



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	AF1	Chairperson
	Allan Bruce	AB	Vice-Chairperson
	Joanna Coghill	JC	Treasurer
	David Dunnett	DD	N/A
	Doreen Turner	DT	"
	Eswyl Fell	EF	"
	Norma Craven	NC	"
	Rona Morrison	RM	"
Co-opted Members	Claire Mackenzie	CM	"
	Roy Mackenzie	RM1	"
Ex-officio Members	Cllr Raymond Bremner	Cllr RB	Highland Councillor
	Cllr Jan McEwan	Cllr HM	Highland Councillor
Non-Members	David Scott	DS	Press Reporter

Apologies of Absence	
Name	Position <i>(If Applicable)</i>
Jayden Alexander	Secretary
Alastair Ferrier	Elected Member

1. Welcome and Apologies

AF welcomed everyone to the meeting.

AF made apology as to his incorrect statement made at last months meeting being non quorate and not to proceed as only 5 voting members were in attendance. Unfortunately he had confused the quorate requirement with that required for issues to be taken in private (as per HC Scheme Section 11 h), and that only 4 voting members are actually required to convene a normal CC meeting. Subsequently AF intimated that all members should refresh themselves with both the HC scheme for Community Councils (which is due for revision after each four yearly election) and the current CC Constitution (last signed in 2011 by the then committee who have since resigned) and propose motions / amendments as appropriate.

Apologies as per listed.

2. Review of Documents

- **Approval and Adoption of Previous Minutes**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 6th November 2023 was circulated by the Secretary.

These minutes were approved and adopted as follows,

JC to provide Updated figures from what is documented.

Proposed By: RM

Seconded By: NC

- **Monthly Correspondence Record**

No correspondence list attached to the meeting documents, AF not much really to report. It was noted that there had been no distribution of the usual Planning Permissions submissions & Licence applications from CC secretary and that no correspondence list had been provided for monthly meeting. AF to request secretary to check email inbox and update as necessary. PMN secretary subsequently distributed Planning permissions received and apologised for oversight, many response deadlines having been missed.

- **Action List**
See attached notes.

3. Local Organisations' Update

- **Wick High School Representatives**

No representatives present. AB to contact Wick High and discuss attendance. **Action AB** AF suggested representatives be offered a position as official Youth Members of the CC as per HC scheme. D Scott requested a copy of the report. Action AF to provide

- **Local Police**

Report sent through prior to the meeting, AF read extracts from the report, 83 recorded offences, 23 road traffic 8 dishonesty, 9 assaults (6 on Police) 7 sexual offences 5 drink driving, misc others. Police Priorities 1. Protecting People, 2 Reducing Anti social behaviour, 3 Reducing Violence, Substance Misuse 5. Making roads safer 6 Serious organised crime. NC asked if Sexual offences should be added to the action list. Action AF

- **East Caithness Community Campus and Noss Primary School**

Nothing to report.

- **Friends of East Caithness Cemeteries**

Nothing to report.

- **Friends of Green Road Park**

AF lost some trees in the recent storms, will look to replace.

- **Wick Development Trust**

No representatives present.

- **Association of Caithness Community Councils**

NC next meeting to be held mid February in Halkirk.

4. Highland Council Matters

DD asked about the lifting of turf at the Grizzly play park, RB the turfs are being recycled and repurposed at local cemeteries to top off the graves when the ground sinks continued to say that areas of wildflowers will be planted within the play park. DD did question whether work should be taking place without any signage or appropriate barriers in place.

As DD has been tasked with being the Community Councillor for Grizzly Park liaison during refurbishment by HC, AF had requested of JM to provide a contact within HC to deal with any issues, John Mackay was mentioned as a point of contact. AF indicated that PPP had also been requested previously with regard to setting up a Friends of Grizzly Park Group.

RB said about the challenges they have had in the county recently around gritting mainly due to issues with the fleet of gritters, broken down out of service for MOT's etc (same lorries that are used in the summer for tarring)

Additional note to add to gritting statement , AF noted that HC have published a document defining the gritting priorities for the town.

AF queried of RB as to carryover of incomplete road repairs on this years programme into next years programme , RB stated that the plan would be to do the remaining Wick roads that are currently on the plan to be repaired by the end of this financial year. AF stated that Willie Mackay is the East of Caithness Councillor representative on the Economy and Infrastructure Committee which includes roads.

RB – new schedule would be worked up beginning of April and be reviewed and include any variations.

RB – Review of the roads service as a whole being reviewed, gritting, verge cutting, Redesign process **Action RB to send information on this.**

JC – Zebra crossings at Bankhead road and Thurso road, when would they be getting white lines down RB unlikely to be anytime soon, DD can't believe it is legal without lines also that it is on a safer routes to school route. Zebra crossing discussion: AF stated that CC was aware of multiple near accidents and it was only a matter of time before pedestrians luck ran out.

AB asked about the Ward manager situation as he had received an email stating that he was no longer in post, RB said that correspondence on this would be coming out soon.

RB information that had come back from the Riverside oversail consultation would be considered and that the elected members group would take a view on it.

DD asset transfer of the garage to St Fergus bowling club, should have gone to the public for sale RB to get information for DD Action RB to send information to DD.

5. Council Business and Matters Arising:

Asset Ownership & Wick common Good fund.

AF any updates RB no,

Asset ownership not common good fund, assets belong to the group.

AF had received clarification from Ward Manager that equipment procured by CC and Subcommittees thereof did not qualify as assets attributable to Wick Common Good Fund. RB confirmed this understanding.

Roads and Pavements

JC Driving situation in the town is dangerous due to potholes and poor drainage. A lot of pavements are now also dangerous. RB Pot hole pro and hot box working together in the town once weather allows. DD is there currently an underspend on the budget? JM if there is we grab it.

