

ROYAL BURGH OF WICK COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Location: Meeting held via Zoom.

Date: Monday 5th October 2020

Time: 7:15pm

Present:

Elected members: Joanna Coghill (<i>JC</i>).	Chairperson
Allan Farquhar (<i>AF1</i>).	Vice Chairperson
Kimberley Miller-Rosie (<i>KMR</i>).	Treasurer
Alastair Ferrier (<i>AF2</i>).	
Wendy Campbell (<i>WC</i>).	
David Dunnett (<i>DD</i>).	
Doreen Turner (<i>DT</i>)	

Co-opted members: None in attendance.

Ex-officio members: Raymond Bremner (<i>Cllr RB</i>).	Highland Councillor
Willie Mackay (<i>Cllr WM</i>).	Highland Councillor

In attendance: Jayden Alexander (<i>JA</i>).	Secretary
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Apologies:

Claire Mackenzie

Cllr Andrew Sinclair

1. Welcome and apologies.

JC welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Minutes of previous meeting.

All were happy with the minutes of the previous meeting.

Proposed by: DD | Seconded by: WC

3. Matters arising and outstanding actions.

- **May 19/07- Harbour Quayside (jutting out pavement):** Raymond Bremner highlighted that this is not a roads department responsibility, however is to do with the planning of the re-generation. David Jones is in discussion with Raymond Bremner on whether it should be improved or removed.
- **Jan 20/02- Common good land:** A report will be submitted to the Caithness committee as soon as a draft lost is sent to Raymond Bremner
- **Jan 20/07- Corner at Businessmen's Club:** JA completed and submitted a planning application. This is ongoing.
- **Feb 20/02- Planning and building standards workshop:** A public meeting for planning is to go ahead when the ability to do so is available. Raymond Bremner has asked about the possibility of holding it virtually with RBWCC.
- **Feb 20/03- Big spring clean:** Raymond Bremner and Nicola Sinclair did a walk around the town and is to work on a list for the clean.
- **Feb 20/04 NHS Near Me:** Raymond Bremner has had no update on figures but is to get an update on the matter with Willie Mackay.

Riverside Car Park.

JC had met in the car park with Cllr Nicola Sinclair, Cllr WM and Cllr RB. Big improvements have been made, however small landscaping is to do be done, such as the replacing and planting of trees etc. Electrical charging points for cars have been installed. New signage, information board, bus shelter and cycle shelter is to be installed yet and the re-positioning of the recycling point.

4. Correspondence.

One item on the correspondence for September required a response. This has since been completed

5. Highland councillors' report.

Cllr Andrew Sinclair kindly passed on the following report in advance of the meeting due to his apologies:


Covid-19 Given the rising numbers of Coronavirus cases locally, I thought it might be useful to share the following link with Community Council members. Some of you may have seen this link already but its worth sharing anyway. Select "Cases by neighbourhood" then "Highland", you will then see localised information for Caithness. https://public.tableau.com/profile/phs.covid.19#!/vizhome/COVID-19DailyDashboard_15960160643010/Overview

Boundary Commission The Council has responded to the Boundary Commission proposals in the strongest possible terms, rejecting the suggested boundaries in their entirety and asking the Commission to think again. We're now waiting to hear back from the Commission to determine what the next steps will be. Its still likely that a significant amount of lobbying MSPs and Government Ministers will be necessary to ward of the proposals.

Executive Scrutiny Following on from my comments last month about a lack of executive scrutiny, particularly in relation to the expansion of the Chief Executives team, I'm pleased to say the recruitment for the Depute Chief Executive position has been halted and Councillors will now undertake seminars to assess the future of the Chief Executive's controversial restructuring process.

1140 Hours Childcare Last month I highlighted the concerns shared locally about the lack of 1140 childcare provision in the town. I'm pleased to say the Council has carried out a U-turn on this issue and will now look to expand provision to new areas, including Wick. I'm still awaiting more clarity from the Education Department on a couple of questions, but on the whole things are heading in the right direction.

