

Nairn West & Suburban Community Council Ordinary¹ Meeting (by Zoom)
7pm Monday 25th January 2021

Present:

Sheena Baker (Chair) (SB)
 Jimmy Ferguson (JF)
 Ally Macdonald (Comm Liaison Sec) (AM)
 Alastair Noble (Vice Chair) (AN)
 Joan Noble (JN) (Associate Member)
 Bill Young (Treasurer) (BY)

Also present:

Hamish Bain (NRCC)
 Steven Bain (NRCC)
 Mandy Lawson (NRCC)
 Veronica Mackinnon (NRCC)
 Stewart Standfield (NRCC)

Andrew Randerson (Nairn town Our Views)
 Des Scholes (Nairn Gurn)

Apologies

Dick Youngson

Absent: Lorraine Mallinson

And 3 members of the public.

Ex Officio: Cllr Tom Heggie (TH)
 Peter Sagers (PS)

Item	Description	Agreed motion/action
1	Chair: Sheena Baker. Welcome and notifications	
1.1	SB informed participants that Brian Stewart has resigned from NW&SCC giving thanks for and recognition to the huge workload Brian undertook on behalf of NWSCC, praising his encyclopaedic knowledge and stating how his contribution has been highly valued.	All members in agreement.
1.2	SB - reminder of meeting being recorded. NW&SCC members identified themselves to attendees. No apologies received. There was no declaration of interests. Participants reminded to log in for second session and instructions given for those unfamiliar with zoom. Public questions to be taken at the end. Time tight for meeting.	
1.3	SB – thanked Des S and Andy R for ensuring Nairn residents were able to read the excellent Nairn Common Good Story produced by JN with contributions from AM and others. There has been tremendous interest, good feedback and good reactions.	
2	Chair: Minutes of Previous Meeting: 30th November	
2.1	Circulated and no amendments required.	Minutes adopted by all
3.	Matter arising from 30th Nov Minutes:	
3.1	Brian Stewart (BS) - Richard Porteous email correspondence 1 st Dec: re signage on Nairn west roads. BS suggested use of SIDS smiley faces may be effective and worthwhile initial step and mentioned active travel status of people funding and our keenness to see this progress Last week an accident with 2 cars and a 91yr old pedestrian occurred at the same spot of previous accidents in Nairn west end and is on the 'rat run'. The 91yr old has been hospitalised. (update since CC meeting: the person sadly has passed away) <i>(Appendix 1.1 for BS comments on this accident black spot)</i>	Agreed SB will follow up on BS correspondence with Richard Porteous to bring Richard's attention to the history of accidents.
3.2	AM - members had an opportunity to view the content of the NWSCC website which is ready to go live. JF – not yet been able to progress going live with the website host but had all the info needed and would contact on 26Jan. Website a work in progress.	JF to follow up with Plexus Media to enable site to go live
4.0	Treasurers Report: Bill Young	
4.1	Report circulated to Nairn Councillors earlier Surplus of £704 for the year to date (9months into the annual accounting)	Proposed by SB Seconded by JF

