

GATEHOUSE OF FLEET COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Draft Minutes of Meeting held on Tuesday 10th January 2006 at 7pm in the Community Centre

PRESENT: Provost Franca Bruno, Deputy Provost Alison Steel, Councillors Mary Cousins, R Forster, A Lowden, D McClelland, G Macnamara, K McConchie, A McLaren and C Walker, Dumfries and Galloway Councillor A Vaux, and Mr I McConchie (member of the public)

Apologies: D McLeod, D Rennie

STEWARTRY AREA COMMITTEE meets on Mondays in 2006

2006 meetings are 16 Jan, 20 Feb, 20 Mar, 24 Apr, 15 May, 19 June, 21 Aug, 18 Sept, 16 Oct, 20 Nov and 18 Dec. Next meeting **Monday 16 January at 7pm in Council Offices, Kirkcudbright**

January Agenda includes: Scottish Water – Provision for Future Development – *Presentation* by Scottish Water
Combined Services Fees and Charges – *Report* by Director of Combined Services
Public Convenience Provision in D & G – *Review* by Group Manager Local Services

Details normally available on D&G Council website <http://www.dumgal.gov.uk>. (NB. 2006 agendas not available yet)

Action: All interested Councillors

2. POLICE REPORT none as Community Police Officer for Kirkcudbright & Gatehouse I Bradley not present

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 13 DECEMBER

The Minutes, with one minor change, were approved. Motion proposed by A Lowden, seconded by C Walker.

4. MATTERS ARISING

a) Missing Inspection Covers - G Macnamara will give the list to the Provost.

Action: G Macnamara

b) Dam (pond at War Memorial) – A Vaux informed us that the weed is called *Elodea canadensis* He will look into the best method of removing it.

Action: A Vaux

c) Library Trust - D&G Council has withdrawn its objection (see Minutes 9/11/05 -7d). The Provost will keep us informed.

Action: Provost

d) Secretary's Post – The post has been advertised but no applications have been received. At the December meeting D Rennie suggested that as the Community Centre Hall Committee, the Board of the Mill on the Fleet and the Community Council and the GDI are all looking for secretarial or other help it might be possible for all the organisations to 'club' together and pay a reasonable salary for someone to do the work.

Action: D Rennie

5. DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY REPORT.

a) Theatre Royal, Dumfries – Redevelopment costs have increased and as they require more money for the running costs D&G Council have refused funding and asked that the project be re-thought.

b) New Swimming Pool, Dumfries is to go ahead although the costs have risen. Mr I McConchie asked why the cost, estimated by the Convener of the Council at £12.5 million, had risen to over £17 million according to the Finance Director.

c) Council Tax – the increase next year is likely to be between 6% and 7% well over double the rate of inflation. The Council Tax will be set on 9 February. There was considerable discussion about how D&G Council could cut costs and reduce the burden of Council Tax. Who decides on priorities and budgets for services? How much blame for the shocking increases in Council Tax can be laid at the door of D&G Council and how much is related to policies emanating from central government? Are D&G passing the buck and blaming Holyrood when they should be looking to their own departments and making real efforts to economise? Strong feelings were expressed by Councillors and public both about the Council Tax and the Commercial rates - which have also increased - and the drastic effect this will have on tourism and the local economy. Though D&G Council's Finance Committee papers are available on the internet they are hard to find / follow and it would be helpful if the Councillor could bring them to our meetings

Action: A Vaux

d) Finance Sub-committee – It was decided to form a sub-committee chaired by C. Walker with K. McConchie, M. Laird and D. Rennie (still to be asked).

Action: C Walker, K McConchie, M Laird, D Rennie

e) Stewartry Area Committee– It was agreed to add a section at the top of the CC Minutes with details of these meetings.

Action: A Steel

6. PROVOST'S REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE

a) Progress on new surgery – nothing new to report – Julie White on maternity leave.

b) Loreburn Newsletter has been received with details the rent levels for 2006-7

c) Scottish Health Council Newsletter has been received. It calls for volunteers for a Local Advisory Council to help with the planning and delivery of health services in our area

Action: All interested Councillors

d) Common Good Land Report by Andrew Wightman & James Penman. This was discussed in a presentation by Douglas Swan at the Stewartry Area Committee on 19 December 2005. There may be cases where local Common Good land and property may have been taken over “unlawfully” by the Regional Council. Might this apply to Gatehouse? It was decided to consult members of the old Town Council and past Council Minutes to see what further information is available. **Action: Provost, R Forster**

e) Community Council Training – ‘Antisocial Behaviour’ In Dalbeattie on Thursday 19 January

