



## MEETING MINUTES

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

**Date:** Monday 7<sup>th</sup> August 2023

**Time:** 19:00

<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	"
	Alastair Ferrier	AF2	"
Co-opted Members	Rona Morrison	RM	"
	Roy Mackenzie	RMCK	"
Ex-officio Members	Cllr Raymond Bremner	Cllr RB	Highland Councillor
	Cllr Jan McEwan	Cllr JM	Highland Councillor
Non Members	Darren Campbell	DC	Market Traders
	Mrs Campbell		"
	Mr Miller		"
	David Scott	DS	Press Reporter
	Jonathan Miller	JM	WDT Representative
	Willie MacDonald	WM	WCL Representative
	Wendy Thain	WT	Caithness Klics

<b>Apologies of Absence</b>	
Name	Position <i>(If Applicable)</i>
Jayden Alexander	Secretary

## 1. Welcome and Apologies

AF1 welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies noted above.

## 2. Review of Documents

- **Approval and Adoption of Previous Minutes**

Approval & adoption of previous minutes: proposed by RM, seconded by DT

- **Monthly Correspondence Record**

- Planning. Noted that the Clydesdale Bank was noted for change of use to B & B. JM confirmed that this was up in front of the planning board week commencing 11<sup>th</sup> Sept.
- Defibs. JM voiced that these pieces of equipment should be available on trains
- 09.08.23 consultation on Highland Health & Social Care – to go on RBWCC FB & forwarded to Wick Noticeboard. Action JA/AF1
- 22.08.23 Projecting the future of transport – AF1 to send comment
- 23.08.23 Community Transport – to go onto RBWCC FB & Wick Noticeboard
- 28.08.23 Community Regeneration Fund – to go on RBWCC FB & Wick Noticeboard

- **Action List**

- 1. Photos to be taken of Wick Riverside, Wick Airport, South Head & North Head – JC. AB confirmed that the ATC group were encountering “fly tipping” up at the airport. River Islands have yet to be tidied – *AF1 to chase.*
- 2. Sub Committee for Wick Community Market – *AF1*
- 3. All weather report – JM happy to take this on & chase, AB to send info to JM.
  - *AB to contact Steve Walsh/Ward Manager/John Mackay/Evan Sinclair*
  - *AB to email RB re ownership, now a 17 yr old surface (10 yrs out of date)*
  - *AB/RB to look at funding*
- 4. CGF – JM confirmed no meeting has taken place to date & will advise asap
- 5. Recycling Centre – JM confirmed that this is being reviewed by HC.
- 6. Parliament Square letter to business owners/residents – ongoing

- 7. River House/Alexander Bain memorabilia – *AF1 to write to Watten CC* to see if they will taken on any memorabilia left.
- 8. Letter to Wick Harbour Authority – re Harbour Shed project – ongoing. *EF* will speak with Ian Cormack.
- 9. Speed reduction through Market Sq area – ongoing
- 11. Wick Gala committee & tidy up of river islands. *AF1* advised that contractors have been engaged but will chase this up.
- 12. Bell mouth entrance into Wick Retail Park (Lidl's/B&M area) *AB* advised that this is “no-mans” land and was never adopted when being constructed, this needs addressing. The Retail Park owners & Lidl's are looking into this.
- 13. Pat Ramsay – Wick Library future – Pat not sure what is future plans there.
- 14. CGF artwork – Ward Manager letter. *JC to chase*
- 15. Annual Accounts for all Sub Groups. Flowers copy - received. *AF1 to copy HAPPY year end & to JA.* Christmas Lights – outstanding. *JA to chase*

Following on from the Action List, *AF1* introduced Darren Campbell who is keen to take on and run the Wick Community Market. *AF1* to speak with other stall holders. *AF2* suggested that future stall holders to be there for set up/take down which is the normal for other markets.

*RM* confirmed that the last remaining member of *HLH* staff has now been relocated from the Carnegie Library up to the East Caithness Campus Library. He was under the impression that the Food Bank will be in the Carnegie Library for a further 12 months. *RM* is keen to establish who would be the new point of contact for the building now. *JA to send letter to Ward Manager.*

### **3. Invitees**

Wendy explained that they are based up in the Hillhead/Macleod Road area. They are having to deal with a significant increase in vandalism over these last few months, worrying problem of children climbing to the roof and *KLICS* staff being verbally abused. From primary age to High School age. All of this has been reported to the Police and a plea has been put on Social Media *FB* to parents/guardians to deter children.

They have taken additional & costly measures to try and address these problems:

- The Clothing Recycle Bins have been painted with anti-climbing paint to deter climbing  
(these cannot be moved due to access/uplift of donations)
- CCTV installed to record vandalism

In addition to this, they have the additional problem of car users coming into their playground to turn/park. This private space is for *KLICS* children to play safely & for the *KLICS* minibus to park/turn.