¹ 'Business' replaced with Ordinary 23/02/21. (AM)
 AM/NWSCC/25Jan21/13:22

	Bank balance: £4983.76. of which £1722.64 belongs to NW&SCC and £3261.12 to the fireworks enterprise. Expenses: £29.95 website. £10.80 Nairnshire Telegraph. Finish.	
4.2	SB – proposed funding a Minutes Secretary as BS has resigned. SB has discussed with BY and circulated the proposal to members. SB read out the proposal and requested approval. (<i>Appendix 1.2</i>)	Proposed by SB Seconded by AN Passed by members..
5.0	Participation Request	
5.1	SB <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive reaction to the submitted Participation Request on social media. The reply received before Christmas from Pablo Mascarenhas (Community & Democratic Engagement Manager, Highland Council) rejecting the Participation Request referred to the outcome guidance and the reason for rejecting the PR. SB understands other councils in Scotland assist people and make sure they know what they are doing when they put in a participation request so that they can achieve their outcome. SB expressed her disappointment that HC are not doing that. 	
5.2	BY: Read out a draft of letter in response to the rejection of the Participation Request. Proposed that the letter is sent to Nairn's 4 elected representatives in effort to gain their support.	Proposed: BY Seconded: JF Agreed by members
6.0	Developers Contributions	
6.1	AM: agreed with SB on the lack of evidence of the decision being taken in public or of any public consultation for the use of the money and called for more investigation. BY: asked for an indication of the DC sums involved and mentioned the need for Academy playing fields for renovation. He understood the DC's to be hundreds of thousands of pounds, and queried the lack of public awareness over the decision to subsidise Nairn Leisure. Called for more information and a proper accounting. How much has been collected and where it is going? SB asked TH if he can follow up on this. He indicated agreement. TH: stated the new academy will be developed over the existing playing fields. BY queried where would they put the playing fields in the interim. TH stated there would be a transition period once the old building was demolished and redeveloped, adding that the All-Weather flood lit surface was due to be renovated around Easter and certainly by the summer and maintained out of HC funds. Temporary arrangements will need to be made over a period of possibly four years in consequence of the development. JN: reported figures she has heard. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> £12,000 (knows figure is correct) from CAB flats immediately opposite the Sports Club and C&A Centre and earmarked for the swimming pool to build a dance studio even though there is a beautiful dance studio in the community centre £60,000 (cannot say figure is 100% accurate) DC from Lochloy again is to go straight to Nairn Leisure at the Swimming Pool not the sports pitches. Expressed that it's strange that Lochloy residents should be contributing towards Nairn Leisure and doesn't know if any residents of Lochloy have been asked if they want the money which they raised by paying £7,000 extra on their house price should go to a facility 2 miles away. At the end of the day Lochloy residents have paid a premium on their house price to the developer who then is paying HC in the form of HLH to subsidise their facility. Felt it was a shameful situation. 	Cllr Tom Heggie to provide a proper accounting of Developer Contributions from Nairn developments and a proper breakdown of proposed use in response to BY request. C/F Developer Contributions to next meeting.
7.	Sandown Highland Council Consultation – SB Chair	
7.1	SB revealed that AM has come back with a late small question which JN has seen. SB stated that fundamentally there would only be a minor change if any and NW&SCC	NWSCC members

	<p>members have had a chance to read and contribute thoughts on the very well put together document – JN’s work acknowledged and thanked.</p> <p>SB asked if NW&SCC members would be happy to submit the response once JN and AM had reviewed AM’s question and made any minor amendment necessary. The final draft to be circulated to members first for approval of any amendment made.</p>	<p>agreed to submit consultation after review of final draft.</p> <p>SB to submit final version to HC Consultation link.</p>
7.2	<p>SB asked TH if responses to the consultation could be seen online. TH responded that Councillors at present do not have sight of anything either but will receive a summary of responses which is the norm in Highland. TH agreed to ask the question and report back.</p>	<p>TH to ask HC about viewing Consultation responses and will report back to SB</p>
7.3	<p>AN made the firm point that this is the not the time to be doing any consultations particularly if online responses can’t be seen and careful consideration of what is happening is required as it makes a mockery of the consultative process. TH responded that online consultations are ongoing across Scotland and Scott Dalgarno said that consultation responses have been more extensive than achieved with public meetings and the other format they had before.</p>	
7.4	<p>SB - After submitting response propose forwarding to Nairn Ward Councillors and Ward Manager. Will then release it for public consumption via NW&SCC website, Nairn Gurn and Nairn our Town. FB page. SB mentioned CC members discussion on proactively circulating the Sandown Consultation response to all Highland Council Councillors. Members agreed with this action.</p>	<p>Proposed SB Seconded AN Agreed by members</p>
	<p>JF Add Donald Wilson to distribution list please</p>	<p>SB to add Donald Wilson</p>
	<p>SB: Dick Youngson and Lorraine Mallinson kept in the loop and are in agreement on the letter.</p>	
8	<p>Councillors update: Scottish Development Fund.</p>	
8.1	<p>SB: Ward minutes of 2nd Dec: (£28,000 allocated sum from SDF towards Nairn) states clearly that Alan Webster (HC) after consulting Nairn Councillors did a desk top exercise in the absence of any ‘shovel ready’ projects.</p> <p>Q.1. Why were the CC’s and other organisations not quickly consulted prior to resorting to a desk top study, as its clear from the newspapers that other communities were consulted?</p> <p>Local councillors in the tourist towns of Fortwilliam and Lochaber insisted on a public Area Committee meeting before making decisions.</p> <p>SB stated that she was unaware of any consultation for its use taking place in Nairn nor was she as Chair of NWSCC told that there was £28,00 available. Ideas and suggestions could have been put forward once the criteria was known. Does this lack of consultation mean we are second class citizens?</p> <p>Q. If it is good enough for Fortwilliam and Lochaber why is it not for Nairn? Consultation could have taken place at the time via email or zoom and ideas put forward.</p> <p>Beaully (CC) are refurbishing their public toilets. Nairn toilets seriously need upgrading pre 2021 tourist season. (not referring to town centre loos).</p>	

