

TARBAT COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 4th April 2018 in the Carnegie Hall at 19:30

Present: Martin Dane (Chairman), Hamish Mackenzie (Vice Chairman), Jacqui Monro, Councillor Fiona Robertson

Apologies: Jackie Thornhill (Secretary), Janet Wilson, Helen Fleming, Councillor Derek Louden

In attendance: Neil Ross, George Terry, Maggie Sowerby, Reg. & Maggie Flegg, Lorna Gordon, Catriona Penman, Jock Munro, Angela Grant and her companion officer from the local police force.

The two police officers stayed until they had completed their report and had answered all questions and then left to continue with other work.

1. POLICE REPORT

The police report for March 2018 was sent in by Sergeant Matt. Ravenhill in advance of the meeting and was read through by the two police officers in attendance. Two further reports had been received re our routine anti-social behaviour candidate.

The police emphasised that we must continue to report all instances of anti-social behaviour, regardless of its seriousness, and try to get witnesses wherever possible. Both the housing officer and the police must be informed.

Concern was expressed by a member of the public that there appeared to be little movement being taken in official circles to rehouse the offender. Councillor Fiona Robertson kindly undertook to contact the housing officer and the senior police representative together with John Lee who looks after anti-social behaviour in the area to see if a meeting could be arranged with them to discuss the whole issue and make them aware of the depth of feeling in the village about the issue.

Pamphlets issued by the police:-

- Poster on the dangers of Human Trafficking in the Highlands
- A guide to Security in the Rural Environment. This is a useful and informative document. A copy of each document will be placed in the Carnegie Hall.

We were asked, by the police, to look out for any suspicious boat activity/landings as the dangers of human trafficking are now coming to the Highlands. *If anyone has any concerns*

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*they should call 08000 121 700. For more information go to:-
www.modernslaveryhelpline.org/scotland*

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (held on Wednesday 7th February 2018)

These were read through by those attending the meeting. Approval of the previous meetings Minutes was proposed by Hamish MacKenzie and seconded by Jacqui Monro.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

Fountain

Hamish Mackenzie has recently spoken to Lachie Stewart about rectification advice re the fountain. Lachie has said that he will do this as soon as his work load allows.

Action Hamish MacKenzie

Access to Tarbat Primary School

A Travel Plan has been developed and submitted. A meeting with a designer has been requested in order to make improvements but no further action has yet been taken. The design has to be approved by the Highland Council before any travel plan can be looked at. Fiona Robertson agreed to chase up the safer routes to school co-ordinator.

*Action Derek Loudon &
Fiona Roberston*

Stand of Trees behind the Carnegie Hall

John MacKay of the Highland Council has reviewed the situation. Contact can be made with British Telecom and Southern Electricity to remove some of the branches if they are likely to interfere with their lines. However, these companies cannot cut down the trees. A member of public noted that there were plenty of fallen leaves on the road causing a slip hazard when wet and asked whether the clearing up of these leaves was a Highland Council responsibility or the responsibility of the owners of the trees. It seems that the owner of the trees is not responsible as they cannot be held liable for where the wind blows the fallen leaves.

Action Derek Loudon to chase the roads department

Repair of fallen fencing at the top of the pathway leading to Castle Street from Bank Street near the Carnegie Hall.

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The top section of fencing which is made from steel poles has fallen outwards towards the steep drop into the nearby garden. The upright members of the fence have corroded through and need to be replaced. The other section of this fencing should also be checked.

Councillor Fiona Robertson took photos of the fallen section of fence and will report this to Highland Council.

Action Chairman & Fiona Robertson

4. COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Derek Loudon was absent from the meeting following an eye examination which had involved having drops in his eyes which prevented him from driving.

Councillor Fiona Robertson gave the meeting an update on the New Tain Campus Project. The £52,000,000 allocated to this project has now been reallocated as the project was temporarily “on hold” until the new public consultation on the plans have been completed. Tain Campus has now moved down the list which has obviously been a severe disappointment particularly to the staff of the primary and secondary schools. The Craighill primary school is now the worst building in the Highlands with regard to its state of repair. The toilets are in a disgraceful condition and many of the pupils refuse to use them.

At the recent stakeholder meeting for the 3-18 campus, of the four site options open to the Highland Council two, the ASDA site and the Kirkshief site have been discounted because the Highland Council officers presentations deemed these to be excessive in cost and reports from engineers, safer routes to schools and other agencies supported this. This leaves the Craighill site and the present site on the table. However, the Highland council have already spent over £1.2m on the previous consultation and site selection and could not at this pre-consultation stage rule out the existing site. This is only a pre-consultation and Highland Council Care, Learning and Housing Committee have to agree if it can move to a formal consultation at their meeting in May. The TCC still generally considered that the existing site left no room for expansion of the school facilities in the future and the current plans left no space for parents to view any swimming activities in the new swimming pool.

Fiona Robertson encouraged everyone to go to the future Consultation Meetings when these are arranged (if the HC agree to progress the project in May) and for a CC Rep. to attend the next Stakeholders' meeting on 24th April. (The stakeholders group is made up of all the parent councils and community councils in the ward, as well as community interest groups and the head teachers from all the schools in the ward).

