

ROYAL BURGH OF WICK COMMUNITY COUNCIL



Location: Games Room 2, Wick Assembly Rooms

Date: Monday 2nd August 2021

Time: 7:00pm

Minutes of monthly meeting held in August 2021.

The names of those present highlighted in grey were present virtually, via Zoom.

Present

Elected members:	Joanna Coghill (<i>JC</i>)	Chairperson
	Allan Farquhar (<i>AF1</i>)	Vice-chairperson
	Kimberley Miller-Rosie (<i>KMR</i>)	Treasurer
	Wendy Campbell (<i>WC</i>)	
	Alastair Ferrier (<i>AF2</i>)	
	David Dunnett (<i>DD</i>)	
Co-opted members:	Allan Bruce (<i>AB</i>)	
	Eswyl Fell (<i>EF</i>)	
Ex-officio members:	Cllr Raymond Bremner (<i>Cllr RB</i>)	Highland Councillor
Non-members/Public:	Jayden Alexander (<i>JA</i>)	Secretary
	Sharon Powell (<i>SP</i>)	Community Liaison Officer of SSEN
	Alan Hendry (<i>AH</i>)	Press Reporter (NOSN Newspapers)
	Iain Gregory (<i>IH</i>)	Caithness Roads Recovery
	Helen Campbell (<i>HC</i>)	Caithness Roads Recovery

Apologies

Doreen Turner, Claire Mackenzie, Roy Mackenzie

1. Welcome and apologies.

JC welcomed everyone to the meeting as the first “in-person” meeting since the beginning of the Coronavirus pandemic and welcomed those who had joined virtually via Zoom.

JC explained that RBWCC hope to offer members the opportunity of joining via Zoom for a time until everyone feels fully comfortable attending in person.

The apologies received were read out by JA (as recorded on Page 1).


2. Caithness Roads Recovery (CRC)

An Introduction by Helen Campbell and Iain Gregory

IG thanked RBWCC for the warm invitation to attend the meeting. IG and HC introduced themselves to those present and explained their roles as part of the campaign to improve the quality of the roads in Caithness. IG stated that community action is the only way to resolve the whole issue and if not, then a tragedy is bound to happen. HC explained that a cyclist was recently injured because of the poor state of one of the roads and that the individual could have life-long injuries. CRC has written to Highland Councillors, MSP’s, and MP’s regarding the situation, they have also met with most of these representatives. CRC has also written to Nicola Sturgeon, Michael Gove, and Kate Forbes; a response was received from Transport Scotland who explained that the issue is in the hands of Highland Council who have stated that they do not have the money to make improvements. CRC have been pushing the matter through social media and radio.

IG stated that the A9 road up to Wick is controlled and maintained by BEAR Scotland, with the route from Wick to John O’ Groats under Highland Council authority. IG stated that if Highland council are unable to resolve the issue, then it becomes a Scottish Government issue- the money is limited and insufficient therefore there must be a way to get the funding to make these improvements. IG stated that Caithness had the best quality of roads around twenty years ago, this was very visible as cars approached the Ord. IG stated “£18,000 is available to amend Inverness Castle”, where is the money to make lifesaving and highly necessary improvements to Caithness roads.

EF asked if increased traffic is a factor for the claim we are trying to make. JC stated that Highland Council have prioritised certain areas to improve, however, the town has seen a huge increase in traffic and Wick should be prioritised also. Cllr RB said he would be happy to take any requests further.



JC thanked IG and HC for their attendance, dedication to the matter and for their huge efforts with the campaign. IG and HC thanked JC and left the meeting.

3. SSE Noss Power Station

A short presentation was shown by SP to those present of progress being made at the new Noss Site. SP stated the steelworks hopes to be completed by early September, between August and December the roof and cladding work will be installed.

SP asked RBWCC if Wick had any Playparks which need upgrading as SSE would be happy to get involved to help with possible refurbishment, providing manpower etc. Cllr RB stated that HC have around £40,000 which will be dedicated to improving these playparks, Cllr RB confirmed he would reveal more information on this in time. JA is to pass SP's details on to Fiona Morrison from SSE to help reinstate the navigation light at Wick Harbour, and details of the Trinkie Heritage Preservation Group and Friends of the North Baths. JA will also gather some details from RBWCC members for a site visit.

