



MEETING MINUTES

Venue: The David Mowat Room, Wick Assembly Rooms

Date: Monday 5th February 2024

Time: 19:00

Present			
Grouping	Name	Initial	Position <i>(If Applicable)</i>
Elected Members	Allan Farquhar	AF	Chairperson
	Allan Bruce	AB	Vice-Chairperson
	Joanna Coghill	JC	Treasurer
	Eswyl Fell	EF	N/A
	Rona Morrison	RM	"
	Doreen Turner	DT	"
	Norma Craven	NC	"
Co-opted Members	Roy Mackenzie	RM1	"
Non-Members	Jayden Alexander	JA	Secretary
	Alan Hendry	AH	Press Reporter
	Pat Ramsay	PR	Food Bank Representative
	Grant Ramsay	GR	"

Apologies of Absence	
Name	Position <i>(If Applicable)</i>
Claire Mackenzie	Co-opted Member
Alastair Ferrier	Elected Member
Cllr Jan McEwan	Highland Councillor
Wendy Campbell	Elected Member

1. Welcome and Apologies

AF1 welcomed everyone who was present to the meeting and thanked everyone for joining the meeting.

PR and GR introduced themselves as Chair and Vice-Chair of Caithness Foodbank, both have been involved for over ten years. Caithness Foodbank are now based in Wick Carnegie Building rent-free. PR advised that they have bought the former Boys Brigade Hall with plans to refurbish, however, recent plans to demolish and rebuild have come to light in order to erect a much more sustainable building. PR advised that there is nothing historic within the building except from a plaque which they hope to re-erect. Currently, Caithness Foodbank are split into Wick and Thurso. PR advised that someone could appear at the building on a Tuesday or a Friday, they would never turn them away, but they would advise them to obtain a referral, particularly from Citizens Advice Bureau who are the main referral agent, or Home Start. There are around x40 referral agencies. If someone is referred, they would then provide the individual with a food parcel; it is common practice for an individual to receive no more than x3 parcels within a X6 month period, however, it is very common for an individual to receive more than that simply due to their circumstances. PR advised that individuals who approach the Foodbank cannot give preferences of what they would like. X9 tons of food was distributed last year, this year that number has doubled. Funding opportunities will be looked at to fund the construction of a new hall for the foodbank, the funds put aside for the purchase of goods will not be used. All the Foodbank's income is through donations, they do not receive any funding from central government. Caithness Foodbank have been told officially that they have got the Carnegie Building on a month-to-month basis, from HighLife Highland, however, they have been led to believe that ownership has now been passed back to The Highland Council.

A vote of thanks was given to PR and GR.

2. Approval and Adoption of Previous Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting were distributed to members by the Secretary. This minute was noted by AF1 due to the absence of the Secretary.

The minutes were approved and adopted as follows, subject to one amendment.

Proposed By: RM

Seconded By: DT

3. Review of Monthly Correspondence List

All members reviewed the monthly correspondence record. AF enquired if anyone present would be willing to take on the environmental side of correspondence.

4. Review of Action List

All members reviewed the current action list.

Action 3: AB advised that the condition of the pitch is fair, it is understood that the pitch requires replacing and a meeting will take place to discuss the possibility of this in future.

5. Highland Council Matters

Cllr RB advised that his out of office response will hopefully be switched off next week. Cllr RB advised that he would provide an update on the Riverside area concerning what has been done and what is to be done. The new public toilets have now been finished, except from a couple of details which are to be clarified, such as the security. Cllr RB gave an overview of how the budget for expenditure on roads is agreed. EF expressed to Cllr RB how disheartening Caithness roads are. Cllr RB advised that roads are getting fixed, but Caithness is not the only place. The A897 is also falling apart due to the size of lorries travelling the road and that it will take Caithness a long period of time to recover and to have some form of agreed strategy which could be put through the AOCC. JC, RM1 and EF expressed to Cllr RB how devastating the whole situation is, that people are having to pay a fortune on vehicle repairs as a result. RM1 asked what the public are paying a road tax for. NC expressed that there isn't enough money. AF expressed that The Highland Council distributed a questionnaire regarding a budget and asked if the results of this had been released, Cllr RB advised that this had been published in the press and that the questionnaire has been expanded upon.

AB advised that he is experiencing issues with lighting and that he would like to follow up on this. NC expressed that there was interest in getting some lighting in the pocket lanes, but if stand alone lighting was to be put up then who would be responsible for its maintenance.

AF mentioned the broken window in the former M&Co building and that the owners who are apparently based in Glasgow are not doing anything to resolve it. Cllr RB advised that he would follow this up. Cllr RB expressed how a new town centre would be a catalyst for welcoming new businesses.

AF asked Cllr RB about the bleaching green and how HighLife Highland used to manage the rent which came in to The Highland Council for the hire of the green.

JC expressed concerns regarding the PSO to Aberdeen. Cllr RB advised that Wick Airport seen an increase of 25% in passengers out of all HIAL airports which is proof that people are very much investing in the airport, but the only way forward is for the government and The Highland Council to continue investing in it.

6. Local Organisations' Update

- **Wick Development Trust**

No representatives were present. AF attended their AGM which was held last week. The Trust now have x20 members aside from their committee with x1 member of staff. The WWII trail is almost complete and the Trust then hope to focus on Wick Town Centre.

