

Nairn West & Suburban Community Council
Meeting: Mon 29th April 2024, 7pm, Nairn Community & Arts Centre

Present:

NWSCC Members: Kevin Reid (KR, Chair), Kristin Duncan (KD), Cory Jones (CJ), Alastair Noble (AN, Vice-Chair), Joan Noble (JN), Graham Stuart (GS, Sec, Minutes), Phill Stuart (PS, Treasurer)

Ex-Officio: Michael Green, Babs Jarvie, Paul Oldham

Public: Hamish Bain, Mandy Lawson (ML), Veronica McKinnon, Murray McRae, Brian Stewart, Loreine Thompson (LT)

AGENDA

1. Declaration of Interests on Agenda Items - None

2. Minutes of Community Council Meeting, 25th March 2024, for Approval ([link](#))

- The minutes were approved by AN and seconded by KD, subject to the following amendment to item 10: "JN commented that Forres and Elgin had received flood defence funding and that Nairn had fallen through the cracks [for funding previously](#) because ~~the River Nairn was split between Highland and Moray Council responsibility~~, that neither population on each bank [of the River Nairn](#) met the criteria for attention but together comprised a higher population need than either Forres or Elgin. [\[Added link: Flood Risk Management Plan 2021, Findhorn, Nairn and Speyside.\]](#)"

3. Review of Actions Log from Last Community Council Meeting (See Appendix) (GS)

- Active Travel Signs – An email was received from Gary Kennedy ([link](#)) indicating that the proposed routes for the signs no longer or do not meet the required standards for shared use paths and that redetermination orders and widening of the footpaths will have to take place for them to be compliant shared use paths. JN questioned why the three paths (Vets to the Tradespark shop, King Street to swimming pool and promenade through Viewfield and from Sainsburys' to the town centre) should not comply with regulations. BJ in email correspondence and in the meeting commented that relaxation of regulations during Covid may have ended, that steps should be taken to ensure the signs stayed available for Nairn, that funding for active travel should still be available and that Gary Kennedy should be approached for details of the changes required to the paths. It was decided in the meeting to connect JN and Gary Kennedy to get more information on the non-compliance and potential next steps (**Action: GS** to contact Gary Kennedy to connect JN for a discussion).

4. Accounts and Admin (PS)

- PS reported that the bank balance is £2773.66. Outgoings not yet accounted for are the pledged sum of £1000 to NICE for the Local Place Plan and website subscription of £78. The e-bank account conversion is still in progress.

5. Planning Applications Submitted Since Last Meeting for Review (GS)

- Land next to 13 Moss-side Road - (24/01162/PIP)_ ([link](#)) – No reservations, JN remarked that the site was next to the Alton Burn and a potential flood risk that the buyer to be aware of.

6. Local Place Plan Update (AN)

- AN reported that plans for the LPP were going well, invitations to May workshops are going out.
- The short notice AOCB item, the Masterplan Consent Area (MCA) Consultation was discussed. MCA legislation has been enacted but not yet introduced ([link](#) to ScotGov) with

the goal of enabling a more streamlined process to address complex planning situations. A consultation on the implementing regulations is underway and Highland Council elected members have been given little notice to review a draft paper on the Council's interpretation of MCAs. Nairn's Councillors sought assistance from members of the local community with experience in planning to respond to the draft, which contained concerning statements and positions e.g. suggesting MCAs for housing developments to meet speculative needs resulting from the Cromarty Freeport and explicitly ear-marking Nairn East as a potential MCA site, even though this site was rejected by the Reporter in the IMFLDP2 review. A draft response from the Community Group was prepared over the weekend and shared with NWSCC members on the day of the meeting for endorsement. CJ and PS expressed concerns about being requested to give approval at such short notice without context. ML from the floor summarised the legislation consultation and the threat to Nairn in the interpretation of use of MCAs by Highland Council in their draft response, which may undermine the IMFLDP2 and the Local Place Plan. The swift action and output of the community group was acknowledged, and the paper was given formal endorsement by NWSCC.

