
In Attendance

Jack Shepherd (Chair) (JS), Andy Foley (Treasurer) (AF), Sara-Lynn Thain (Secretary) (ST), Mary Foley (MF), Nigel Greenwood (NG), Andrew MacIver (AM), Fred Lees (FL), Cllr M Paterson, Cllr A MacKinnon, Cllr G Mackenzie, Carron McDiarmid (Highland Council, Community Services) (CM)

Apologies

Brian Simpson (BS), Agnes Simpson (AS) (Minutes Secretary), David Lockett (DL), Cllr A MacLean

1. Police Report

1.1 Police Report

No report this month due to our most recent Community Officer being relocated to Wick. JS has spoken to Inspector MacLeod and they are working on appointing a replacement.

1.2 Drinking den, Job Centre

ST has written to the Job Centre asking that they put their rubbish bins to the back of their building as they did before. Cllr A MacKinnon said he will try to speak to Inspector MacLeod about this drinking den and the monthly Police reports.

Action: Cllr A Mackinnon to repost back to see on the above.

2. Constitutional Matters

2.1 Minutes of previous meeting

Minutes of Community Council meeting on July 8th were approved on the grounds that corrected minutes will be sent to ST from JS and then circulated. Therefore, AF proposed acceptance of the minutes and NG seconded.

2.2 Community Council elections

Item discussed so new members or co-opted members are aware of the process in November. ST noted that forms to nominate yourself can be found on the HC website under the Community Council page. An election only ever takes place if more than 12 people nominate themselves. NG pointed out that this has never happened. It was discussed that 4 years ago at the last election hundreds of posters were given out around the town with only 10 people nominating themselves for the Community Council. Out of those 10 only one person was new to the CC. All agreed to make an effort to approach people who they feel would be an asset to the CC, i.e. have skills, attributes that would benefit the CC.

Action: ST to make a poster for the town notices boards and for advertising at the Feil Maree. ST to approach the Ross-Shire Journal and P&J to see if they would be interesting in covering the elections.

3. Matters Arising

3.1 Hector MacDonald Monument

CM attended tonight's meeting on behalf of Donna Manson (Chief Exec', Highland Council). No update tonight but CM stated she would speak to Di Agnew (DA) to arrange a meeting as per NG e-mail on 23rd July. NG requested

that the CC be advised of the starting date of the monument survey but to date there's been no reply to his email.

3.2 Canal Foot Bridge

NG working on technical approval for the replacement bridge. The new bridge will be 1.5 meters wide so wider than the current bridge. This will allow for wheelchair access although ramps to allow entrance and exit from the bridge are not yet planned, this would be a future project. The company CTS are currently building the bridge and NG is liaising with Norman Smart. The long term maintenance of the new bridge is currently being looked at by HC.

3.3 State of road surfaces - new surface from Pitglassie Farm area into Dingwall

CM read through an e-mail and provided an update from Gary Urquhart (GU) in the Roads Department. GU noted in his e-mail that the department are disappointed with the recent works in the above area and in hindsight they can only assume the poor surface has been caused by either too much emulsion or a malfunction with the sprayer. The department are looking to resurface the area very soon, later this month or early next month.

Action: CM to find out when resurfacing of Tulloch Street will take place.

3.4 Grass cutting

Cllr G Mackenzie noted that he had spoken to John Mackay and they had gone round 'hot spots' in Dingwall with particularly bad grass cutting. These areas included outside the Sports Centre, Kinnairdie Brae, the park at Balnabeen etc. It was agreed by all in attendance that the standard of grass cutting is poorer than other areas in the Ward. It was also noted that one of the reasons the grassy areas look so bad is due to all the cut/dead grass lying around. It was confirmed by Cllr G Mackenzie that staff are not allowed to lift the cut grass. It was suggested that the grass cutting team had been reduced from 18 to 11 staff, hence providing a substandard service.

Action: CM to confirm how many grass cutters are on a team/provided for the area and if it's possible to liaise with the CC/Men's Shed for future cutting prior to it starting. Secondly, to find out who is responsible for the 'round Dingwall' core path/walk.

