

**ROYAL BURGH of WIGTOWN & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD IN THE COUNTY BUILDINGS, WIGTOWN,  
ON MONDAY, 12 AUGUST 2019**

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[www.WigtownCC.org.uk](http://www.WigtownCC.org.uk)

**PRESENT**

Willie McCartney *Vice Convenor*

Jak Kane *Secretary*

Kerr Inger

Matt Kitson

David Moran

David McAdam

Jock McDowall

Robin Richmond

Nick Walker

Kevin Witt

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Cllr Jim McColm

Gill Hay

PC Nicola McFadzean

**APOLOGIES**

Sandra McDowall

**1 APOLOGIES**

Apologies had been received from Sandra McDowall and, in her absence, Vice Convenor Willie McCartney chaired the meeting.

**2 POLICE MATTERS**

PC Nicola McFadzean explained that that the only significant incident since the Community Council's last meeting was the report of a suspicious male in Jubilee Terrace on 30 July. Police enquiries were ongoing. Wigtown Show and the Riding of the Marches had both passed without incident. This was the first year that there had been a temporary road closure for the Show and there would be feedback to evaluate how well this had worked.

At Wigtown Show the police had been publicising 'Rural Watch Scotland', an extension of the Neighbourhood Watch movement aimed specifically at rural communities. She provided copies of the relevant leaflet and said that Police Scotland was encouraging all people living in a rural location to join as the scheme was not just targeted at those living on farms.

**3 APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Agenda was approved with the addition of the following items of 'other' business: double yellow lines at dropped kerbs; fly tipping at Lovers Lane; and faulty streetlights in Kirkland Hill and South Main Street.

***AOB- Double Yellow Lines***

It was agreed that this issue would be discussed first to enable Gill Hay to leave the meeting rather than wait until the end.

Gill explained that she had spoken to Graeme McKie who had directed her to raise this issue with the Community Council before taking it to Roads Department. She had approached Graeme with the suggestion that all dropped kerbs for those with limited mobility in the town should be marked with double yellow lines to ensure that they are not blocked by inconsiderate parkers. As a first step she was drawing up a map showing the location of the relevant dropped kerbs. The Community Council supported Gill with the project and Matt Kitson agreed to help with identification. Gill agreed to also highlight locations in the town where existing yellow lines had been tarred over.

**4 APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Monday, 8 July 2019)**

The minutes of the previous meeting had been circulated prior to the meeting. The minutes were approved, proposed by David Moran and seconded by Kerr Inger.

**6 MATTERS ARISING**

**a. Neighbourhood Champions Initiative**

There had been no further progress with the launch of the Initiative. Jak suggested that it appeared that the Council had instead resorted to introducing it via the back door with the expectation that communities would fill the gaps caused by its inability to maintain services.

**b. Wigtown Primary School**

It was agreed that the Secretary would go back to the Council to ask for: a) details of the Options appraisal undertaken on the configuration of the school once the Nursery decisions had been made; b) copies of the correspondence sent to Head teachers instructing them to share decisions on school capacity and class reductions with Parent Councils; and c) an explanation on why the report on proposed capacity reductions contained historical statistics.

**c. Bird Hide**

Anna Johnson had confirmed that the Council had accepted a quote for the replacement roof for the hide. She would now meet with the successful contractor and advise the CC of the agreed start date and how long the hide would be closed.

**d. Community Conversations Thursday 18 July**

A number of Community Councillors had attended this event, organised to discuss Public Toilet provision and Face to Face Customer Services. The Council needed to make savings of £120,000 in the Public Toilet budget in the next financial year and were looking for communities to make suggestions. The Council proposed options such as closure, reduced opening hours, seasonal closures, reduced frequency of cleaning, communities adopting facilities and a 'Comfort Scheme' where local businesses would agree to make their toilets available to non-customers. The session on Customer Services was intended to be only information sharing and it was stressed that any proposed future reduction in Library or other customer services would be subject to full consultation.

**e. Bladnoch Phone Box**

Kevin Witt had met with Distillery Visitor Centre Manager, Rosie Higginson. Kevin had passed on the red paint bought by the CC and Rosie had agreed to organise the labour to paint the phone box. There was a broken pane of glass on the door of the box and Jak had ordered a replacement. Jak and Kevin would instal the glass and clean up the inside of the kiosk.

**f. Glass Recycling**

The Council had advised that Kirkinner would have a local glass collection point because it was a large enough settlement to warrant one but Whauphill would not. The replacement glass collection bins would have sensors that would notify the Council when they were full and they would be emptied within a few days.

**g. Wigtown to Bladnoch Footpath**

Kevin Witt (*unofficial Neighbourhood Champion*) had voluntarily cut back the worst of the briars and brambles overgrowing the footpath as well as roadside overgrowth in Bladnoch village. The footpath hedge had subsequently been cut back further by the contractor employed by the Templetons.

