 **ROYAL BURGH OF WIGTOWN AND DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

 **MINUTE OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 8 SEPTEMBER 2025**

**Present**: Sandra McDowall, Convenor, Paul Tarling, David Moran, Cora Sharp,

 Jock McDowall, David McAdam, Nicole Court.

**In Attendance**: Cllr David Inglis, Malcolm Court, Anne Barclay, Shona Herries,

 John Jennings.

**Apologies**: Andrew Pym, Cllr Richard Marsh.

**Notification of AOB and Approval of Agenda**: Two items added under AOB and Agenda approved.

**Approval of Minute of Meeting held on 11 August 2025:** Proposed by Nicole Court and Seconded by Paul Tarling.

**Matters Arising not included elsewhere on the Agenda:** None.

**Updates and Reports**:

**Place Plan Update**: Town Team has held its first meeting as a SCIO and the draft policies have been approved. The next step is the preparation of a Borderlands Town Investment Plan. The top priorities remain as the County Buildings and the Square improvements.

**Finance Report**: David Moran had produced up to date accounts, which Convenor agreed to pass to Andrew Pym the new Treasurer. Convenor thanked David for all he had done for Community Council, particularly in his role as Treasurer. He was then presented with a gift as a token thank-you from all current members.

**Planning Report**: 25/1509/LBC – Applegarth, Wigtown. Neighbours had made their own representations, but we had received comments from the wider community, and it was agreed to pass those concerns to Planning as follows:

* Finish of new garage and wall are not in keeping with the Listed Building status or the Conservation Area.
* The wall reduces the width of the carriageway making the corner more difficult for cars to negotiate.
* There is no footpath at this location, which has always caused difficulties, but the wall now forces pedestrians further out onto the roadway with literally nowhere for them to go if a car comes down from South Main Street or up from Harbour Road.

It was agreed to make no comment on application 25/1619/FUL in respect of 5 extra floodlight columns at Bladnoch Park.

**Police Matters**: Convenor had received a complaint from a local resident with regards the 101 service. The resident tried to report an act of vandalism taking place at Windy Hill but had to wait 50 minutes before finally getting through to an operative, based in Edinburgh, who advised that the incident was not a priority. Convenor had raised it at the monthly Police Teams meeting and had been assured it would be investigated. The advice was that if 101 was busy, it was best to email wigtowncpt@scotland,pnn.police.uk. It was agreed to add the email address to the poster on display on the Community Council noticeboard. An email had been received from Inspector Lynsey Nicolson asking for feedback on the monthly police reports. After discussion it was agreed that we did not mind what the format was, but we would still prefer to get information for Wigtown and District only. We appreciate how busy the police are, but we miss not having their presence at our Community Council meetings. We always made it possible for them to give their report as soon as they arrived and to leave immediately afterwards. We feel no connection to the Community Police as a result and the monthly Teams meetings, although welcome, are not very well attended.

**Town Maintenance Team Report**: Paul Tarling advised that thanks to Norman and Allan, the railings had now been repaired and painted. The plaques were almost finalised, and he would bring them along to the next meeting for us to see. The next repair would be to the inner gate to the martyrs’ stake as the closing mechanism needs further strengthening. The vandalised gate at the Seaview end of the walk has been reported and will, hopefully, be repaired shortly. It is intended to carry out further drainage where required along the walk and the grass will be cut again before the end of the season along the old railway line and lovers walk.

**Casual Vacancy Election**: Convenor intimated the good news that we had 8 Nominations for the 7 available places. Voting will take place on 16th September from 3-7pm, with the count following immediately afterwards. She urged everyone to use their vote and looked forward to welcoming the new members to our October meeting.

**Community Council Training**: Convenor and Vice-Convenor have registered for the Training on 20 September and are one of the Community Councils giving a presentation on governance and projects.

**Remembrance Sunday 9 November**: Wreaths can be ordered online only. Last year we ordered two Community Council wreaths for Wigtown and Kirkinner, one wreath for Guides and one for Brownies, crosses for Rainbows, a wreath for the Masonic Lodge and one for the McGuffie Arch. We are waiting on confirmation that Olly McKie is free to pipe the lament. Paul Tarling reminded us of how wet it was last year and asked that we borrow a gazebo from the Market - just in case. Jock McDowall agreed to lay the Kirkinner wreath and Convener will organise posters, order of service and speak to the local ministers. Wigtown Primary School to be asked if senior pupils will contribute.

**Christmas Tree for the Mercat Cross**: James Craig have sold Garrocher Tree Farm and advised us to contact the new owner Isaac Adams, ejdforestry.com, who has advised that he is working with another Christmas Tree grower to help prepare for the upcoming season and they’ll be back in touch once they have more details.

**Christmas Lights Switch-on – 28 November**: Convenor has been in touch with Creetown Silver Band, and they have confirmed the date. Wigtown Primary School to be asked if the School Captains will perform the switch-on for us. Local ministers will be contacted as will Tom Inger who normally provides the amplification.

**Social Media Policy**: Community Councillors are guided by the Amended Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils in Dumfries and Galloway but, although it includes a Code of Conduct, there is no mention of social media. Convenor had circulated the proposed Social Media Policy in advance of the meeting and it was duly adopted.

**Correspondence**:

* Wigtown Library phone has been out of order for a considerable length of time, but we have been advised that the fault has been rectified.
* A cone has been placed at the anchor stay in High Street pending action by Scottish Power.
* Weeds have been treated at the Mercat Cross. Pointing will be discussed to see what can be done.
* Following an enquiry with regards to memorial benches, we have received the following response:

*Where a request for a bench is made on Council owned ground, we have an application process where we give two options and normally arrange as site meeting to agree a location. Future maintenance of the bench is the responsibility of the owner; however, all works must conform to Council specification and be carried out by a Council approved contractor. We don’t have a condition of public liability insurance as part of the permission process or advise them to check the condition regularly. Normally, memorial benches are situated where we carry out ground maintenance duties and we would notice if a bench was needing attention. We would then try to contact members of the family to advise them.*

As this has implications for the Maintenance Team, Cllr Inglis agreed to raise the matter on our behalf.

* It was noted that Wheatley Homes had carried out some re-rendering to the Chapel Court Flats.

**Councillor’s Report**: David Ingles updated members on the reasons why the four members in the west had formed their own group. The constant lack of investment in the west and the refusal to back a National Park were the major contributors; they felt let down and will now try to push forward themselves doing all they can to bring much needed investment to the west. He touched on the proliferation of wind turbines and advised that the Glenvernoch Wind Farm Application had been rejected by Councillors. He touched on the proposal to introduce a Tourism tax in the region, something he supports if it results in better funding for tourist businesses and a better advertising budget. A region wide consultation is going to be held, and he urged us all to get involved to learn more.

**Any other business**: He undertook to report the pothole at the Harbour Road/Seaview junction that had been reported previously but still hadn’t been repaired. Convenor agreed to report the potholes on North Main Street outside Number 11.

**Public Forum**: Members of the public had nothing further to raise.

**Date of Next Meeting**: Monday 13 October 2025.