



Community Council of the Royal Burgh of Peebles and District

Minute of the 216th 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 December 2014

Present: C. Carleton, F. Dalgleish, D. Horsburgh, A. McKenzie, G. Mackie, G. Rennie, A. Snoddy, E. Smith, A. Stewart (Chairman) and R. Tatler

In attendance: SBC Councillors: W. Archibald, S. Bell, C. Bhatia and G. Logan, PC D. Sorrell, L. Crichton (Minute Secretary), P. Farish (Innerleithen Community Council)

1. **Open Forum:** The Chairman, A. Stewart welcomed Anne McKelvey who was attending the meeting with the intention of possibly joining the Peebles Community Council. A. Stewart then went on to introduce Michael Bryant from JS Sainsbury's who was there to give a presentation on Sainsbury's involvement with the community. M. Bryant told about Sainsbury's different ways of supporting the local community, e.g.:

- The Local Charity Scheme which aims to nominate a local charity each year and to support their activities in various ways.
- The Bags for Life sale which directs funds towards supporting the local community.
- Active Kids vouchers which can be exchanged for various things, e.g. sports equipment, computers etc.
- A dedicated notice board for local organisations to use to inform the community about their activities.

M. Bryant emphasized that they really wanted to do more for the community and invited people and organisations to contact them to discuss the different options available.

A. Stewart thanked M. Bryant for permitting the Peebles Community Council to set up a stall in the store in September. He also promised to get back to M. Bryant with the name of a person from the Community Council who would act as the point of contact in the future.

ACTION: AS

2. **Apologies:** L. Foster, A. Kubie, L. Morrison, SBC Cllrs: K. Cockburn

3. **Minute of Meeting of 13th November 2014:** The Chairman noted one alteration to the last minutes and proposed a correction to 'LDP' under item 10 in the Planning Report. It stands for 'local' instead 'long-term' Development Plan. The approval for alteration was proposed by E. Smith and seconded by A. Snoddy. The minute was approved and signed by the Chairman, A. Stewart.

4. **Matters Arising:**

- **Priorsford Bridge:** E. Smith advised that the council had been working on the bridge that day but was unable to determine why the bridge became slippery in cold weather. It is looking into the matter and it may be necessary to close the bridge again for new work to be carried out.
- **Tour o' the Borders - update:** F. Dalgleish reported that the organisers were having another meeting on the 16th of December to discuss the progress of the arrangements. The Chairman said that the next Community Council meeting would be held on **Thursday, 8th January 2015 at 7 pm in the Burgh Hall** at which Neil Dalgleish of Hillside Outside would be giving a

presentation on the subject and to which all members of the public are invited. F. Dalgleish added that the arrangements for Tweedlove would also be discussed at this meeting.

- **Neighbourhoods Review - update:** The Chairman commented that the report on this subject had not been published yet but J. Hedley/SBC had promised to inform the Community Council as soon as this was ready.
- **Kingsmeadows Road – update:** The Chairman informed that the work on Kingsmeadows Road had been completed at the end of November and the road was open for traffic again. It was generally commented that the diversion around the road works had caused many difficulties for people trying to get through.

5. **Future of Hay Lodge Hospital:**

Cllr Bhatia reported on the matter of Hay Lodge Hospital which had been widely in the news of late. However there had been concern expressed following comments attributed to Dr Sheena MacDonald (The Medical Director) made during an interview with a BBC Reporter. The Board of NHS Borders agreed to review the future role of the community hospitals but Cllr Bhatia emphasised that the Board has no proposals to close the local community hospitals. The Community Councils as well as the wider public will definitely be consulted during the process.

Concerns were raised that local services were going to be diminished despite the fact that more houses were being built in and around Peebles. The 'Hospital at Home' approach is evidently favoured by many patients as they prefer to be taken care of at home but this is not always feasible, particularly with elderly people. Cllr Bhatia commented that there needed to be serious discussion around what families can do for care of their family members. The question is how to make the service better bearing in mind that there just is not enough money to do it all.

The Chairman noted that until there was more news from the Board of NHS Borders the Community Council would wait before taking any action. C. Carleton suggested having the possibility of forming a liaison group with the GP practice on the agenda in the near future. The Chairman commented that J. Pace and J. Key had been involved in something like this before and that this should be looked into.

ACTION: AK

6. **Police Report:** circulated. PC D. Sorrell commented that the police had continued to tackle the problem of illegal parking in the town and had spoken to several members of the public about it, and had also issued a few tickets. She emphasised that it is important to keep educating people on the matter. Cllr Logan advised that the working group dealing with parking would be issuing a statement in January. PC D. Sorrell also encouraged the public to be extra vigilant and security conscious for, although Peebles had not been targeted, there had been several housebreaks in the southern parts of the Borders.

7. **Chairman's report:** The points the Chairman intended raise would be covered by Agenda items.

8. **SBC Councillors:**

- **Cllr Archibald** informed the Community Council that the Local Licensing Forum, which is appointed from members of the public, was looking to replace one member in early spring 2015 and invited anyone interested to come forward. He also said that the alcohol statistics were moving in the right direction in the Scottish Borders and that educating people about the use of alcohol was beginning to show results.
- **Cllr Bhatia** commented on the recent road works in Peebles High Street which had caused chaos. The contractor, working on the water mains of a new development, had started the works before permission had been granted and the council had stopped the work. These are now expected to begin in January once the proper permissions have been obtained and the traffic control will be better organised. Cllr Bhatia promised to find out if any penalties were issued to the contractor over the traffic problems caused.

