

**MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL OF THE ROYAL BURGH OF TAIN
MEETING HELD ON 29 APRIL 2013 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, TAIN**

Present: Mr D Macdonald (Chair) Mr G Amos
Mr D Louden (Treasurer) Ms S Weir
Ms C Mackenzie Mr N Munro (Vice-Chair)
Mr D McAllister Mr Mohan

In attendance: Mrs Robertson/Mr Rhind – Highland Councillors
Sergeant Pearson – Police Service of Scotland

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Mr Torrance.

2. POLICE REPORT

2.1 Sergeant Pearson reported that there had been 865 reported incidences in the area since January, including 37 drug searches, and 2 involving stolen property. It was noted that the crime figures are low and the detection rate in Sutherland is the lowest in Scotland. Whilst there have been some fears about the amalgamation of the Police to a Single Force, so far they have been unfounded. There is a full component of staffing in Tain at present. Ms Weir indicated that there was annoyance with a motorbike in the lane between Hartfield Road and Scotsburn Road – Sergeant Pearson indicated that this issue may have been resolved. Mr Louden enquired about the Mansfield Estate – Sergeant Pearson indicated that apart from some drug warrants it was a relatively quiet period there. It was noted that funding is being sought for improved lighting there.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2013 were approved by Ms Mackenzie, and seconded by Mr Louden.

4. MATTERS ARISING

4.1 **Item 5.1 ref litter on path between Asda and the Burgage area.** It was noted that a litter bin had been positioned at the Asda end of this path. There is a dispute between Asda and Highland Council as to who owns the land the path is on. Guides are undertaking a litter pick in this area.

4.2 **Item 17.4 ref Highlands & Islands Fire and Rescue Service.** Mr Macdonald had managed to source a brass stand pipe which will be gifted to the Fire and Rescue Service workers in Tain as a token of appreciation. It was agreed to get a brass plaque engraved with an inscription and a suitable base. The draft inscription to be circulated to CC members for agreement.

5. HIGHLAND COUNCILLOR'S REPORTS

- 5.1 **Mrs Robertson's report.** Mrs Robertson reported that there had been good feedback from the Ward Forum on the Community Challenge Fund. The topic for the next Ward Forum on 19th June will be broadband. The Chief Executive of Highland Council is retiring in August – his post will be advertised internally and externally. There is a walk-a-bout with the Mansfield Residents Association to highlight items that need addressed – next meeting of the group is 13th May. Mr Macdonald highlighted the problem of water running across the road at Quebec Bridge – this appeared to be a similar circumstance which previously led to the old bridge collapsing, and may need addressing. Mr Amos asked that the drains in the Mansfield Estate/Viewfield Terrace are unblocked. Mr Amos also highlighted the large amount of glass in the general waste bins that are being put out to be collected. An extra bottle bank was suggested for the Mansfield Estate area, but it was noted that Highland Council think that there are enough in Tain at present. It was agreed to review this situation in 6 month's time. Mr Rhind indicated that Asda have been asked to do snagging in connection with their development including dealing with the large pool of water at the Tennis Courts

6. COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITY – none

7. YOUTH ISSUES - none

8. OUTGOING CORRESPONDENCE - noted

9. CHAIR'S REPORT

- 9.1 Mr Macdonald indicated that the CC were told late in the day about the Ward Manager's report going to the Finance Committee on the permanent repairs to the Alexandra Bridge. Jamie Stone was approached and asked to reconsider his support for this matter, as the CC had concerns over the ability of the Common Good Fund to cope with such high expenditure, especially in this case where the Council's management of the asset had been neglectful in terms of past maintenance. It was intimated that Mr Stone may attend the next CC meeting. Whilst Common Good funding for this project had been discussed previously in general terms, it was felt it would have been better for this matter to come before the CC for discussion, prior to the report being submitted. It was noted that Councillor's from other areas make decisions about the Tain Common Good Fund.

10. VICE-CHAIR'S REPORT

- 10.1 Mr Munro reported that he and Mr Macdonald visited HMS Sutherland as the joint Warrior Exercise had finished, with various countries participating. Various events happened during the day with other community groups being present also. It was agreed to send a thank you letter to HMS Sutherland for this event.

11. FINANCE AND TREASURER'S REPORT

- 11.1 Mr Loudon circulated an up to date financial report. Accounts have been audited. The Data Protection Act renewal has come in - £35 – agreed to pay. As an aside Mr Loudon reported he had attended the recent Ward Forum. Various questions and concerns were raised about the Community Challenge Fund. A discussion took place on the Challenge Fund and it was questioned as to what might happen if a particular service required for whatever reason to return

back to Highland Council. In addition, it was agreed that when the Alexandra Bridge contract is ready for tender, Mr Louden is informed so he can let local appropriate tradespersons know.

12. LETTERS

- 12.1 **National Play Strategy.** It was noted that this matter had been forwarded to the representatives from TRA.
- 12.2 **Duthac Centre.** A thank you letter has been received from the Duthac Centre Committee on the award of the Beinn Tharsuinn grant.
- 12.3 **Review of Polling Stations.** A letter has been received and noted re a review of Polling Stations beginning in October – with the review to be published on 1 December.
- 12.4 **Beinn Tharsuinn Windfarm Community Ltd.** A application from Tain Task Force has been received for £1,000 towards the purchase of a small utility vehicle and suitable watering tank. This was agreed.
- 12.5 **Common Good Fund Applications (GCFA).** A CGFA has been received from Tain Youth Café from £5,400 for running costs – insurance, electricity, heating. Another CGFA has been received from Tain Task Force for £2,000 for a small utility vehicle and suitable watering tank. Whilst everyone was supportive of the applications concerns were expressed on the amount left in the Common Good Fund, and leaving enough money in for eventualities, bearing in mind the heavy demand placed upon it by the Council's Alexandra Bridge spend decision. In supporting both applications, members suggested that a limit on grants from the CGF might merit consideration, given the aforementioned concerns. It was suggested there ought at least to be a ceiling of say £10000 per application, pending the return of the Fund to better health. After further discussion, it was agreed to continue to raise concerns on the decreasing revenue and proper balance for eventualities with Highland Council, awaiting meantime a response to our current letter, currently with the Chief Executive on the matter. Mrs Weir thought it might be appropriate for Community Councillors to have some training on how to access funding, and it was suggested SCVO may be able to provide that.

13. PLANNING MATTERS

- 13.1 **To replace 4 UPVC windows, The Cottage, High Mills/Change of use from residential to guest house, 8 Geanies Street** – support. Fascia sign at 15 Lamington Street – no comment.

14. COMMON GOOD FUND – no report

15. UNEXHAUSTED REMITS

Cemetery – noted that the extension works to the Cemetery will be starting soon. **Alexandra Bridge** – spoken about earlier. **Green Environment** – Mr Madonald reported that he, Mr McAllister and Dennis Macdonald will be looking at the trees at the Collegiate Church soon. The flowers for the floral display are currently being prepared in the Poly tunnels. The Japanese Knotweed is going to be looked at. **Website development** – going to put on the CC information in relation to the Data Protection Act, and the new Police 101 number.

16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 16.1 **Annual General Meeting.** It was agreed to have the AGM prior to next month's monthly meeting starting at 7 pm.
- 16.2 **Care of Animals event.** Mrs Stone has organised a Care of Animals event in the Royal Hotel with vets on hand to offer advice on 16th May.

THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9.35 PM

THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING IS MONDAY 27 MAY 2013