

# ROYAL BURGH OF WICK COMMUNITY COUNCIL



Location: Meeting held via Zoom.

Date: Monday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

Time: 7:00pm.

## Present:

<b>Elected members:</b>	Joanna Coghill ( <i>JC</i> ).	Chairperson
	Allan Farquhar ( <i>AF1</i> )	Vice chairperson
	Wendy Campbell ( <i>WC</i> )	
	Alastair Ferrier ( <i>AF2</i> )	
	David Dunnett ( <i>DD</i> )	
	Doreen Turner ( <i>DT</i> )	
<b>Co-opted members:</b>	Allan Bruce ( <i>AB</i> )	
	Eswyl Fell ( <i>EF</i> )	
<b>Ex-officio members:</b>	Raymond Bremner ( <i>Cllr RB</i> )	
<b>Other / Public:</b>	Jayden Alexander ( <i>JA</i> )	Secretary
	Ron Gunn ( <i>RG</i> )	Chairperson of AOCCC
	Jamie Robson ( <i>JR</i> )	The Co-operative

## Apologies:

Claire Mackenzie (*Co-opted member*)

Cllr Willie Mackay (*ex-officio member*)

## 1. Welcome and apologies.

JC welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked all attendees for joining. Ron Gunn (chairperson of the Association of Caithness Community Councils- AOCC) and Jamie Robson (Member Pioneer of the local Co-operative branches) were introduced.

## 2. Minutes of previous meeting.

Approval and adoption of minutes: JA circulated the minutes of the previous meeting which was held on May 2021 at 7pm via Zoom. Only members of the community council are permitted to approve minutes subject to any changes, and those who are non-members who were in attendance are permitted to highlight changes or errors. Subject to three changes, the minutes were approved and adopted.

**Proposed by:** *WC* | **Seconded by:** *AB*

JA is to amend these errors and circulate to members.

Outstanding actions:

**Big spring clean-** Although this action is COVID circumstances depending, *Cllr RB is meeting with Cllr Nicola Sinclair regarding this.*

**NHS Near Me-** Cllr RB had a meeting recently regarding this and will forward a report on from this to JA for circulation to RBWCC members.

**Grizzly Park situation-** The park is still “officially” closed, although it remains in use. AF1 sought a report from Highland Council, however, there is no timescale yet for the repair and re-opening.

Matters arising:

It was agreed to submit an email to Michelle Johnstone (NHS) to express disappointment with no response from the letter which was sent earlier on in the year regarding the situation with the COVID testing centre. JA is to carry this action out.

### **3. Report from Wick Development Trust.**

JC thanked JM for joining on behalf of Wick's Heart (Wick Development Trust). JM introduced himself as the current chairperson of the trust and went on to explain that Wick's Heart is the trading name of the Wick Development Trust and that the organisation has been set up for a couple of years. JM stated "we are here to start a line of communication to work on projects going forwards". JM went on to explain that the trust is working "behind the scenes" with the demolished sites (Former Sloans and Pavilion sites) for re-development. JM also said that both organisations (Wick's Heart and RBWCC) could be of assistance to one another as both are working towards the same outcome.

AF2 asked JM if Wick's Heart had any propositions or a way forward for both demolished properties which is now in their ownership. JM stated that they are looked at different routes, one being to find a suitable developer for each site in a timely manner, or a community led project for which lots of suggestions has been made. JM said that it could be tricky project. If the route of a community led project was to be followed, then that would mean reaching a consultation stage for community development and establishing what is available for that project. JM also stated that although lots of suggestions had been received it is a choice of finding what is feasible and realistic taking costs into consideration and if it was a community led project, finding how the site would actually be managed depending on what the site could be.

WC asked JM if and how Wick's Heart would stay in contact with RBWCC as RBWCC attempted to make contact previously on different occasions which were unsuccessful. JM explained that Wick's Heart began with a strong amount of people, many left and then a board of directors had to be established. JM stated that they are looking to get new members and are happy to keep in touch with RBWCC.

EF explained to JM that she had applied to become a member of the trust but was told that to become a member she would have to become a director and that she felt hugely discouraged at being told this especially when Wick's Heart were a new organisation which were set up for the good of the town. JM stated that the monthly meetings are for directors only and that meeting minutes are available on their website. JM also stated that members can attend annual general meetings.

WC explained that she felt insulted when RBWCC were told by Wick's Heart that they did not want RBWCC representatives at meetings.



JC asked JM how many directors Wick's Heart currently have. JM explained that the trust currently have eight board members including two new board members, but they are looking to recruit both new members and board members.

JC explained to JM that she along with RBWCC feel that Wick Development Trust need to be more open and transparent to the public about Wick's Heart as no one knows what is going on or what is happening. JC also stated that Wick Development Trust need to keep in contact with RBWCC as the name of Wick Community Council is on the funding applications for the town centre re-development and that RBWCC are a key stakeholder in the re-generation.

AF1 asked JM what the timescale is for re-developing the demolished sites. JM stated that Wick's Heart aren't ruling out any option for the now demolished sites and progress should be made within the next month or so. JM also said that the trust does

#### **4. Co-operative funding.**

JR expressed his thanks to RBWCC for the invitation for joining the meeting and expressed how the Co-op is very keen on getting involved with projects locally. For example, litter picking, involvement with young people, local mental health situation. JR also explained how Co-op would like to encourage everyone to use their store membership card as a percentage of sales benefits local groups and organisations.