Cllr Bhatia also reported that at a Council Executive meeting a remarkable increase in the proceeds of crime amounting to approximately £1.5 million had been noted. She would like to see how that money could be spent e.g. for projects like the skate park in Victoria Park as there really are no facilities for teenagers in the town.

Cllr Bhatia informed that as there was no money currently to build the traffic island on Neidpath Road in the Old Town it would now be postponed to next year. She asked would the Peebles Community Council have a view for removing the other, existing island which is close to the new one once the new one was built. The old island suffers from continuous damage and the pavement needs constant repairing. The Chairman promised the Community Council would look into the matter.

ACTION: AS

9. Reports for approval:

- **Treasurer's report:** circulated. G. Mackie advised that very little had happened recently and that there was nothing specific to report.
- **Bonnie Peebles:** Nothing to report.

10. Special Topic: Health and Social Care:

Cllr Bhatia reported on the Integration of Health and Social Care which is the Scottish Government's programme of reform to improve services for people who use health and social care services. Scottish Borders Council had been working together with NHS Borders to deliver seamless and joined up care in the Borders. The process includes most of adult social care services and community health services but not acute services. The process is extremely complex and the detail of bringing together different organisations is complicated. However, there are good examples that the integration will improve the services and create savings once implemented. The staff are extremely enthusiastic about the possibilities the integration brings and want to make it work, which is very encouraging. The budget for the integration scheme is £100 million but it does not have a legal position before the Scottish Government has approved it.

11. Planning Report: A draft report had been circulated. C. Carleton pointed out that the last Planning Committee meeting had not been quorate. The responses to planning applications had been put on the Community Council website. There being no adverse comments the recommendations as posted were approved.

- LDP (Local Development Plan): The reporter is now reviewing the LDP.
- Vision for Peebles: ongoing.
- Common Good & Social Housing: C. Carleton asked for clarification why the Peebles Common Good Fund had considered a report on the suitability of a piece of land by Elliot's Park for future social housing in their September meeting. It also does not form a part of the draft LDP. Cllrs Bhatia and Bell explained that the value of the land exceeds £1000 and according to their rules the Common Good Fund has a responsibility to find the best value for their assets. The Fund has asked architects to have another look into the matter.
- Our Future - Our Borderlands: R. Tatler had prepared and circulated a response to this consultation and submitted it to the Westminster Parliamentary Select Committee on Scottish Affairs at the end of November. The timescale had been very tight and the Planning Committee had not had the opportunity to debate the contents of the report.
- Cloich Forest Wind Farm: A. Snoddy had attended a meeting in early December of the local Community Councils affected by the wind farm application. The Chairman reported that the Peebles Community Council had been asked to join a united front against the development of Cloich Wind as well as contributing to a 'fighting fund'. Peebles Community Council is not in a position to take a stance on Cloich Wind Farm as it has not been discussed at a meeting, nor has public opinion been gauged. It was agreed that members of the public would be asked for their opinion at the Community Council's stall at Tesco's in the New Year (date still to be decided). It was further agreed to write a letter to

the Reporter asking for clarification if it is going to make a site visit and prepare written evidence or if it is going to a hearing and at what stage will this decision be made. Details on how to get funding for a plebiscite (town referendum) will also be requested.

ACTION: CC

- **Kingsmeadows Estate:** A planning application has been submitted to change Kingsmeadows House into 12 residential flats, it is not known who now owns the steadings on the Estate. The Community Council/Planning Committee has no objections in principle on Kingsmeadows House but it would be better if it were connected to the whole area to be developed. It was hoped that the surrounding woods would remain intact.
- Other items covered were: no development as yet at Veitch's corner; C. Carleton's presentation to the Civic Society's meeting in November on Vision for Peebles.

12. Any other business:

- **SBCCN (Scottish Borders Community Councils' Network):** G. Mackie reported on the last SBCCN meeting held in November. The legal position of community councils and the question of whether members could be personally liable was discussed. This remains unclear and G. Mackie reminded everyone that although representing the community council everyone was also acting as an individual. SBCCN is carrying out a survey on communication within communities with the aim that all community councils could help each other but they needed to first know who does what. G. Mackie and A. Stewart will go through the questionnaire and fill it in. SBCCN has also published a handbook for community councillors which is very approachable and useful for everyone to read. Only one copy will be sent to each community council as it will be constantly updated and the information in it will change frequently.

ACTION: GM & AS

- **Tweed Island:** A. Snoddy advised that SBC was going to carry out work to thin out trees on the island.
- **Christmas Lights Switch-On:** The Chairman of the Peebles Christmas Lights Association had expressed his dismay on the way SBC had closed the roads and in particular the Eastgate which effectively excluded those businesses. A. Snoddy will talk to A. Kubie to co-ordinate a response.

ACTION: ASn & AK

13. Date for next meeting: Thursday 8th January 2015 at 7 pm at the Burgh Hall.

The meeting closed at 9.35 pm.