

ROYAL BURGH of WIGTOWN & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ONLINE
ON MONDAY, 8 MARCH 2021

contact@WigtownCC.org.uk

www.WigtownCC.org.uk

PRESENT

Sandra McDowall (Convenor)	Jak Kane (Secretary)	Kathleen Hart
Kerr Inger	Ada Montgomery	David Moran
Robin Richmond	Cora Sharp	Paul Tarling
Nick Walker	Kevin Witt	

IN ATTENDANCE

Cllr Jim McColm	Louise Kerr, Free Press
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APOLOGIES

David McAdam	Jock McDowall
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Before the start of the business meeting, Sandra McDowall reflected on the passing of Community Council member and friend Willie McCartney.

“There can be few groups and organisations locally that don’t owe Willie McCartney a great debt of gratitude. He volunteered tirelessly in this community for countless years and will be difficult, if not impossible, to replace. He provided the sound and the music for numerous community festivals, not just in Wigtown and the Machars, but much further afield as well. He was there whenever he was needed for galas, festivals, gatherings, processions, quizzes, and raft races to name but a few. Every Christmas saw him not only providing the sound for the switch-on and the Silver Band but also working with other volunteers to put up the lights and then help take them down again.

Almost the last time I saw him was when the Christmas Lights were being connected in the pavilion. He maybe was not as fit as normal but he was there – just as he always was – to make sure everything was done properly and everything was ready on time. He has been a tremendous friend to us all, our Community Council meetings will not be the same without him. We will really, really miss him.”

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were recorded for David McAdam and Jock McDowall who were both unable to access the online meeting.

2. POLICE MATTERS

PC Dodds had submitted a written report which had been circulated to Community Councillors prior to the meeting. There had been three incidents reported to Police Scotland via its crime recording platforms since 8 February 2021: fencing materials had been reported stolen from Baldoon; a fire-raising had been reported at a house in Church Lane; and damage to one of the CC’s hand sanitising stations. Jak Kane had reported the last incident which was being dealt with as an Antisocial Behaviour incident as it could not be ascertained how the damage was caused and no evidence to substantiate any crime. Jak Kane said that the station had been forced open with damage to one of the rivets and the metal bent out of shape. He had effected repairs himself and the station was again serviceable.

3 APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Agenda was approved with no additional business notified.

4 APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Monday, 8 February 2021)

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

5 MATTERS ARISING

a) RSPB Crook of Baldoon – Nick Walker confirmed that he had sent a letter to RSPB confirming the CC's support of the proposed development work at the Reserve.

b) Honey fungus and replacement trees – Nick Walker advised that he had held initial talks with Wigtown In Bloom and Wigtown Bowling Club. He had been passed the contact details for the Club's Greenkeeper and he would be arranging a meeting with him as well.

c) Christmas lights – The Christmas lights had been taken down and stored. Thanks were due to all who had carried out this work.

d) Planning & Commercial Activity in Wigtown

i. Free Press article – Sandra McDowall thanked Louise Kerr for the Free Press article that she had written in support of the CC following the online abuse around this issue.

ii. CC Code of Conduct – Online abuse – Jak Kane said that he had sourced a Welsh LGA (Local Government Association) document, 'Councillors Guide to Handling Online abuse' that he would circulate.

iii. Removal of Barriers - It was noted that the Council had now removed the Galloway Bar barriers.

e) Dog Fouling – Jak Kane had circulated several suggested signs that encouraged dog owners to pick up after their dogs. It was agreed that an amended version of the NZ poster should be designed and circulated to community councillors for comment by the end of the week. It was also agreed that the community council would purchase dog bag dispensers for the paths. As the Council Resilience grant could not be used for this project, Jak would approach the Community Shop for their agreement that their grant could be used to pay for the items.

f) Textile Recycling Bin – the bin continued to be a problem with overflow bags being dumped beside the bin. The contractors had been asked to make collections on a more regular basis but they had failed to respond in any meaningful way. It was agreed that the facility was proving to be more of a public nuisance than a community asset and the Council should be asked to arrange for the bin to be removed permanently.

g) Kirkinner Lights - Bob Green, DGC Roads had advised that the electrician had advised there was a problem with the power supply but he was scheduled to have them repaired and programmed by 12 March 2021

h) Pedestrian Gritters - The preferred machine that could deal with damp Council grit (Gritex Matterhorn) costing £348 was out of stock and would not be available again until Autumn 2021. Rather than wait to buy two of these machines, a second more substantial machine costing £849 was available for immediate delivery. It was agreed to wait until the cheaper of the machines were back in stock later in the year.

