 **ROYAL BURGH of WIGTOWN & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**MINUTES of meeting held in County Buildings Wigtown**

**Monday 14 July 2025**

PRESENT: Sandra McDowall convenor, Paul Tarling, David McAdam, Jock McDowall, David Moran, Nicole Court, and Andrew Pym

Louise Kerr of the Free Press and three members of the public attended.

APOLOGIES: Cora Sharp, Cllr. Jackie McCamon.

**1. Welcome:** The convenor welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**2. Notification of AOCB and Approval of Agenda**: The agenda was approved, with no items for AOB.

**3. The minutes** of the meeting of 9 June were approved. Jock McDowall proposed and Paul Tarling seconded.

**4. Matters arising:** None.

**5. Updates and reports:**

a) Place Plan: There was nothing new to report as New Practice are still assessing the high level costs of the proposals for the County Buildings and the McGuffie Gardens.

b) Finance: Also little to report but the Quiz Night organised by David McAdam was vdery successful raising £180 each for our Christmas Lights and Lightlands Play Park. WCC insured the event.

c) Planning: Nothing of note for the community as a whole has been proposed in the past month.

d) Police Matters: No report has been received. The convenor reported on the monthly online meetings arranged by the Police for Community Councils on the third Thursday of each month. If anyone is concerned about anything and wants the matter raised with the police, please advise Sandra McDowall.

e) Maintenance team:

 (i) The bus stop notice board has had a pineapple removed. The replacement cost is £250. The makers also offer a refurbishment service and we will investigate a grant to cover the cost for doing all three.

 (ii) The matching fingerposts could also do with an update, not least because they still refer to the Quaker Meeting House (now Crossroads). Consideration should be given to other key areas including Lightlands Play Park, when the new play area is certain to proceed, and The Merse.

 (iii) Dog fouling is becoming a greater problem. The bags provided in the WCC dispensers are taken very quickly after any refill and we should consider putting up signs to say they are for use when needed. The library hands out free bags in larger numbers.

 (iv) Work is to be carried out to try and improve the Railway line path where puddles are forming; some vegetation has been cut back. Some signs have also been cleared of overhanging vegetation.

f) Resilience Plan: DG Council has suggested changes to the submitted and draft and these are to be reviewed by the team.

**6. Council vacancies:**  The convenor summarised the paper which she had circulated, explaining that we are tight on the number of elected members and it may become difficult to establish a quorum for meetings, when only elected members count. We need 5 members present to be quorate; we have only 7 elected members, with 1 member co-opted. We can have up to 14 members. If we choose to hold a Casual Vacancy Election, Nicole Court must stand down as the co-opted member; DG Council will handle the election, once notified. It was agreed unanimously to hold a Casual Vacancy Election.

**7. Windy Hill:** It was reported that Scottish Water is to install protective fencing around the water tank and all its apparatus, except for one manhole. Scottish Water says that its site in Wigtown suffers more vandalism than any other in the west of Scotland – all councillors were shocked and appalled that this should be the case. The fence in black metal, will be 2 metres high. One length will stand about 1 metre away from the monument – this will affect the appearance when at the monument but this cannot be avoided. The works will also require the felling of a row of trees.

There are also challenges in maintaining the existing railings which are also subject to ongoing vandalism. They are cast iron and difficult to weld. Paul is looking at sources for grants to fund replacement railings. It was agreed to investigate with Scottish Water whether a sensor light would reduce the vandalism. It was also suggested that one or two benches be placed by the monument but these would need to be secure against vandalism, and we will need to be sure about liability if WCC provides them.

**8. War Memorial Competition:**  We are waiting to hear more but it is understood that Wigtown has come top of the class. Members agreed that it looks wonderful and thanked all those who have helped.

**9. Correspondence:**

 (i) The faulty elephant has been removed for repair or replacement.

(ii) The convenor reported on Southfield Park to the effect that no applications/notifications have been received to indicate that work will begin on site any time soon.

(iii) The convenor had circulated a paper on the commercial use of the electric hook-ups at the Mercat Cross and in the gardens. It sets out a list of the papers/certificates which need to be proposed and a charge of £25 for their use by commercial operators. This would help to cover the costs of maintaining the hook-ups, and ensuring annual electrical certification.

**10. Councillors’ report:** None.

**AOB:** None.

**Public forum:**  No matters were raised by the public.

**Date of next meeting:** Monday 11 August 2025 at 7.30pm in The Hub.