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| **rOYAL bURGH OF wICK cOMMUNITY cOUNCIL**  **Meeting Minutes** | | |
| Location: | Held via Facebook messenger (video call) |
| Date: | 1st June 2020 |
| Time: | 7:20pm |
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# Present

**Elected members:** Joanna Coghill *(JC)*

Alan Farquhar (*AF1)*

Kimberley Miller- Rosie *(KMR)*

Alastair Ferrier *(AF2)*

Doreen Turner *(DT)*

Wendy Campbell *(WC)*

**Co-opted members:** None in attendance.

**Ex-officio members:** None in attendance.

**In attendance:** Jayden Alexander

Chairperson / Wick Flower Baskets

Vice chairperson / HAPPY

Treasurer

Secretary

**Apologies**

Claire Mackenzie

1. **Welcome and apologies**

A welcome was given by everyone present in the meeting who had successfully managed to join. No indication was given by those who were unable to join the meeting, however those who were not present is as above.

1. **Minutes of previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on Monday 2nd March 2019 had been circulated by the secretary and were agreed.

*Proposed by: DT | seconded by: AF2*

1. **Matters arising and outstanding actions**

**May 19/07- Harbour Quayside (jutting out pavement):** Raymond Bremner had taken this up with the roads department who claimed not to be aware of the question being raised. A response was awaited.

**Jan 20/02- Common good land:** Raymond Bremner advised that officials had produced a spreadsheet showing all the areas in question, they were still researching, including documents held at the Nucleus but it appeared that the Camps car park was Common Good Land and possibly also the Mart car park and the Town Hall but other areas were also being looked at. A lot more work remains to be done and it will be necessary to have a public consultation rather than a public meeting.

**Jan 20/06- Noss Primary School and Community Campus:** Raymond Bremner advised that he was still following up this report.

**Jan 20/07- Corner at Businessmen’s Club:** John Bogle advised that he was still waiting for one price.

**Feb 20/02- Planning and building standards workshop:** Raymond Bremner advised that this was ongoing.

**Feb 20/03- Big spring clean:** Raymond Bremner advised that the date for this had been agreed as week commencing 13th April 2020. This was postponed due to the current pandemic.

**Feb 20/04 NHS Near Me:** Raymond Bremner advised that he was still waiting for the figures from the NHS but expected them next week.

* AF1 mentioned that everything is currently on hold regarding off street car parking, everything was suspended a week prior to lockdown and that local businesses were spoken to. A consultation was due, however, this was also put on hold due to the pandemic. HC were asked to contact us if the consultation is to be resumed. It was suggested that the caravan site for Wick is there for camper and and motorhomes so why charge for them? It was raised that people who work in the town centre will also have to pay for parking and if councillors are attending a meeting then a claim can be submitted to receive their money back for the parking charge. JC suggested creating a “Take pride in our town” where we need to take pride in Wick and clean up before we look to improve things greatly. JC mentioned that we need to get the message out to shop owners to “take pride” in their shopfronts which will also help to improve the town.

An update from Mr Allan Tait of CVG was received in regards to the community response to COVID-19:

“ *As March went on it became clear that there was going to be a considerable number of people having to either self isolate or shield and that they would require support. The team at CVG worked to identify lead organisations in each Community Council area that could deliver shopping, medicines, even walk the dog for these vulnerable people. We eventually identified 10 groups that were prepared to take on the task, see map attached. For Wick that was Pulteneytown Peoples Project who have done a great job.*

*There have been a number of challenges including money handling, social distancing, obtaining hand sanitizer, access to shopping in the early days. I have hosted a weekly resilience meeting on Zoom for all the groups plus the food bank, local councillors, HIE, Ward Manager and other community reps and at these meetings we have discussed all these problems and in the majority of cases came to a solution. I think we are due our 11th meeting tomorrow at 3pm and these will continue as long as the groups see them beneficial.*

*As we went into late April some of the groups started to provide cooked food where it was possible for them to do so. Also most of the groups have been provided wellbeing/activity packs to both youngsters and those isolated.*

*The Befriending team at CVG are operating a telephone befriending system and that is working well. Most of the other organisations are operating as best they can, Homestart, CASWA, Y People and Caithness Rural Transport in the current situation.*

*As we stand today I think we have done a good job supporting everyone during the crises.*

*Going forward there are a number of issues that will face us –*

*1. Volunteers going back to work, volunteer fatigue will impact on the resilience effort*

*2. Continuing isolation for some will have an impact on mental health. These people will need long term support. Are the NHS expecting these people to travel to Raigmore for appointments in the current circumstances?*

*3. Rising unemployment and all the issues that brings.*

*4. Collapse of tourist trade.*

*5. What will funding be like going forward for the voluntary sector. Ability to fund raise with social distancing?* “

1. **Highland councillors report**

No report was received. JA is to chase this up and circulate once received.

1. **Correspondence**

One item on the correspondence for May required a response.