3.5 Town noticeboards / bench refurbishment

ST reported that herself and MF had washed half of the towns notice boards, cleaned the Perspex as best they could and tidied up the posters inside. The rest of the boards are to be done ASAP. MF has been in touch with establishments who had posters inside the boards that were faded etc. to make them aware that a replacement was needed if they wished, and that it was best to laminate it. ST informed attendees that it was hoped that the Men's Shed would consider some painting of the town notice boards and benches for a donation. However, it was reported by AF and FL that the Men's Shed would not undertake the work as it was felt that CC members could do this work themselves.

3.6 Mitchell Hill seat

Cllr M Paterson noted that the seat is being replaced with a new one by George Murray.

3.7 Railings in Station Square

JS noted that the work is underway to have these repaired.

4. Treasurer Report

4.1 DCC Main Account

Financial Position on 12th August 2019 - £3453.86

4.2 DCC Christmas Lights Account

Financial Position on 12th August 2019 - £4434.57

5 Correspondence

5.1 Himalayan Balsam, Craig Woods

A member of the public messaged via Facebook to ask if we were aware of this plant growing in Craig Woods. He advised that it was very invasive and would take over the woods if not controlled. Elected members advised that the HC had recently named and located the owners of the woods regarding the recent felling of dead trees. It was agreed that unless the owner wished to undertake works in the area the balsam would continue to grow.

5.2 Seagull nuisance, Fingal Road and other areas

ST noted that there had been several messages via the Community Council Facebook page with regards to significant seagull nuisance in areas around the town. ST asked CM if she knew of anything the HC could do but in particular funding to help property owners put up deterrent measures.

Action: CM to get back to ST

5.3 Motorbikes, Neill Gunn

A member of the public had sent several messages to the Community Council Facebook page about contestant noise and dangerous driving in the area during the summer period. ST said that the MOP was encouraged to call the Police to note their concerns but that we would pass this on also. ST had hoped to bring this up tonight with the Police.

6 AOCB

6.1 Ross Memorial Hospital

A member of the public brought to the attention of the Community Council that the minor injuries department at the Ross Memorial has been shut for some time. Both elected member and CC members did not have any further information but all agreed this facility was an asset to Dingwall and should remain open as long as possible.

Action: ST to e-mail Di Agnew to ask about the Mid Ross Partnership and if there's any further information on the closure of the minor injuries unit.

6.2 Recent flooding

CM noted that she is co-chairing a new task force who are working together with SEPA, Flood Forum, Scottish water etc. to co-ordinate answers to the recent questions raised by the flooding in July and public meeting. They aim to hold another public meeting on 16th September in Dingwall Academy between 4pm and 7pm. CM will share the agenda with the CC prior to the event and hope the CC can assist with advertising. It was also noted that DL is in discussion with the HC, particularly with regards to Boggan Bank.

6.3 Feil Maree

The event will be held on 7th September on the High Street. It was agreed that it's best if two CC members at a time would be present on the stall. The Christmas Lights boxes should be on the stall along with CC information boards and election news.

Action: ST and MF to arrange noticeboards and a members rota.

6.4 Pefferside Park pond

A member of the public raised concerns over the terrible condition of the pond in the park. All agreed that the pond continues to remain in a very unsightly condition despite efforts in the last few years to improve it. A comparison of Inverness pond at Whin Park was given as an example. This pond continues to be in excellent condition with rowing boats used every year. Why can't Dingwall pond be kept in the same good condition?

Action: ST to put this on the agenda for next week and some members may wish to look back at previous minutes.

7. Date and Venue of next meeting.

Next meeting will take place on Monday, 9th September in Room 11, Dingwall Academy at 7pm.

8. Planning and Licensing.

8.1 Cruickshank Court

No update

8.2 Street Naming request, Ark Estates on behalf of the Highland Council

An e-mailing from a Planning Technician noted that the name chosen by the CC 'Ross Court' and 'Morganti Court' is not used Dingwall.

"We do not recommend the use if 'Court' as a suffix for a flatted development name. This tends to be used as a suffix for street names, 'House' or 'Buildings' is more appropriate suffix for a flatted development."

Action: JS to respond to the e-mail and state that the CC are open to an alternative suffix as long as the 'Ross' and 'Morganti' names remain.

THESE MINUTES ARE ALSO AVAILABLE AT THE LOCAL LIBRARY.