

ROYAL BURGH of WIGTOWN & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ONLINE
ON MONDAY,10 MAY 2021

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

Rose Toney, Species on the
Edge

Jennifer Jones, Free Press

APOLOGIES

David Moran

David McAdam

Jock McDowall

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were tendered on behalf of David Moran and recorded for David McAdam and Jock McDowall who were both unable to access the online meeting.

2 LIGHTING COLUMNS – Calum Edgar, DGC Roads

Calum Edgar was scheduled to attend to bring the Community Council up to date with proposals for the replacement lighting columns to be installed in North Main Street & High Vennel following SPEN's recent undergrounding of power cables. He was unable to access the meeting as the Council's IT was blocked from accessing Zoom meetings.

3 SPECIES ON THE EDGE – Rose Toney

Engagement Officer Rose Toney had asked if she could attend the CC meeting to make a presentation on 'Species on the Edge' (SotE), a partnership of NatureScot and seven nature conservation charities, dedicated to improving the fortunes of 40 priority species found along Scotland's coast with the Solway Coast as one of seven Project Areas. She explained that the programme had already received development funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) and the partnership was now developing a four-and-a-half-year programme of work to tackle the impacts of environmental change on wildlife, to benefit both nature and people.

SotE is working up a Stage 2 NLHF application for funding due to be submitted by November 2021. A decision is expected from the funders by March 2022 with funding for constituent projects expected to be available from June 2022 – December 2026. SotE is consulting with CCs for ideas on what might be included in the new programme and Rose Toney undertook to send out a short questionnaire for completion by Community Councillors.

4. POLICE MATTERS

No Police Report had been received prior to the meeting. *An email was subsequently received from PC Krystle Martin advising that she had emailed the April Report in time for the April meeting but she had received a notification that her email could not be delivered. She suspected that it was because there had been a change in the secretary's email address but this was not the case as the email address she had used was still in use. She had then sent the report to the CC's Convenor and Secretary separately but again*

the email had not been received by either party perhaps because of the file attached. PC Martin had included copies of both April and May's report with her email but delivery may have been delayed by the 10MB size of the file.

5 APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Agenda was approved with the addition of Wigtown Community Fridge and Plastic Free Schools.

6 APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Monday, 12 April 2021)

The minutes of the previous meeting had been circulated and were approved, proposed by Paul Tarling and seconded by Robin Richmond.

5 MATTERS ARISING

a) Honey fungus and replacement trees – Nick Walker reported that he had spoken to Robert Lowther about the Honey Fungus project and the Kirkyard Project and he had been supportive of both. There would be a Teams meeting organised to identify what would be needed from the Council with site visits arranged later. Jak Kane had sent out details of a new South of Scotland Tree Planting Grant that had recently been announced. He had spoken to Jonathan Barrett of the Galloway Glens Landscape Partnership who had explained that grants of up to £1,000 were available for trees and material costs. He had provided further guidance and advised getting an application in asap as the scheme was proving to be very popular.

b) Dog Fouling – Signs/Dog waste bas dispenser – An additional bag dispenser had been sourced and installed at the Martyrs' Stake car park. Copies of the second version of the CC's dog fouling poster had been put up at Lovers' Lane and the approach to Windyhill. Kevin Witt had also designed stickers for the dispensers that make it clear that they have been provided by the CC with support from the Community Shop. It was agreed that the CC should expand the scheme further with the purchase of a third dog bag dispenser for installation at the opening of Lovers' Lane.

c) Textile Recycling Bin – DGC Waste Services had responded on 23 April to the CC's request for the bin to be removed permanently by advising that Nathan's Wastesavers would supply a second Textile Bank and then arrange for them to be serviced weekly on Tuesdays. Council staff would also be asked to check the site weekly 'when possible' and report any fly tipping beside the skip. The single Bin was full and overflowing on Wednesday, 4 May so the Secretary contacted Waste Services again to highlight that Nathan's had not delivered on the arrangement. Nathan's had subsequently advised that, instead of supplying a second textile bank, they would provide a larger textile bank on the site with almost double the current capacity and an improved chute design. The swap was scheduled to take place on Tuesday, 11 May.

d) Roadworks – Lightlands Avenue – the Secretary had contacted the Council again as the barriers were still in place although the works had been expected to be completed by "early April". The Council advised that they had been assured by the contractors that the works would be completed by 14 May and they would be raising the issue of why the works had been open for so long at the next meeting with the Utility companies.

e) Kirkyard Project - See 7a)

f) Harbour Signage/Interpretation Boards – There had been no progress in this project and problems had been reported with gates at both ends of the Martyrs' Stake path. It was agreed that a meeting with Anna Johnston, DGC Countryside

Team be arranged to discuss the CC's plans to address maintenance issues and the desire to increase interpretation on Wigtown paths.

g) Back Lane – Beddie Crescent/Church Lane – the Secretary had reported the poor condition of the lane linking Beddie Crescent and Church Lane to the Council but they did not identify any repair that was their responsibility. Cllr McColm confirmed that the road would need to be brought up to a standard before the Council would adopt it and be responsible for its maintenance.

h) Summer event -Jak Kane had contacted the CC's Insurer who had advised that an additional premium of £56 would be needed to provide Liability Insurance cover for the proposed event.

i) Willie McCartney Archives - Matt Kitson had provided a spreadsheet to show that he had catalogued and digitised 72 DVDs and 24 Mini-DVs. He still had 12 Mini-DVs to record and 16 VHS cassettes to look at.

