

## Tarbat Community Council

Draft Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday 5th December 2012 (Not yet approved)

1. **Present:** Janet Wilson, Hamish MacKenzie, Helen Fleming, Neil Ross, Jock Munro, Steve Carroll. In attendance: Kenny Aitken, Inspector Jason Beeston, Sgt. Keith Robb, Alistair MacLean, Toby MacLean, Ward Manager Helen Ross, George Terry. Apologies were received from Cllr Alistair Rhind, Cllr Fiona Robertson, Treasurer Billie Wood

### 2. Police Report

Sgt. Robb reported that the past two months had been "quiet" in the Portmahomack area with three reported incidents, a parking offence, a noisy party and a fire in a dwelling. Sgt. Robb again urged the public to contact Tain Police Station by telephone if they suspected any criminal activity.

Inspector Beeston introduced himself as a new appointment to the area and outlined his history in the Police Force and his views on local policing. He promised to visit again when issues of sufficient magnitude merited. Inspector Beeston answered several questions. He assured us that we will notice no difference in the effectiveness of local policing when the new Scottish Police Authority comes into existence on 1st April 2013. He stated that he placed a high value on the other Emergency Services including the Coastguard Service. Inspector Beeston urged the use of the Crimestoppers telephone number (0800 555 111) to report any instances of speeding, or indeed any incident where the caller wished to remain anonymous.

3. **Minutes of last Meeting** Hamish MacKenzie reported a minor error in the Minutes. The amended Minutes were proposed for acceptance by Helen Fleming, and seconded by Janet Wilson.

### 4. Matters Arising from Minutes

**4.1 Weeds on Portmahomack Beach** Hamish MacKenzie gained support for the argument that action was required to deal with weeds above the high water mark, in contradiction to the view of Ranger Martin Hind. Jock Munro spoke against the use of glyphosate weed killer and stated that mechanical removal was the only option. Toby MacLean volunteered to organise a beach clean-up in the Spring. Helen Ross volunteered to ask colleagues at the Highland Council for specialised advice on the best course of action. **ACTION Helen**

**4.2 Gorse at Tarbat Ness** Steve stated that he had recently spoken to Martin Hind to enquire about progress in this matter. Martin replied that he would visit Tarbat Ness in the near future and hoped to find a group of local volunteers to assist with gorse removal. Steve has already publicised the matter in the village and will do so again when Martin gives a definite date.

**4.3 Playpark Furniture.** The promised roundabout has not yet been installed. It was also reported that inadequate drainage above the playpark was causing problems, particularly during freezing conditions. Helen Ross volunteered to make enquiries on both of these matters. **ACTION Helen**

**4.4 Village Officer** This matter is proving difficult to resolve in view of the current financial situation. awaits resolution. Helen Ross volunteered to discuss the matter with colleagues at the Highland Council for advice. **ACTION Helen**

**4.5 New Bench at Car Park** Hamish MacKenzie has made enquiries about a replacement bench but all estimates have proved to be expensive. However, he is following a positive lead with a local supplier who may be more reasonable **ACTION Hamish**

**4.6 Removal of Derelict Boat at the harbour** Janet Wilson stated that matter was now resolved after a period of about six months. A 28-day Statutory Notice of Removal was attached to the boat by the Harbourmaster in October. This notice had attracted no response and the boat was removed by the authority of the Highland Council in November. It was noted that Due Process had been followed by the Highland Council in this matter.

**4.7 Road Repairs** It was reported that the recent gully repair at the bend almost a mile from Portmahomack was starting to deteriorate. Helen Ross volunteered to pursue this matter. **ACTION Helen**

**4.8 Passing places in Tarbatness Road** Jock Munro described problems with coach parking outside of the Discovery Centre and causing an obstruction to large vehicles. It was agreed to write to the Coach Operator at the beginning of next season to explain the problem and seek a solution. Hamish Mackenzie agreed to raise the matter at the next board meeting of the Tarbat Discovery Centre **ACTION Hamish**

**4.9 Portmahomack Playing Field Development** Kelly Skinner has secured funding to improve the appearance of the pitch and also to make the area more secure as nearby residents were parking their caravans in the parking area and walking their dogs on the pitch. The grant was from Cashback in the Community where young offenders work with skilled tradesmen to pick up vital development skills. They erected a fence along the long side of the pitch, made the entrance to the parking presentable, supplied secure farming gates, planters, benches, new nets and are supplying some chippings for the car park. In all around £3,500 has been spent and this has really given the pitch and pavilion a facelift.

**5 The Councillor's Report** In the absence of Highland Councillors at the meeting, Ward Manager Helen Ross dealt satisfactorily with questions relating to the Highland Council. Helen urged the Community Council to email her with any urgent problems.

**6 Financial Report** Treasurer Billie Wood was unable to attend the meeting but left a message stating that no transactions of any significance had taken place since the last meeting.

**7 Jean Bridgeford Memorial and Well Renovation Project** Alistair MacLean presented his draft plans, specifications and an artist's impression of the proposed development outside the Carnegie Hall. Hamish MacKenzie emphasised the historic importance of the well and recommended consultation with a Highland Council Archaeologist, as well as the Planning Department. The Community Council gave qualified approval of the project and agreed to contribute an unspecified sum of money towards the project. Alistair stated that the plans will be presented to Denis Bridgeford, the Tarbat Hall Community Group, the Portmahomack Gala Committee and the Portmahomack Community Association. Alistair hopes that a Steering Committee will be set up comprising one representative each of all interested bodies. It was decided to ask the Community for any photographs, pictures or any information regarding the well.

**ACTION Steve**

**8 Correspondence** Steve Carroll reported on a number of items:

- UHI Talking Science Community Project
- Moray Firth Partnership AGM Friday 7th December
- Licensing Application - Tarbat Golf Club
- Rhoda Grant MSP - Update on Rural Broadband
- Invitation to Nigg and Shandwick Community Council Meeting 13th December
- Woodland Crofts Seminar Dornoch 12th December
- NHS Highland and Highland Council Event on Health Inequalities 30th April 2013 in Inverness
- Enquiry by Highland Council concerning the suitability of the Carnegie Hall as a Polling Station

After some discussion, the meeting could find no reason to oppose the Licensing Application by Tarbat Golf Club. Billie Wood indicated a willingness to attend the Nigg and Shandwick CC Meeting on 13th December which is concerned with to problems at the Nigg Oil Terminal. It was agreed that the Carnegie Hall is an appropriate location for a Polling Station.

## **8 AOCB**

**8.1 Broadband** Steve has received an email complaining about the poor provision of Broadband in the local area. Steve held a subsequent straw poll of local people with about a dozen replies and proposed to pursue the matter with a view to securing an improvement. **ACTION Steve**

**8.2 Dog Fouling** Toby MacLean stated that canine excrement was a big problem in the village. After discussion, it was agreed that it is very difficult to convert dog owners who do not care about this matter.

Meeting closed at 10.10 pm Next Meeting Wednesday 6th February 2013