

NAIRN WEST & SUBURBAN COMMUNITY COUNCIL
ORDINARY MEETING

7.15pm, Monday 26 October 2020 (held virtually on Zoom)

Minutes

Present:

<i>NWSCC members:</i>	Sheena Baker (in the Chair)	<i>Others:</i>	Hamish Bain (NRCC)
	Jimmy Ferguson		Mandy Lawson (NRCC)
	Alan Hampson		Stewart Stansfield (NRCC)
	Ally MacDonald		Peter Gibson (NRCC)
	Alastair Noble		
	Joan Noble		Cllr Tom Heggie (HC)
	Brian Stewart		John Dolan (Nairnshire Tel)
	Bill Young		Des Scholes

Apologies: Dick Youngson (NWSCC)
Cllr Peter Saggars (HC)
Willie Munro (Ward Manager)

Absent: Lorraine Mallinson (NWSCC)

1. Welcome/Introduction

1.1 Sheena Baker (SB) in the chair, welcomed all to the regular CC meeting following the AGM. She reminded all that the proceedings were being recorded: there were no objections. She invited any declarations of interest: there were none.

1.2 Apologies were noted from Dick Youngson, Cllr Peter Saggars, and Ward Manager Willie Munro.

2. Minutes of previous meeting (24 Feb 2020)

2.1 The draft minutes of the last meeting – prior to the Covid lockdown - had been circulated by email to all members and to Highland Council. No comments or amendments were offered. *The minutes were adopted (proposed by AH, seconded by JF).*

3. Matters arising

3.1 Fireworks donations. SB advised that because of Covid, the BID would not be able to organise any events over the coming festive period, The money currently held by NW&SCC would therefore be retained until an event was possible.

3.2 Website. AM is researching the two Spanglefish options for website hosting. JF and BS offered to assist with the design planning and selection.

3.3 Flood prevention. SB reiterated the hope that the authorities responsible would take matters forward with urgency.

3.4 Common Good. SB said that the sub-group would be reporting on progress to the CC in due course.

4. Treasurer's report

4.1 BY had circulated a report (copy attached). He noted that expenditure was considerably lower so far this year because Covid had ruled out normal meetings, saving on room hire costs. He explained that the 'Sundries' entry was in fact the cost of purchasing the domain name. The CC had a current credit balance of £1,776.59, and was also holding separately the £3,261.12 of donations for 'fireworks'. There were no comments or questions. AN expressed appreciation to BY for managing the accounts at such long range...

5. Zoom licence

5.1 With the prospect of virtual online meetings for some time into the future, the question arose of whether to pay for a Zoom subscription. JF said that there were three levels: Basic (free), Pro (£119 pa), and Business (£159 pa). The last – which offered company branding, online data storage and other corporate advantages – was not necessary for CC purposes. The key differences between the free Basic option and the £119 Pro package was that the free one had a 40-minute session limit, requiring participants to log out and log in again; and the Pro package offered 1GB of cloud storage. Both the free and Pro options permitted the recording of meetings.

5.2 JF wondered whether a Pro subscription could be jointly purchased and shared between NW&SCC and NRCC. It was not clear whether Zoom would permit a single subscription or licence to be used by two separate groups. For the moment, the Free option appeared to be sufficient, but BY noted that there were sufficient funds available to afford a subscription if required. *It was agreed that AM would explore the details and discuss further with Nairn River CC with the aim of bringing a recommendation to a future meeting.*

6. Speeding restrictions

6.1 SB said that a Seabank Road resident had expressed concern about speeding along Seabank Road and that Cllr Heggie had offered comments in response. SB had contacted Council officials and understood that the matter was the responsibility of Richard Porteous of Highland Council. She

thought that “smiley face” electronic warnings might be more effective (but perhaps more costly) than 20mph signs.

6.2 Invited to comment, Cllr Heggie said that one question was whether a 20mph zone should extend across the town. There were already plans to install signs along Lochloy Road. There were ‘ratruns’ elsewhere, partly because of the lack of a bypass. His view was that it was up to the CC to decide whether to pursue the matter.

6.3 AM felt it was not a matter for the CC to decide. There were various criteria to be met. It was for Council officials, as professionals, to examine the options and choose the appropriate mitigation measures. BY added that this should be based on evidence, including the times of day as well as the locations: drivers speeding along Seabank Road were unlikely to be local residents.

6.4 In response to Cllr Heggie, Hamish Bain (River CC) argued that measures should be based on a town-wide survey and appraisal: it made no sense to treat different parts of the town separately. Cllr Heggie agreed. He went on to observe that traffic monitoring had already been done on ‘Pig Street’ [this is the old name for Tradespark Road, but the reference is probably to Sandown Farm Lane – which has ‘rat run’ problems] and this had identified individuals who were regularly exceeding the speed limit. So education and behaviour change was needed. ***SB concluded that NW&SCC would draft a letter requesting that speed-management measures be examined by the relevant Council officials, and invite River CC to endorse it or take parallel action.***

7. New Nairn Academy

7.1 AH introduced the discussion. He welcomed the prospect of a new Academy building, but was disappointed that it was now third in the list of Highland Council’s priorities for funding. His particular concern was that the proposals appeared to be based on a figure of 780 pupils: when there were up to 2,000 more new houses envisaged in the development plans, he feared that the capacity of a new building would rapidly prove inadequate.

7.2 In response Cllr Heggie said that local Councillors had just held meetings with the relevant Council officials. They would be holding further meetings, including with Academy staff and pupils about the LEIP (Learning Estate Improvement Programme). There would also be wider public consultation over the next six months. Both Nairn and Broadford (Skye) would be taken forward. But available funds were limited. He hoped for developments next year, with a target date of 2025. On the question of future capacity, he said that “there are models which allow for expansion” and that Councillors had already taken that point on board.

7.3 SB asked if there was an intention to relocate the Library. Cllr Heggie noted that the Council was obliged to consider the inclusion of other facilities in a new build. But local Councillors were not in favour of moving the library. Its location in the town centre was important for public access and to sustain footfall.

7.4 AM asked if other sites had been considered for the new school building. It would make sense to think of locating closer to the expanding areas of housing in the town. In response Cllr Heggie said that building on the existing playing fields would involve “nil cost” for the site, and argued that “people were used to having the school at its current site”. However, alternatives could be considered during the consultations. AH welcomed this, emphasising the need for appropriate

infrastructure and access, and urging that proposals be fully discussed before the detailed specification, designs and plans were drawn up and submitted.

8. Membership and Training

8.1 SB asked all CC members to give serious thought to identifying potential additional co-opted and/or 'youth' members.

8.2 SB asked for views on the idea of virtual online training sessions. AM felt that virtual training was as effective as gatherings around a table. No one dissented. ***SB agreed to contact Ward Manager Willie Munro about the possibilities.***

8.3 In a brief digression, participants tried out the voting facility offered via Zoom 'chat' . It worked – but it was evident that practice would be useful (not least in ensuring that the motion or action being put to a vote is clear).

9. Update from Councillors

9.1 Cllr Heggie reported that “there were a number of ongoing matters being resolved in other meetings elsewhere”.

10. Questions and AOCB

10.1 No other matters were raised.

Next meeting: 7pm on Monday 30 November, by Zoom.

The meeting concluded at 20:10 hrs