Crown Estates Funding At the full Council meeting on 10th September Councillors decided the allocation of the Crown Estates revenues. Under the agreed allocations, the majority of the funding, £2.6m, will be devolved to Local Area Committees, with a strategic fund of 15% being retained for Highland wide projects and for bids from individual areas that are over-subscribed. In addition to this, a pot of £100,000 was set aside for the administration of the scheme. There was widespread concern that Inverness would try to allocate the money to benefit itself at the expense of the more remote areas, but these efforts broadly failed



and places like Caithness, Sutherland, Skye and Lochaber will now see the most significant benefits of this funding.

Cllr WM stated that there wasn't much that he could add to Cllr Andrew's report other than the criticism which is obvious on social media etc is very discouraging. Cllr WM said that no other are in the Highlands have taken money to get their town "spruced" up. Caithness has been used as an example for the amenities review. Caithness also have monthly meetings and no other areas are doing this.

JC thanked the Highland Councillors for their work on purchasing the derelict buildings, this is a huge achievement for the town.

6. Treasurer's report.

The current account bank balance currently stands at £27926.43 KMR said that there was nothing to report. JC requested if it would be possible for KMR to provide a breakdown of the report including the community council, paths group and micro grants.

7. Wick Christmas Lights.

CM was not in attendance to give a report.

8. HAPPY.


AF1 said that there was currently £2,000 in the King George VI park fund. There was nothing else to report.

9. Wick Flower Baskets.

JC had nothing to report other than that flowers were most likely be taken in next week.

10. Wick Paths Group.

The following report was received from John Bogle on behalf of Wick Paths Group:



There is not much to report from the Paths Group because the new Covid restrictions prevent large groups gathering, however we are progressing with the Planning applications for the interpretive panels. Details of the proposed locations are attached. The first step is to get landowner approval, this is fairly straightforward on the north side of the bay as all the sites are in the ownership of the Hempriggs Estate and written permission has been received from them. Note we are including a panel at the Soldier's Tower but the Paths Group will not be erecting this, it will be up to the RBLs once they are in a position to commence on the Tower works. On the south side of the bay we have not yet been able to establish land ownership, we suspect at least one site is in the ownership of the Highland Council, confirmation is awaited. We are trying to identify ownership of the other sites.

11. Wick Community Campus and Noss Primary School.

AF1 had been in touch with the Highland Council. Work on the boulevard is to start next week and the park will be fully accessible when the zig-zag ramp is installed. AF1 is to pass on the plans to CC members once received.

12. Wick re-generation project.

Cllr Nicola Sinclair attended September's CC meeting and had discussed the funding application "Sustrans Places For Everyone" which would have to be applied for to continue with the regeneration plans. Cllr Nicola had asked if RBWCC would be willing to apply in the name of the CC. A letter was received from her on 29th September. JA is to contact Cllr NS regarding the funding for more information.

13. Development of Caithness Club corner.

JA said that he had successfully submitted a planning application for the proposed plans for developing the corner at the businessmen's club. JA expresses the difficulty of the application, however it was a learning curve. A few issues had arisen with the application and the council not receiving plans to support the application, however, this was being resolved and sorted. JA is to keep the CC posted.

14. Arrangements for 2020 annual general meeting.

JA sent a copy of the RBWCC constitution to all CC members. Cllr RB is to open the AGM if the swaps for the Highland councillors go accordingly in November. The date set for the AGM is Monday 7th December, commencing at 7pm. It will be held via Zoom. Jayden is to issue an agenda and will organise the Zoom meeting and distribute details and create a poster.

WM said highlighted that it is not code of consult for a Highland councillor to attend CC meetings, however councillors do so out of interest and to show their support for the community to help in any way that they can and that councillors are to rotate in November. AF2 said that the CC and councillors have always worked hand in hand with one another.

15. AOCB.

Post Office.

