

Nairn West & Suburban Community Council
Ordinary Meeting: Mon 26 June 2023, Nairn Community & Arts Centre

DRAFT MINUTES

Present:

NWSCC Members: Alastair Noble (AN, Chair)
Alan Hampson (AH)
Joan Noble (JN)
Brian Stewart (BS)
Graham Stuart (GS)
Phillip Stuart (PS)
Dick Youngson (DY)

Others: Paul McDonald (public)

Ex-Officio: Cllr Paul Oldham

1. Introduction (AN)

- 1.1. AN welcomed all and conveyed apologies from Cllr Laurie Fraser, Cllr Michael Green (MG), Cllr Babs Jarvie, Kevin Reid and Lorraine Mallinson.
- 1.2. AN expressed his sadness at the death of Winifred Ewing, former MP and MSP for Nairn.

2. Declaration of Interests

- 2.1. None declared.

3. Minutes of Last Meeting, 22nd May 2023 (link [here](#))

- 3.1. Minutes were approved as an accurate record (proposed by DY and seconded by PS)

4. Accounts and Admin

- 4.1. PS reported that the bank account stands at £2200.75 when outstanding bills for room hire and insurance are taken into account.

Matters arising or carried forward from May meeting

5. Local Place Planning (AN)

- 5.1. AN updated the meeting on the LPP, as follows. A very positive meeting between stakeholders and officials was held on 12 June resulting in agreement to move forward with LPP for Nairn and Nairnshire. The Steering Group will consist of Chair NICE, Chair BID and representatives from both CCs and can be expanded if needed. Becky Richmond, who leads the Black Isle LPP, has been appointed start-up Project Manager and Ice Cream Architects will manage graphic design and publicity. The start-up fund allows the project to take off and there are several other fundings streams in place to meet future costs. Input has been received from Ewen Mcintosh and Scott Dalgarno who are responsible for HC role out of LPPs throughout Highland. There are publicity plans in place for July and August to inform all

individuals and communities as to how best they can be involved to make sure this is genuinely community led. The team will be attending the Riverside Picnic/Queen's Park Residents- 22 July, Nairn Farmer's Show -29 July and Nairn Games (Bandstand) -19 August. Core data sets for population and housing needs are already being worked on and have to be agreed and ratified by the Scottish Government Reporter at an early stage. Initial local consultations will take in September and October to agree localities and priorities. The initial proposals will be re-consulted on in November and after further consultations will be finally agreed with Highland Council in December/January for submission to Scottish Government. The LPP must comply with National Planning Framework (NPF4) guidelines and best practice, and it will be the basis for Nairn's New Development Plan which should be a prioritised, costed, and deliverable action plan for essential infrastructure needs. It will be a very busy autumn, but the more who take part and help the better will be the outcome.

- 5.2. GS asked how it would be determined whether Nairn's 'hinterland' communities would be involved. AN responded that it would be up to representatives of the communities to decide whether to be involved and lead their process. PO acknowledged that East Nairnshire CC is not active and Auldearn CC meets infrequently. In response to a question from BS as to whether the Nairnshire CCs were aware of the upcoming LPP, AN responded that he had been in touch with representatives of these communities. PO said he would like to see Ardersier included because of the potential impact to Ardersier and Nairn of Ardersier Port development.
- 5.3. The critical funding support of River CC to kick-start the LPP process was acknowledged. It was agreed that NWSCC would make funds available for maintaining the progress of the LPP, as required.

6. Common Good

- 6.1. Appointment of Common Good Project Officer (CGPO)
 - 6.1.1. MG conveyed to AN prior to the meeting that there had been a number of applicants for the open position, and it was hoped to make an appointment soon.
- 6.2. Draft Proposals for Terms of Reference (ToR), Membership and Tasking of Common Good Engagement Group (CGEG)
 - 6.2.1. MG had advised to AN that the draft ToR, which was written by Legal officials, and other details would be shared after appointment of the CGPO. There was a long discussion about whether the draft should be circulated in advance for feedback (as had been previously committed to do at the December meeting). PO mentioned that there is a desire for the CGEG and its ToR to be a template for other Common Good Funds. JN and BS felt that it was important for NWSCC to be able to comment on the draft. This need not be dependent on or linked to the timing of the appointment of the CGPO. GS commented that the membership criteria and formation was most relevant to share in advance for feedback and the other ToR should be approved by the group itself. It was decided that JN would write to THC legal Department to request a copy of the current draft ToR. **(Action: JN to send letter requesting a copy of the current draft ToR).**

6.2.2. There was also some discussion on the role and duties of the CGPO [**Post-Meeting Note** - the job-post with role outline is linked [here](#), link active as of the meeting date].

6.3. Discretionary Charging for Common Good Facilities for Events

6.3.1. PO cited discretionary charging as an example of an aspect of CG management which could usefully be considered by the CGEG. He explained that the tariff of charges was administered by officials under delegated powers and made on the basis of past practice. BS agreed with PO's observation that this was not very appropriate.

7. Parking Scheme Feedback from Legal Services

- 7.1.** AN expressed disappointment that, despite a prior assurance from MG that the legal opinion from Stewart Fraser would be delivered by the end of last week, nothing had arrived.
- 7.2.** JN responded to queries from AH and PS that the newly painted permit parking bays at Millbank School were allocated on the TRO map from 2018 (downloadable TRO map from 2018 linked [here](#)).

