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| **rOYAL bURGH OF wICK cOMMUNITY cOUNCIL****Meeting Minutes** |
| Location: | Meeting held via Zoom. |
| Date: | 1st June 2020 |
| Time: | 7:20pm |
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**Present:**

Treasurer

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

 Alan Farquhar (*AF1)*

 Alastair Ferrier *(AF2)*

 Doreen Turner *(DT)*

 Wendy Campbell *(WC)*

David Dunnett *(DD)*

**Co-opted members:** Claire Mackenzie

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

**In attendance:** Jayden Alexander

Chairperson / Wick Flower Baskets

Vice chairperson / HAPPY

Wick Christmas Lights

Secretary

**Apologies**

Kimberley Miller-Rosie

1. **Welcome and apologies**

JC thanked everyone for joining on Zoom, and welcomed everyone to the meeting. One apology was submitted.

Apologies: *Kimberley Miller-Rosie*

**Minutes of previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on Monday 1st June 2020 had been circulated by the secretary and were agreed, subject to one spelling correction.

*Proposed by: DT | seconded by: WC*

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 20/07- Corner at Businessmen’s Club:** John Bogle advised that he was still waiting for one price. JA is to contact John Bogle regarding this.

**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 (currently still ongoing).

**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 (currently still ongoing).

* **Highland councillors report**

No report was received. JA is to chase this up and circulate once received. A report was not received for the previous meeting either.

It was mentioned that Highland Council should be maintaining their market square. Loose paving slabs need fixed. CM said that large slabs were fixed, however, cobbles weren’t. It was also mentioned that the bins and seating need fixed also. Raymond Bremner and Nicola Sinclair had sorted out a big spring clean for Wick, JA is to ask what is planned. We have to ensure the town is looking nice.

1. **Correspondence**

No items on the correspondence for June required a response, all since completed. All were happy.

1. **Treasurer’s report**

The community council bank account currently stands at £7,999.46. Happy’s account currently stands at £732.68. JC explained that Wick Flower Basket’s account is extremely low, being near £0. JC is to find out the exact amount at which the account stands at. There were no accounts for Wick Christmas Lights. CM is to investigate this.

1. **Christmas Lights**

CM explained that plans for the future were at a standstill due to the current pandemic. However, Wick Christmas Light’s held their first digital kid’s prize bingo on Facebook. This was successful and another is to take place on Wednesday 8th June 2020. The total made was £200. They are currently looking at plans for December. Funding was received for Santaland and CM assured that Santa’s Sleigh can hopefully still go ahead at Christmas time as this doesn’t seem to affect social distancing and COVID related rules. JC suggested for the Christmas Light’s to apply to Beatrice micro-grants.

1. **HAPPY**

AF1 said that there was nothing to report due to the current pandemic.

1. **Wick Flower Baskets**

Flowers which had been ordered had been received and planted. JC explained that there are no hanging baskets this year as they couldn’t get any trailing flowers due to money. Ideas for fundraising were being explored. JC also mentioned that an application for Beatrice micro-grants had been submitted as they are in need of money to pay for their insurance.

1. **Wick Paths Group**

JA is to enquire with John Bogle regarding a report for Wick Paths Group as no report was received for the previous meeting.

All agreed that paths looked very well, however it is the upkeep which needs to carry on. The question was asked, what do the town wardens do? What is their job? Could this be explored and potentially lead to their upkeep? JA is to contact Alex MacManus regarding this.

1. **Green Road Park**

AF1 explained that the prices they had received from contractors had expired, new quotes from contractors are to be looked at. Evan Sinclair will be contacted about taking tables down.

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

AF1 said that minutes of previous meetings had been checked and drawings of the campus which said that wild flowers would be put into the ground. AF1 is to chase this up and investigate more regarding this as the weed situation in the areas are becoming worse. There was no mention on the progress of the boulevard development, however, CM mentioned that she was notified that work commences in August on a sixteen week progress plan. DT asked what the progress was on the football pitch behind the big mound of dirt, and if there was an access issue. It was mentioned that a zig zag path was in the pipeline instead of steps leading up to it to make it disable friendly. This is apparently in the hands of Ryan Sutherland, AF1 is to send an email to enquire about this.

