



## MEETING MINUTES

**Venue:** The David Mowat Room, Wick Assembly Rooms

**Date:** Monday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2023

**Time:** Following Conclusion of Inaugural Meeting

<b>Present</b>			
Grouping	Name	Initial	Position <i>(If Applicable)</i>
Elected Members	Allan Farquhar	AF1	Chairperson
	Allan Bruce	AB	Vice-Chairperson
	Joanna Coghill	JC	Treasurer
	Wendy Campbell	WC	N/A
	Doreen Turner	DT	N/A
	Norma Craven	NC	N/A
	Alastair Ferrier	AF2	N/A
	Rona Morrison	RM	N/A
Co-opted Members	David Dunnett	DD	N/A
Ex-officio Members	Cllr Raymond Bremner	Cllr RB	Highland Councillor
Non-Members	Jayden Alexander	JA	Secretary

<b>Apologies of Absence</b>	
Name	Position <i>(If Applicable)</i>
Roy Mackenzie	N/A
Cllr Jan McEwan	Highland Councillor

## 1. Welcome and Apologies

AF1 welcomed everyone who was present to the meeting and thanked everyone for joining the meeting. AF1 extended thanks to Cllr RB for chairing the inaugural meeting. Apologies is as noted.

David Dunnett was unanimously elected as a co-opted member.

## 2. Review of Documents

- **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 amendments.

Proposed By: WC

Seconded By: NC

- **Monthly Correspondence Record**

All members reviewed the monthly correspondence record. AF1 touched on the funding options which was communicated in correspondence from the Scottish Government for bikes, AF1 advised that he forwarded this on to Alistair Jack and Yvonne Hendry for their information.

- **Action List**

All members reviewed the current action list. JC advised that Wick Gala Committee have been approached with regards to tidying up the islands in Wick River. JC suggested writing to the committee. This was unanimously agreed. AB raised the fact that the bell-mouth at Wick Retail Park was never adopted by The Highland Council and that it is not the responsibility of any of the businesses within the retail park.

## 3. Local Organisations' Update

- **Wick High School Representatives**

No representatives present, however, AB advised that he attended Wick High along with JC to give a presentation and a very positive response was received.

- **Local Police**

A report was received from Brian Hamilton which was circulated amongst RBWCC members.

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

AF1 advised that there is an issue with the cleaning, a robot hoover was taken in, however, it doesn't seem to be working correctly.

- **Friends of East Caithness Cemeteries**  
WC advised that volunteers would most likely resume in March 2024. Cllr RB advised that Donald has extended the work on the edging into the Old Municipal Cemetery.
- **Friends of Green Road Park**  
AF1 advised that there was nothing to report. RM advised that an individual feels that the benches need updating. JC advised that there are x2 benches available at The Highland Council depot. for re-location.
- **Wick Development Trust**  
No representatives present.
- **Association of Caithness Community Councils**  
AF2 advised that funding was applied for as it was intimated how much funding was going to be received compared to previous years. AF2 advised that if the £500 each community council receives, then the funding will not be obtained again. AF2 advised that there will be a few new members, however, some community councils unfortunately weren't successful in re-establishing due to low numbers in the election process.

#### 4. Highland Council Matters

- Cllr RB advised that the progress with Whitechapel Toilets is progressing, Cllr RB had a walkaround with Douglas Wilby of HLH to see where facilities could be improved. They visited the new toilets to see its progress. The foundations have been fixed, the entire interior has been gutted and replaced. There are some other works to be completed, however, Cllr RB advised that it will be a great facility. Steel doors will be put on, the wet-wall flooring has been installed, there will be a terraced wall which will be fenced at the end. The poor landscaping at the front has been gutted and improved. CCTV is also being looked at and the new signage has arrived and is awaiting installation. There is motion-sensor lighting which will help the CCTV. An opening date has not been communicated yet; however, Cllr RB is reluctant to it opening without it being fully finished and all present agreed with this. Cllr RB also voiced that the community need to play its part in maintaining it and that Wick is very fortunate.
- Cllr RB also advised that the area where the floral clock is located has been improved, and the arches at Wick Town Hall has been painted. All agreed that these small changes make a big difference.
- Cllr RB advised that Sustrans are undergoing a transition. The submission, which was at stage 4, will be submitted in December which will attract the construction phase and communicated will hopefully come through for this in January 2024. The whole project will be an investment of £2.1 million pounds. EF enquired if this was guaranteed, however, Cllr RB advised that the bid would have to be found. Cllr RB advised that the work all had to be recognised at stage 4, such as, lighting, gas etc.
- Cllr RB advised that a lot of work has been put into the Wick District Heating project, with the addition of another x50 properties to the scheme. Cllr RB voiced

that they are looking at stretching this scheme to the other side of the river also, and Ignis are looking at private owned homes as well as council ones. Cllr RB advised that one individual had a saving of around £3,500 in one year since joining the scheme.