1. **Treasurer’s report**

The community council bank account currently stands at £799.46. Happy’s account as of 31st March 2020 is £732.43. Wick Paths Group bank balance is currently £799.46T. he new Clydesdale account is now open as all funds are currently in. However, the Bank of Scotland account is still open as the switch is still ongoing,

1. **Christmas Lights**

No report was received..

1. **HAPPY**

No report was given due to the current pandemic.

1. **Wick Flower Baskets**

Plants which were ordered have now arrived. Money from Beatrice was received, an order for flowers may be able to be placed next week.

1. **Wick Paths Group**

It was mentioned that we should suggest to the paths group that the side protective panels and and rails should be painted. JC indicated that this was already in hand and involves Willie Watt.

1. **Green Road Park**

AF1 has applied to the Dounreay Community fund for the installation of a zip slide, only one tender returned prior to the lockdown. However the application was breached as it was over the £5,000 limit. AF1 is to chase up contractors for other competitive tenders but is unsure when this can get this installed due to COVID-19 restrictions . If anyone has a large trailer which could be borrowed then the bench could be relocated from Highland Council storage to the park.

JC suggested writing a formal request for a picnic bench to be moved from the Bignold Play park to the park at Green Road. JA is to write a letter to Alex Macmanus regarding this.

1. **Wick Community Campus and Noss Primary School**

The progress on the boulevard had gone no further due to lockdown restrictions. We are now six years into a three year build and this is still not complete. There has been no response to AF1 regarding the report AF1 obtained and issued to Raymond Bremner and the school. AF1 mentioned that we should suggest to plant wild flowers which would obviously look more attractive than the weeds. AF1 is to suggest this to Brian Porter.

1. **OSCR complaint**

AF1 submitted his own complaint to OSCR against Wick Academy Development Fund (WADF) which he is currently chasing up. This is being considered at this time and he has requested a progress report. The case officer is currently off work until 6th June as stated to him by email on 1st June 2020. Since originally raising the concerns regarding WADF to OSCR on Monday 8th January 2018, we received an acknowledgment on Thursday the 18th of January but since then have still had no outcome on the investigations, despite many chase up emails. On Friday the 10th January 2020 John Bogle submitted an official OSCR customer services complaint form, our complaint to OSCR was upheld and we later received a response to that complaint on Friday 7th February 2020. In that email OSCR informed us that they were bringing our enquiry to conclusion stage and that if we still remained unhappy then we could contact the Scottish Public Service Ombudsman (SPSO). OSCR had mentioned that the enquiry would be brought to conclusion stage by March 2020. This has not happened. JC suggested in an email to CC members that we should take this to SPSO. This was agreed and JA submitted an official complaints form accompanied by a letter from RBWCC, our official complaints form to OSCR and their response. No response has been given as of yet regarding this. DT suggested involving our local MP as well as our MSP. AF1 is to draft and send a letter for the John O’ Groat Journal.

1. **Youth membership and community council scheme**

JA highlighted that this new scheme allows all community council to appoint two youth members between the ages of sixteen and eighteen on top of their set membership allowance. The scheme requires that the appointment be made in liaison with the local high school and the youth work service. Community councils are not bound to make use of this clause in the scheme. It was suggested by Alex Macmanus that this firstly be discussed at the association mention on the 3rd of March before contact is made with the high school and youth workers This will be actioned and is to be taken further after restrictions etc ease.

DT suggested contacting Carly Sinclair (Wick High School).

1. **Opening of recycling centre and uplifting of bins**

It was mentioned that this should have been opened, however, AF1 said that this was a Scottish government item not HC.

**16. SSE Beatrice Fund**

Funding was made available to Chris Aitken and co but not used at this time, it will remain available until the current situation bottoms out then funds can be returned to SSE. JC said that they will carry on for another year to keep the fund open.

There has been an increase in grants due to COVID-19. JC said that there was no indication that money had been paid into the CC bank account.

1. **AOCB**

Market Traders are currently on hold due to lockdown restrictions. AF1 is to contact Patricia to see what plans have been made. Also to follow up on our commitment to circulate a questionnaire to traders to glean pros and cons and any ideas.

AF1 suggested approaching local organisations to give money to support them due to the current pandemic. The community has been very generous in the current situation which has affected so much.

AF1 is to contact Patricia Sutherland (Wick Market Traders Association) regarding the indoor and outdoor markets.

AF2 brought to the CC’s attention that there were plans for possible cycle lanes and that HC had been given £7, 000 for the project. JA is to compose an email to Highland councillors to explain the need for additional hoops for bikes.

It was mentioned how there is grass cuttings from gardens being thrown down the cliff towards the North baths. JA is to write a letter to HC about this matter.

AF1 suggested uploading a post to the RBWCC Facebook page about dog fecies not being picked up in and around Wick.

JC explained that it is important for the CC to continue with ongoing matters and to “keep the ball rolling” while in lockdown, it was suggested that a meeting should be arranged for June, this was agreed JC

thanked everyone for joining the meeting.

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