



*Community Council*  
*of the*  
*Royal Burgh of Peebles and District*

**Minutes of the 293<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Community Council  
held in on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2022 at 7.00pm via Zoom. The meeting  
was recorded for the purposes of Minuting and Reporting.**

**Present:** L.Turnbull, S.Rae, A.Snoddy, G.Mackie, P.Maudsley, H.Young, A.Mackenzie, L.Hayworth, M.Bruce, S.Hamilton, J.Shearer, O.Olesheva, S.Watson; Cllr Anderson, Cllr Haslam, Cllr Small, Cllr Tatler, Cllr Bell

**In attendance:** H.Scott of the Southern Reporter

**Observing:** candidates for the forthcoming Local Election: V.Thomson and J.Pirone

**Members of the public:** D.Pye, R.Cameron, A.Sutherland, C.Williams

**Apologies:** C.Forsyth, J.Mitchell, G.Ramsay, J.Crawley, Cllr Chapman

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, including members of the public and 2 candidates for the forthcoming Local Elections in May.

**Presentation** by SBC Dog Education Officer, Rose Hogg

Ms Hogg works for SBC's 'Trading Standards and Animal Health' department along with the SBC Dog Control Officer, and they cover the whole of the Borders. Her role is to promote responsible dog ownership. She works to reduce instances of dog fouling, as well as dog barking. She carries poo bags to distribute, speaks with dog owners, and erects signs as well as creating stencilled signs on pathways. She speaks with children so that hopefully the situation will be much improved when they grow up. Ms Hogg follows the Dog Fouling Act which means she has seven days from someone reporting an incident of fouling to collect statements and report the case to the Police who will give the dog owner a warning or issue a fine. In response to a question from H.Young, Ms Hogg said that the new posters have QR codes on them. Scanning the code will take you straight to the reporting page and pinpoint the exact location. That information goes to Ms Hogg who can arrange for a team to go out and clean up that area. Ms Hogg hopes to introduce a 'green dog walkers' scheme where dog walkers within the community keep an eye on a particular area and report any instances of dog fouling. If a particular area is frequently brought to Ms Hogg's attention she can arrange to focus on it for a while.

**Open Forum**

Athletics provision at Peebles High School

Colin Williams of Moorfoot Runners, spoke about the athletics provision in Peebles High School (PHS) rebuild planning application. He said this is an opportunity to provide enhanced athletics facilities for the benefit of the whole district, of all ages (not just

those attending the High School). The current proposals are limited and in fact the plans are actually worse than the current provision.

Their coaches' suggestions during the feasibility and consultation periods included a 400m track, failing which a 100m sprint track and 300m training track, failing which a J-track of 150-200m, a double-pit long jump (which is essential to avoid technical training into the wind), a high jump fan and/or a multi-use area of a synthetic spike-friendly surface, and a lit path around the perimeter of the new 4G pitch wide enough to be used as a running loop. None have been included and the single-pit long jump is now located separate from the sprint track (which does not facilitate essential track-to-pit training). It is also now on a less than ideal North-South orientation.

Moorfoot Runners intends to submit a representation to the planning application requesting that enhanced provision is included in the plans and are asking Community Councils throughout Tweeddale/Peeblesshire to support their request.

The reputation of both PHS as a school, and Tweeddale as a rural community, is that they both punch well above their weight in athletics at regional, national and international levels.

Cllr Anderson said the plans for the outdoor areas have not yet been completed. She does not believe there is any intention to reduce standards and invited Mr Williams to contact her directly with his concerns. Cllr Tatler said that Tweeddale Councillors have been meeting with the design teams all along and have been pushing for the facilities to be at least as good as they are at present, if not better. It will, as always, depend on the finance available. Additionally there are limitations due to the available space.

Cllr Haslam said is it hoped that the sports facilities will be built before the main construction.

L.Turnbull asked Mr Williams to copy PCC into Moorfoot's submission to SBC's Planning Department and PCC will send in a letter of support. Cllr Anderson invited Mr Williams to copy in the Tweeddale Councillors too.

Cllr Small explained that he is on SBC's Planning Committee and while impartial has listened carefully to everything Mr Williams said.