- Cllr RB advised that the white lining of the roads is continuing and the capital programme for the roads is also continuing, and The Highland Council will do as much as they can until the end of the financial year.
- Cllr RB advised that he will forward correspondence on with regards to the Grizzly Park where new equipment will be finally be installed.
- WC voiced that the road at Cooper's Corner is in an awful state.
- WC asked if there will be a cleaner at the toilet and if it will be open 24hrs per day. Cllr RB advised that there will be an attendant checking the facility, it is automatic locking after a certain time and they will not be available 24/7, simply to protect such an investment. Opening hours for the facility is to be confirmed. RM asked if the CCTV will be linked to the Police and if so, will the Police be able to respond to any incidents. Cllr RB advised that the CCTV system is digital and that it is monitoring and recording 24/7, recordings can readily identify who the culprit is within a certain period. JC suggested highlighting this fact in the paper. Cllr RB advised that that there will be signage on the building displaying that CCTV is recording 24/7.
- AB voiced that he would like to see a drive by The Highland Council for the fact that the town is being made a 20mph speed limit. Cllr RB advised that the gateway signs have not been changed to display this yet, however, Cllr RB has asked for an update for this.
- Cllr RB advised that the Wick River Fountain area underwent refurb-work which made it look much more attractive. Cllr RB advised that the publishing of the news with regards to the windfarms over-sailing the land did not communicate what it was for. Cllr RB advised that there is no change to the estate, it is merely a ribbon lease. Cllr RB advised that a ribbon lease is over a period, you get the benefit of having the money at the beginning instead of receiving it over a period of five or ten years. Cllr RB advised that he sees this as a good way of getting money into the common good pot for Wick.

## 5. Council Business and Matters Arising:

- **Businessmen's Club Corner**  
No update.
- **Veteran's Memorial Tower**  
AB advised that information has been obtained from the architect, and a meeting needs to be set up with RBLs to see how they would like to proceed.
- **Wick Common Good Fund**  
JC advised that she feels that although there is for example £10,000 in the common good pot, after The Highland Council take their cut from it, what is left. AB voiced that there should be a balance sheet provided with all the expenses and income

detailed on it. Post meeting note- Highland Councillors to be contacted regarding the use/lease of bleaching green adjacent to MacLeay Lane.

- **Harbour Sheds Project**  
EF advised that she would like to do a photo board, however, JC explained the costly expense from getting these for the Businessmen's Corner. JC suggested contacting Step Forward Wick Youth. EF will investigate.
- **Town Centre Tidy Up**  
AF1 voiced that the tidy up made a huge improvement, throughout the year. A vote of thanks was given to AB.
- **Wick River Fountain**  
JC advised that the new stone at Wick River has been installed. Wick Hanging Baskets have been planting seeds in the area, and they will be planting tulips at the area at the bottom of the County Show ground. The fountain pump has now been switched off for the winter. JC advised that she would like to get some PR done as the whole project was helped along with Wick Paths Group etc.

## 6. Council Sub-Group Reports

- **Wick Hanging Baskets Committee**  
EF seconded JC's statement under the previous agenda item.
- **Wick Community Market**  
AF1 advised that there was nothing to report, except from speaking with traders with the potential to get a committee established. WCM are liaising with WCLC for fun day. PMN- AF1 applied to the Discretionary Committee for £800 towards the costs of PRS / PPL license and insurance.
- **Wick Christmas Lights**  
No report was provided due to the absence of Claire Mackenzie.
- **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.

## 7. Treasury Reports


- **Royal Burgh of Wick Community Council**  
£18,509.12. £7,407.22 belongs to RBWCC. There is approx. £6,500 within this from the Beatrice fund.
- **Wick Hanging Baskets Committee**  
None provided.
- **Wick Community Market**  
£790.07
- **Wick Christmas Lights**  
None provided.
- **Wick Paths Group**  
£11,706.00
- **HAPPY**  
£1,901.81. AF1 advised that no statements are currently being received as the account is currently not in use.

## 8. AOCB

- EF advised that the bus shelter in Breadalbane Crescent was promptly seen to after it was damaged, however, the repair is temporary.
- JC advised that she was invited to a ScotRail event in Glasgow with Anne Duffy of Wick Hanging Baskets Committee. Their train travel and accommodation were paid for by ScotRail. It was held in the Grand Central Hotel in Glasgow. Next year is the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary for the rail line from Wick to Inverness. ScotRail is keen to get people to actually go through Wick Railway Station as a lot of people by pass it by accessing the station from the rear outside entrance. JC voiced to an individual at the event that she would like to tidy up the area at the old railway line next to the line which is in use. All agreed that this would be beneficial.
- EF advised that she visited Pulteneytown People's Project to find out more about the teen challenge event, but they are looking for volunteers.
- AF1 advised that he won't be in Wick to attend to lay the wreath on Remembrance Sunday, AB advised that he will check his diary to see if he can attend on RBWCC's behalf.

AF1 declared the meeting closed for private discussion.

**Date of Next Meeting:** Monday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2023

These minutes were approved and adopted as follows:					
Date	08/01/2024				
Location	The David Mowat Room, Wick Assembly Rooms				
Proposer	Roy Mackenzie				
Secunder	Norma Craven				
Signed		Name	Jayden Alexander	Position	Secretary