

Kinghorn Community Council.

Minutes of the meeting held Thurs 14th December 06 at Kinghorn Community Centre

- 1) **Present:** - John McLeod (Chair), Marilyn Edwards (Secretary), Cllr Fraser Ballantyne, Alex Cook, Rena Wallace, James Willis, Martin Melvin and Collett Salvona

Also present Ron Edwards (environmental advisor), Sgt Scott Johnston and Members of the Public estimated around 80 +

Apologies –Sadie Wilson. Also John Allan, Alan and Christine Knox, Jim Reid

The Chairman welcomed everyone along to the meeting and apologised to those standing for not managing to book a larger venue. He explained that there were no others available at such short notice

- 2) **Police Update**

Sgt. Scott Johnston began by taking the opportunity to introduce himself to everyone. He said that police presence had been required to attend a variety of complaints in Kinghorn. He mentioned vandalism, a domestic stabbing, theft, car theft and breach of the peace.

The person who had been assaulted in the High Street in Kinghorn, which was highlighted in the Fife Free Press, was present. He said that he was supporting a campaign for CCTV to be introduced because he wanted Kinghorn to return to the nice village it had always been with people confident that they could walk out safely. Sgt Johnston said that a mobile CCTV van was available and could be deployed. He urged that people still call in with their complaints so that the police could respond.

Youth Gathering in Kinghorn

Sgt Johnston went on to report on this topical issue. He said that the problems in Kinghorn were made up of approximately one third of youngsters from Kinghorn, and groups of friends invited into the area. There were some related drink problems but certainly not all. He asked that parents make sure they ask and know where their youngsters are as far as possible. He stated that youth disorder was a problem throughout Fife at present and various initiatives were in place to tackle it. He described some of these, preventing large groups getting on and alighting from buses, dispersing groups once in Kinghorn, taking home to parents those showing influence of alcohol. A police bus was also deployed to deal with problematic areas. He gave reassurance that the problem was being taken seriously and police presence would continue until problems abated. The "Pulling Together" initiative in Kinghorn & Burntisland was having an effect during the summer period when activities for the youngsters were encouraged.

- 3) Item 4, Planning Application for Lochside Works (old Tannery site) was moved down the agenda so that the main business of the evening could take place.
- 4) **Registration of Land under Part 2 of Land Reform Act.**

It was requested from the floor that Richard Frew from Scottish Executive should speak first and the chair indicated that as this was a Community Council meeting, he would consider the matter and after consultation, Richard Frew indicated that he was at the disposal of the C.C. He said that he was happy to give his time. He had come along to listen to people's views and answer any queries they may have. He confirmed that 18 parcels of land had been put forward for registration under the Community-Buy-Out section of the Land Reform Act. Each area of land would be considered individually and a decision made on each. The process should be completed by early January 2007. Kinghorn Community Land Association (KCLA) had put forward their case with evidence of support by a petition. He also stated that there was no requirement in the act for consultation at this stage but he would expect this to happen in the future.

Next to speak was Marilyn Edwards, Secretary of the Community Council. She explained that the Community Council had decided to become involved after landowners and residents had voiced their complaints and concerns about the extent of land and housing that had been forwarded for registration. The community council had asked Ron Edwards, environmental advisor to KCC, to compile a discus-

sion paper for them to discuss at the November Community Council meeting. It was felt that it was time for the community to become familiar with many facts that had not yet been revealed. Only then could people make the decision whether Right to Buy of such a large area was right for the public interest of Kinghorn. She explained that KCC felt that the shaded mauve area on the map handed around at the meeting could be supported for community ownership as it had already undergone consultation. However although many people had signed the petition some had indicated that they were unclear regarding details. It was felt that specific commitments may not have been made clear and all had not appreciated what the petition included. It was now time to increase public awareness and open up the consultation process as to what people really wanted.

Richard Brewster spoke for Kinghorn Community Land Association. He set out their position and said that community ownership had definite advantages. Community Right to Buy could only take place if land came up for sale, landowners could not be forced to sell. KCLA would apply for lottery funding and community grants to buy any land that came up for purchase. He invited more people to join them, as membership was now free. He said that as a company with a board of directors they were accountable for their actions. Use of the land had been considered at this stage because it helped the cause. Once the community right to buy was obtained there would be a feasibility study before KCLA determined all the exact details of usage.

The rest of the meeting was given over for people to ask questions and make comment. A summary of the points raised were as follows:

People stated that the area around the loch was one of natural beauty and they wanted this to remain. Loch nature reserve status had not yet been granted but this had been a recommendation from the Planning Enquiry of 2003 and should be followed up. Retaining the natural beauty of the area had mutual agreement of everyone. KCC said they would follow up the matter of loch reserve status.

Some detailed questions were asked about the petitions. It was understood there had been two and the last was in June 2006 immediately prior to applying for registration of land, 600 people signed this and it was confirmed that most were eligible. Some people spoke that they were not aware of the petition and one person said they wished their name to be removed.

One landowner expressed the view that it was a waste to spend large sums of public money buying up property and land when the people of Kinghorn already had full access around the loch. Instead the money could be put to better use to provide more NHS and Education facilities.

There were several comments made by people that they were uneasy about buying up individual's homes for community use if and when they came on the market for sale.

Several questions were asked about the long term Local Plan for Kinghorn. Concerns were expressed about Fife Council sticking to agreements about housing in the area. Assurances from both Cllr Ballantyne and Ron Edwards did not satisfy individual worries. Ron explained that committee decisions on recent planning applications showed the determination of the Council to not allow development and that the 20 year Fife Structure Plan did not include for any further development of Kinghorn. KCLA spokespersons were adamant in their view that the Structure Plan and Local Plan could allow development around the loch and expressed concerns about the resolve of Fife Council in resisting development.

The secretary of KCC was pressed hard by members of KCLA to give names and details to them, of all the people who had expressed disagreement with the KCLA registration of large areas of land. She said that all people who come to the Community Council with a concern or complaint have a right of confidentiality unless they specifically give permission for their names to be published. The Chairman said that all those who wished to pass on their concerns should do so, either to Richard Frew (Scottish Executive) or Richard Brewster (Sec. KCLA). [The chair consulted Mr Frew after the meeting who confirmed that personal details could not be revealed in consideration of the Data Protection Act]. The Community Council would pass on this request to those concerned.

A large number of people listened but did not make comment during the long meeting.

The chairman summed up by saying that the Community Council supported the right to buy and the establishment of a land association. Everyone has opinions and these may differ, but the objective of the public meeting was to allow free and open exchange of views. Kinghorn Community Council had initiated the consultation process and he hoped the debate would continue. Many people had shown an interest to come along and he thanked them for their attendance. A local resident, Mr McLeod, wished to express thanks to Fraser Ballantyne for his service as Councillor, as he understood he would be standing down at the next local elections.

All other business was suspended. Meeting closed at 10.15pm
The next meeting will be on Thursday 18th January 2007 at 7.30pm in Kinghorn Community Centre

All members of the public are welcome.