



Community Council of the Royal Burgh of Peebles and District

Minute of the 224th 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 10th September, 2015

Present:, F. Dalgleish, S. Haslam, L. Hayworth (Acting Chairman), D. Horsburgh, A. MacKenzie, A. McKelvey, L. Morrison, K. Rand, E. Smith and A. Snoddy

In attendance: SBC Councillors C. Bhatia, G. Garvie and G. Logan, L. Crichton (Minute Secretary), Inspector M. Bennett and PC D. Sorrell

Community Councillor L. Hayworth opened the meeting as Acting Chairman in the absence of both Chairman and Vice-Chairman and welcomed everyone.

1. **Presentation:** Scottish Borders Climate Resilient Communities Project

Esther Carmen, Project Officer from the University of Dundee told the meeting about the Scottish Borders Climate Resilient Communities Project. A report of her presentation is attached to these minutes. A series of interactive workshops, open to anyone interested, will be held in the towns chosen to take part. The first one in Peebles was held at the beginning of September. The next workshop in Peebles will be held at the end of November (date not yet fixed) and it will be more widely advertised than the first one which not many people had heard about. Esther Carmen encouraged anyone interested to get involved by attending the workshops. More information on the project can be found on the Scottish Borders Council and the University of Dundee websites.

The Community Councillors found the topic very interesting and important and it was agreed that Esther Carmen will send information to A. Snoddy to distribute to members of the Community Council. L. Hayworth noted the Scottish Resilient Communities Conference will be held in Edinburgh on 23rd September 2015. He pointed out that there is a very active resilient group in Peebles.

ACTION: A. Snoddy

2. **Open Forum:**

Rosetta Caravan Park Development: Cliff Scupham representing Rosetta Caravan Park and Dalatho Bridge Action Group asked the Community Council if it can, on behalf of the community, fund the research into ownership of the land on which it is proposed to build the new bridge. The Acting Chairman, L. Hayworth commented that the Community Council simply did not have the funds to support such research which was expected to cost approx. £500. The Common Good Fund had looked into this matter at the request of Cllr Bhatia and decided that it was up to the developer, not the Common Good Fund, to undertake this research and therefore the application was rejected. It was noted that there was no evidence of a formal acceptance by the developer of the several conditions attached to the Planning Permission in Principle. C. Carleton had raised the question with Council officers prior to the public meeting to be held on Tuesday 15th September 2015 but had not received a reply. Another resident informed the meeting that representatives of the developer had been seen measuring and marking the area where it is proposed that the bridge is going to be built and that it was understood that some residents were going to have to move their garages. The Community Council was not aware of these issues and L. Hayworth encouraged everyone to attend the above mentioned public meeting where these and any other questions could be raised.

High School Building: L. Hayworth welcomed a group of High School students who were present to express their views and thoughts to Community Councillors on the High School building works and the impact on the students. They praised the new PE facilities and many other great aspects of the school pointing out that the Peebles High School was within the top 15 state schools in the country. Overall, however, the school suffers from lack of space with many separate alterations having been made over the years creating inadequate facilities. The students wished to highlight the need for a brand new school building to overcome all the current deficiencies. In order to fully understand the issues at hand it was agreed that the Senior Student Council will invite the Community Councillors, by liaising with A. Snoddy, to one of their meetings. That way Community Councillors will be able to get a first-hand impression of the problems as well as provide information to the High School students about the Community Council's role in the community. L. Morrison inquired if the students were interested in having a senior school student as a rotating member of the Community Council. The students gave a positive reply and so it was agreed that the Community Council will discuss the matter and get back to them should this be possible to arrange.

ACTION: A. Snoddy/All

Dog Fouling: A resident raised the persistent problem of dog fouling in Peebles. Everyone agreed that this kind of behaviour is not to be tolerated, is anti-social, totally irresponsible and can create serious health risks. The Council, fully supported by the Community Council, have made significant efforts over the years to get the message through but the problem still remains. Another resident spoke about a scheme called the Green Dog Walkers Initiative which has been widely adopted by several local authorities. It is a community led initiative, run by local volunteers, to build awareness and change attitudes about dog fouling in a non-confrontational and friendly way in order to encourage pet owners to take responsibility and clean up after them. The Community Council is committed to help keep Peebles clean and agreed to look into this scheme, liaising with Scottish Borders Council and Police Scotland to see how this issue can be supported and taken forward. There will be a situation update at the next Community Council meeting in October.

ACTION: A. Snoddy

3. **Apologies:** C. Carleton, J. Crawley G. Mackie, J. Shearer, R. Tatler, SBC Cllrs S. Bell and K. Cockburn

4. **Minute of Meeting of 13th August 2015:** The acceptance of the minutes was proposed by S. Haslam and seconded by E. Smith. The minutes were approved and signed by the Acting Chairman, L. Hayworth.