**h. Access to Martyrs' Stake**

The Council had been asked to arrange for the paths leading to the Martyrs' Stake to be cleared of overgrowth but they said that cuts in funding for the Environment team and

reduction in staff numbers had removed the Council's ability to cut Core Paths in the region. They were looking for Community Assets Teams to take over the role. In the interim, Andrew Wilson (*unofficial Neighbourhood Champion*) had carried out the work.

**i. Wall at Lorry Park**

The CC's request for repairs to the wall had been acknowledged and the repair had been added to the Council's schedule of works. The work was still outstanding.

**j. Lights in the Bus Shelter**

The Council had confirmed that there was a light cover in the bus shelter but no light fitting. The pillar adjacent to the shelter had been installed to provide power to the realtime display which had been cancelled across the whole region.

**k. Redundant Electricity Poles Martyrs Stake/Harbour footpath**

SPEN had confirmed that they would make a site visit with the information passed to their Access Project Manager for him to deal with on his return from holiday on 12 August.

**7 UPDATES & REPORTS**

**a: Financial Report**

Jak Kane had circulated a report prior to the meeting showing figures for the financial year to 31 July 2019. Expenditure on the Administration Account included £13.68 to Machars Action for printing etc along with £13.68 for the piece of glass for the Phone Box in Bladnoch. Replacement pads for the Defibrillator had cost £52.80 but this had been offset by a payment from Wigtown Community Shop who had previously agreed to cover any maintenance costs. Closing balance for Administration was £1,275.49.

A detailed breakdown of income and expenditure for the Summer Festival was also provided. So far there was a surplus of £320.12 for the Festival but there remained payments due to Briars Engravers and Wigtown Bowling Club. It was agreed that a donation of £24 should be given to the Bowling Club to cover use of the clubhouse and electricity.

**b: Consultations WP**

There were no current Consultations.

**c: Planning WP**

Nick Walker had circulated a report prior to the meeting. Nick explained that there were no new applications to be considered, only updates on earlier applications to be noted.

He confirmed that he had sent a positive submission in connection with the proposed chip shop at 24 North Main Street along with comments on the potential impact of opening hours on the immediate locality. Updates included details of three of the previous planning applications that had been approved unconditionally.

Cllr McColm did not participate in the consideration of the contents of the report.

**d: Town Square Development WP**

Sandra had circulated a report prior to the meeting. She recommended that the Working Party convene a meeting inviting representatives from the Council, Scottish Power and the Bowling Club in an effort to take the project forward. This was agreed. It was suggested that the Working Party should investigate the possibility of the provision of lamp post-based electric vehicle chargers being included in the project. Robin Richmond reported that another tree in the square was dying and needed to be replaced and asked that this be raised at the meeting.

Matt had spoken to the Bowling Club re the proposed clubhouse extension and he had been told that the Club had decided at a recent meeting that, while they agreed in principle to the proposal, they would rather wait until the lease with the Council had

been finalised. The Secretary was asked to write to Graeme McKie to find out if there had been any progress with the Asset Transfer.

**8 CORRESPONDENCE, ETC**

***Barrhill Station Car Park*** – A letter of support for the proposed car park provision at Barrhill Rail Station had been sent.

***Machars Cycle Routes*** – The Council had been asked to provide a replacement insert for the very faded Machars Cycle Routes sign next to the bike racks on the square. The Council had replied that there was no funding available to print a replacement but provided the relevant files so that the Community Council (perhaps as *quasi Neighbourhood Champions*) could do it at its own cost.

***Newton Stewart Trad Music Festival*** – The Council had been asked to arrange for the numerous posters around the town advertising the Council-funded Festival to be removed now that the event was over.

***Granite Pillar*** – Kerr Inger had reported a granite pillar on the square that had been broken, presumably by a vehicle. The issue had been passed to Cllr McColm and subsequently the top part of the pillar had been removed and a traffic cone placed on the remaining section. It would be monitored to ensure that the bottom part was ground away and/or the pillar replaced.

**9 COUNCILLORS ISSUES**

Cllr McColm said that the issues that he would have spoken about had already been covered earlier in the meeting. He did highlight that the Council had a statutory duty to keep Core Paths free of obstruction. Councillors had expected this to include cutting back vegetation when they agreed to the cuts in the Environment Team but it transpired that one interpretation was that obstructions only included things like fallen trees and locked gates. A further complication arose where the Core Path was on private land and the landowner shared responsibility for the upkeep of the path. The Council was now waiting for the policy to be clarified by Legal Services.

**10 OTHER NOTIFIED BUSINESS**

***Fly tipping*** – The Secretary would report an old trailer loaded with scrap that had been left at the start of Lovers Walk.

***Streetlights*** – The Secretary would report lamps that were not working in Kirkland Hill and South Main Street.

**11 NEXT MEETING**

**7.30pm on Monday, 9 September 2019 in Wigtown County Buildings.**