

**MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL OF THE ROYAL BURGH OF TAIN  
MEETING HELD ON 26 AUGUST 2013 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, TAIN**

**Present:** Mr D Macdonald (Chair) Mr G Amos  
Mr D Louden (Treasurer) Ms C Mackenzie  
Mr A Mohan Ms S Weir  
Mr D MacIvor

**In attendance:** Mr Rhind – Highland Councillor  
Sergeant Ewing – Police Service of Scotland

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Mr McAllister, Mr Torrance, Mr Munro, Mrs Robertson and Mr Nutt.

**2. POLICE REPORT**

2.1 Sergeant Ewing reported that since last month's meeting there had been 750 phone calls to the Police for the local area. There has been some concentration on speeding checks. 20 speeders caught, plus 20 others for vehicle related items. In the summer period there had been 6 seizures of alcohol from underage drinkers. Mr Macdonald indicated that a letter had been received regarding a decrease in the public attending Police offices. Sergeant Ewing explained that when the Tain station is unstaffed there is an intercom that goes through to the Control Room in Inverness, and the public can get assistance. Mr Macdonald reported that he had not always been able to get through on the 101 telephone number. Sergeant Ewing noted his comments and will pass them on. Sergeant Ewing also reported that conditional offers dealt with at the roadside for all offences had considerably increased recently.

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

3.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on 24 June 2013 were approved by Ms Mackenzie, and seconded by Mr Amos.

**4. MATTERS ARISING**

4.1 **Item 3.1 ref presentation to Tain Fire Brigade.** Mr Macdonald reported that he has yet to have spoken to Mr Whiteley. Hopefully by the next meeting the presentation will be arranged.

4.2 **Item 5.1 ref Ward Forum.** Mr Louden reported he had attended the last Ward Forum on broadband. He indicated that it was more the Seaboard villages that has poor signal, Tain faring quite reasonably.

4.3 **Item 14.2 ref Chapel Road.** Mr Rhind reported that the speed survey had been carried out on Chapel Road, but the report on the survey was not available as yet.

- 4.4 **Item 17.1 ref trees at Links.** Mr Macdonald reported that all but one of the newly planted trees at the Links had been stolen. Mr Rhind indicated that the replacement trees will be replanted. Possible theft prevention methods such as placement of natural barbed stems were considered.

## 5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF 2 AUGUST OF SPECIAL MEETING

- 5.1 Mr MacIvor approved the Minutes of 2 August, seconded by Mr Louden. Mr Macdonald disputed the planning officers assertion the procedure adopted for the planning application had no statutory basis. Mr Macdonald read out guidance from the Scottish Government, which was clearly committed at encouraging community involvement at an early stage and set down quite specific measures as to how the planning authority secured this. After further discussion as to whether a loophole in planning procedure existed and had been taken advantage of by the applicant, it was agreed to await the reply from the Director of Planning before considering further options.

## 6. HIGHLAND COUNCILLOR'S REPORTS

- 6.1 **Mr Rhind's report.** Mr Rhind reported that the cost of the upgrade in lighting at the Mansfield Estate had increased from £10,000 to £78,000. The overtime ban for Community Maintenance Workers had been restored. Mr Rhind commented on the outstanding floral display in the town. Mr Rhind is waiting for an update on the planning application for the St Duthus Special School – trees may be an issue. The consultation for the 3 – 18 years old school campus is on target for November. Mr Rhind to meet with Asda representatives over items such as loose kerbing, the problem at the tennis courts, overgrown trees. The project to repair the Alexandra Bridge is progressing – it may be closed for a short period of time for the initial repairs. The Cemetery extension begins in October. The drain at Tower Street has been repaired. The pricing of repair to the Old Academy Wall and Castle Brae have been investigated and will be discussed with the TEC Director on 4 September. Mr Rhind still pursuing the development brief for the present Health Centre. Landscaping work has been completed on the Adsa entrance on the A9. Disappointingly, there are no road repairs for Tain on the Highland Council list – this will be discussed with the Director on 4 September. The grass verge at the Catholic Church is no longer being cut. After discussion, Mr Rhind agreed to speak to the Priest, the Community Council would write to the Priest, and also to TEC Services in Golspie to try and resolve this matter. Concerns were expressed about the weeds at the Mansfield Estate, plus the broken paving slabs. Mr Rhind to discuss this with the Director on 4 September. Mr Rhind indicated that there was a proposal to erect two flagpoles in the town centre and after discussion it was agreed the Rose Garden would be the most appropriate location. After further discussion, it was agreed that Mr Louden and Ms Weir would investigate the possibility of a Tain flag and this along with a St Andrews flag was considered the most appropriate Rose Garden display.