1. **Car parks**

Refer to email sent to Wick CC members by AF2 on 28/06/2020: “ *Currently I have had a promise from Alison Clarke Highland Council project manager for CarPark Charging Consultation that there are no current plans to restart the CarPark Consultation and she has promised she would inform RBWCC without delay if they even start looking at this.  But I think given HC are going to be up to their necks in debt they will be keen to raise funds where they can.   Although CarParking Charging is not on their agenda at this moment in time, this hasn’t gone away and this could be slipped in by stealth.  I don’t feel oneness and transparency has been their best asset here.  I ll see if I can draft something just on where we are at to date.* “.

Regarding parking charges, JC said that businesses are struggling as it is at the moment. AF2 stated

 that nothing can go ahead at the moment without a public consultation. AF2 also said that Alison Clark would be happy to keep us informed as to how progress is coming along. AF2 is happy to carry out some research into this.

1. **Local film makers**

Refer to email sent to RBWCC members by AF2 on 28/06/2020: “ *Sara and Emma Thomson both pupils in Newton Park and the High School produced a 2 minute film highlighting sea pollution .  They filmed it, edited it, narrated it and researched their subject matter.   Reiss Beach was their backdrop for their story.*

*It was only originally intended to be shown to Emmas class and class teacher as a project for their weeks work, This was to coincide with world Oceans day a couple of weeks back.  Anyway when I saw it I was blown away by how well made and produced it was, and thought it needs to be shown to a wider audience, and through the magic of Jayden he managed to upload it to the RBWCC Facebook page.  On the FB page, last time I looked it had been shared something like 50 times, and over 2500 views.  Fantastic response, brought a tear to a glass eye so it did. This is a real educational piece of work and I think we should recognise their work, bearing in mind they did all themselves.  So I thought id put this out there and have your thoughts on what we could do to recognise their work.  My initial thought is we could make some sort of recognition certificate and present it to them, along with a photo for the Groat and a wee write up.  The paper loves this kinda stuff anti would be something these two young girls would remember, good for RBWCC to recognise also.*”.

JC mentioned that the Highland Council could recognise this also and that we should push this above. AF2 and JA is to take this on and write to HC and local environment groups.

1. **Cycle root plans for Wick**

AF2 brought to the CC’s attention at the previous meeting that there are plans for possible cycle lanes and that HC had been given £7, 000 for the project. JA is to compose a letter on 29/06/2020 to Highland councillors to explain the need for additional hoops for bikes. JA received a reply on the same day from Raymond Bremner noting that there would be a total of ten new cycle bays at the new Riverside Carpark. RBWCC were asked if they have consideration of where the new cycle bays could go and if there has been any discussions with local cycle groups to inform us of where might be good.

JA is to compose a reply outlining the following:

1. The need to fix potholes in roads, especially if a cycle root is being put in place then potholes are of big danger to cyclists, mentioning accidents.
2. The need for cycle hoops, establishing the popular points in Wick where might be suitable for bays to be out in place. Ie- Iron Wellie, Cairndhuna well, Market Square etc.
3. Shop locally (this new cycle root and cycle bays will encourage people to shop locally and support local businesses.
4. **OSCR complaint**

JA submitted an official complaints form to the Scottish Ombudsman with a letter from Wick Community Council regarding the length of time it has taken for OSCR to complete their investigations and RBWCC’s enquiry into the Wick Academy Development Fund (WADF). JA received a reply on 15th June 2020: “ *We are writing to acknowledge receipt of your complaint. Your case has been assigned reference no.****202001224****. Like many public service organisations, we are working hard to continue to deliver our service with reduced resourcing.  In light of these challenges we kindly ask you****not to contact us****with any further information or questions relating to your complaint at this stage.  Please be assured we will contact you, we hope to do so in the next****thirteen****weeks.*”

JC suggested writing to Jamie Stone, Gail Ross and the Scottish Government. This was agreed. AF1 drafted an article for including in the John O’ Groat journal and sent to all CC members. This was agreed and is to be sent to the editor for Friday 10th June 2020.

1. **Highland council public consultation**

Refer to item 13.

1. **AOCB**
* Local deaths

JC mentioned the sad news regarding the deaths of several local people over the past couple of weeks, relating to depression, anxiety and drugs. It was outlined that the drug situation in Caithness has escalated hugely and it is affecting many people and communities. It was said that something needs to be done regarding the drug situation and mental health in the county. The question was asked if there is cover at weekends for people with mental health problems. JC states that there is cover at weekends but it is limited. WC suggested that RBWCC should have a contact list for these kind of people in Caithness, eg- helplines etc, and numbers for departments within the Highland Council as RBWCC don’t know who to contact reading different situations etc. JA is to contact Allan Tait to ask if he has any contacts for mental health and HC etc for RBWCC to be able to put together a contact list, with the potential of being able to publish this in the local paper. Posters were also suggested to be put up in shops around the town with helplines etc.