7. Community Regeneration Funds Distribution (GS)

- A discussion took place on the letter to the councillors arguing for improved allocation of Highland Council funding for Nairn ([link](#)). There was general agreement from the Councillors that the allocation of the Coastal Communities Fund (CCF) was unfair to Nairn, it was mentioned that some discussions had taken place in closed meetings and it would be difficult to change the *status quo* with members from the areas that benefitted most from funding. JN remarked that the CCF was based on Crown Estates revenue, most of which came from ports, and the length of coastline methodology does not take this into account (Sutherland has no ports). LT from the floor suggested that tourist numbers should be taken into account for allocation of funding, ML commented that obtaining specific tourist numbers for Nairn, disaggregated from Inverness and loch Ness, had not been possible. With respect to the towns' allocation in Place Based Investment Fund (PBIF), JN noted that the population for a town was set too low at 1000, such that Strathspey & Badenoch had four towns and four times the towns' allocation compared to Nairn, and smaller communities are able to access other funding streams. JN suggested a fairer towns' threshold of 3000. PO commented that the allocation methodology of the PBIF was set by the Government. PO also pointed out that Nairn had received more than its allocated share of UK Shared Prosperity Funds in 2024 for three projects in the ward (See Oldham Blog [link](#), Nairn Community Transport - purchase of a new minibus - £44,500, NICE - Local Place Plan phase 2 - £35,000.00, Nairn Bowling Club - creating support mechanisms within the community - £25,965). BJ felt that the four-year time period since adopting the CCF methodology merited a review and proposed that the CC should try to influence Officers, firstly by forwarding the letter to the Community Support Officer, (**Action: GS** to forward letter to Mark Greig). MG said he would check when the CCF will come again before the E&I Committee, (**Action: MG** to report back to NWSCC on when the CCF will come before the E&I Committee).

8. Nairn Common Good Charging and Leisure and Recreation Spend in Nairn (JN)

- A discussion on the letter arguing for greater fairness for Nairn on Leisure and Recreation ([link](#)). MG commented that the letter was a good starting point for considering an approach and tactics to addressing the unfairness of the situation, highlighted by the zero support for the community centre. HB from the floor asked if the King George V Park at Riverside was part of the Common Good and JN responded that it was not. PO wanted to be sure that all the facts on other areas were correct, he pointed out that Highland Council had withdrawn from Inverness Town House and is no longer paying to use the facility and that Inverness Common Good substantially funded Bught Park and Northern Counties Meeting Ground. PO also queried whether Chanonry Point was being maintained by Highland Council *in lieu* of rent, (**Action: JN** to follow-up on the source of

the information for Chanonry Point). With respect to the request to not implement voluntary payment for use of the Links, PO felt that this was a topic that should be brought to the Common Good Engagement Group (CGEG). PO noted that the Common Good Trustees recently approved 2024 High Life Highland spend for Links maintenance. It was proposed that L&R spend on the community centre was a topic that may be covered at the Community Councils' joint meeting in May. (**Action: GS** to propose L&R funding for the community centre as specific topic for joint CC meeting).

9. Ardersier Port Community Benefit Fund Working Group (PS)

- PS summarised the first meeting ([link](#)), the structure of the funding is according to Foundation Scotland practice. Importantly, it was confirmed that even though Nairn River CC area is not covered by the fund, projects out with the NWSCC boundary that benefit all of Nairn are eligible to be submitted for funding.

10. Nairn District Planning Group – including NNCP (AN)

- AN attended the Planning Group Meeting, he noted there was really good local representation and that one of the key points was that charities supporting vulnerable people should have the appropriate training in place. (Adult Services Strategic Plan [link](#) for info)

11. Common Good Engagement Group (CGEG) (JN)

- JN gave a brief update from the first meeting on 24th April, which was considered successful. There were presentations from a representative from the Land Commission and from Highland Council's Common Good Officer, followed by a wide-ranging discussion on ownership, contracts, accounts, future participation and desire to avoid top-down decision-making rather a more consultative approach. MG agreed that it had been a successful meeting and that the meeting participation could be flexible depending on topics, e.g. allotments may have different input to planning matters.

12. Coastal Erosion (KD)

- KD referred to the summary of the central and East beach site meeting on 15 April ([link](#)). The author of the Dynamic Adaptive Pathways report is due to present to councillors in May and PO commented that he would like to discuss the central beach erosion he witnessed at the site meeting, which was not an area covered by the report 'because this short section of coast is protected by previously installed rock armour and therefore falls outwith the scope of the Dynamic Adaptive Pathways approach. PO mentioned that the Adaptive Pathways study had been organised by Highland Council from central funding but that there is no funding in 2024 for dealing with the recommendations of the report. MG reported that he attended a COSLA meeting in Edinburgh where the threats from climate change were widely discussed and the lack of current prioritisation for funding was a major issue. (For information, Summary of Dynamic Adaptive Pathways Report ([link](#))). JN's suggestion that CCF funding for 2025 could be used to tackle coastal erosion was considered to be a good one. The topic of coastal erosion is planned for the agenda of the joint CCs meeting in May.