He had spoken briefly to Betty McGowan about bringing together some of the 'elders' of Wigtown when it is safe to do so to help provide some detail where there is no information on the DVD or Mini-DV cover.

Once he had finished digitising the content Matt would arrange to hand over the original copies together with a copy of the spread sheet and digital copies on SSD to Alison Burgess, DGC Archives to be stored at the Wigtown Library.

Some of the Mini-DVs had personal footage which Matt would remove the digital collection and Jak Kane was to liaise with Willie's family to ascertain if they would like the Mini-DVs back that contain this footage back along with a digital copy. Matt had also spoken to Anne Barclay about the recordings that Willie had made of Book Festival Events. He had created a separate register and will hand over the files for the Festival Company to retain.

6 UPDATES & REPORTS

a: Financial Report

The only transactions on the CC's accounts since the last meeting were payments from the Resilience Fund for renewal of the Zoom subscription, and the purchase of a dog bag dispenser, two signs and a new stock of bags.

b: Consultations Report

There were no current consultations to consider.

c: Planning Working Party

Nick Walker had circulated a Planning Report prior to the meeting. There were Planning and Listed Building applications listed in connection with proposed works at 11 Bladnoch. While the CC would normally make a formal submission as statutory consultees, there appeared to be no design statement submitted in connection with the applications which would normally invalidate the application. Nick Walker would raise the issue with the Planners.

Nick had also raised with Planning Enforcement the issue of the replacement of the public telephone box in Wigtown with an ATM with integrated public telephone without benefit of a planning application particularly given the Conservation Area location.

Kevin Witt raised the issue of recent social media posts re rumours of proposed Caravan Sites in Bladnoch and Wigtown. Sandra McDowall said that she had looked into it and had established that, within planning rules, there was an Approved sites exemption for small caravan sites that allowed for a maximum of 5 caravans at a time for each site. Planning Permission was not required if the proposed site had been approved by an exempted organisation that promotes leisure and recreation, like the Caravanning and Camping Club (CCC). For CCC to approve the site the landowner would need to provide: safe drinking water; an emptying point for chemical waste; a bin for dry rubbish; and safe

access for caravans and motorhomes. Cllr McColm agreed to determine from DGC how the Council would be involved in determining the question of vehicle access to the sites. Cllr McColm did not participate in the discussion of the Planning issues.

d. Town Square Developments WP

Sandra McDowall advised that the Working Party had not met since the last CC meeting but she had spoken to Sandy Sweetman who had said that he had been busy with other work but would be dealing with the CC project in the coming weeks. It had still to be determined which of the lamp standards around the square would be able to be provided with sockets and/or suitable for the proposed additional lighting.

A Council electrician had disconnected the power supply to the town square socket as well as removing the community council electrical equipment from the Bowling Club. The equipment needed to be installed in the new box in the gardens to reinstate the supply and Jak Kane had written to the Council asking for it to be returned. Alan McDowall had applied high voltage warning stickers to both boxes.

The EV Charging Station was nearing completion with all but the superfast and disabled charge points installed. The lighting on six columns had also still to be finished

In dealing with the various issues in and around the Town Centre, the amount of work carried out by Wigtown In Bloom had been noted and it was agreed that the CC should acknowledge the contribution of the group's many volunteers in the next edition of the Newsletter. It would also be mentioned that WIB was looking for additional volunteers that could contribute one hour per week.

The wooden power poles in North Main Street and High Vennel had been removed by SPEN and it was agreed that, given the improvement in the streetscape now that they were gone, the CC should write to SPEN to ask if they knew when the undergrounding of the power cables in South Main Street was scheduled.

e. Resilience Working Party

There was nothing to report other than the items that had been purchased as mentioned in the Finance Report .

8 CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence other than what had been covered in Matters Arising.

9 COUNCILLORS' ISSUES

Cllr McColm highlighted that over the period of the COVID crisis the Scottish Government had provided £8.125M for Education to cover additional costs in relation to staffing, cleaning and providing childcare for the children of key workers.

The Council was conducting an ongoing review of cluster management in Primary Schools. The system had been running for 6/7 years and Education Department was looking to identify where improvements could be made.

Cllr McColm was also able to advise that, in addition to the Coastal Community Fund awards reported by Cllr Hagmann in April, Wigtown & Bladnoch FC had received a grant of £18,000 which would allow the club to install floodlights at Trammanford Park.

10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Community Fridge Scheme – Kevin Witt had circulated a briefing note on the proposed scheme that would see community members offered free access to surplus food donated by local supermarkets, food shops and local gardeners. The organisers intended applying for funding from the Co-op Community Fund with a closing date of 31 May 2021 and it was agreed that the application could be submitted in name of WDCC. Pending a

decision on the funding application, the group would look to identify an appropriate and available location to house the project

Plastic Free Schools – Cora Sharp reported that pupils at both Wigtown and Kirkcowan Primary Schools had advanced their interest in the environment by joining the Plastic Free Schools initiative and were now looking at ways to reduce use of single use plastics. Primary 7 pupils had spoken at assemblies sharing their knowledge on the subject and explaining how long these items take to decompose. The school is planning a litter pick in Wigtown to see how many single use plastic items are found and will look for other ways they can identify this through school and families. Cllr McColm agreed to investigate if the schools could be provided with a recycling bin for plastics to help with the initiative. Cora was asked to go back to the school with the offer that pupils could arrange to attend a Community Council meeting to inform on any projects the School was leading on.

11 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Community Council would also incorporate the Annual General Meeting. The meeting would be held online on **Monday, 8 June 2021** with the AGM starting at the regular time of 7:30 pm and the regular business meeting following thereafter.