

ROYAL BURGH of WIGTOWN & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ONLINE
ON MONDAY, 11 JANUARY 2020

contact@WigtownCC.org.uk

www.WigtownCC.org.uk

PRESENT

Sandra McDowall (Convenor)
Kerr Inger
Cora Sharp

Jak Kane (Secretary)
Ada Montgomery
Paul Tarling
Kevin Witt

Kathleen Hart
Robin Richmond
Nick Walker

IN ATTENDANCE

Cllr Jim McColm

Laura Kiltie DGC

Louise Kerr, Free Press

APOLOGIES

David Moran

David McAdam
Cllr David Inglis

Jock McDowall

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from David Moran and Cllr Inglis. David McAdam and Jock McDowall were both unable to access the online meeting.

2. POLICE MATTERS

PC McMillan had provided a written report which had been circulated to the Community Council. Two crimes had been reported to Police Scotland via its crime recording platforms since 10 December: a female had been reported for disorder offences in connection with an assault in Wigtown; and police enquiries were ongoing regarding the fraudulent sale of second hand goods via Facebook Marketplace by a user in Wigtown. The Police gave a reminder that any incidents or concerns should be reported to them as and when they occur. This would create an official record of the report, allowing it to be graded accurately, provide accountability and the best opportunity for any timely investigation required. Potential breaches of the COVID-19 regulations could be reported online to Police Scotland via the following link
<https://www.scotland.police.uk/secureforms/covid19/>

2a YOUTH MATTERS

DGC Youth Development Worker Laura Kiltie had been invited to attend and bring the Community Council up to date with how the Council was trying to deliver Youth Work Services during COVID restrictions. Laura explained that Youth Work dealt with young people aged 12 and over and would normally engage with them at the Kaos Café, Wigtown. Unfortunately, this was not possible because the Café was too small to allow social distancing and the alternative of the halls in the County Buildings were not open to the public. They had been transporting children from Wigtown to Newton Stewart on a weekly basis up until the introduction of the latest restrictions. Around 12 children had been taken each week with an upper limit of 28 children being able to participate in Newton Stewart.

The Council had launched an online digital programme for young people along with a telephone service. Detached Youth Workers were working in Dumfries & Galloway in general but not yet in Wigtownshire or Annandale because of the high level of cases locally. Laura agreed to provide details of the range of initiatives being offered by the Council to allow the Community Council to share them on its social media platforms and newsletter.

3 APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Agenda was approved with the addition of RSPB presentation and dog fouling as other business.

4 APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Monday, 14 December 2020)

The minutes of the previous meeting had been circulated and were approved, proposed by Nick Walker and seconded by Ada Montgomery.

5 MATTERS ARISING

Merchat Cross – Luce Bay had visited the Merchat Cross and carried out the remedial works to remove the weeds and repoint.

Public Toilets – The issue with petty vandalism had been monitored with no other incidents reported.

6 UPDATES & REPORTS

a: Financial Report

Jak Kane had circulated a report outlining the position up to date. From the Administration Account, £20 had been paid for the annual Lottery Licence and £28.34 for printing, stationery and postage. A further £358.34 had been paid from the Resilience Account for printing.

David McAdam had produced £141 for the Christmas Account made up of £100 from Lucky Squares and £41 coin collection. A letter of thanks would be sent to Daviv in recognition of his ongoing efforts.

b: Consultations Report

There were no current consultations to consider.

c: Planning Working Party

A Planning Report had been circulated prior to the meeting. The report included an update on an issue which had been raised just before the CC's December meeting and involved a property in Agnew Crescent that appeared to have undergone alterations without benefit of Planning consents. The building was listed and in the conservation area and it was agreed that the CC should contact Planning Control to make them aware of the issue as the CC had consistently looked to support the conservation heritage of the town.

The report also detailed two new applications: the erection of a house on a site north of 2 Main Street, Whauphill and the erection of an agricultural building at Crouse Farm, Wigtown. It was agreed that the CC should make no submission in connection with the former and noted that Planning had indicated that the latter required no prior approval.

The CC had previously submitted comments on an application on the proposed development at Carsegowan which had questioned the validity of a 2014 bat survey. A subsequent preliminary assessment recommended that, while there was currently no evidence of Bat roosting, activity surveys should be conducted between May and August 2021. The applicant was seeking approval with a condition that bat assessment follows based on the dilapidated state of the buildings, but it was agreed that the CC should ask DGC to refuse the application until such time as the relevant bat assessment could be completed.

Updates on the earlier Planning applications were also noted.

Cllr McColm did not participate in the discussion of the Planning issues.

d. Town Square Developments WP

Sandra McDowall reported that she had spoken to Tom McLellan of SPEN re the works at High Vennel. Tom had explained that the plans to keep the Vennel open throughout the works had been changed when it emerged that the cables to be worked on were in the

middle of the road rather than nearer the pavements. Residents had been informed of the changes and work was still on course to be completed by end of January.

