

KINGHORN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Meeting notes for

Dualchas Consultation Group meeting with Kinghorn Community

Council Members held Wednesday 28th May 08 at Kinghorn Community Centre

Present

John McLeod, Sadie Wilson, Alex Gibb, Neil Chalmers, Marilyn Edwards, John Lancaster Fraser Ballantyne, Collett Salvona, Martin Melvin and Duncan Bryden

Apologies

Rena Wallace, Alex Cook

As a director of KCLA, John Lancaster had a declared interest in the matter to be discussed but wished to stay. The Chairman asked each Community Council member individually if they wanted John L. to remain for the meeting. The unanimous decision was that they did not wish him to stay and he left the room.

Introduction and background information was given by Duncan Bryden, consultant for the Dualchas Group. Each member also had a hand out based on the report of the phase one Feasibility Study.

Seeking the views of the Community Council

The Chairman made it clear that he considered that information represented in the report was questionable, particularly quotes about developments such as pathways booklet and the jetty. The telephone conversation between the consultant and himself gave the a false impression that this was consultation with the community council and was mis-representation. He gave a short summary of how the Community Council had been involved with improvements to the loch over some years, most of these were included in the hand out report from Dualchas but not attributed to Community Council or other community groups. The Community Council had been instrumental in establishing the Kinghorn Loch User's Group, and Kinghorn Pathways Group and he felt that the information from the study report implied that the loch area was neglected and under threat. It was unanimously agreed that this is not true. Indeed it is widely used by a variety of interests from canoeing, sailing, fishing, dog-walking, rambling, bird-watching and for environmental projects and school visits and is thoroughly enjoyed by many people with open access to all.

In answer to this Duncan said that people in the community and school pupils who were asked in a survey indicated that they would like improvements with better pathways, parking provision, upkeep and access.

Duncan was asked if he could clarify details about KCLA and The Ecology Centre partnership to acquire the land at the east side of the loch from Kinghorn Developments. He said he was only aware of a proposal not the details.

Consultation methods were questioned by members. The process needed to be much more informative and transparent than it was at present. Kinghorn Community Council said that this could be achieved through clear information put out to everyone in the community, and holding public meetings where proc-

esses are explained. Surveys must be carried out by an independent organisation not KCLA, in order to show impartiality. The community council said that it would be helpful to put out a questionnaire to everyone in order to ascertain the preferences of the community and this should then be focused upon by the consultants and KCLA. The Chairman said that the Community Council has always offered to assist KCLA go forward with full and independent consultation. This offer has not been taken up but still remains open.

The long term future of such a venture. The question was asked "what would happen if the Community Right to Buy went ahead and the company found it was not sustainable and had to re sell? What would happen to any money and any assets that had been acquired?"

The community council said that the community must be asked if it is supportive of the KCLA Right to Buy on peoples homes and if it were not supportive, then the Community Right to Buy should be rescinded on them.

The hand out quoted "Most people like the loch area as it is". The Community Council said this showed a high level of satisfaction for things to remain as they were. They said that actively supporting the establishment of a Local Nature Reserve would preserve habitat and biodiversity for the future. Kinghorn Loch User's Group has been actively promoting this for some time and working with Allan Brown from Fife Council. Kinghorn Community Council is supportive of setting up Local Nature Reserve Status for the loch and the surrounding area.

The meeting wanted the consultants to arrange a meeting with the Kinghorn Loch Users Group. It was understood that contact had been made with certain individuals in the canoe club, and a meeting with the commodore of the sailing club (it was pointed out that this may not have been impartial as the commodore at that time, Ronnie Mackie, was also the manager of The Ecology Centre which now works very closely with KCLA). Kinghorn Loch User's Group works with leisure groups, land owners and Fife Council to achieve improvements to the loch and the surrounding area. A key factor for them was working together to achieve the agreement of all interested parties.

KLUG has the support of Community Services who maintain certain areas around the loch including checking on the base eroding for the wall around the roadside. The feasibility study would need to look at how these important checks/maintenance would be sustained in community ownership. Community Councillors felt there were many things to consider before moving forward.

Kinghorn Community Council had long been in favour of the establishment of a Woodland Cemetery, the information implied that this may not now be in the ownership of Fife Council. The Community Council questioned whether KCLA would have the expertise to oversee this and said that the community should be asked for their view on this change. The view of the community council is that any operator of a cemetery must have a guaranteed longevity and Fife Council would be preferred operator.

It was a good open meeting and well conducted giving time for everyone who wished to express their views.

The chairman thanked Duncan for his time.