5. **Matters Arising:**

- **Priorsford Bridge & Neidpath Corner:** To be taken at item 10, Planning Report.
- **Additional Meeting on Local Taxation:** Cllr Bhatia reported that unfortunately it had not been possible to arrange another meeting in the Borders to collect views about council tax in addition to the one to be held in Galashiels on 14th September. Cllr Bhatia noted that almost 40 people had already pre-registered for this meeting.
- **Filming of Tommy's Honour:** L. Hayworth and Cllr Garvie noted a contribution of £300 to the Common Good Fund by the film group.
- **Skate Park Initiative:** S. Haslam reported that the reason for not taking the previous initiative forward had been reluctance by SBC to adopt the facility. Cllr Bhatia said that the Council expected that maintenance of the park would be difficult and so had not wanted to take on the responsibility. Cllr Bhatia felt, however, that there was a precedent for the Council to adopt the park and encouraged taking the new initiative forward again. She said that there would be funding available. S. Haslam agreed to take the matter forward. She also pointed out that there may be an opportunity for skate boarders to use a new venue in Innerleithen on Friday afternoons: Tweeddale Youth Action have taken over the old Co-op building where a bike workshop will open up mid November.

ACTION: S. Haslam

- **Civic Reception for Visitors from Hendaye:** A. Snoddy reported that the event had been very successful and read out a thank you letter from the Peebles-Hendaye Town Twinning Association. The Common Good Fund had provided financial help with the arrangements which was kindly noted.
- **Public Meeting re proposed Development at Rosetta Caravan Park:** The Community Council is organising a public meeting on this matter to be held on *Tuesday, 15th September, 2015 at 7 pm at St. Joseph's Neighbourhood Hall*. 625 flyers have been printed and will be distributed to the residents in the area prior to the meeting by the Community Councillors together with the kind help of Cliff Scupham and other residents.
- **Provost for Peebles:** A. Snoddy reported that the Peeblesshire News will run a poll in the newspaper on 25th September 2015 to find out the public's opinion on the matter. A. Snoddy also read out a letter from the Peebles Callants intimating that they do not support the proposition.
- **Peebles in Bloom:** A Snoddy had circulated the final report on the Peebles in Bloom awards which had once again been a success and well attended with approx. 100 guests. The front gardens were judged by Ms. Carolyn Spray and Mr. David Spray and the business premises, streets and secret gardens by Mr. Eric Gilmour and Mr. Thomas Gifford. Awards were presented by Lady Catherine Maxwell Stuart. Thank you letters have also been sent out.
- **Creation of Small Businesses Related to Biking:** L. Hayworth suggested that the LDP (Local Development Plan) should include opportunities for small businesses to grow from a domestic situation into premises. E.g. the old Halyrood school building which is currently owned by the Council could be used for such purposes instead of being sold for housing. Cllr Logan commented that it would be surprising if the building was developed into housing. Cllr Garvie thought that the Auction business in the building has been a great success and Cllr Bhatia pointed out that the Council needed to bring in capital to fund e.g. schools in the area so it was likely the property will be sold.

6. **Police Report:** Circulated. The Acting Chairman, L. Hayworth introduced Inspector Mike Bennett and welcomed him and PC D. Sorrell to the meeting. L. Hayworth noted that the Police had been very vigilant about parking recently having issued 22 tickets in Peebles, 17 of which were to vehicles local to the area. L. Hayworth also commented that some residents had experienced problems with Police not following up 101 calls (for non-emergencies and general enquiries) with responses or visits. Inspector M. Bennett noted that the ability of Police Scotland's 101 service to cope with demand fluctuates somewhat. However he was also happy to be a contact for non-emergency issues. PC D. Sorrell went through the circulated report noting especially one anti-social behaviour (ASBO) warning given for driving at excessive speed in the town. There had been no drugs misuse or alcohol incidents. PC D. Sorrell pointed out that some sheds had been broken into in Peebles and Innerleithen and urged the public once again to vigilance. PC D. Sorrell also brought up the dog fouling problem and mentioned the Green Dog Walking Scheme which had already been discussed earlier on in the meeting commenting that the Police were keen to take part in the initiative. It was agreed that PC D. Sorrell will liaise with A. Snoddy on the matter. Cllr Bhatia pointed out that funding for the project can be applied for from the Quality of Life Fund.

ACTION: A. Snoddy

S. Haslam noted that there was a serious bottle neck especially in the mornings in the Old Town by cars parked outside the garage causing many dangerous situations. PC D. Sorrell agreed and said the Police would target the area again.

Cllr Logan enquired if the community police officers were going to be issued with mobile phones as requested at the Innerleithen Community Council meeting a week before. Inspector M. Bennett replied that there were financial problems in doing so and that other options were also being looked into.

PC D. Sorrell reported that she had talked to some skate boarders based on the complaints raised at the last Community Council meeting noting that they really were not a problem, were decent and responsible individuals who unfortunately did not have anywhere to go to practice their skills. S. Haslam informed PC D. Sorrell of the initiative to take forward the skate park idea again as discussed above.

7. **Chairman's report:** In the absence of the Chairman there was nothing to report.

8. **SBC Councillors:**

- **Cllr Garvie** praised the new Borders railway which was opened on the 5th September as a fantastic and remarkable event which will have a hugely important impact on the economy and prosperity of the Borders.

