



Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 12 May 2009
following the AGM. in the Community Centre

Present: Provost: P. Jacques, Deputy Provost: I. McConchie, Dean of Guild: A. Lowden ,
Councillors: M. Cousins, R. Forster, M. Laird, D. McClelland, G. Macnamara, and A. Steel.
D&G Councillor Patsy Gilroy and 1 member of the public.

Apologies: C. Walker, F Bruno and D&G Councillors: T. Jacques and J. Maitland; Police

3. Welcome

The new provost was welcomed and in turn welcomed new office bearers and councillors.

4. Public Forum

- Bus shelters - the process of consultation is not complete but, whereas councillors were happy with the shelter for westbound buses, they are less happy with the proposed site of the shelter on the other side of the road where some people awaiting buses may sit on a garden wall and drop litter into the garden.
- Footbridge over the Fleet at the Mill - this has been inspected by Combined Services and they hope to make repairs 'relatively quickly'.

5. Police Report

No police officers present

6. Adoption of Minutes of Meeting of 13 April 2009

Adoption of the March Minutes was proposed by I. McConchie and seconded by M. Cousins.

7. Matters Arising

- a. Jet skis at Carrick - Issue is difficult to resolve to the satisfaction of all parties. I. McConchie had contacted some of the parties concerned. This matter is appropriate for the Themed Stewartry Area Meeting "Enjoying our Natural Environment" on 18 May. The Stewartry Community Safety Forum, National Trust for Scotland, Forestry Commission and Visit Scotland will be at that meeting. **Action Cllr McConchie**
- b. The Cape road - Charles Clemie is to inspect the area and re-erect or replace road sign knocked down by a fallen tree.
- c. Parking on lugs – this continues and police could be asked to caution offenders .
- d. Speeding between the 30 mph sign and the old garage – Gatehouse is awaiting its turn to have the speed control sign which is shared amongst several communities. After discussion about sign provision in other areas like Ayrshire it was decided to contact the police about more frequent use of speed cameras in Gatehouse. **Action Cllr Laird**
- e. The Mill lade weed has been cleared.
- f. Motorbikes - the nuisance and noise caused by a few motorbikers who make a circuit of Gatehouse continues. Jim Harvey and the Provost have started the Gallovidian Motor Cycle Club to promote the considerate and safe use of motorbikes. The club has a "Ride Out" on Monday nights when about 26 bikers go for long runs.
- g. Dangerous bend on B727 near High Lodge – there have been 7 accidents there in the last 2 years, the latest one destroying a large section of wall. It is not clear what the most effective or viable solution is and signs, speed bumps, crash barriers etc were all considered. Cllr Forster is to investigate. **Action Cllr Forster**
- h. Boots the Chemist shop sign – concerns were expressed that present sign may be fixed incorrectly and that the exterior light remains on outwith shop opening hours. **Action Cllr Forster**

- i. Voting record - Cllr Gilroy confirmed that as our elected representative she always takes the views of Gatehouse CC into consideration. In the case of the Boots' shop sign these views had to be weighed up with other considerations, most pertinently the fear that if refused, Boots would 'pull out' leaving Gatehouse without a chemist's shop.
- j. Slope near the Spar – D&G Council installed a path with a lower gradient for pedestrians a few metres west of the steep slope. As it is required for vehicular access the steep slope was too narrow and too pitched for steps and or a handrail. D&G Council to be asked if they could provide a handrail on lower path **Action Cllr Steel**

8. Housing Working Group

Cllr Burnie was not present.

9. Dumfries & Galloway Councillor's Report

- Gavin Stevenson who was Executive Director of Corporate Services for Perth and Kinross Council. has been appointed as the new Chief Executive of D&G Council and will take up his post at the end of July.
- There is a Themed Meeting of Stewartry Area Committee on **Monday 18 May** from 5.30pm in Kirkcudbright Town Hall with the aim of highlighting and promoting the natural assets of our area. Stallholders are National Trust for Scotland, Visit Scotland, Forestry Commission, Historic Scotland, D&G Council Ranger Service, Scottish Natural Heritage, Solway Heritage, Solway Firth Partnership, Sulwath Connections, Stewartry Community Safety Forum, The Cocoa Bean Company and catering by Kirkpatrick's Restaurant. Cllrs are encouraged to attend. **Action All Cllrs**
- The Stewartry Area Committee Targeted Support Fund (£100,000) for the development and implementation of projects which deliver clear and demonstrable economic outcomes for the area has had more expressions of interest than funds available. The second stage of the selection process is underway.
- D&G Council are aiming to make efficiency savings of about £3 million this year and with cutbacks from central government savings of nearer £9 million will be required next year. D&G Council will meet their statutory obligations but, outwith these, there will be hard decisions to make. Due to very low interest rates there will be less money for Common Good Funds.

Councillor Gilroy left the meeting at 8.53pm.

10. Provost's Correspondence

Letters received concerning

- Targeted Support Fund (see D&G Cllr's Report above) The letter with the "Expression of Interest" form was sent out on 21/4/09 and had to be returned by 30/4/09
- Relay for Life, a 24 hour fundraising event for Cancer Research UK, is taking place in Bladnoch Park on 13-14 June 2009. Contact: anne.barclay@cruk-wigtown.co.uk, tel. 07383 693420 or visit: www.cancerresearchuk.org/relay for more details **Action All Cllrs**
- Training for volunteers entitled "Getting more people involved in your group" 7 - 9pm Monday 25 May in Castle Douglas Town Hall. Light refreshments available. To book a place call Louise McClune 0303 3333000 or email Louise.mcclune@dumgal.gov.uk **Action All Cllrs**
- Kirkcudbright Hospital. Most of the elected representatives contacted have replied favourably to our letters concerning the need for proper public consultation over the future of Kirkcudbright Hospital. Jim Hume MSP wrote on our behalf to John Burns, Chief executive of D&G NHS Health Board and received a reply in which Mr Burns states that "Following the outcome of independent scrutiny it is anticipated that the NHS Board will enter into a period of consultation. At that time Gatehouse Community Council will have the opportunity to express their views on the options presented". Derek Brownlee MSP sent details of the Independent Scrutiny Panel which will be chaired by Prof Frank Clark supported by Profs Jane Farmer and Gordon Peterkin and which will report within six weeks.