Action: A Lowden

f) Attendance at a set number of CC Convention meetings is compulsory for our Council grant. M Laird will attend next meeting on 14 February. **Action : M Laird**

g) Festive Lights D&G Council are unable to store the Christmas lights. G. Macnamara will consult The Lions about how much space is required. A.Vaux offered, if no other solution forthcoming, to store them in a barn. **Action : G Macnamara**

h) “Householder” Planning Applications The Provost had telephoned but had no satisfactory answer. (See MIns of 13/12/05) A formal letter will be sent asking for clarification. Forster is recording which plans we receive, which are available in the libraries, when they are published in the press etc. **Action: Provost**

i) SHOUT (Save Haugh of Urr Transactions) The Provost had a reply to her letter of support to Peter Carpenter. Unfortunately the SHOUT meeting was the same night as Gatehouse Community Council

j) Conservation Area Booklet – C.Walker to read and report. **Action C Walker**

k) Road Safety Booklet 2005-6 – A.McLaren to read and report. **Action A McLaren**

l) Swans – Mr Peter Norman, Biodiversity Officer is to advise us. **Action: Provost**

7. PLANNING APPLICATIONS - DEAN OF GUILD REPORT:

Forestry Grant Application - 25m Wind Turbine at Rainton – *no plans received*

Garage, Mosslade - *no plans received*

Extension to Entertainment Suite, Auchenlarie – *no plans received*

8 BOUNDARY CHANGES

R. Forster made a detailed study of the boundary maps as the Council has been asked to comment on the current boundaries. The traditional parishes of Anwoth and Girthon do not include Gatehouse Station or Dromore Visitor Centre. There was some feeling that these should be included. M.Laird proposed an amendment that the Clints of Dromore, as a clear natural feature, should form our northern boundary. G.Macnamara seconded the motion and the amendment was passed with seven votes in favour and four abstentions. Ron Forster will follow this up.

Action: R Forster

[Councillor Vaux left the meeting]

8. MILL ON THE FLEET UPDATE – COUNCILLOR RENNIE (written report)

Having missed the last two Board Meetings there is not much to report. There has been little progress on major upgrading. D&G Council has been asked for ‘officer assistance’. The Board is still missing an administrator / secretary following John Morton’s retirement. D Rennie should be present at the next Board meeting on 12 January. Mary Cousins attended a meeting with The Friends of the Mill and the date for opening has been set as Saturday 1 April. The Friends of the Mill have prepared a good programme of events. There are plans to upgrade the café and The Friends have raised money for the work. The lease has been drawn up but the financial position is still not certain.

9. TREASURER’S REPORT - COUNCILLOR RENNIE (written report)

a) The CC Grant There has been a slight hitch over the administration grant of £575.50 but we should receive it soon. A Gatehouse councillor must attend the next Stewartry Association of Community Councils in order for Gatehouse to claim the additional £100 (M Laird has agreed to do this – see 6f above)

b) Common Good Fund – no new applications

c) Community Centre Update The position is still being investigated. The Centre Committee is a separate committee to the Community Council but Alix Wolffe thinks that, as the community owns the Community Centre, the representatives of the community (i.e. the Community Council) should have a role but the legal position on this is not clear. There will be a discussion about the Community Centre at the next GDI meeting and D Rennie will report on this in February. **Action: D Rennie**

10. RON FORSTER’S REPORT

a) Footpaths A survey of footpaths was commissioned by the GDI some time ago and a detailed review published. R. Forster expressed concern that some paths might have been missed and new ones needed to be included.

b) Designed Landscape Anna Johnson's reply discussed the *Inventory of Designed Landscapes* for Scotland (which outlines the status of the 20 designed landscapes). In our area the designed landscape includes all the land around the Cally Palace Hotel (the old Cally estate) an extensive area to the east of the B727. There are severe planning restrictions which include a "presumption against" building or development.

c) Port Macadam Stone surfacing has been completed and the next stage is interpretation boards and seats. 20 oak saplings are to be planted and tree guards have been obtained from the Forestry Commission. The official opening will be in late spring. The Council congratulated Ron on the success of his project.

d) Dam (pond at War Memorial) This belongs to the Hesketh Trust. It is overgrown with weeds (see 4 b above). It is some time since the pond was dredged and the current cost of cleaning could be around £10000. It was agreed to (i) to find out how much cleaning would cost and (ii) to ask D&G Council and the RSPB for advice.

Action: R Forster

(iii) C. Walker's suggestion of asking Mrs Fiona Hesketh for written permission to go ahead with weed removal and pond cleaning was accepted.

Action: C Walker

e) Tourist Office This is in need of attention and the Provost will write to *Visit Scotland*.

Action: Provost

11. AOCB

a) Mill on the Fleet Lights – D. McLelland was concerned that nothing has been done even though the Provost signed the necessary papers last year.

Action: Provost

b) Wheelchair Accessibility – A Lowden pointed out that it was about a year since we asked for the height of the kerbstones at the Brewery entrance in the High Street to be adjusted for wheelchair users. They have been marked but not adjusted. Mary Cousins mentioned that the bridge into Garries Park from the Town Hall gardens needed attention too. D&G Council had looked at the concrete deck of the bridge, which has become impassable for wheel chairs or motorised scooters, but there has been no follow up work.

Action: R Forster

c) Garries Park – C.Walker said that he had filled a black bin bag with rubbish, including more than 20 bottles, which had been strewn around Garries Park after a Saturday football match. Councillors were asked to keep an eye on the park especially on Sunday mornings.

Action: All Councillors

The meeting ended at 9.47pm