5. FINANCIAL REPORT

The Treasurer was absent. The chairman reported that the funds stood at £3,190.54.

6. ANY OTHER COMMUNITY BUSINESS

The chairman drew people's attention to:-

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- The launch of SSEN Scotland's Resilient Communities Fund examine rural access to banking. (Hamish and the Chairman have filled out personal forms and Hamish will fill out one for the community).
- The 90 day consultation on the future of the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service

Land in front of Dolphin View Chalets

Hamish reported that all parties, with the exception of one (who is consulting their solicitor), has now agreed to sign the proposed agreement.

Seating on benches near the seafront

The TCC received a report from George Terry regarding the refurbishment requirements for these benches. The TCC has asked him to undertake the necessary work and George will keep the TCC advised re cost. George will also look at repairs that are required to the flower tubs.

Action: George Terry

Stone Planters in the village

Maggie Sowerby proposed that she and others would try to get together to weed and tidy up the planters in the village which belong to the TCC. This could well be co-ordinated with Lorna Gordon's proposed tasks for the Beavers.

Action Maggie Sowerby

Transparent Covers on Notice Boards in the village

Now that the worst of the winter weather has passed, the chairman will replace the perspex cover on the southerly car park notice board. This has been cleaned and examined but was found to have been blasted by blown sand to the point where it was no longer truly transparent even after cleaning and polishing. A new perspex cover has been ordered via the internet (cheaper by far than ERG's offer) and will cost will cost £49.19 which includes £16.66 post and packing and VAT). There will be a cost for waterproof fixing tape to be added but this should not be more than about £15.00.

Action: Martin Dane

Public Toilets

The matter of the possible closing of the public toilets in Portmahomack had been raised again. The chairman reported that he had been in touch with Carron McDiarmid and she has passed on our concerns to William Gilfillan who is the Director of Public Services. We have asked that the Community gets consulted about any plans in advance of any action being taken. There is, as Fiona Robertson reported, no plan to shut the public toilets. However, there is the possible plan of shutting them for the winter months which, George Terry kindly informed us, was regarded as being between November and April. No reply from William Gilfillan has been received and so a message about this has been sent to Caron McDiarmid as

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a chaser. Fiona Robertson agreed to find out more information from Highland Council.

Action: Martin Dane and Fiona Robertson

Dog Pooh Competition

It was suggested that we should have a another “Dog Pooh” poster competition amongst the primary school children as the current posters are in need of renewal. This was agreed to and we will ask Jackie Thornhill if she can bring this matter up with the primary school. A suitable prize will be donated by the TCC.

Action: Jackie Thornhill

Support for the Beavers

Lorna Gordon asked if the TCC could offer some support to the Beavers to add to the support already promised by Homebase. The TCC voted to give this support and, in return, the Beavers will help weed the flower display tubs and generally help tidy up.

Action: Lorna Gordon

Portmahomack Beach Tidy-Up

Jacqui Monro suggested that we take a leaf out of the Dornoch Beach sign and encourage those using the beach to help clean up the beach by using the plastic bags held in the box to put any litter in that they come across. This is an excellent idea and will complement the dog pooh poster campaign. The notice board etc. can be seen on Lisa Smith’s facebook page.

<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=1896036443761746&set=gm.10156126924815359&type=3>

Action: Jacqui Monro to investigate further

Road to Rockfield

This road is in a really terrible state and some serious action needs to be taken by the Highland Council. The potholes are getting bigger and deeper by the day and the verges are getting worse as vehicles try to avoid the worst of the potholes. A concerted attempt needs to be made by the Highland Council Roads Department to schedule a proper repair job in the very near future. An e-mail has been sent to the authority. Fiona Robertson agreed to raise this with the roads officer as a priority. *Action: Fiona Robertson & Martin Dane*

Letter to Community Services Team

Following the recent very bad weather period, A member of the public rendered very valuable service by helping clear snowdrifts, drive ways etc. without any thought of

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recompense. Their actions were brought to the notice of the chairman who wrote to the police and the Community Services Team to see if any of this work could be set against their community services order. This has been agreed to by James Stewart of the Community Services Team who are delighted to see that the community are noting this voluntary work in this way. A draft letter has been written by the chairman in confirmation of the TCC's approval and this will now be forwarded.

NB Although the TCC lacked a quorum on this occasion (only 3 elected members were able to attend the meeting) other members of the TCC have agreed by e-mail so this letter has been duly authorised and has now been posted. (The letter having now been forwarded the authorities have formally agreed to credit the hours to the person involved for worked to their sentence accordingly).

Action: Martin

Dane

Citizens' Rights Project

We have been advised that on Saturday 14th April the Citizens Rights Project is holding an information day at the Eden Court Theatre where there will be a Q & A session with immigration lawyers and experts on Brexit as well as information stalls from a range of advice and support agencies.

The information day runs from 12:00 to 15:00 and the Q & A session runs from 12:30 to 14:00. You can pop into the information stalls at any time.

It's a free event.

Date of the next TCC Meeting: Wednesday 6th June 2018 at 19:30