### Speeding

Alasdair Sutherland lives at Standalane and is concerned at the speed of cars travelling both north and south along that end of Rosetta Road. The national speed limit sign is 10m north of the entrance to the Standalane estate. Drivers often start accelerating before that sign, reaching speeds of 30 and 40mph. Similarly cars entering the town along that route from the north are often travelling fast. He suggested that the 20mph sign could be better positioned so drivers would be decelerating before they pass the junction with Standalane.

Cllr Anderson said she would speak with P.Gilhooley of SBC and invited Mr Sutherland to email her the details of his concern. L.Turnbull thanked Mr Sutherland for raising the matter and said PCC would continue to follow the matter up on his behalf.

**Approval of the Minutes of 10<sup>th</sup> February 2022:** proposed by M.Bruce, seconded by P.Maudsley

### **Matters arising from the Minutes**

- Minute Secretary still required

- Public toilets: Cllr Tatler reported that, subject to approval of a funding application to the Peebles Parking Fees Fund, the toilets in the East Station car park will open shortly and stay open for at least 6 months. It will be up to the new administration after the forthcoming local elections in May to decide how many toilets should be open in each Borders town. It is unlikely that the School Brae toilets will be re-opened.

SBC officers have been asked to assess how much funding would be required to keep the Haylodge toilets (*a Common Good Asset*) open during the winter months as well as the summer months. They are also looking at the cost of keeping them open at the weekends only during wintertime. The subject will be discussed further at the next Common Good meeting.

A.Snoddy asked if the slots in the cash boxes outside the School Brae toilets could be covered up in some way as she had witnessed visitors to the town putting money in before they realised the toilets are permanently closed. Cllr Tatler said he would ask for that to be done.

- Overgrown hedges and obscured sightlines. The list has been sent to SBC by A.Snoddy
- CCTV: M.Bruce said that a proposal that shops in the town could have front facing CCTV cameras in their windows attracted no support from the shopkeepers. He concluded that the existing CCTV system should be repaired or replaced with more modern technology. Cllr Haslam reported that 6 further mobile CCTV cameras are going to be deployed in the Borders, making a total of 8. The cameras will be owned and managed by the police, but it will be the SBC Councillors who decide where they will be deployed. Cllr Tatler explained that the new mobile CCTV cameras will operate in low lighting. S.Rae asked if multiple cameras could be deployed to just one location and Cllr Haslam responded that that could happen. M.Bruce was informed by Sergeant Granger that the current mobile CCTV camera in School Brae has not worked for some time due to a faulty battery. Mr Bruce said it is important that the new CCTV cameras are properly maintained.
- Traffic calming measures in March Street: Cllr Anderson reported that a recent survey of traffic travelling along March Street showed an average speed of 22mph. It is not possible to restrict the movement of large vehicles on that road. There have been suggestions for build-outs or traffic islands, but it is difficult to make a case for them because there have not been any accidents on that road. Cllr Anderson said P.Gilhooley of SBC would be happy to hear from anyone who wants to make a case for having electronic speed restriction signs installed. L.Turnbull invited all Community Councillors to indicate their approval of the suggestion, and all supported it. L.Turnbull asked if 20mph signs could be painted on the road surface as well. Cllr Small confirmed that he has spoken with Ms Gilhooley and it will be done shortly.

### **'Parents Issues' Sub Group**

H.Young reported that since the last PCC meeting the group have liaised with parents of pupils at Kingsland Primary School and compiled a list of their concerns, which include dropped kerbs, pavements and access problems. She recently sent the list to Cllr Tatler and hopes to follow it up with him in due course. Of particular concern is the speed of the traffic passing the school on the Glasgow Road. Ms Young has been in correspondence with Ms Gilhooley and Cllr Anderson about the matter and hopes to attend a meeting

soon to discuss the creation of a 40mph buffer between the 60mph national speed limit and the town's 20mph speed restrictions. All Community Councillors indicated that they would support the measure.

### **Police Report**

The report was circulated prior to the meeting. M.Bruce said much of this month's discussion with Sergeant Granger focused on recent incidents of anti-social behaviour in School Brae. Concerningly many took place during the High School lunch hour. On one occasion several pupils were escorted back to the High School by police officers. However police officers cannot be everywhere and Mr Bruce thinks that there is a need for education to adopt different values and behaviours, and the appropriate place for that is at the High School. Mr Bruce would be happy to help the High School with any sort of education programme to resolve the issues.