JC said that she had learned and understood more about how the Post Office works from the meeting held. This was a mutual feeling highlighted by most CC members. JC also thanked AF2's hard work on finding out information about the PO and for his correspondence with various contacts regarding the situation.

Wick's Heart.

JA said that Wick's Heart (Wick Development Trust) were looking for a representative from RBWCC to attend meetings. AF1 said that he was involved from the beginning, however had other commitments, but would be interested in getting involved again. WC also said that she would be willing to attend. It was agreed that AF1 and WC would attend and take turns. JA is to notify the trust within a letter highlighting the CC's support for the trust and points discussed (which were sent to JA by CC members) for the development of the Sloans and Dominoes sites.

Letter received from Dr. Pearson.

JA received an email from Dr Euan Pearson regarding funding for Wick Medical Centre with a view to be able to put up screens etc in the centre as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The CC members agreed that the medical centre is shared by the NHS and the Pearson Practice and is a business which should have had these precautions in place already, and NHS should have helped with this, despite that it was highlighted within the email that the NHS have not contributed. JC said that Fiona Morrison from SSE may be able to help them as well as CVG. JA is to draft a reply highlighting this.

Beatrice.

AF1 could not attend the Beatrice funding meeting due to work commitments. JC said that various groups had applied for money and an extra year will be given for the funding due to COVID-19, and a bigger fund will be opened in December which will be ideal for kicking off big projects for local groups. JC highlighted that the application for the Riverside fountain restoration was approved.

Grizzly Park.

DD highlighted that the fencing put up by Highland Council does not stop children from entering the park. Cllr WM said that this was discussed at the previous amenities meeting however nothing can be done apart from refurbish the park. AF1 is to investigate to see what can be done. Cllr WM said that the word needs to get out to the community to people in schools, parents, and teachers to address the situation of the vandalism/trashing etc.

State of shops in Bridge Street and High Street.

JC asked how we could encourage shop owners to maintain their premises. Cllr RB said that funding was applied for which could be used for shop owners to do this however success was not seen, Cllr RB suggested that a charter could be made to get people to sign. DT asked what their intentions were and if the regeneration had been in contact with businesses. JA is to contact Cllr Nicola Sinclair regarding this. WC said that those shop fronts which look really bad should get a letter from The Highland Council.

Purchase of building.

AF1 said that Kevin Milkins from Birons Ironmongers had purchased the building which is opposite the Camps on High Street.

Gladstone Place parking.

DD said that someone who lives in Gladstone Place has “built” a small wall to stop parking in a certain area and asked RB how this could be allowed. Cllr RB is to look into this.

JC thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting was drawn to a close.

ACTION LIST

ACTION NO.	DESCRIPTION	RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETED
OCT 20/01	List to be composed of tasks to be taken on during the next big spring clean of town.	Cllr RB / Cllr NS	
OCT 20/02	Update to be sought on NHS Near Me.	Cllr RB / Cllr WM	
OCT 20/03	Cllr NS to be contacted regarding info on Suststrans funding for town regeneration.	JA	20/10/2020

OCT 20/04	Poster to advertise AGM to be designed and advertised.	JA	06/10/2020
OCT 20/05	Wick's Heart to be notified on RBWCC "reps" and council's support for the trust and suggestions for site developments.	JA	09/10/2020
OCT 20/06	Reply to be written to Dr. Pearson in response to email to RBWCC dated 05/10/2020.	JA	20/10/2020
OCT 20/07	Investigations into Wick Grizzly Park to be carried out to find out what can be done with a view to re-open the park.	AF1	
OCT 20/08	Cllr NS to be contacted regarding the state of various shop fronts and buildings on High St and Bridge St.	JA	
OCT 20/09	Investigations to be carried out to establish the current situation with wall in Gladstone Pl affecting parking.	Cllr RB	
OCT 20/10	Breakdown of treasurer's report to be provided including Wick Paths Group and Wick Flower Baskets, micro grants and CC.	KMR	