It was suggested that the Roads Dept be contacted to enquire about the old School Gate & road leading to it – does this still belong to HC or Gunns of Lybster. Discussion about alternative road for Public to use to turn vehicles. WT thanked the CC and would take up the suggestions above.

#### 4. Local Organisations' Update

- **Wick High School Representatives**
- Wick High reps – unfortunately, there were none. AB/JA to send invite. AB advised that he was chasing WHS to return to talk to 1<sup>st</sup> year pupils with JC re the respect/ Community Council presentation. AB confirmed only 28% of eligible under 25's have taken up the Free Bus Travel and he will be in WHS to talk to 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> reps regarding this.
- Local Police Report. AF1 gave an overview of the August report sent in by the Wick CC rep: 253 incidents reported, 68 offences, 38 in custody. Decrease in violence but an increase in high value thefts. AB/AF1 recently attended the Community Confidence & Action meeting hosted by Police Scotland. AB confirmed :
  - What they can influence
  - For the Public to keep using 101 but for serious incidents to dial 999
  - Wick Police Station is open 0800 – 1800, 2 members of staff. If door locked, use the Buzzer intercom to be connected & report problem.
  - Being more visible & attending planned community events/coffee with a cop
  - Each CC has a named Police Person, Wick has Brian Hamilton
  - Social media coverage, however Wick has no trained officer
  - Steven Mezzals is keen for us to engage with Probation Officers

JM confirmed that the Police now have 3 push bikes and these will be seen around town.

Friends of Green Road Park. AF2, nothing to report , HC have recently done work **(Jayden, please speak with Sparky to see what work)**

- **Local Police**  
No report.
- **East Caithness Community Campus and Noss Primary School**  
East Caithness Community Campus & Noss Primary School – AF1 advised nothing to report apart for the issues of the All Weather Pitch, ongoing redesign of Reception Area, the poor acoustics & noise in the library when meetings are

being held. This issue was brought up during the building of the Campus but due to budgets, this was not looked at. RB advised this was still on the HC radar.

- **Friends of East Caithness Cemeteries**

WC confirmed they are there every Saturday and Wick New Cemetery is looking really good. Local donation has been gratefully received. RB enquired why we have this group on our Agenda, AF1 advised that these volunteers are supported by the RBWCC and it is good to hear how they are getting on.

- **Friends of Green Road Park**

AF1 advised that The Highland Council fitted the round swing.

- **Wick Development Trust**

- Campsite Phase ongoing & taking shape. Planning has gone through, CRF fund approved, waiting for Dounreay/HIE funding approval to enable the next phase to happen (decision in next 2 weeks). Building warrent underway for toilets, timing is tight for this but they are hopeful that completion will be before next season.
- Campsite bookings have done exceptional this year – 1350 bookings for August, 1200 bookings for July – summer season bookings exceeded their expectations.
- Fewer problems with teenagers
- New deer fencing erected
- Plan for a biodiversity project area in the Trees between park & campsite.
- WW2 trail – waiting for final approval.

- **Association of Caithness Community Councils**

No update was provided due to the absence of Alastair Ferrier. NC advised that the next meeting is scheduled to take place on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2023 and that there is still an issue with the Wi-Fi in Wick Town Hall. AF1 advised that he can attend on behalf of RBWCC along with WC. EF advised that Alastair Ferrier was going to enquire about Watten Community Council getting involved with the campaign for Caithness to receive and retain the Alexander Bain Emmy Award.

## 5. Council Business and Matters Arising

- **Veteran's Memorial Tower**

AB advised ongoing, in contact again with Andrew Bruce and has a planned teams meeting this week with him. AB confirmed that the Royal British Legion area aware of all plans. AF1 asked why the RBWCC was involved, AB confirmed that the RBL had turned to us for help, JC confirmed that we has a CC had agreed to help get this repair project off the ground, all funding would be met by the RBL.

- **Wick Common Good Fund**  
JM/RB confirmed due to the (rising) costs of running the Town Hall, there was a deficit. The Town Hall was CGF but HC looked after it, as other CGF artefacts and until it starts generating monies, it would not cost the CGF anything. AF1 advised that he has spoken with the County Show committee and they do not pay for the use of the lower area at the Riverside which sits on CGF land.
- **Harbour Sheds Project**  
EF sent in her report that great progress had been made, work at the moment has stopped. They had received a number of donations, and will cover the costs of the project. They are looking at adding to the area – seating, containers etc. It was agreed around the table, that this project has been a success. EF advised that they had been approached by the Harbour Authority re painting of their sheds, and it was agreed that EF and Co, should not undertake this. JM stated that the Harbour Authority have their own team that could do this.
- **Wick River Fountain**  
JC advised that the monolith should be ready by early September for installation. JC advised that some PR could then be done with all volunteers.

