



Community Council of the Royal Burgh of Peebles and District

Minute of the 223rd Monthly Meeting of the Community Council of the Royal Burgh of Peebles and District held in the Old Council Chamber, Chambers Institution, Peebles on Thursday 13th August, 2015

Present: C. Carleton (Vice-Chairman), J. Crawley, F. Dalgleish, S. Haslam, L. Hayworth, D. Horsburgh, J. Shearer, E. Smith, A. Snoddy, R. Tatler

In attendance: SBC Councillors S. Bell, C. Bhatia, K. Cockburn and G. Garvie, L. Crichton (Minute Secretary) and PC D. Sorrell

The Vice-Chairman C. Carleton informed the members that the Treasurer, G. Mackie was not attending the meeting due to a sudden illness. Everyone joined the Vice-Chairman in wishing him a speedy recovery.

1. **Open Forum:** There were no questions raised.
2. **Apologies:** G. Mackie, A. McKelvey, L. Morrison, K. Rand, SBC Cllrs W. Archibald and G. Logan
3. **Minute of Meeting of 25th June 2015:** The acceptance of the minutes was proposed by E. Smith and seconded by F. Dalgleish. The minutes were approved and signed by the Vice-Chairman, C. Carleton.
4. **Welcome:** Tweeddale Youth Action
The Vice-Chairman, C. Carleton welcomed the members of the Tweeddale Youth Action management team who were present to observe the Community Council meeting.
5. **Election of Chairman:** Due to the sudden death of Alasdair Stewart in June the Community Council needed to fill in the vacancy of Chairman. The Vice-Chairman, C. Carleton invited nominations for the election of Chairman. R. Tatler was nominated by A. Snoddy and seconded by L. Hayworth. A. Snoddy was nominated by J. Shearer but she kindly declined. As there were no other nominations R. Tatler was duly elected as the new Chairman of the Community Council of the Royal Burgh of Peebles and District. C. Carleton handed over to R. Tatler the duties of Chairman. R. Tatler paid tribute to Alasdair Stewart saying that it had not been his desire to become Chairman in such sad circumstances but that he would do his best to fulfil his duties. R. Tatler also read out a note from Alasdair Stewart's widow and said he hoped that in time Alasdair Stewart's role in the community could be recognised in some special way, ideas of which were already arising.
6. **Matters Arising:**
 - **Priorsford Bridge & Neidpath Corner:** As there seemed to be no progress on the works on Priorsford Bridge and Neidpath Corner A. Snoddy was instructed to follow up with council officers on the situations.

ACTION: A. Snoddy

- **Peebles Cemetery:** A. Snoddy had circulated a note in June informing that Jason Hedley/SBC had responded to the Community Council's inquiry on the matter saying that at the present rate of use there is 10 years use left in the cemetery. SBC is aware it needs to start planning now for new cemeteries in Peebles and some of the other Border towns.
- **3G Pitch:** C. Carleton reported that the Community Council had sent a letter to Scottish Borders Council as agreed in the last meeting and went again briefly through the background of the matter. The council still has not made it clear why a 3G pitch is needed in Peebles nor what a 3G pitch really is. Cllr Bhatia explained that the pitch is meant for everyone, in particular for football players. She said it really should have been built in connection with the new Sports Centre at the High School. The reason why it cannot be built at the Gytes, the site originally proposed for the pitch, is that a flood risk assessment confirmed it was not feasible there. Cllr Bell confirmed that the council officers have been made aware of the issues raised and they will address these questions to clarify the matter.
- **Civic Reception for Visitors from Hendaye:** A. Snoddy reminded everyone of the Civic Reception being held for visitors from Peebles's twin town in France, Hendaye on 28th August hoping for as many Community Councillors as possible to be able to attend. Funding for the reception was still under discussion but it was agreed to pay £100 towards the arrangements if necessary.
- **Public Meeting re proposed Development at Rosetta Caravan Park:** C. Carleton informed that the Community Council has organised a public meeting on this matter to be held on **Tuesday, 15th September, 2015 at 7 pm at St. Joseph's Neighbourhood Hall.** The intention of the meeting is to provide a situation update and to have a discussion on what the local residents can do and how to engage with the process. Along with council officers the Tweeddale Councillors and the developer have also been invited to the meeting. S. Haslam suggested inviting also other groups such as local businesses, the golf club etc. which was considered a good idea. The Peeblesshire News will also publish the event to make people aware of it. It was agreed to have flyers and posters made to inform residents of the meeting with a budget of max. £50.

