

ROYAL BURGH of WIGTOWN & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF BLENDED MEETING HELD in MACHARS ACTION and ONLINE
ON MONDAY, 14 FEBRUARY 2022

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www.WigtownCC.org.uk

PRESENT

Sandra McDowall (Convenor)
David Moran
Robin Richmond

Jak Kane (Secretary)
David McAdam

Ada Montgomery
Jock McDowall
Paul Tarling

IN ATTENDANCE

Cllr Katie Hagmann

Cllr David Inglis

Cllr Jim McColm

APOLOGIES

Kerr Inger

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Kerr Inger had intimated his apologies prior to the meeting.

2. POLICE MATTERS

PC Krystle Martin had emailed a Police Report and it had been circulated to members. The report detailed the local crime incidents that had been reported since the January report.

1. On 16 January, a Wigtown male had been reported for a bail offence.
2. On 22 January, a Fixed Penalty Notice had been issued in connection with a minor Road Traffic Collision on South Main Street.
3. A driver had been reported for a number of offences in connection with a one car Road Traffic Collision on the A714 200m north of Wigtown on 12 February 2022.

It was noted that there had been recent reports of graffiti in parts of Wigtown but the incidents had not been reported to the Police.

3 APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND ANOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Agenda was approved with the addition of Kirkinner Hall AGM and Wigtown Bottle bank.

4 APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Monday, 10 January 2022)

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

5 MATTERS ARISING

- a) *Speeding in Southfield Lane*** – Cllr McColm had taken the issue up with Tony Topping, DGC Roads who had suggested that he would have expected vehicle speeds to be relatively low and not excessive for the road environment given the nature of Southfield Lane (fairly narrow, parked cars, junctions etc). However, he confirmed that he had arranged for a couple of SLOW markings to be marked on the road when the lining contractor was next in the area.
- b) *Verges – Ballgreen to Martyrs' Stake Car Park***. The problem with the overgrown verges had been reported to DGC Roads by Cllr McColm.
- c) *McGuffie VC Gardens (Removal of Shed and Picnic Tables)*** – It was reported that arrangements had been made for the items to be removed from the gardens on 16 February 2022.

6 UPDATES & REPORTS

a: Financial Report

A financial report that showed income and expenditure for the various CC funds had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Admin Account had received the annual DGC Admin grant of £574.75 as well as the £2,000 grant from Kilgalloch Community Benefit Company. The £30 subscription for membership of APRS had been paid and additional Dog Waste bags costing £64.50 had been purchased.

For the Festivals account, the local Co-op had raised £141.83 via shoppers' donations for the Christmas Lights and an acknowledgment of thanks was provided for their Community notice board.

b: Consultations Report

The Consultations Report highlighted two current consultations, details of which had been forwarded separately to community councillors.

The first involved pre-implementation directions and regulations for Local Authorities in connection with Pavement Parking prohibitions, viz. the ban on pavement parking, double parking and parking at dropped kerbs. The Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 gives local authorities the relevant powers to enforce these new provisions as well as the power to exempt areas of pavement from the pavement parking ban in certain circumstances. The Scottish Government was consulting to discuss the proposals for those powers and to gather opinion on them.

The second Scottish Government consultation had been drafted in partnership with Zero Waste Scotland, Keep Scotland Beautiful and Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), and was seeking views on the aims, objectives and actions that will sit under, the new National Litter and Flytipping Strategy for Scotland.

Cllr Hagmann advised that the Council's Communities Committee would be discussing parking issues and there had been a suggestion that the Council should consider decriminalisation of parking in Dumfries & Galloway with the Council taking enforcement back from PoliceScotland.

c: Planning Working Party

A Planning Report had been circulated prior to the meeting. There had been three new applications connected to Bladnoch Distillery: creation of a Visitor car park on part of the new Show field, the erection of a new Warehouse building and an application to formalise the storage of Hazardous Substances (whisky, alcohol and propane gas).

It was agreed that there should be no submissions in connection with these applications but it was suggested that, with the Distillery looking to increase its facilities to attract more visitors, the Community Council should take the opportunity to raise the possibility of access to the former Core Path being reinstated to provide an additional activity for visitors and locals on the site.

Cllr Inglis left the meeting at this point.

Cllr Hagmann explained that the Core Path suggestion need not be shared with the Planning Committee as it was unlikely to be involved unless objections to the applications were made. It was agreed that the Secretary should contact the Council's Access Officer and the Distillery direct.

Updates on previous applications included:

- The agent responsible for the proposed new build house adjacent to Kerross, Station Road had written in response to objections claiming that the objectors had wrongly based their objections on a perceived difference in height levels between the proposed house and Kerross. The owners of Kerross were aware of these claims.

d. Town Square Developments

DGC's Calum Edgar had confirmed that the embellishment kits to the new lampposts on North Main Street would be installed when the weather improved.

e. Martyrs' Stake/Old Railway Line

Sandra reported that she had received an email from Anna Johnson re the Goose Stones renovations.

f. Plant a Tree for the Jubilee

Jak Kane reported that he had spoken to Kirkinner Hall and Whauphill Community Association and they had confirmed that they would like the CC to provide a tree for their communities to mark the Queen's Jubilee. They had identified bits of ground where they would place the tree and Jak had undertaken to contact the Council for approval. It was agreed that Paul Tarling would meet with the community groups to discuss the sites and the type of tree to be planted.