## 6. Council Sub-Group Reports

- **Wick Hanging Baskets Committee**  
Nothing to report, containers doing well, watering continues, and spring plans have been agreed for bulbs.
- **Wick Community Market**  
AF1 confirmed Darren Campbell is happy to be on the Committee, AF1 will chase other stall holders and speak with other local craft organisations. Next year will way of working. Next Market is on the 9<sup>th</sup> September. Needs volunteers for set up/take down. WC asked who actually owns all the marquees etc. AF1 confirmed RBWCC. AF2 enquired why the stall holders cannot be there to set up etc as they do at other markets. AF1 agreed that this will be looked at.
- **Wick Christmas Lights**  
WM. Preparations have started – they have purchased new lights which will be erected up the Cliff Road all they way out to Lidl's so lampposts need to be looked to ensure they are set up/OK for this. The committee agreed due to the costs of repair, the Chandlers which are seen in the Market Square area will be replaced by new banners. Dates for the Diary – 14.11.23 Bingo/25.11.23 Wick Fun Day. All lights will be in place before the 25.11.23. Santas Sleigh dates will be decided once they find out School Christmas Concerts & Wick Players Panto Santaland & Groto – tbc, they are waiting to hear back from the Wick Youth Club. The tree for Market Square has been confirmed.

They are discussing with HC lighting team about posts. It was suggested that they apply to the Ward Discretionary Fund for HC lighting costs WM was thanked for coming along in Claire's absence.

- **Wick Paths Group**

AB confirmed that during August, a good turnout for the tidy up of the area running from Calders Monument to the Riverside Play Park. New equipment tried & tested – mechanical sweeping brush did well. The path at the North Baths has been widened, contractors will be repairing/replacing fencing along that area. All in all, 3 miles of path have been maintained this summer, not accounting for areas being tidied.

- **HAPPY**

AF1 have a group and a Solo Artist confirmed. They will be asking HC to move a bollard to allow truck in. The entertainment/music licence will be a shared payment between HAPPY & WCM.

## 7. Treasury Reports

- **Royal Burgh of Wick Community Council**

JC confirmed Statement dated 05.09.23 shows money in Bank £19308.82 – however:

£630 was paid into the account on 01.09.23

£487 was paid out of the account on 03.09.23

Therefore, the bank account balance is £19.451.82.

This balance includes monies held for a number of groups who do not have their own bank account, for ongoing projects etc totalling £12818.62

RBWCC monies is actually £6633.20

- **Wick Hanging Baskets Committee**

JC confirmed Wick Flower Baskets £5892.86 as previous month

- **Wick Community Market**

WM confirmed Christmas Lights £4016.75

- **Wick Christmas Lights**

AF1 confirmed HAPPY £1889 (tbc, waiting for bank statement)

- **Wick Paths Group**

£11,968.76

- **HAPPY**

JC advised WCM £1034.00

## 8. Highland Councillor's Report

- Pocket Lanes. AF1 confirmed that the Contract is with HC – RB confirmed that the Legal Department is looking at this and will sign it once they are satisfied of wording etc. AF1/RB confirmed that works has to be completed by 31.03.24
- Sustrans. RB advised Stage 4 is where we are at. HC finalising info/technical info/ facilities/utilities and we should know by March 2024. AF1 asked “how confident are we?”, RB advised “very confident that this will be delivered”.
- DT advised rugby posts going up in the pitch behind the schools. AB asked if ownership can be confirmed as HLH say it's not theirs. RB advised perhaps either Estates or Education depts. Ward Manager might be able to advise. AB to send email regarding this to RB along with All Weather Pitches query.
- RMck raised the Wick Carnegie Library issues. He recalls JA was to draft a letter, but to date, RMck has never seen this draft. He would like clarification on –
  1. The etched pane of glass to be removed and delivered to Wick Museum for display
  2. Who oversees the Air Raid Shelter situated in the grounds. It needs emptied, tidied.
  3. The sculptures found in the basement. Ownership has to be determined if HC or CGF. RMck feels it is HC and they would be responsible for repair.

AF1 posed Questions on Economy and Infrastructure Agenda Minutes 17 Aug 2023 for JM as follows:

- Item 8 Developer Contributions ; Members and local communities can shape developer contributions.
  - 1. How are developer contributions derived ?
  - 2. How much is in the current developer 'pot' ?
  - 3. How can local communities contribute as to how the developer pot spend profile decisions are made ?