SB asked TH and PS to give serious consideration to going back to the subject raised by PS at the joint meeting that the Links toilets require upgrading and the funds would come out of the Nairn Common Good Fund. This is a project sitting waiting, though not technically in the town centre it IS in the recreational area of the town centre.

It is hoped people visiting the links will come into the town to shop but if there is no easy access to loos people will move on. *See comments in appendix*

Why can't the £28,000 be used for upgrading the loos?

The harbour toilets are closed. Would summer reopening of these be an option?

TH responded they had been led to believe a town centre was town centre and were advised to speak to BID to involve local stakeholders. BID representatives were asked before Christmas if they would be interested in acting as agents to develop a project. This is capital funding money which then has ongoing revenue costs perhaps or not. It is a relatively small amount for the town centre and the project mentioned (Links toilets) is being progressed in a different way. Alan Webster produced a report which went to the Nairnshire Committee meeting prior to Christmas with meetings in the coming week to progress that and combine capital and revenue for the development of the High St.

SB sought confirmation that only the Nairn BID had been consulted. TH responded Bob Ferenth and Peter Gibson were invited to consult others around projects to do with the High St and there is a clear parameter that this is a capital sum of money that has to be committed prior to the end of March 2021. SB sought clarification that TH's interpretation was this was a capital sum of money and not for refurbishment. TH responded it is the specified governments parameters and not for interpretation. SB accepted that but asked how Beaulieu were refurbishing their public toilets. TH responded Beaulieu were using different funding sources and doing it in different ways and different groups have different sources of funding. Nairn Councillors were given clear indication of the criteria, took advice and implemented it accordingly.

AM stated she heard what TH was saying but was now confused as the newspaper article implied that Beaulieu was one of the groups that had applied for that money.

BY: said that according to the newspaper the sum involved was over a million pounds of which Inverness received two hundred and fifty thousand or so and asked what happened to the remaining seven hundred and fifty thousand. He felt that Nairn's share of £28,000 was not proportionally correct. TH responded money has been distributed pro-rata around Highland with varying sums to communities. Inverness with a larger community base was given a larger sum. Nairn was given twenty-eight thousand and argued for this amount at the committee deciding distributions.

SB read comments from Murray Macrae's and Andy Randerson 'chat' that backed up the need for the Links toilets refurbishment: (*Appendix 1.4*)

JN: Raised the definition of capital spend as spend on either refurbishment or new builds opposed to ongoing maintenance costs. Secondly had read that the town centre funding was not on a pro-rata basis depending on ward size but was to do with number of towns in Highland with Inverness counting Culloden, Balloch and Smithton as separate towns thereby getting 4 lots of money. However, towns of a population of 3000 were getting as much as Nairn so the system is broken and needs fixing.