Cllr Garvie mentioned the working group he was in which had been set up by Council initiative to prepare the way to receive Syrian refugees (no specific figures have been decided upon yet). When asked about placing refugees in people's homes as there was restricted availability of social housing he commented it would not be straight-forward to arrange with many complications but that there will be many other ways people can help.

Cllr Garvie had also attended the Peebles in Bloom Awards event and complemented the arrangements.

- **Cllr Bhatia** mentioned the multi-use path which has been initiated to be built northwards to Leadburn and which will partly be funded by Sustrans. L. Hayworth noted that the Community Council will comment on this in response to the Transport Consultation.

Cllr Bhatia noted that the resurfacing of the railway path between Peebles and Eshiels had now been completed.

Cllr Bhatia enquired about the 3G presentation to be given at the Community Council meeting in November. L. Morrison replied the presentation was going to be made by residents from Craigerne Lane. Cllr Bhatia proposed to also have someone to speak about the actual 3G pitch itself and what it is, not about the location, and suggested contacting Adrian Lucas. This was agreed.

ACTION: A. Snoddy

- **Cllr Logan** noted that the cycle/walkway path between Clovenfords and Galashiels has been completed.

Cllr Logan commented that although not being involved with the opening of the Borders railway he felt it looked like a success with many people using the service.

L. Hayworth enquired if any of the Tweeddale Councillors sit on the committee looking into the transfer of the Council's cultural services into a trust. Cllr Bhatia commented that all 34 councillors will decide on that matter. There was uncertainty whether public consultations had taken place and Cllr Bhatia promised to check this.

ACTION: Cllr Bhatia

9. **Reports for approval:**

- **Treasurer's report:** not circulated. L. Hayworth reported on G. Mackie's behalf that there was nothing special to report.
- **Bonnie Peebles:** Minutes of the Bonnie Peebles meeting on 29th July 2015 had been circulated.

10. **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:** L. Morrison had circulated the Community Council Planning Committee's suggested comments on the SESPlan consultation and requested comments from the Community Councillors to be sent to her in order to incorporate them into the response. L. Hayworth had attended a consultation event in Newton St. Boswell's on 8th September.

ACTION: All

- **Local Access and Transport Strategy:** L. Hayworth will prepare and circulate a draft response to the consultation.

ACTION: L. Hayworth

- **Rosetta Caravan Park Development:** A public meeting will be held on 15th September 2015 at 7 pm at St. Joseph's Neighbourhood Hall.
- **Glentress Master Plan SPG:** The Community Council Planning Committee are concerned that the Forestry Commission's plans, while providing for commercial development in Glentress, do not appear to include a programme for upgrading, improving and extending the cycle paths. In addition SBC Planning Department have not supplemented the plans for the development within Glentress with plans to develop the upper Tweed Valley from Peebles to Walkerburn as a visitor and outdoor leisure centre.
- **Kingsmeadows House:** There are concerns that the estate is being developed as a "gated community" with no public access to the river bank or forest paths. The Community Trust will send a letter to the developer about this issue. L. Morrison also pointed out the sales particulars imply that the grounds are private which would be contrary to the Scottish Outdoors Access Code. The application for tree-cutting is also considered too vague and open-ended. L. Morrison will contact the SBC Access Officer on the matter.

ACTION: L. Morrison

- **3G Pitch:** There will be a presentation on this matter at the Community Council's meeting in November.
- **Neidpath Corner:** The placing of permanent traffic lights will be incorporated at the time of wall/banking repairs and the road will be closed 2 – 7 October 2015 for these works to be carried out. There will be clear diversions in place. Cllr Bhatia suggested that Community Councils in towns and villages along the A72 form a working group to put pressure on the Scottish Government to designate it as a trunk road. That way repairs would be financed by the Scottish Government and not Scottish Borders Council.
- **Priorsford Bridge:** E. Smith said repairs have not yet been carried out.
- **Veitch's:** Costa Coffee have submitted planning applications to alter the interior of the building. Lots of related documents are available on the SBC website. Acting Chairman L. Hayworth expects Peebles Civic Society will scrutinise them in great detail.

11. Any other business:

- **Report from Community Cllr E. Smith:** Nothing to report.
- **Community Councillor achievements and successes:** A. Snoddy reported that a resident had written to her about a problem with rabbits in her garden. The resident subsequently contacted A Snoddy to say the rabbits had miraculously disappeared the day she sent the letter! S. Haslam reported that she had arranged for the Council to cut down overgrown grass on the path in Haylodge Park.
- **Tweeddale Youth Action:** S. Haslam proposed inviting the representatives of youth organisations in Tweeddale to give a presentation on their activities at a Community Council meeting. It was agreed to have the presentation at the December meeting.

ACTION: S. Haslam/A. Snoddy

- **Tree at Northgate:** A. Snoddy reported that Jason Hedley/SBC had indicated the possibility of getting a new bench to replace the one which was vandalised by the tree at the Northgate. It was agreed to have the bench replaced.

ACTION: A. Snoddy

12. **Date for next meeting:** Thursday 8th October 2015 at 7.30 pm at the Burgh Chambers.

The meeting closed at 9.05 pm.