ACTION: C. Carleton & R. Tatler

- **Provost for Peebles:** A sub-committee of the Peebles Community Council was set up in 2014 to discuss the matter of Honorary Provost for Peebles. It concluded this year that there is a role that an Honorary Provost could fill in the community, as there is not currently a similar figurehead. The Chairman of the sub-committee, Cllr K. Cockburn had requested the Community Council to draft a letter to ask the residents of Peebles if they would support the establishment of the role of an Honorary Provost and consequently to arrange a poll on the matter. A. Snoddy had circulated a draft letter and after a brief debate it was agreed to go ahead with the poll. The wording of the draft was agreed and A. Snoddy will arrange for it to appear on the Community Council's website, Facebook page and Peeblesshire News.

ACTION: A. Snoddy

7. **Police Report:** Circulated. PC D. Sorrell noted from the report that 34 parking tickets had been issued commenting that the Police had been able to have more presence on Peebles main streets and would continue to do so when duties allow. There had been 2 anti-social behaviours with one ticket issued for a breach of the peace for throwing items at cyclists during the Tour of the Borders. PC D. Sorrell noted that there were youths gathering in the Venlaw area and that the Police will be looking into this. A shop in Eastgate had been broken into and there had been a fire in the stand at Whitestone Park; there were no more details on either incident. PC D. Sorrell said there have been no recent complaints about boy racers. Our new community sergeant is Duncan Marker and our new inspector is Mike Bennett. They will introduce themselves to the Community Council at the next meeting.

Cllr Cockburn inquired if parking in disabled places was a problem as there had been an incident in the report. PC D. Sorrell said no but reminded that disabled bays were strictly meant for people with disabled badges.

A. Snoddy brought up the matter of dog fouling which an upset resident had written about to the Community Council and asked what the Police & council can do about the problem. PC D. Sorrell commented it was a very difficult problem to tackle noting that she has put up posters in areas

where there is a significant problem. She can hand out more if required. The Chairman, R. Tatler noted that the problem has often been discussed in the Community Council and hoped the Peeblesshire News will highlight the problem again. It was generally commented that the more people were made aware of the problem the better.

L. Hayworth noted a concerning, anecdotal incident of a knife being drawn out at the Central Bar. PC Sorrell confirmed the incident had not been reported to the Police but said she would look into it.

8. **Vice-Chairman's report:** C. Carleton, Vice-Chairman welcomed R. Tatler as the new Chairman and said he would continue as Vice-Chairman.

9. **SBC Councillors:**

- **Cllr Cockburn** commented on behalf of Cllr Logan that the planning application for the Great Tapestry of Scotland had now been submitted and the deadline for any objections was 20th August. Cllr Logan also wished to remind the Community Council of its earlier decision to invite Cllr Parker to a public meeting to discuss the matter.

Cllr Cockburn mentioned the Local Access and Transport Strategy (which sets out what is considered to be the key transport and access issues affecting the Scottish Borders along with the council's proposed approach to these issues) which is now under consultation. He commented that the questions the council is seeking responses to are very relevant, covering a lot of good issues and encouraged the Community Council to fill in the questionnaire. C. Carleton confirmed that the Community Council's Planning Committee will respond to the consultation.

- **Cllr Garvie** noted the film company which was going to be in Peebles on 20th August filming 'Tommy's Honour' and which was very exciting for the town.