8. Spindrift Caravan Site Planning

8.1. MG had briefed AN prior to the meeting that he was going to chase up Malcolm Macleod for a response to the letter sent. A robust discussion followed within the constraints of PO being unable to discuss specific planning matters as a member of the Planning Committee. PO referred back to his previous correspondence and expressed disappointment that this was deemed insufficient for the CC, who continued to press on the matter. JN acknowledged the limitations of the information that PO was able to provide at the time but reaffirmed that the response was insufficient to be able to understand the situation fully. A discussion followed with NWSCC members emphasising the importance of community bodies being able to scrutinise the planning process and decisions with historical context. JN informed the meeting that detailed information had been received via an FOI request and the complex legal situation that has arisen is now apparent.

9. Vaccination Policy Progress Report (AN)

- 9.1.** Both PO and AN shared stories of ineffective vaccinations practice under the current policy and AN indicated his grave concerns for the effectiveness of child immunisation in the area.
- 9.2.** AN reported that the Scottish Government Cabinet Secretary had declined to meet with Fergus Ewing, Adrian Baker and AN to discuss the inefficiencies and inadequacies of the present implementation.
- 9.3.** PO reported that a meeting took place with an NHS Highland representative and that a number of unanswered questions were to be followed-up.

10. Road Access and Safety Issues (A96 at Altonsyde)

10.1. AN reported that a meeting about possible path alongside allotments is to be held with stakeholders with a view to the creation of a path alongside the North

side of the A96, which would be subject to planning permission. Common Good land is involved.

11. Delnies Development Site

11.1. PO said that there was nothing to report from the Council on Delnies. It was noted that stakes have been inserted into the ground in one area and Paul McDonald from the floor reported that a building warrant to the value of £41M had been lodged by Barratts at significant cost. JN reminded the meeting that planning approval was extended until Aug 2024 but the development is no longer supported in the IMFLDP Report. NWSCC remains concerned that this matter will become another serious planning dispute which will increase tension and uncertainty and may result in undesirable outcomes for Nairn. The original consent conditions, which linked the construction of the 300 houses to the delivery of a range of other recreational and leisure developments on the Delnies site, appear now to be disregarded and a response is awaited from Scott Dalgarno asking for clarification on that linkage and enforcement.

12. Nairn Academy

12.1. AN reported that a stakeholder meeting is to take place on 28th June and that an announcement is due from the Scottish Government on funding on 30th June. Recent publicity on the deficiencies in the type of concrete used in the building were noted, see details in PO blog linked [here](#).

13. Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan 2 (IMFLDP2)

13.1. Further information has been requested by the Reporter from NWSCC as a body which had commented on the levels of local housing need. (**Action:** JN to send response and share with NWSCC). The Reporter has asked if National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4, link [here](#)) issued since the Plan was submitted has implications for the Plan and JN commented that 'infrastructure first' recommendations in NPF4 aligns with local sentiments and the councillors' position on no new development at Nairn East until the by-pass is delivered.

14. Developer Contributions (DCs) - Involvement of Local Community in Allocation

14.1. The question on whether there are meaningful changes in procedure to involve local groups in deciding on allocation of DCs for community projects was deferred until next meeting for feedback from MG.

15. Community Regeneration Funding (Details linked here)

15.1. Details of the funding are linked [here](#). NWSCC sought feedback as to the methodologies or formulae are used to allocate monies to Nairn from the various funds. It was noted from the paper that was submitted to the May E&I Committee (download link [here](#)) that Nairn receives 4.01% of funding from the Place Based Investment Programme and UK Shared Prosperity Fund. The paper 'proposed to retain the allocation methodology used in previous years' - but did not explain what that methodology was. PO responded that Nairn's population is about 5% of the Highland population and that he thought the town was doing rather well to get 4.01% considering that it is considered to be a prosperous town

with relatively lower needs, formulae are hardly used and other needs also taken into account. JN and BS believe that Nairn does not seem to get its fair share compared to other communities; Inverness receives millions of pounds from the City-Region Deal and smaller (<3k population) communities have access to rural funds not open to Nairn. AN expressed again his view that Nairn has been deprived £30-40M of a fair share of health and social care funding.

- 15.2.** PO and Paul MacDonald noted that deadlines for funding applications were often very short, and that this highlighted the importance of having 'shovel-ready' project bids prepared. In response, others (JN and BS) commented that the evidence showed that this resulted in inconsistent planning, *ad-hoc* short-termism and piecemeal delivery, and was an inefficient way of setting priorities and allocating resources

16. Access Platform to Nairn Beach

- 16.1.** AN informed the meeting that the platform was to re-built by the contractor.

New Matters Arising

17. East Beach Car Park

- 17.1.** JN reported that children's play equipment has been removed from caravan park extension next to the East Beach car park and signage issues have not been addressed. The provision of a playpark was part of the original planning approval for the site extension. There is still no sign indicating the East Beach car park from the Maggot car park, despite Cllr Jarvie requesting Highland Council to provide this and signs at the car park have been removed or are in the wrong location. (**Action:** JN will follow-up with Cllr Jarvie removal about signage; PO will follow-up about the right of removal of play equipment)

18. NWSCC Future Membership and Engagement

- 18.1.** PS kicked-off an initial discussion on potential initiatives for bringing people forward to join NWSCC in time for the CC elections. AN mentioned that feedback from Black Isle LPP organisers was that community engagement was enhanced during the process. PS offered to lead on creation of leaflets that can be distributed during the LPP public events, JN has access to publishing software to help with content. (**Action:** PS and JN to coordinate production of leaflets)

19. AOCB

- 19.1.** PO noted that Derek Brown had been appointed Chief Executive of Highland Council, details linked [here](#), and from a brief discussion with him, he is optimistic that Mr Brown will be supportive of constructive working with community councils.

Next meeting Monday 31st July 2023