PS responded to SB querying if Ardersier and Auldearn counted in with Nairn or Inverness that he did not recognise the numbers being mentioned by CC members. They had

	<p>discussed with BID who will use their own money to supplement the work proposed and the £28,000 will cover capital items in their project with BID money used to fund expenditure that is deemed to be revenue.</p> <p>There is a meeting later this week with Debbie Sutton to discuss the Links toilets with aim to have something in position for the summer season.</p> <p>SB: asked for PS to clarify if the funding for refurbishment of the toilets was to come from the common good fund. PS responded that it may well be a mixture of Highland Council money and Common Good money.</p> <p>Mandy Lawson (NRCC): raised concerns over selective transparency as over the summer there had been keenness for collaboration on community projects between council members and community groups with the two Community Councils, NICE, and Nairn BID representing community views. Some charging for parking on the links was talked about – something councillors were keen to see – which would then generate funding for improving toilets. What was also said at that meeting is that the next steps were to come back with proposals and information on sources of funding as well as charging for parking. The funding source we are now belatedly hearing of was something that could have been brought forward for general information for the town and that though Nairn BID was well placed more suggestion would have surely have arisen. ML pointed out that Nairn River Community Council covers both the High Street and the Town Centre and have had absolutely no communication about this. ML expressed hope that in the future there will be open transparency from the Ward Business Meetings not this selective transparency that is ongoing and has to be put in the past.</p> <p>AN. Stated that from a public health point of view not having public toilets was a disgrace and the lack of disabled toilets in the town centre was unacceptable with the problems with the NC 500 etc over last summer reinforcing the importance for a tourist town to have really good, welcoming toilets. Part of the Nairn BID regeneration effort is to increase footfall. Felt that nothing heard from the councillors evidences fair shares and that serious questions need to be answered on the application of resources.</p> <p>JF: reminded participants of the use of chat facility to air thoughts on proceedings. Des Scholes: Hopes that more public money will go to BID but it looks a little bit opaque around the public money coming to the BID and called for the BID to publish the appropriate part of the minutes. SB asked PS to reflect that to BID directors.</p> <p>JN – Requested that next meeting agenda includes: Contribution of HC to the maintenance of the Links in lieu of rental as it is public open space.</p> <p>No rent is paid by HC for the use of the links when it is a statutory obligation of HC to provide public open recreational space. PS said that he is just in discussion with HC on that subject.</p> <p>SB: To sum up more openness, more consultation needed as it is disappointing to feel that residents are not having a say in how the town is run and what happens to it.</p>	<p>PS to reflect to Nairn BID directors the need to publish appropriate parts of minutes on public money coming to the BID.</p> <p>PS to update NWSCC on his discussion with HC on rental of NCG (Links).</p>
8.2	CAB Flats Project	
8.2.1	TH: Agenda Item for next committee meeting. 4 th Feb 2021. E&I (Economy and Infrastructure) committee meeting will update on what is happening with CAB flats and going forward for final proposals.	
8.3	Covid Funding/Assistance. Ward 18	
8.3.1	SB: No update from Willie Munro as yet to letter from Brian Stewart. Raised a number of questions. Nairn Task Force is leafleting community offering help in the current reimposed lockdown.	