Cllr Garvie wished to congratulate & praise the organisers of the Tour o' the Borders for a highly successful event giving great credit to the town.

Cllr Garvie also wished to remind everyone of the historic event of the railway opening on the 5th September in the Borders.

- **Cllr Bhatia** informed of the delay with the High School kitchen and canteen repairs which will now be completed by mid-September and will cause some disruption with school meals.

Cllr Bhatia noted an initiative to bring a 40 miles/hour speed limit to Eshiels. This has been looked into before but was not recommended then by the council. Cllr Bhatia hoped that the Community Council could be supportive of the initiative. R. Tatler asked if the Community Council's Planning Committee had an opinion on the matter and L. Hayworth commented that it may be an opportunity to feed back to the Local Access and Transport Strategy.

Cllr Bhatia pointed out a public event on 14th of September at 7 pm in Galashiels for people to give their views about alternative approaches to council tax. Pre-registration is requested (by email info@localtaxcommission.scot, phone 0131 4749332 or via <http://galashiels.eventbrite.co.uk>).

- **Cllr Bell** commented on the very positive feedback he had had of the Tour o' the Borders asking for F. Dalgleish's comments as representative of Hillside Outside, event organiser. F. Dalgleish reported that the event had gone extremely well with amazing feedback from cyclists and only a few complaints. She went on to inform that the date for next year's event will be 11th September 2016 which will mean that the road closures will have to start slightly later due to day light.

Cllr Bell proposed to Cllr Bhatia that a second event be also arranged in the Borders for getting the views of people on council tax as the event in Galashiels focuses mainly on people from around there and most likely will get less people attending from elsewhere. Cllr Bhatia said she could ask if another one can be arranged although there already are quite a number of events being arranged around Scotland.

Cllr Bell reported from a Scotland's Towns Partnership meeting he had attended. He gave C. Carleton a map of Scotland's towns which was produced by Understanding Scottish Places (USP), a consortium made up of e.g. the Carnegie UK Trust and Stirling University. USP have

created an online tool to help understand the figures, facts and interrelationships of all Scotland's towns and cities. The tool can be accessed by anyone for digital information about any of 479 Scottish communities and compare that information with any other place across the country. Cllr Bell also pointed out that more money was available for charettes (a charette is a process where consultations are held to capture information, the key constraints and opportunities and how they can be addressed.) C. Carleton noted that charettes could be used for a wider range within the Scottish Sustainable Communities Initiative.

The Chairman, R. Tatler reminded everyone that having the Tweeddale Councillors at the meeting provides an opportunity to ask them questions.

D. Horsburgh wanted know why there have been so many repairs and building activity going on at the Peebles High School during the past few years. Cllr Bhatia replied that the most recent upgrading of the kitchens was supposed to have been done a year ago but then more funding had been put forward and it had been decided to do the canteen as well. Cllr Bhatia agreed there had been many improvements and repair works done here and there over the years with the quality of education defying the facilities. She said that public pressure for a new school would be welcome. By campaigning other towns like Kelso had managed to get a brand new school.

10. Reports for approval:

- **Treasurer's report:** not circulated. R. Tatler reported on G. Mackie's behalf that there was nothing special to report.
- **Bonnie Peebles:** Minutes of the Bonnie Peebles meeting on 27th May 2015 had been circulated. C. Carleton noted that signs have been put up at the flowerbeds managed by Bonnie Peebles stating they are looked after by volunteers. It was agreed the flowerbeds are looking fabulous.

11. Planning Report: A draft report had been circulated. The responses to planning applications had been put on the Community Council website. There being no adverse comments the recommendations as posted were approved.