JM advised that so much goes to Education (schools etc). HC can't object but note. RB advised around £10k per household & gave examples of new build areas in Inverness – new houses, increase population so new school built, play park, lighting, pavements and so on.

- AF1 asked about new builds in Wick developer monies. JM was of the opinion that this goes into the “pot” revenue and Amenities then receive it.

Background info : From HC EI meeting minutes, 4.5 i States ' Where an appropriate representative Community Group identifies a new project priority that might be eligible for Developer contributions, they can make recommendations for consideration by the



Developer Contributions Action Group ( through the Developer Contributions Officer) and subsequent decision by Area committee.

Chair AF1 stated the Local Plan downloaded from the HC website ( which identifies areas in Wick ward identified for development, and therefore contributions thereof) was dated 2002. RB initiated that a more up to date version available.

- Item 12 Adopted Tree Management Strategy Update

Would JM care to comment as to what this entails ? JM didn't know.

- Item 13 Nature Restoration Fund

Would JM care to comment as to what this entails and clarify what the grant scheme is ?

- Item 17 Tourism Development

Would JM care to comment as to the status of the HC Tourism plan is ? Is there ability for community input ?

- item 18 Visitor Levy Bill

Would JM care to comment as to what the impact of this bill will be to our community ? RB advised that this was a Scottish Government levy and a letter to our local MSP should be sent. Action AF1/JA

- Item 19 UK Shared Prosperity Fund

Would JM comment as to how this fund is being delivered ?

- Item 21 SSEN Community Benefit Fund Consultation

AF1 commented Thurso Cllr Ron Gunn ( Thurso ) was reported in the Local Press with regard to this fund, however on closer inspection it seems as if the local communities that would benefit would be those along the route of the transmission lines which would exclude Wick, unless negotiation with SSE was to occur such that the fund would apply wards county wide eg Halsary. Engagement with SSE will be essential to realise such.

JM confirmed that she will try to advise or help if she is able to.

Cllr RB reported the following:

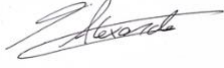
- Whitechapel Toilets making good progress & should be open October.
- Heating in Pulteney area. He is leading this. 2<sup>nd</sup> phase is happening with a possible additional 100 households being connected – a mixture of Council tenants/private owners. In total 173 properties will benefit and it is hoped that this project may be able to “cross” the river to include Wick side. Benefits are being seen by residents – from an £80 pw cost for coal, down to £40 pw, others have seen savings up to £1k pa.

- Roads. Town roads are being marked up. Some already done. Shared work between Roads Dept & Contractors. £3 million for Caithness and will help enormously with upgrades/repairs. AF1 enquired about Green Road. RB advised that there is a Economy Infrastructure Paper List, so maybe this area will be included in the “general list” for the Caithness Area Committee Roads Report.
- Riverside Area CCTV cameras will be installed shortly.
- JC enquired about the painting of white lines on newly retarred roads. RB confirmed Contractors have been indentified and this will happen shortly.
- AB wanted to touch on good news stories – newly arrived Street Sweeper, fantastic bit of kit and he knows the HC boys are delighted. He is aware that HC departments in town are grateful for all that individual groups are doing alongside their workings.
- AF1 touched on recent floodings in town. JM knows about Union Street. RB advised that although the Roads team are busy retarring etc, flooding issues need to be reported so they are noted & attended to.
- RB would like to meet up with AF1 to address the letter sent recently to all 4 East Caithness Councillors.

## 9. AOCB

- JC advised that the new lighting for the businessmen’s corner is being awaited.
- AB advised that he attended the NetZero workshop and found out that the Highland Rail Card is available to the public for £15 which takes 50% off all rail tickets for Scotland and that the YoungScot bus pass which is available to all young people up to age 22, is a service which is being poorly taken up by the public.
- JC raised concerns about the former Carnegie Library, JC will dig out email correspondence with regards to this.
- AF1 raised that the final BOWL cash distribution is next week, RBWCC still currently have funds from the COVID grant which is £6,400.
- AF1 spoke with Julie MacKinnon of Wick Youth Club who hopes to spend the funds received from Wick Academy Development Fund to upgrade the tennis courts at Rosebank, however, their quote has expired and has gone up by £3,000 and more funding is now required. The crazy golf is also being upgraded, however, when materials was being delivered a lorry damaged one of the paths in the area and it cost £5,000 to fix the damage.
- AF1 attended a Dounreay Stakeholders meeting. Dounreay is now a division of Magnox and they are now rebranding.

**Date of Next Meeting:** Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2023

These minutes were approved and adopted as follows:					
Date	02/10/2023				
Location	The David Mowat Room, Wick Assembly Rooms				
Proposer	Wendy Campbell				
Seconder	Roy Mackenzie				
Signed		Name	Jayden Alexander	Position	Secretary