	<p>PS: £ 34,000 discretionary fund of which £24,000 remains. Attempt to get maximum grant increased from £500 has been refused at present but Nairn fund has not refused a single request from Nairn community groups. Anyone looking for funding should contact Willie Munro, Nairn Ward Manager who will take it forward.</p> <p>TH: proactively approached groups – parents councils in schools and every parent council has had an award and a second and third application would not be refused. Limited to £500 grant per time but invite folks to consider additional work they could do. Nairn Ward 18 have a spread sheet with 20 – 30 different allocations and have distributed funds to community councils, charity and various other groups and have been as flexible as possible without extensive form filling and the money is ready with the capacity to roll it over to the next financial year.</p>	Andy R and Des S will put information out on social media
8.3.2	Highland Council Recovery Action Plan Meeting. (25th Jan 2021)	
	<p>SB: Understands that part of the discussion was the possibility of introducing weekly virtual meetings for resilience groups and community councils and to prepare a town centre recovery plan identifying available resources and practical actions council can take to support the town centre and High St businesses. Asked if Nairn Councillors are doing this for Nairn and involving CC's and others. TH: stated there were ongoing meetings and as and when finds it helpful would certainly be involving folks but due to being unable to attend the meeting had no direct personal knowledge of the talking point raised. Town Centre Regeneration Group – called for by the leader of HC but nothing going out to groups from that as yet.</p> <p>SB: In the report it says office bearers to look into this with local elected members to ensure Nairnshire CC's are kept in the loop as proposed and are able to play an active role and hopes that CC and elected members can move forward together.</p>	TH to update
9.	Inner Moray Firth Development Plan	
	Now out for consultation with responses due 1 st April 2021. Thought and discussion on how NWSCC will address its response is required. To be carried over to next meeting.	C/F next meeting
10.	Questions or contributions	
	<p>JF: Asked if there were ways of gaining updates on Covid in the community. E.g. How is NHS doing with vaccination programme?</p> <p>TH: Fri 22nd elected members received an email that he will forward to the Chair SB for circulation. Previous briefings were embargoed but they are now permitted to place the information into the public domain. Health Service area includes Argyll and Bute but does give quite specific figures and targets. 100% of Highland care home residents in covid free care homes have been vaccinated.</p> <p>JF: Suggested a joint Zoom licence between the two CC's would be a good idea if both CC's were in agreement and other public bodies could also use it. Cost around £120.00 /year</p>	C/F next meeting
11	Next meeting: MONDAY 22nd February at 7pm	

Appendix 1.

- 1.1** From BS - Rat runners: have to stop at Albert St (junction) at the illuminated STOP/GIVE WAY by Greenlawns. Once across drivers accelerate down towards the leisure park and Marine Road links. Problem -those coming along Thurlo Rd towards/from Corsee think it is straight through all the way. Crossroads at Seafield St has white lines but no signs and a lot of people (some are rat runners) don't notice or realise they must give way/stop and so BANG! BS thinks big illuminated stop signs on both sides of Thurlo Rd are required as at the Greenlawns junction.
- 1.2** "That NW&SCC agree that when there is no member able to take on the role of the Minute Secretary as a volunteer we pay an individual to type the minutes from the recording taken at the meeting. These draft minutes to be checked by the Chair and when agreed are then available for circulation and adoption. Any amends required to be incorporated into this remunerated role."
- 1.3** "Advised by an officer in the Council planning team that all Developer Contributions to date towards community facilities are identified against Nairn Leisure. These funds have been collected from various developments, including Lochloy, through an agreed approach determined by the relevant Planning Applications Committees at the time and in recognition of the shortfall in provision in Nairn as a whole. I have been advised that this is an entirely appropriate use of DC and that all decisions on the matter have been taken publicly. The use of such funds to invest in an existing facility is felt to offer the best value for that investment as well as ensuring there is provision to meet the deficiency in the short term. To provide separate facilities in different parts of Nairn whilst perhaps a longer-term ambition, might not be economically sustainable based on existing residential density at this time.

In addition, I made enquiries of the position regarding the actual extension project and was advised that Developers Contributions would only be used to fund the expansion of community facilities that are directly impacted for instance to address capacity issues. This is a valid use of such contributions due to increased demand from extra housing as the facility directly serves the wider community. Anything over and above the expansion such as cafes would be funded from other sources and not Developer Contributions"

- 1.4** from Andy: I would agree there Sheena, where I work 29 miles away in Muir of Ord where people work from all over the Highlands and they love to come to Nairn's beach with their families and have been very disappointed in not been able to use clean open toilets and puts them off coming here for the day, and sooner just stop off on route elsewhere.

From Murray: There are a lot of people that are disabled that use the toilets all year round and now find it difficult to visit the harbour and links area. I would like to bring this to everyone's attention.