AB asked JR about the litter which is often seen around the Wick Co-op store during school lunch times and if it would be possible to raise awareness of this to deter school children and other young people from creating such mess. AB suggested a co-ordinated campaign with RBWCC to tackle this.

WC asked JR about young people congregating in the front area of the store, and how young people have been known to be "drinking" at the back of the building.

JR said that Co-op would be delighted to get involved in any way with the community to tackle such issues and that e would always be happy to help. JR also expressed how he would be interested in attending more meetings of RBWCC to get an insight as to what they do and are involved in, with the outlook of getting involved locally with projects.

## **5. Arrangements of Annual General Meeting.**

JC suggested holding the AGM on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2021 at 7pm, via Zoom due to COVID guidelines and regulations. All members agreed and JA will arrange as usual and the usual monthly meeting would commence straight after.

Cllr RB was invited to officiate (chair) the AGM and accepted.

## **6. Correspondence.**

One item on the correspondence for May required a response, all members were happy and had nothing to raise on any of the items received.

## **7. Local Police report.**

Due to the absence of a representative, no report was given or received in advance.

JC and RBWCC members expressed their disappointment in the local police representatives as no apology has been received in advance of any meeting if a rep is unable to attend, members also expressed how it would be beneficial for a report to be received in advance of a meeting if someone is unable to attend.

JC requested JA to compose an email to Inspector Alasdair Goskirk and Sargent Brian Hamilton to express this and the dangerous situation at Wick Riverside. Reports have been received of young people throwing stones at people, areas being left with alcohol bottles and other items such as broken glass. JC said that a discussion is required to detail the matter to find a solution. The Coghill Bridge has also been damaged repeatedly after refurbishments. WC expressed how Wick has a no drinking ban and asked why young people aren't being brought to task because of it. JC is to contact Wick High School regarding the issue.

## **8. Highland Councillor's report.**

Cllr RB gave a vocal report on various issues around the Wick district, and kindly circulated the following written summary on what was reported:

**To be received.**

## 9. Treasurer's report.

Wick Christmas Lights: This would be stated at the next meeting.

Wick Flower Baskets: JC stated that the balance in the current account was £6,316.18.

HAPPY: Current bank balance is £732.43.

## 10. Sub-groups report.

Wick Christmas Lights: CM had nothing to report.

Wick Flower Baskets: EF reported that the flower baskets team had been very busy planting flower in the tubs in different areas in the town and that it has made the town look very colourful.

Wick Paths Group: John Bogle submitted the following report. *The Wick Paths Group AGM was held on 26th May and the amendments to the constitution previously notified to RBWCC were approved. The following office bearers were elected: Chairperson: Willie Watt, Secretary: John Bogle, Treasurer: Allan Tait. It was agreed to take on a project to upgrade the South Head Path through the old quarries. A Planning application has been submitted for 3 new panels and 1 relocation on the South side of Wick Bay. Regrettably there has been more vandalism directed at the smaller of the refurbished Coghill Bridges. When the bridge was upgraded a temporary plywood ramp was fitted at the North end of the bridge, this was ripped off but was quickly replaced by Willie Watt using plastic decking which should be more robust. Then one of the handrails at the North end was broken but again Willie Watt repaired it the following day. Photos attached. There are 9 benches (3 with backs and 6 without) beside the path between the Coghill Bridge and the steps at the end of the path, these have Caithness stone legs and wooden slats. The wood is in need of sanding down and painting which the Community Payback Team have kindly agreed to undertake with the cost of materials being met by the Riverside Volunteers and if there is any shortfall the Paths Group will cover it. Photo of a bench attached. The new recycled plastic bench arrived and has been installed at the North Head, photo attached. It has been a long term goal of the Paths Group to create a circular route at the Riverside using the Kinderspiel Bridge. A meeting was held with the landowner but it would*

*appear that the environmental and ground conditions are such that this will not be possible.*

HAPPY: AF1 had nothing to report.

### **11. Wick Community Campus and Noss Primary School.**

AF1 and CM had nothing to report.

### **12. Council business.**

Wick Common Good Fund: RM reported that he had contacted HighLife Highland who now own Caithness Horizons as they are no re-opening. He explained that he has reached the year of 1925 for donations which were made to the Carnegie Library and is hopeful that Caithness Horizons store some of these items which can be located.

Cllr RB confirmed that the fund had now been set up and that he would investigate to find out what the next steps are.

Insurance for RBWCC: JC stated that all sub-groups of RBWCC have their own insurance.

Community resilience funding: JA received an email confirming the granting of the funding and KMR confirmed that the money had been received.

Caithness Club corner project: JC reported that Siemen's have yet to finish the cleaning work, the new bench and Johnston photographic panels could then be installed.

Riverside fountain project: JC stated that she is chasing Highland Council for the fountain to be switched on, new lighting can then be looked at.

JC thanked everyone once again for their attendance and the meeting then closed for private business to RBWCC members and the secretary only.