* Website

 JC thanked JA for putting together RBWCC’s new website. JC said that Eswyl Fell has photographs of Wick Flower Baskets which she will send over for including. AF1 mentioned that the local paper has photographs of Happy. CM is to send photos to JA of Wick Christmas Lights.

* Police reports

It was mentioned that RBWCC should be receiving police reports, this has not been happening over the past few months. JA is to email inspector Alistair Goskirk, regarding this to see if RBWCC could start receiving reports again as we are not being informed of anything which should be brought to our attention

* Royal Burgh of Wick Community Council’s AGM

JC stated that we are in need of new members. JA created a poster advertising this (posted on Facebook, Caithness.Org and CVG). RBWCC’s August meeting could possible be our AGM, this is to be confirmed.

* Garden waste bins

JC asked why there was such an increase in brown bin charges. Collections costed £30 to begin with, this has now creeped up to £45, and also that there has been an extension for three months on the current year as there were no bins being lifted from mid March to mid May.

* Communication between Highland Council and RBWCC

AF2 asked if Highland councillors notify us on any business at all. RBWCC should receive a monthly report but have not received one in the last few months. It was mentioned that Wick Community Council only hear of any business through rumours and gossip, and it was felt as if we are only being told of “chosen” news whereas we need to be aware of everything. AF2 is happy to contact the Highland Council regarding this as an open letter also to the Highland councillors and Alex MacManus, from RBWCC.

* NC500 signage

JA received an email from Jonathan Gunn regarding new signage which the Highland Council are planning to secure along the NC509 route, asking RBWCC if they have any objections to the signs being installed in our council area at this time. JC asked if we could respond asking if the signs would be in Gaelic. This was agreed. JA will include this in our response.

JC thanked everyone for either attendance.

**The following items were discussed in private:**

* Beatrice micro-grant applications

WC asked if people/groups can get money yearly, JC is to look at the rules and regulations to find out.

Two applications were received, one from Wick Flower Baskets Committee and Wick Players. It was asked what grants Wick Players were given in the past and if they are eligible for receiving again. JC is to check this. JC outlined that the flower baskets committee are in need of money for paying their insurance. WC stated that RBWCC can give the committee money on loan, should they wish.

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**Date of next meeting**

**Date:** Monday 3rd August 2020 (possibly Wick Community Council’s AGM- to be confirmed).

**Location:** To be held via Zoom

**Time:** 7:15pm

**OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

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| ACTION NO. | ACTION DETAILS | RESPONSIBILITY | STATUS |
| May 19/07 | Harbour quayside Road jutting out pavements. To chase response from HC. | RB | Ongoing |
| Jan 20/06 | Noss Primary School and Community campus, to check for more recent report than Dec 2018. | RB | Ongoing |
| Feb 20/07 | Planning and building standards workshop. To circulate details when available. | JA | Ongoing |
| Feb 20/04 | NHS. To circulate the figures on use of NHS Near Me.  | RB | Ongoing |
| Mar 20/01 | CCTV. To pass on map and details to secretary for distribution, and to DS Afro JOGJ. | JA / RB | Ongoing |
| Mar 20/02 | WADF complaint to OSCR. To advise OSCR that a reference would be made to the Ombudsman if not resolved by April meeting, complaint was made to SPSO. | JA | Ongoing |
| Mar 20/03 | Parking charges. Request an extension to the consultation period at the ACCC meeting on 03/03/2020. | JC | Ongoing |
| Jul 20/02 | Compose a letter to Jamie Stone, Gail Ross and Scottish Government regarding situation with WADF and complaints to OSCR and SPSO. | JA | Ongoing |
| Jul 20/04 | Photos to be sent to JA for new RBWCC website. | JC / JA / CM | Ongoing |
| Jul 20/05 | Find contacts for HC and mental health teams for potentials contact list for RBWCC. | JA | Ongoing |
| Jul 20/06 | Local film makers to be recognized for their achievements and hard work in putting together film about plastic pollution.  | AF2 /JA | Ongoing |