



Community Council of the Royal Burgh of Peebles and District

Minute of the 211th 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 11th of June 2014

Present: C. Carleton, A. Kubie, G. Mackie, G. Rennie, A. Snoddy, A. Stewart (Chairman),

In attendance: SBC Councillors: W. Archibald, G. Logan, C. Bhatia and PC. D. Sorrell

- 1. Open Forum:** Neil Dalgleish came to give a short presentation on the Tour O'The Borders (Tour) cycling event, which this year starts and finishes in Peebles. A pilot for the event had been run in 2012, followed by a much bigger race in 2013 with nearly 1000 participants and this year organisers hope to have close to 2000 cyclists. The date is 10th August with most of the riders arriving on the Saturday. As with the Tweedlove event the accommodation and catering businesses will benefit.
Concerns with various aspects of Tweedlove were brought forward although the general consensus was that such occasions were extremely good for the town and that families and young people were very much involved. There seemed to have been little publicity and the general population had felt that it had not been told what to expect, particularly with respect to road closures and occupation of the carparks. Businesses in the town had expressed dissatisfaction in the way the parking had been handled and that their trade had suffered due to customers being unable to park and going to other towns. Kingsmeadow carpark was closed for public parking and used for sleeping. Both of which seemed to be unauthorised. Mr Dalgleish said that for the Tour field parking was being explored. Tweed Green was closed to traffic a day earlier than the notices suggested and the barriers in the town went up far too early. The police were able to sort out the barriers and with the road closures it was the SBC signage that had been incorrect. However it was clear that for any future event a greater effort to publicise the activities, routes and in particular road closures must be made. In closing the discussion the Chairman commended the Tweedlove team on their cleanup operation and said that the Community Council would be very willing to help with future events which were obviously good for the town and the community.
- 2. Apologies:** L. Foster, D. Horsburgh, L. Morrison, E. Smith, R. Tatler, M. Tolhurst, and SBC Cllrs: G. Garvie, S. Bell and K. Cockburn.
- 3. Minute of Meeting of 8th of May 2014:** Acceptance of minute was proposed by A. Snoddy and seconded by G. Mackie. The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman, A. Stewart.
- 4. Matters arising:**
 - **Rumble strips:** Cllr Bhatia confirmed that the rumble strips had been reduced in height and that to her knowledge no further complaints had been received.
 - **Tweed Island:** A. Snoddy and C. Carleton had been interviewed by Borders Television and this had been broadcast that evening. From the various polls conducted it is clear that opinion in the community is polarised. Cllr Bhatia also mentioned that new islands were forming nearer to the cauld.
 - **Peebles in Bloom:** A. Snoddy gave out judging sheets for first round judging which is to be done between the 10th and 19th July with sheets to be returned to her by 20th July.
- 5. Police report:** circulated. There was a new format to the Police Report which was now being used across the Borders and includes a section for feedback. Insp. T. Hodges will be attending a Community Council meeting to introduce himself. The Chairman requested that PC Sorrell or the

inspector advise the secretary which meeting he would attend so that the Community Council could be prepared. **Common Wealth Games:** All police leave has been cancelled for the games period and most police from the Borders will be in Glasgow. **Anti Social Behaviour:** this has become a problem with youths in Galashiels. It does not yet seem to have spread to Peebles but if anyone hears of ASB becoming a problem the police should be notified. **Dog fouling:** PC Sorrell asked for ideas of where to display anti dog fouling posters. She advised that the police would not advocate members of the public taking photos of incidents but encourage witnesses to tell the police. She would also be happy to participate in a 'day in the park' initiative. Parking: All the businesses in the High Street have been spoken to and tickets have been issued. Cllr Logan advised that he had set up an initiative to look at parking within the town. PC Sorrell had been approached by many visitors who were very confused regarding the new signage in the car parks. The meeting agreed that it was very confusing.

6. **Chairman's report:** The chairman requested that all members who wished to go to Melrose to support David Tawse when he carries the Queen's Baton on Wednesday get in touch with the Secretary.