- **SESPlan:** C. Carleton reminded that the SESPlan2 (South East of Scotland Strategic Plan) was open for consultation with a consultation event being arranged in Peebles on **Thursday 10th September at 6.30 pm**. This event conflicts with the September meeting of the Community Council and as the date cannot be changed the Planning Committee will decide who will attend the consultation event.
- **Local Access and Transport Strategy:** L. Hayworth had had a look at the report but felt strongly that it contained a lot of aspiration without direction. E.g. satisfaction of rural roads has slipped in Scotland but there is no indication in the report on what could be done, the use of multi-used paths is encouraged but there are no plans for the creation of new paths. It is suggested that maintenance of these paths is adopted by local communities but there are no explanations as to how. Many forestry plantations in the area are reaching maturity and so more heavy loads will be moving along our roads network. C. Carleton confirmed again that the Community Council will definitely respond to the consultation questionnaire.
- **Glentress Master Plan SPG:** A draft supplementary guidance for the Glentress Masterplan has just been released. This presents outline details of a proposed development programme for upgrading of Forestry Commission Scotland's assets in the Tweed Valley at Glentress. C. Carleton commented that it was thought the masterplan would cover a wider area than just Glentress but this is not the case adding that the document fell far short of providing a vision for development of leisure and recreational access in this part of the Tweed Valley. The Community Council Planning Committee will study the draft Masterplan with some care and prepare detailed comments on the proposals, checking also if the council has any plans to develop a wider vision for development of this whole area.
D. Horsburgh commented that there were expectations to create 20 – 30 new businesses in the area but asked where would these be located as there seemed already to be limited

space e.g. in Cavalry Park. Cllr Bell proposed that the Community Council invite Graeme McLean, Project Manager with DMBinS (Developing Mountain Biking in Scotland). This was agreed and A. Snoddy will follow up on the matter.

ACTION: A. Snoddy

- **Forthcoming events:**
 - Peeblesshire Agricultural Show 15th August
 - Filming in Peebles: A film team will be filming around Veitch's Corner on 20th August (Tommy's Honour). BBC Landward film team may visit Peebles to obtain clips for forthcoming programmes.
 - Peebles Highland Games 5th September
- **March Street Mill & Old Halyrood School:** March Street Mill will close its facility at the end of this year and the former Halyrood school site is currently advertised for sale (council ownership). The town cannot afford to lose these important sites to possible developments as housing and they should be retained for economic development use. The Community Council Planning Committee floats the idea of exploring possible acquisition of one or both of these properties. This will be discussed again at a future meeting.

12. Any other business:

- **Report from Community Cllr E. Smith:** E. Smith reported that youths are roller skating/skate boarding fast along the streets and having had many people complain about this activity. It was generally agreed that this could be a concern for older residents especially. At the same time, young people do have the same rights as everyone else and that usually these skaters are extremely skilled and aware of people. The need for a skate park was brought up again; this was pursued earlier by some parents and supported by the Community Council but it subsequently fell through due to liability issues. C. Carleton encouraged the members of the Tweeddale Youth Action to ask if their members would be interested in getting involved in establishing a skate park for Peebles and they said they would. S. Haslam also said that she would see what support there was for a skate park. A. Snoddy asked that young people in town be considerate and thoughtful around other people when skate boarding or cycling on the streets.
 - **Community Councillor achievements and successes:** A. Snoddy commented that often people wonder what the Community Councillors actually do and suggested sharing examples of recent achievements. These include responding to concerns about potholes, blocked drains, requests for new signs, communal bins, etc and in general tackling issues to improve Peebles and its surrounding area. The Mural at the Bake House was considered a great example of what the Community Councillors have initiated; it is expected to be finished at the end of October with signs being put up on the High Street to direct people to it.
 - **Peebles in Bloom:** A. Snoddy reported that the gardens have now been judged and the Awards Presentation Night will take place on Thursday 20th August. Catherine Maxwell-Stuart has kindly promised to present the awards. Approximately 100 people are expected including representatives of the press. All Community Councillors are also expected to be present.
9. **Date for next meeting:** Thursday 10th September 2015 at 7.30 pm at the Burgh Chambers.

The meeting closed at 9.15 pm.