Sustrans/ Pocket lanes

Pocket lanes AF stated that 192 contributions had been received, Both AF & JC raised concerns that the indicative detail designs did not reflect expectations nor incorporate initial suggestions for murals, lighting etc proposed at concept, merely installation weatherproof panels, produced by specialists based in Glasgow. Final designs presentation last week in Jan, timescale for completion end of March 2024. Local contractors have been contacted.

Town Centre Redesign, AF had received an update from Town Centre Redesign project manager in Dec which clarified the situation and provided indicative timescales. RB & JM confirmed that bid submission for next phase funding was in hand for this month.

Action RB to confirm if bid has been submitted.

Whitechapel toilets

RB gave an update on the White chapel toilets, they are nearing completion and looking extremely good, will not open until internal CCTV has been installed and operational, there will be a monitoring presence initially when the facility opens. **Action RB to arrange visit of Community Council members to the facility.**

Norseman Bus Stop

Is this bus stop being used by all service buses? Action RB to contact David Summers Travel Manager to clarify the situation. AB possibly it just needs advertised that it is back operational.

Semi-Chem premises

AF would this premises need a change of use to storage facility, let RB know and he will look into this. Action AF to email RB with the details.

Wick Town Hall

AF notice posted that office accommodation for rent.

All weather Pitch ECCC

AB asked RB if he could give a date for a meeting with him and Alan turner, AB to email RB Secretary to arrange **Action AB to send email**

Scottish Spring Clean 2024

AB stated that after the succesful events over the past two years he would like for the Community Council to get involved again this year, this was agreed.

6. Council Sub-Group Reports

- **Wick Hanging Baskets Committee**

EF £700 cheque from Wick Players, 25 year Anniversary coming up would like to do something for that, AGM to be held next month.

- **Wick Community Market**

AF Spring time start for the Market, EF asked about the possibility of more events similar to the Christmas Funday, possibly a summer fayre.

- **Wick Christmas Lights**

CM lights all down now for this year, fantastic turnout at the funday, a lot of damage due to the weather, Big Santa looking a bit tired, over £2K to replace, refurbishment work to be done over the summer, recruitment drive needed with possibly a bank of helpers, looking to fundraise outwith Christmas. NC her daughter seen the video of the switch on and couldn't believe a town the size of Wick could stage an event of that size.

To clarify understanding as to how CC Subcommittees are formed and managed, AF read out the qualifying statement from the HC Scheme for Community Councils Standing Orders Appendix 4, Section 8. Committees. This stimulated some discussion as to the which of the various committees in existence providing reports, are / were actually originally formed by RBWCC.

Wick Community Market do not have a formal subcommittee as yet, however draft terms of reference have been drawn up as does FOGRP. Other committees and constitutions will be reviewed for status

- **Wick Paths Group**

The following report was received in advance of the meeting: *“Wick Paths Group members joined with the RBWCC on Sunday 22nd October to clear the Academy Braes, it was a fine day between storms and the area was left looking very tidy. The following week Highland Council trimmed the hedges in Sinclair Terrace which also made a great difference and was a good example of the Council working successfully with local voluntary groups. A percentage of bags of rubbish were also collected”.*

- **HAPPY**

AF1 advised that they will be meeting soon to confirm the event for this year.

6. Treasury Reports

- **Royal Burgh of Wick Community Council**

£17,1058.59. Within that, we hold monies for: Beatrice COVID Grant £6450.

Balance from Businessman's Corner £963.35 (earmarked for lighting). Balance from Fountain refurbishment £671.82 (earmarked for specialist marine paint. Friends of Green Road Park £1856.00. Riverside Volunteers £126.63 - to be discussed AB/JC.

- **Wick Hanging Baskets Committee**

£5,415.20

- **Wick Community Market**

£181.00

- **Wick Christmas Lights**

£9,527.14

- **Wick Paths Group**

£ TBC

- **HAPPY**

£1906.27 (£1208 for full payment of the town centre PPL/PRS music licence for 2024 has been made by Direct Debit).

7. AOCB

JC town centre amenities list, could this go back on as an Agenda item. **Action AF**

AB Memorial Tower arrange stakeholder meeting **Action AB.**

AF Honours list think of possible names **Action All CC Members**

JC Why no letter was submitted from the community council for the consultation of the riverside oversail?

AF stated it was far to late by the time responses came in the CC messenger chat and that it would not be right that his personal opinions would be submitted without proper consultation, individual CC members did respond to the consultation.

AF has submitted a FOI to HC to establish how many submissions to the consultations had been received.

AF proposed that Claire Mackenzie be co opted back onto the committee, unanimous show of hand from around the table.

RM Art works that form part of the common good assets, they should be repaired, displayed and stored appropriately. 10 paintings in the cellar Thurso Library, 5 damaged sculptures and one etched pain of glass in the Carnegie Library Wick. 2 damaged paintings in Caithness house, Assembly rooms have some on the walls, Wick players currently storing a Scott painting.


There is No gallery in the town, RM feels Heritage centre is the only option. AF raised about community asset transfer of these items.

Action AF/ JC to write a letter to the ward manager and east of Caithness councillors and Fergus Mather about this.

RM also investigating the location of 16th and 17th century coins that were discovered at Wick's Hillhead school many years ago.

RM also mentioned about one of the earliest paintings of Wick is currently stored in the Thurso Library Cellar.

Date of Next Meeting: Monday 5th February 2024

These minutes were approved and adopted as follows:					
Date	05/02/2024				
Location	The David Mowat Room, Wick Assembly Rooms				
Proposer	Roy Mackenzie				
Secunder	Doreen Turner				
Signed		Name	Jayden Alexander	Position	Secretary