7. **SBC Councillors:**

- Cllr Bhatia: The Peebles CAN Saturday Market wished to move to a new location in front of the Tourist Information Office. It was thought that this would raise a number of issues but she had advised them to contact the Community Council.
- Cllr Logan: Cllr Cockburn had attended the Scottish Affairs Committee meeting and hoped that it would bring economic benefits to the town. C. Carleton had also attended and taken an active part in the debate.
- Cllr Archibald: At the most recent Council meeting a permanent home for the Tapestry of Scotland had been discussed. Tweedbank was thought to be the best location with £40K available for a feasibility study. It is anticipated that a purpose built venue will cost in excess of £2M.
A third of the Borders population is over 65 and SBC are looking at ways to rationalise the care of the elderly. A business case report will be issued.

8. **Reports for approval:**

- Treasurer's report: circulated. The Chairman reported that the Community Council grant is being processed but not yet paid.
- Bonny Peebles: circulated

9. **Special Topic:** First Bus Services – 62 and X62

Neil McNaught, Business Manager and Lee Young of First Scotland East Limited came to answer questions on the changes to the 62 service and the introduction of the X62. For the company this represents a major development of the 62 service and a significant investment creating 22 new jobs and six extra vehicles. The frequency of the service has been increased and the links to other services within the Borders improved. The reliability of the services is now guaranteed as most of the delays were caused by traffic congestion between the bus station and North Bridge. However passengers are experiencing real difficulties both at the Edinburgh terminus with the change to Waterloo Place and in Galashiels at the cessation of a through service to the hospital. The lack of toilet facilities, seating and sheltered waiting area in Edinburgh causes hardship and this will be exacerbated in the winter. It is difficult for people changing from buses which have come into the bus station particularly since most people doing this have luggage and a high proportion are elderly. The chairman was surprised that there was a demand for a twenty minute service during most of the day although at rush hour it would make sense. However regular users had requested the increase in frequency and First Bus were confident that business would expand. It was noted that there was a longer gap during the afternoon rush hour, which is being looked into, but this is filled with the X70 service.

The discontinuation of the service beyond Galashiels has seriously affected people attending the BGH. These people are generally elderly or mothers with young children. By definition at least one of the party travelling will be ill or infirm and waiting at the bus station with its limited facilities is very difficult.

First Bus welcome feedback from customers but the timetable is set for at least 90 days as this is the minimum time permitted between timetable changes unless recommended by the local authority.

It is clear the First bus wishes to communicate with all its customers and the communities it serves and the Chairman confirmed that anything that the Community Council can do to facilitate these communications it will. Cllr Archibald noted that John Dellow heads transport services at SBC. The conclusion of the discussion was that at both ends of the service facilities for both passengers and drivers need to be improved and local authorities need to be pressurised into doing this.

10. **Planning report:** draft report has been circulated.

- The Community Trust is investigating the possibility of purchasing Kingsmeadows House
- Amended plans for the Peebles Hydro housing development have been submitted but these do not address fully the objections raised.
- The Vision for Peebles workshop was held and well attended.
- The Scottish Government initiative Scottish Sustainable Communities Initiative (SSCI) has indicated that it is accepting applications for part of the £100,000 fund it has available to cover the professional fees component of community consultation / planning exercises that contribute to the formulation of Local Development Plans. Up to £15,000 is available per exercise. Applications can only be made by Councils, who are also expected to match-fund (cash or kind) the grant awarded.

11. **Any other business:**

- **Retirement from the Community Council:** Myriam Baete has stepped down from the Community council due to the pressure of other commitments
- **Minute secretary:** It was decided that this position should be advertised outwith the Community Council.
Action: AS/AS/AK
- **NHS Borders:** It was decided that a letter should be sent to remind NHS Borders that the Community Council is a statutory consultee.
Action: AK
- **SBCCN:** A. Snoddy agreed to go to the next two meetings and G. Mackie will accompany her to one. Their purpose to assess whether these meetings are of use to the Community Council.

12. **Date for next meeting:** 14th August, 2014 at 7.00 pm. There is no meeting in July

The meeting closed at 9.10 pm.