4. Local Police Report

No report was received due to the absence of a representative.

5. Minutes of previous meeting.

JA circulated the draft minutes of the previous meeting which was held on Monday 7th June 2021 (via Zoom) to RBWCC members.

Approval and adoption: It were agreed to approve the minutes via email due to some proposed changed. JA is to amend and circulate to RBWCC members.

JA advised that the minutes will be made available to the public on the RBWCC website and Facebook page as per usual once the amendments have been made, and minutes approved and adopted.

- Action No. JUL21/03- Poster to discourage littering and fly-tipping to be finalised.
JA
- Action No. JUL22/05- Sub-group of RBWCC to be formed to manage the new community market titled “Wick Community Market”.
RBWCC

6. Correspondence.

No items in the correspondence for August required a response.

7. Highland Councillor’s Report.

Cllr RB stated that he and Nicola Sinclair are working on the street design project while Neil Young has been contacted to move the bid for funding to the 2nd and 3rd stages, a project manager would also be appointed. Cllr RB stated that the town centre paths would be involved in the new street design however Cllr RB requires support from Highland Council for the whole project due to Nicola Sinclair’s resignation.

Cllr RB mentioned that a survey is taking place for town signage and funding for bus shelters has recently been released for upgrading’s and replacements, with hope that this will go towards the shelter opposite the Norseman Hotel, if so then an order for this will be placed week commencing Monday 9th August. Cllr RB stated that the plans for the new public toilets at Whitechapel have gone to the design stage, however, a budget is required. Cllr RB stated that the money has been provided and councillors will know within the next fortnight what the plans for the new toilets actually are. It is known that these plans include showers, lockers and a baby changing facility with a possible extension for the Camps toilets. Highland Council are investigating the owner(s) of the building which is joined on to the toilets with the possibility of making this a travel hub.

RBWCC raised their concerns with regards to the retirement of the current ward manager, Alex MacManus. Cllr RB assured RBWCC that he would raise these concerns for when he retires.

DD voiced his concerns for the council workers who clean the streets as they are not doing their job properly. Cllr RB has asked Highland Council for a motorised street sweeper. It was mutually agreed that Highland Council need to get the basics right by getting the streets seeped regularly.

JC thanked Cllr RB for his report.

8. Treasurer's Reports.

KMR stated that the current account bank balance stands as £31,079.91 JC stated that this money is made up from various different projects and from the sub-groups of RBWCC.

AF1 stated that the HAPPY bank balance is the same as what was reported in July.

9. Sub-Group Reports

Wick Christmas Lights: There was nothing to report due to the absence of CM.

Wick Flower Baskets: EF stated the committee has ambitious plans for next year, with possible sponsorship of the various hanging baskets. They will be looking at getting the high school pupils involved and vandalism has lowered.

Wick Paths Group: A report was received from John Bogle which JA circulated.

HAPPY: AF1 had nothing to report.

10. Wick Community Campus and Noss Primary School.


AF1 stated that the reception area of the high school is being looked at as where it is currently situated, it is constantly getting hit by the cold air coming from outside when the front doors open.

11. Council Business.

Campaign for town clean up: JC expressed her disappointment as no action has been taken by Highland Council, JC also expressed how Inverness has no weeds, they have good roads and decent pavements. It was agreed that their should be a table composed to highlight what action is needed in the town centre.

Caithness Club Corner project: JC advised that the new bench had been installed with thanks to Siemen's and that the photographic panels would be installed soon.

Wick Common Good Fund: RM continues to research for the missing historical items and JA is updating the spreadsheet with the names of these items as RM



	notifies him and RBWCC.
Riverside fountain project:	JC advised that the top part of the fence has now been painted and the fountain was being tested; the water has now been drained for cleaning.
Dog fouling campaign:	AB is seeking quotes from Caithness Print Solutions for printing these posers off, JA has finalised the letter for sending to local businesses along with the posters.
Wick Playparks:	Cllr RB stated that he would gather as much information the current situation with the playparks for the matter to be discussed at the next meeting.

12. AOCB

There was no further business to be discussed.

JC thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting closed for private discussion for RBWCC members and the secretary only.

Next meeting

Location: Games Room 2, Wick Assembly Rooms

Date: Monday 6th September 2021

Time: 7:00pm