- **Wick High School Representatives**
No representatives were present.
- **Local Police**
A report was received in advance of the meeting which was distributed to members by the Secretary.
- **East Caithness Community Campus and Noss Primary School**
AF advised that he had nothing to report. AB had one concerned member of the public approach him with regards to the state of the former High School building, particularly, regarding the safety of pupils and the derelict state of the buildings close to the boulevard.
- **Friends of East Caithness Cemeteries**
Nothing to report due to the absence of WC.
- **Friends of Green Road Park**
AF advised hat he had nothing to report.
- **Association of Caithness Community Councils**
An email was received from Alistair Ferrier containing the details of the next meeting.

7. Council Business and Matters Arising:

- **Scheme of Establishment for Community Councils**
AF advised that this is to ensure that all constitutions are up to date and that all RBWCC members have read the Scheme of Establishment.
- **Review of RBWCC Constitution**
AF advised that this would have to be re-thought at some stage due to some changes.
- **Wick Common Good Fund**
AB suggested that a separate meeting to discuss would be a good step forward. AF agreed.
- **Sustrans / Pocket Lanes**
AF advised that the final designs have now been submitted. AF expressed how we RBWCC are receiving “flack” from the public concerning how the funding received for this should be put towards roads instead.
- **Scottish Spring Clean 2024**
AB advised that he would send AH some information regarding this, Sunday 17th March 2024 would be the first date.

8. Council Sub-Group Reports

- **Wick Hanging Baskets Committee**

JC advised that the AGM was held this evening. Office Bearers remain the same and that they are making plans for their 25th anniversary.

- **Friends of Green Road Park**

AF advised that he didn't have much to report, except from the erection of the new goalposts (concrete has been installed for this).

- **Wick Community Market**

AF advised that he would attempt to form a committee and that the hope is to hold a market on Easter weekend.

- **Wick Christmas Lights**

CM advised prior to the meeting that there was nothing to report.

- **Wick Paths Group**

The following report was received in advance of the meeting: *"Wick Paths Group purchased 3 replacement signs for the Telford Trail which were weathered and faded. Willie has now fitted these. A major litter pick was carried out on 6th January at the shore along Market Street after the storms over the festive period had resulted in a lot of litter about the town including lots washed in from the sea. 21 volunteers tookNot content with the work done on the litter pick, some members went on to complete other tasks. Willie fitted the Telford Trail signs as noted above, Brucer and Joanna tidied the area around the fountain then removed weeds from a section on Thurso Road, Marie and Robert did a litter pick round the North Head and John and Norette did a beach clean as part of the clean up. Charlie discovered the Riverside walk was blocked by fallen trees so set about clearing it. 29 group members met at the Nethercliffe hotel for a very enjoyable meal, many thanks to Suzanne for organising. Willie borrowed a digger to help clear the access road to the North Baths. The fence along parts of the upper path near the North Baths is almost finished being replaced by contractors GMR Henderson, part funded by the Caithness Beatrice Community Fund, the Friends of the John o'Groats Trail and an anonymous benefactor. This work, in addition to widening the concrete part of the link path, has made this popular path much safer26 Paths Group volunteers and 5 members of Caithness Kayak Club took part in the Keep Scotland Beautiful, Upstream Battle Week of Action on 28th January at the Riverside. Two volunteers were allocated to each of 10 counting areas (100m long by 10m wide), one picked and bagged the litter, the other recorded what was collected. The other 6 volunteers plus the 5 kayakers picked litter out- with the reference area but didn't record. An estimated 20 full refuse sacks were collected and re-moved. The data collected was entered on the Keep Scotland Beautiful website".*

- **HAPPY**
AF advised that he scheduled to have an AGM next week and to start making arrangements for the 2024 Hogmanay party.

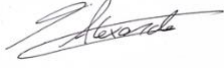
9. Treasury Reports

- **Royal Burgh of Wick Community Council**
£17,158.00 (£6,909.10 belongs to RBWCC).
- **Wick Hanging Baskets Committee**
£5,533.51
- **Friends of Green Road Park**
£1,856.00
- **Wick Community Market**
£181.00
- **Wick Christmas Lights**
£9,302.14
- **Wick Paths Group**
£10,637.26
- **HAPPY**
AF advised that a bank statement has not yet been received.

10. AOCB

- AB asked if Lynsey Broomfield from Planet Youth could be invited to the next RBWCC meeting. All agreed and AB is to carry this action out.
- AF attended the Dounreay Stakeholders meeting, and that the MOD would handover Vulcan to the NDA so that both Dounreay and Vulcan would be decommissioned as one.
- AF advised that the quorate for a meeting is x4. AF proposed that the quorate number must be more than 50% of the voting members. To get this motion in action, we are required to hold a meeting . AF suggested holding this five mins prior to the next meeting.

Date of Next Meeting: Monday 4th March 2024

These minutes were approved and adopted as follows:					
Date	04/03/2024				
Location	The David Mowat Room, Wick Assembly Rooms				
Proposer	Allan Bruce				
Seconder	Doreen Turner				
Signed		Name	Jayden Alexander	Position	Secretary