

Kirkcowan Community Council Meeting – 15th February 2021

at 7pm, online via Zoom, due to continuing Covid19 restrictions

Draft Minutes

Present: Charles McEwan (Chair), Hazel McWhirter (Treasurer), Debbie Mcbain (Sec.), Dave Mcbain, Mary Harkness, Joe Wright, Katrina Dick, Wendy Wood, Tricia Veevers, Mary Mackenzie (Minutes), Bill Harkness, Richard Marsh, Alix Parker, Douglas Bannister, Janice Sommerville, Cllrs. David Inglis & Jim McColm

- Chair welcomed everyone** and gave a quick update: The Steering Group had its first meeting which was very constructive, focusing on moving forward with the Park, development of the top playground at the school, and the Rest Garden. 2 Landscape Architects have been invited to submit plans for the Park based on responses to last year's survey, and residents will have the opportunity to choose. Other sites will be looked at for the MUGA, and it was alternatively suggested that a minibus could be bought for community use, including taking young people to use the MUGAs in Wigtown or Newton Stewart for organised sports and events.
- Apologies:** Lesley Parker, Andrew Gladstone
- Minutes of the last meeting (21/12/20):**
Minutes accepted: proposed by MH and seconded by JW
Matters arising – Regarding the Autumn Club, M Murdoch asked why Jak Kane, Machars Action, held the deeds for the building. KD – a copy of the title documents was bought to ascertain who owned the property. At present it is solely for use by the Autumn Club for over-55s, and therefore not possible as a Community Shop.
- Police Matters:** DMcb emailed report to KC Councillors. [KCC Police Report February2021](#)
- Treasurers Report:** HMcW
Account no.1 has £46.30 | Account no.2 has £12,958.55
£28.78 has been spent on Zoom meetings since the last meeting.
DGC Resilience Grant has been applied for, just need fill a form to record spending and return any surplus. Not too difficult.
- Correspondence:** None
- Planning:** No local planning applications this month.
- Update from 17th January KCDT meeting:** DMcb
Discussed MUGA. Agreed with the formation of a steering group to progress Park / School Playground/ Games Area projects. Employability / Education Grant – could widen the scope to include help for apprenticeships/ HGV licence etc.

KCC Resignations: Dan Baillie and Jackie Mortiboy have resigned as Councillors.

Alix Parker has offered to join KCC. MH - How do we fill vacancies? DI – Publicise to community via usual routes – Facebook pages, website and in the Minutes, a hard copy of which should be displayed in the PO, as well as a separate poster. If there are more candidates than available posts, then the Ward Officer should be contacted and an election held. If fewer candidates, they can be co-opted onto KCC by remaining councillors. JMcC – it is not essential to fill all vacancies, Community Councils can operate effectively with fewer than the maximum permitted. DI – check the ‘Scheme of Establishment for Community Councils’ for clarification of protocol.

Hampers for over-65s: Mary Murdoch contacted supermarkets in Stranraer and has the support of Wendy Jesson (DGC anti-poverty worker) for a proposal to give food hampers to local residents over 65, to relieve conditions of Covid-19 lockdown. The cost of £40 each, for 85 people, could be applied for from KCDT funds by the KCC. This is a list of people identified by MM & DMcB. It was generally agreed that the intention is commendable, a gesture of good will which would be welcomed by recipients, but there are many practical obstacles to achieving this under the conditions set by KCDT for grants. How to identify **all** over-65 residents in the whole of Kirkcowan area, given sensitivity of personal data? There is an issue about some individuals benefitting and not others. Many over-65s are comfortably off, while there are families who would benefit more from a hamper. Autumn Club could apply, but only have limited number of members. Best plan is for DMcB, MM and KD to meet to come up with a detailed proposal and bring it back to next KCC meeting. In the meantime, the proposal will also be raised at the next KCDT meeting on 17/2/2. MM resigned from the Council.

Dickie Wood: JW - Concern has been raised about a tree leaning over the memorial bench which looks out over the village. Although AG believes it is not in immediate danger of falling, JW would like it to be felled, as the bench has such a sentimental feeling to a lot of people in the village and isn't just any bench. Given the strength of opinion, CMcE will go back to AG to arrange for felling. JW – At the last meeting, a grant was applied for by KCC to thin woodland and open up westerly views. What about wildlife if more cutting is to be undertaken? Why grant-aided? This seems to undermine the application process. CMcE - The intention is to make the woods available for the school and community as an outdoor resource for learning and recreation, with the potential for adding seating, shelter and other features in the future.

The Hall: DMcB had been asked by a resident if there had been any heating on in Hall? MH – No, the hall has been closed since last year and the infrared heaters don't heat space, they heat people. She has checked regularly and run the water to avoid Legionnaires Disease. Even though there is no insulation in the building, there have been no freezing pipes.

Steering group: KD – Waiting for quotes from Landscape Architects. The group will be looking at the Park, School playground, area for ball games, and Church Rest Garden collectively for development in planned stages. This will offer best value and efficiency, starting with the Park and working outwards. JW – **Noticeboards** in the Park and/or the Hall, with updates on projects, would be useful and would give people information and a focus for regular walks for elderly residents. DI – would have to be kept up to date. KD – depending on size and location, planning permission might be required.

Co-ordinated Signage: More creative signs for village entrances, combined with colourful planters, planting wildlife-friendly trees & shrubs, and maintaining neat verges could all contribute to a more welcoming & attractive appearance in the village for residents and visitors alike.

Covid-19 Business Support Fund: DI – Discretionary Fund to help businesses which have not had any financial support so far, will open tomorrow -16th February. More information on the [DGC Website](#)

Resilience Team – DMcB – Do people know if the Resilience/Red Card scheme is still operating? Need to provide a safety net for isolated residents, though informal arrangements seem to be working. JW checks around village from time to time. JMcC - The Resilience Plan has to be updated, and any changes should be publicised.

KCC Vacancies: DMcB has resigned as Secretary, and J Mortiboy has resigned as Director on Kilgallioch Community Benefit Company. These posts will be discussed at next meeting.

The Next Meeting of KCC will be held on **Monday 15th March 2021** at 7pm, again via Zoom. All welcome. For access codes, email Charles McEwan charlesmcewan@yahoo.com

The meeting closed at 9.12pm

Mary Mackenzie (Minutes Secretary)