A report had been circulated on how the community could address the loss of trees in the McGuffie VC Memorial Gardens due to Honey Fungus infestation. The recommendations in the report were agreed and an early meeting would be convened where the CC could share its findings with the Bowling Club, Wigtown in Bloom and the Council so that a strategy to deal with the infestation and replacement planting could be agreed with tree stumps and surrounding soil being removed by Spring 2021. Thanks were due to Paul Tarling, Kathleen Hart and Nick Walker for compiling the report.

David Moran had switched off the Christmas lights and provided meter readings so that the Bowling Club could be reimbursed. It was agreed that it would not be possible to take down the tree and lights under current COVID restrictions because of the need for social distancing.

e. Resilience Working Party

The Resilience WP had met to organise the relaunch of the volunteer system. It had been decided that volunteers would not be routinely walking looking for red cards but residents needing assistance would be asked to call the Resilience Helpline 07551 552 166. A flier explaining the system had been printed up and would be delivered to households in Wigtown, Kirkinner and Whauphill in the next five days. Fridge magnets with the Resilience phone number had been circulated to all households previously but replacement magnets would be available for collection from the Co-op and the number was included in the flier.

7 CORRESPONDENCE

- a. *Classification of the Solway Firth Special Protection Area (SPA)* – Natural England had written with respect to the classification of the SPA. The area included much of Wigtown Bay but did not extend to Wigtown or Bladnoch. Paul Tarling volunteered to explain the implications of the SPA classification.
- b. *Potato Mill Road* – a local resident had copied the CC into an email that she had sent to DGC re the installation of replacement speed signs on Potato Mill Road. It was left to Tony Topping, Roads to respond on behalf of the Council.
- c. *Introduction to Community Asset Transfer (CAT)* – the Community Ownership Support Service (COSS) had sent details of two webinars on CAT they were hosting. Sandra McDowall and Paul Tarling had indicated their interest in attending but COSS had not set a limit on how many people could attend, so it was still open to others.
- d. *Abandoned car* – Sandra McDowall had been in touch with both the Police and the Council re an abandoned vehicle parked in South Main Street. It transpired that the car was taxed and insured until November 2021 and would not therefore be treated as ‘abandoned’ and removed. Although the vehicle lacked a valid MOT, no Road Traffic offense would be committed unless someone drove the car.
- e. *Planning & Commercial Activity in Wigtown* – An email had been received from a local resident raising issues with the Galloway Bar and its outside drinking area as well as the potential loss of other businesses from the town centre. The barriers outside the Galloway had been put in place to create an outdoor drinking area which was allowed as part of DGCs Restart Plan for Town Centre pubs, cafes etc and, as a temporary measure, did not require Planning Permission. An occasional licence was needed to extend the Bar’s licence to include the new area being used. The Community Council had contacted the Council asking that the barriers be removed obstruction while the Bar was not in a position to operate during the current phase of extended lockdown. The letter raised a range of other issues connected with how the Galloway operated when it was open, and the CC would advise the community

member that any such concerns needed to be referred to the Police and the Licensing Board.

The future of the Glaisnock B&B and the Craft Hotel were also mentioned in the email but the Community Council would only have a remit if, at some time in the future, the properties' owners submitted a Change of Use or Planning application at which stage the CC and the wider community would be able to comment, object or support. Sandra McDowall would respond in writing.

The Community Council acknowledged the struggles that local businesses were dealing with during the uncertain times caused by the response to the pandemic and that they should be supported in their endeavours.

8 COUNCILLORS' ISSUES

Cllr McColm attempted to deliver some information but was inhibited by a poor connection with his microphone breaking up.

9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Dog Fouling – Sandra McDowall reported an increase in the incidences of dog fouling along the Martyrs Stake path, Lovers Walk and throughout the town. The Secretary would contact the Community Safety Team to ask if additional or enhanced signage could be provided.

RSPB Presentation – Paul Tarling asked if RSPB could attend the CC's February meeting on 8 February to give a presentation on the proposed development of two additional lagoons at the Crook of Baldoon reserve and that representatives from Kirkmabreck and Garlieston CCs be invited as well. RSPB would also be hosting a wider online consultation meeting on 10 February on connection with the relative Planning application. It was agreed that the presentation would be received at the start of the February meeting and the Secretary would contact Kirkmabreck and Garlieston CCs with details.

Recycling – both the Textile and Glass recycling bins in Wigtown Lorry Park were causing problems because neither were being emptied often enough and people were discarding full bags beside the facilities. The Secretary would chase up.

10 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Community Council would be on **Monday, 8 February 2021** starting at the regular time of 7:30 pm and held online.