6 UPDATES & REPORTS

a: Financial Report

Jak Kane confirmed that the CC had now received the resilience grant of £1,149.50 from DGC.

b: Consultations Report

There were no current consultations to consider.

c: Planning Working Party

A Planning Report had been circulated prior to the meeting detailing new applications that had been submitted and giving updates on prior applications. It recommended that the CC make no submission in connection with two new applications: installation of ground source heat pumps at Barnbarroch Mains, Whauphill and formation of new forest track leading to Glenling Wood, Corsemalzie. It also recommended that the CC should respond to the application for proposed works at 4 Acre Place by submitting comments on the importance of the Conservation Area and its Listed Buildings and noting that this proposal appeared sympathetic to, and supportive of, the built heritage. The report was noted and the recommendations accepted.

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

d. Town Square Developments WP

Sandra McDowall had circulated notes of the WP meeting of 19 February when Sandy Sweetman of South West Sound and Lighting had provided more information on the proposed lighting scheme and infrastructure for the Town Square. SPEN had advised that the overhead power lines were no longer live and the contractors would remove the poles and overhead lines in April.

Calum Edgar, DGC Street Lighting Team Leader had advised that the new lighting columns had been installed only on a temporary basis so that the area does not go without light. It was still to be determined what style of lamppost and light fitting are to be installed on a permanent basis but the Heritage style of lighting is not Dark Sky compliant. He said that everything that was currently installed, including a column in High Vennel that had appeared in the middle of the pavement, was still up for discussion. It was agreed that the Council should be held to their commitment that traditional style columns should be used round the Square and that Calum Edgar be invited to attend a CC meeting as soon as he had proposals to consider.

e. Resilience Working Party

There was nothing to report other than the receipt of DGC grant monies as mentioned previously. The CC had donated £50 to Cobwebs who were leading a community project to deliver Easter gifts to all primary school children.

8 CORRESPONDENCE

- a. *EV Charging Points* – The CC had received correspondence re the lack of Council neighbour notification of the works involved, provision of disabled friendly charging points and the future of the site as a Lorry Park. The emails had been passed to Grant Coltart, DGC who had confirmed that he would speak to the neighbours and that the contractors had been asked to look at possible bays for disabled EV drivers.
- b. *Connecting Community Councils* – DGC had entered into a partnership with the Scottish Tech Army (STA) to assess the digital presence of CCs in D&G and Jak had completed a short questionnaire. They were also looking to identify 12 CCs to take part in a pilot initiative to help them increase their digital presence but it was agreed that Wigtown CC did not need this support.
- c. *Beddie Crescent play park* – A resident had raised the issue of an unprotected drop and broken or lack of fencing at the park. The Council had attended to the issue of the issue of the broken fencing and unprotected drop.
- d. *North Main Street* – The CC had been contacted by GAP (Galloway and Ayrshire Properties) re the rules about the replacement of a wooden door in North Main

Street. They had been advised that this work would need Planning Permission as the property was within the Conservation area

9 COUNCILLORS' ISSUES

Cllr McColm said that he would like to echo the Convenor's statement about the death of Willie McCartney whom he had known for over 50 years. Willie had helped Wigtown and many surrounding communities over the years and would leave a huge gap that would be difficult to fill.

The Council had passed its Budget for 2021/22 and there would be no increase in Council Tax. The Council had found more money for roads and to enhance safety at places like at the playpark mentioned earlier things were moving towards introducing 20mph speed limits in built-up areas.

Cllr McColm finished by noting the recent death of Patsy Gilroy who had served as a Councillor with DGC for many years.

10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business and the meeting was closed.

11 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Community Council would be on **Monday, 12 April 2021** starting at the regular time of 7:30 pm and held online.