11. Kirkcudbright Hospital Campaign - Deputy Provost Ian McConchie

- A meeting was held in Kirkcudbright on 5 May attended by representatives from Borgue, Dundrennan, Gatehouse, Kirkcudbright, Tongland, and Twynholm Councils as well as the Kirkcudbright Hospital League of Friends. They are concerned at the lack of proper consultation over proposals for the future of Kirkcudbright Hospital.
 - It is believed that NHS are considering at least 3 different options for regional health provision and closure of Kirkcudbright hospital is thought to feature on at least two of the alternatives.
 - The action group launched the “Keep the Kirkcudbright Hospital Open” petition and contacted the *Galloway News* in order to make the public aware that NHS proposals could affect Kirkcudbright Hospital. The petition was in shops, clubs, libraries and other facilities the next morning and many people have already signed.
 - The hospital, noted for its cleanliness and friendly staff, has 14 beds and at some periods these are underused. It is possible that patients are being sent to Castle Douglas though Kirkcudbright is nearer as a way of ‘massaging the figures’.
 - It is hoped to produce bumper stickers for the Save Kirkcudbright Hospital Campaign
- The Provost suggested taking the petition from door to door in Gatehouse. It was felt that a group of councillors might encourage more people to sign the petition outside the Spar on Saturday morning from 9am. Cllrs Cousins, McConchie and Steel agreed to join the Provost. Other councillors are urged to join them.

Action: Provost, Cllr Cousins, Cllr McConchie, Cllr Steel

Action: All Cllrs

12. Planning Applications – Cllr Ron Forster

1. Longacre, Boreland Wood, Gatehouse of Fleet,
Proposal: Alteration and extension to dwelling house and erection of domestic garage
2. 5 Bakers Dozen, Gatehouse of Fleet
Proposal: Extension to dwelling house
3. Littleton Farm, Gatehouse of Fleet, DG7 2DQ
Proposal: Extension to agricultural buildings, erection of slurry store and formation of two silage pits (amended proposal to that approved under 08/p/2/0121)
4. Tannery Wynd, Gatehouse of Fleet,
Proposal: Felling of dead elm tree

Planning applications can be found on the D&G Council website by following the link to the Online Register or go to the register at <http://ww2.dumgal.gov.uk/dgplanning/acolnetcgi.exe> Select Gatehouse applications using the ‘Find’ facility from your own Menu Bar. Click Edit (top left), then Find and type Gatehouse into the search box. Keep clicking next until you have seen all the relevant planning applications.

13. Project Progress Report

1. Core Path Network – final draft plans will be available in libraries etc. from 18 July – 2 Oct. For more information see the website at <http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/corepaths>. The online map facility was due to go live in early May.
2. Cally Horse Route - no progress
3. The Cally Ha- ha - Fleet Valley Volunteers have been clearing scrub from the ha-ha.
4. Cally Walls along the B727 – Two teams of dykers are presently restoring these.
5. Textile Bank in the carpark - a photograph of the un-emptied and overflowing textile bank was sent to the D&G Council and they promised that it would be cleared. Cllr Forster has been given two D&G Council contacts if this happens again.
6. Knotweed – there is funding for the spraying programme for a further 2 years. It’s not clear how much money will be needed for this year. Cllr Forster may be looking for money from CC for this project.
7. Car Park at the Old Brick Works – the Car Park belongs to the National Trust and the Board-walk to the Murray Usher Foundation and both are overgrown with weeds. At one stage the Volunteers were scheduled to work here.

8. Extension of the double white lines travelling west on the bypass on the approach to the Gatehouse turn-off.. Though this has been agreed by Transport Scotland AMEY have still not responded. Another letter will be sent. **Action Cllr Forster**
9. Spanish Bluebells – clumps have been found in Garries Park and Boat Green. Though pretty, Spanish bluebells have no scent and are more vigorous than the native variety. They, and their hybrids, are in danger of wiping out the Scottish bluebell by hybridisation. Where found in the wild, the Spanish variety *Hyacinthoides hispanica* is an escaped garden plant and therefore not a protected species. Anyone finding Spanish bluebells growing in the wild should contact the landowner so that they may be disposed of in a controlled manner. The appearance of this bluebell highlights the real menace caused by dumping garden waste and introducing foreign species into our woods and parkland.



*Photo
courtesy of
Cllr Forster*

The Scottish native bluebell (left) is more delicate with the intensely blue flowers borne on one side of the slightly drooping stem. The Spanish bluebell (right) has broader leaves, paler and larger flowers which have a more compact bell-shape, borne on a straight quite thick stem. There are white or pink-petalled varieties of both species..

14. AOCB

Charity shop receipts are falling and they would like space on the GDI noticeboard to put advertising posters. Chair of the GDI is to be contacted.

Action Cllr Steel

15. Date of next meeting

9 June 2009 at 7pm in Gatehouse Community Centre

Meeting ended 9.33pm