13. A96 Tradespark Wood to Sandown Road Speed Limits (CJ)

- CJ presented a summary of the current situation. In March 2023, Transport Scotland assessed traffic at Tradespark and the data indicated 5M cars per year and 2M travelling at over 40mph. CJ and his partner had personally lobbied for a crossing and Transport Scotland responded with the recommendation that a controlled pedestrian crossing be installed, subject to meeting the required formal requirements. Amey has been actioned to present a design but it is already highlighted that there may be challenges to having a crossing approved. BS from the floor noted that the crossing was planned within a 40mph area, CJ responded that Transport Scotland have a report on speed limits that has not yet been shared and this issue is likely part of the design considerations. JN noted that the

sightlines for motorists approaching a crossing from the corner leaving Nairn were not good and CJ acknowledged that this may also be an issue for design approval. PO mentioned that Amey is due to participate in a Ward Business Meeting and councillors intend to raise the possibility of 30mph limits being extended at both ends of the town.

14. AOCB

- Nairn Bypass Meeting 31st May, noted for information.
- Tradespark Hall Charity Update (JN)
 - **Action: JN** as agreed to draft letter to OSCR seeking attention to the status of the charity.
- Vaccinations Update (AN)
 - AN had a discussion with Tim Allison from NHS Highland who acknowledged that vaccination rates are too low but did not seem to have a plan to deal with it. MG in his role as Nairnshire Area Committee chair had written to the head of public health requesting current and historical vaccination data for the Ward and had no response to date. AN to follow-up with Tim Allison and request a response to MG letter.
- Delnies Planning / SUDS Area (AN)
 - AN reported that Delnies developer has indicated an area for its SUDs location, apparently the only location available for a viable development, which is contrary to the masterplan and reserved for golf course expansion should coastal erosion require it. AN reported that NICE and Nairn Golf Club will collaborate on the Delnies development and dealing with this latest information. ([Link](#) to some basic SUDs information).
- Next Meeting 22nd May, tbc, including AGM.

For Reference - Communications from/to NWSCC Since Last Meeting

- 20240325_Oldham_SEPA_PVAs ([link](#))
- 20240326_NWSCC_letter_Nairn_Academy_Planning_([link](#))
- 20240409_NWSCC_Email_Campbell_Nairn_Academy_([link](#))
- 20240412_NWSCC_Letter_Councillors_Funding_([link](#))
- 20240412_NWSCC_StuartPh_Ardersier_CEG_([link](#))
- 20240314_Email_Herron_Ardersier_Working_Group_([link](#))
- 20240419_NWSCC_Duncan_Coastal_Erosion_Site_Visit_Summary_([link](#))
- 20240422_NWSCC_Letter_CG_Charging_Leisure_spend_([link](#))

Appendix – Actions Log

(Date) Action	Status
<p>(29Jan24) Community Regeneration Funds Methodology - Action: GS/JN to draft email to councillors drawing attention to the huge differences between funding allocated to Nairn compared to other regions and asking them to push for a better allocation.</p>	<p>Agenda item 8</p>
<p>(25Mar24) - Active Travel Signs – Action: GS to follow-up with BJ to identify person responsible for providing update.</p>	<p>Update – No responses from Transport, BJ to discuss with Access Panel</p>
<p>(25Mar24) East Beach Signage and Conveniences - Action: JN to follow-up with Ali Garrow to confirm the CC support for the design and enquire about the size of the signs.</p>	
<p>(25Mar24) Nairn Academy – Library Relocation Action: GS to draft a letter requesting a response to the last letter submitted, requesting that the public library references be removed from the planning documentation and that a decision on the public library is not part of the school planning approval.</p>	<p>Completed – link, plus email to Robert Campbell requesting a meeting, link</p>
<p>(25Mar24) Ardersier Port Community Benefit Fund Working Group Action: AN to confirm to the organiser that CJ, PS and Rev. Steven Manders are proposed.</p>	<p>Completed- link</p>
<p>(25Mar24) Nairn District Planning Group Action: GS to confirm to organiser the AN is nominated by NWSCC.</p>	<p>Completed - link</p>
<p>(25Mar24) Coastal Erosion Report Commissioned by Highland Council Action: KD to connect with River CC with the proposal for a Working Group and organisation of a site visit after the Councillors’ meeting and before next NWSCC meeting.</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>(25Mar24) A96 Tradespark Wood to Sandown Road Speed Limits Action: GS to organise with CJ a follow-up letter and ensure that there is liaison with Nairn Access Panel.</p>	<p>Completed</p>