## 7. COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITY – none

## 8. YOUTH ISSUES - none

## 9. OUTGOING CORRESPONDENCE - noted

## 10. CHAIR'S REPORT

- 10.1 Mr Macdonald reported that, over the past two months, he had been keeping a watch over the tree

situation at the links play park. He had been invited to represent the Community Council at a visit to Glenmorangie Distillery by the Duke of Rothesay, Whilst it was a private event, Mr Macdonald wished there had been more public awareness about it and maybe an opportunity had been missed to bring the visit to the attention and inclusion of the wider public. It was excellent news for the town that the Duke also paid a visit to another local business, Highland Fine Cheeses, in recognition of the firm's commitment to buying its milk from struggling Caithness dairy farms. Mr Macdonald met with representatives of Planning, plus Mr Rhind and Mrs Robertson regarding the Glenmorangie planning applications, and that prompted the Special Meeting on 2 August.

**11. VICE CHAIR'S REPORT - none**

**12. FINANCE AND TREASURER'S REPORT**

- 12.1 Mr Louden circulated an up to date financial report. Discussion on various way of using the annual grant was considered including funds for the Senior Citizen Party and the proposed Tain flag.

**13. LETTERS**

- 13.1 **Maintenance of public areas.** A response was received regarding concerns expressed about the poor maintenance of public areas. Significant budget reductions was given as a reason for the reduction, although a current review is being undertaken on the budget.
- 13.2 **Police Scotland.** A letter has been received regarding a review of traffic warden provision and public services and opening hours at Police Offices – noted.
- 13.3 **Response to Community Council Scheme evaluation 2013.** It was agreed to get the information on email and circulate it for discussion at the next meeting.
- 13.4 **Highland Small Communities Housing Trust.** A letter has been received invited Community Council members to an open day and AGM. It was agreed that Mr Macdonald would attend.

**14. PLANNING MATTERS**

- 14.1 **Change of use of field to develop a base for horse trekking, Fendom** – agreed to support.
- 14.2 **Erection of house at Birch Place** – no comment.
- 14.3 **Construction of new access road at Glenmorangie Distillery** – after much discussion, it was agreed to object to the planning application due to increased traffic at the existing junction which was considered dangerous. In communicating this to the planning authority, it was agreed to suggest better visualisations were made available to help members and the community better understand the extent and significance of the re-modelling of the local landscape. Reference was made back to a pending application relating to an alternative access point to Morangie Road which was considered safer and more appropriate. The previously discussed need for a segregated walkway between the distillery visitor centre and the town was worth raising with Planning for the first time .
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**15. COMMON GOOD FUND**

- 15.1 Mr Louden reported that he had received the financial information on the Common Good Fund extending back to 2008. It was agreed to email the information round to Community Councillor's. Discussion on getting the information on an annual basis was discussed.

**16. UNEXHAUSTED REMITS**

- 16.1 **Cemetery/Alexandra Bridge** – Mr Rhind spoken about these items previously. **Green Environment/ Website development** –no reports. **Mussel Fisheries** – an extensive discussion took place on the Mussel Fisheries. It was agreed to approach Stirling, and Highlands and Islands Universities to see whether they would be interested in undertaking a research project on the Firth with a view to exploring its ecology, to study the present and future health of the mussels and ways in which a sustainable fishery might be assured..

**17. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- 17.1 **Quality Awards.** It was agreed to nominate Tommy Agnew, teacher at the Academy, for a Quality of Service Award. Mr MacIvor to fill in the information. It was agreed not to nominate anyone this time for the Community Awards. However, a letter would be sent to the newly formed Mansfield Estate Residents group praising the impact to date they have had on their area.
- 17.2 **Mansfield Estate Lighting.** It was agreed to write to Highland Council and question the seemingly excessive increased costs of upgrading the lighting at the Mansfield Estate from £10,000 to £78,000.

**THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9.40 PM**

**THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING IS MONDAY 30 SEPTEMBER 2013**

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