It was also agreed that a small Working Party (Sandra McDowall, David Moran, Robin Richmond) should be established to start talking about a community event in the McGuffie VC Gardens for the Queen's Jubilee celebrations, scheduled for 2 – 5 June.

g. Machars Action (MA)

Carol Lochrie, Manager had provided the first monthly report on MA activities and it had been circulated.

h. APRS Webinar

Sandra McDowall had taken part in the webinar on NPF4 (National Planning Framework). She reported that it was very interesting and had explained how the Scottish Government would give more credence to the Local Development Plans. There were a lot of communities with grievances against planning development on green space.

7 WIGTOWN SHINDY

Matt Kitson was proposing to again organise the Wigtown Shindy and had submitted a funding application for an event on Saturday, 27 August. He was asking if the CC would support the event by covering the cost of the Liability Insurance and by sponsoring one of a number of awards for people and organisations that had been active in the Wigtown community in the past year. It was agreed that CC would support the event in principle and the details of the proposed awards would be circulated for discussion at the next CC meeting.

Ada Montgomery advised that there would be a programme of individual community events organised over the period from 30 July – 7 August. The organisers would be held responsible for organising their own insurance cover but they may need assistance in covering the printing costs related to posters and schedules.

8 CORRESPONDENCE

a) *Whithorn & District Community Council* – Whithorn CC had requested assistance with a Review Panel needed in connection with a complaint against the CC and which needed to be composed of Councillors from neighbouring CCs. The request had been circulated and Robin Richmond had agreed to volunteer.

b) *Kindling* – Roy Lewis, DGC Community Payback had been in touch to arrange a further delivery of free kindling that had since been distributed by David McAdam and Jock McDowall.

c) *SOSE Engagement Tour* – SOSE had confirmed the second phase of its engagement tour with meetings in Whithorn, Newton Stewart and online.

d) *National Park Poll* – It had been announced that Galloway had polled more votes as the place where people thought the third National Park in Scotland should be located than all the other candidates put together.

- e) **Climate Change Petition** – The CC had received a request that it should highlight a petition that had been launched in connection with “the need for imported consumer goods to display the level of embedded greenhouse gases”. It was recognised that by including the information on the CC’s Facebook and website would suggest that the CC was itself supporting the call for the UK Government to debate the issue in Parliament. It was agreed that the information be recirculated to councillors so that an informed decision could be taken.
- f) **Mining Exploration** – an email had been received from a local resident re mining exploration being carried out near Blackcraigs and asking what position the Community Council was taking. A response had been sent advising that there was little that could be done until such time as a Planning Application related to any proposed extraction of minerals had been submitted. At that stage, the Community Council would have the opportunity to make a submission as a statutory consultee based on the information provided about the proposed development.

9 COUNCILLORS’ ISSUES

Cllr Hagmann said that the range of options for Council’s budget from the various political groups was due to be published by the end of the week with the Full Council meeting on 22 February 2022 to set the Budget. There was a budget gap of c£8m to fill but the Council had received an additional £3.44m from the Scottish Government which limited this shortfall. The additional money was a one-off for this financial year and would not be recurring.

The Council was entering into the first stage of appointing a new Chief Executive with a short list of applicants be drawn up.

DGC’s Economy & Resources committee would be discussing: Derelict Buildings Strategy; renewal of Crown Estate 25 year lease for Wigtown Bay LNR at a cost of £1,250 pa; Covid Economic Recovery Plan with initiatives like £25k for Town Centre & visitor management and provision of Motorhome facilities.

Cllr Hagmann reminded the CC that Wigtownshire Educational Trust distributed grants to Wigtownshire residents for educational purposes with c £3,300 available each year.

The next Wigtown Area Committee meeting was scheduled for 2 March after which things would be winding down pre the Local Authority Elections.

Cllr McColm explained that the Council Tax collected only covered in the region of 16% of the Council’s budget and a 1% increase in the tax would only raise an additional £775k in revenue. Savings had to be made as to cover the budget shortfall from Council Tax would mean a 12% increase.

He reported that the repairs to the wall round the old graveyard had been completed and it pretty well matched what was there before.

Referring back to Sandra McDowall’s report on the APRS webinar, Cllr McColm explained that the Scottish Government was looking to merge Local Development Plans and the National Planning Framework to produce an overall plan that would remove the need for Supplementary Guidance.

Both Cllrs Hagmann and McColm were asked to chase an update on the Borderlands Place Programme and how the Council was planning to support the pilot communities to produce the Local Place Plans that would be needed to access funding.

10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Sandra McDowall asked that the DGC Councillors raise the issue of the Bottle banks in Wigtown again be checked and emptied on a more regular basis as the bins were both full to capacity and rows of bottles lined up alongside.

Kirkinner Community Hall was having its AGM and Ada Montgomery volunteered to attend on behalf of the CC.

11 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Community Council will be an in-person meeting held in the County Buildings, Wigtown on **Monday, 14 March** at the regular time of 7:30 pm.