L.Turnbull said he wrote to Mr Wilson, the head teacher at the High School, earlier in the week about anti-social behaviour. Mr Wilson is willing to meet with Mr Turnbull and Mr Bruce to discuss their concerns.

Cllr Haslam said all parents of pupils at the High School received emails last week reminding them to remind their children about good behaviour at lunchtimes and after school.

Mr Bruce gave further details about some of the incidents concerned in response to a query from G.Mackie. That prompted L.Turnbull to once again question whether we are getting value from the Community Action Team (CAT) Would some of the money be better spent on some full-time youth workers?

Cllr Tatler, who meets with the CAT Team regularly, said they respond to all concerns put to them including sending letters to youngsters' parents, confiscating alcohol, etc., but they cannot be everywhere. Again Mr Turnbull asked if some of the money would be better spent on youth workers? Cllr Tatler said Mr Turnbull would have to make a case for that to happen. M.Bruce has spoken with a Street Pastor based in Galashiels. They patrol in Galashiels and Hawick from 11pm till 3am at weekends. They speak to anyone they encounter at that time, ask if they can help in any way, and hand out lots of lollipops! They would like to speak at one of our meetings, and perhaps undertake an exploratory patrol to see if they think they can offer us any help. L.Turnbull asked the Secretary to issue an invitation.

Cllr Haslam said that we are lucky to have the CAT Team in the Borders, giving us an additional 14 police officers. A review is currently being undertaken into the tasking of the Team. She thinks it would be wrong to take money out of the CAT Team to invest in youth workers. She pointed out that every time Tweeddale Youth Action (TYA) has applied to SBC for funding they have received it. Therefore if TYA came up with a project which required funding for outreach youth workers then Councillors in the next administration would probably look favourably upon it.

Cllr Tatler said Sergeant O'Rourke (who has now left) and Dave Hodson of TYA worked well together in the past. Cllr Tatler will suggest to the CAT Team that one of them speaks with local Community Councils to explain what they do in the community. Mr Turnbull asked if there would be an opportunity for Community Councils to have an input to the CAT Team review? Cllr Tatler suggested we ask the new team of SBC Cllrs after the May local election.

Mr Bruce said that in the past Dave Hodson has said he would be delighted for TYA to act as a host employer for a couple of youth workers if funds were available. He concluded that he would like there to be youth workers as well as the CAT Team.

### **Chairman's Report**

L.Turnbull attended the recent Beltane Committee AGM and acted as their interim Chairman whilst the new committee was elected. It was indicative of the good community spirit in the town to hear about the local groups which help the Beltane Committee and how, in turn, the Beltane Committee support other groups.

### **Chambers Institution Trust**

A report by P.Maudsley was circulated prior to the meeting. L.Turnbull and P.Maudsley attended the last Trust meeting. The two Community Councillors agreed that the concept of a User Group was a good starting point but Mr Turnbull made it clear that the governance of the Trust has not changed and we are still seeking representation on the Management Board of the Trust. Mr Turnbull asked the SBC Councillors (Trustees) why the meeting went into secret session to discuss, according to the agenda, Place Making and Levelling Up.

Cllr Bell said he not seen the report which, it transpired, had been sent to Community Councillors only. He reminded the meeting that SBC Councillors are members of the Community Council. Mr Maudsley will forward the report to them. SBC officers had recommended to Cllr Bell, as Chairman, that that part of the meeting be heard in private session because there were commercially confidential matters in relation to possible contractual arrangements that might be entered in to. Cllr Bell had put it to the vote and the Trustees agreed that it should be held in private.

L.Turnbull said the Trustees refer to 'stakeholders' of the Chambers Institution rather than 'beneficiaries'. He feels there is an important distinction and would like the Trustees to use the term 'beneficiaries' from now on. Cllr Bell said he failed to see the distinction but if it was important to Mr Turnbull then he should put his request in writing with an explanation of the distinction. That request would be considered at the next CIT meeting which will be chaired by Cllr Tatler.

Mr Turnbull said that the open letter referred to in past meetings has now been signed by 5 local organisations and was posted out to all SBC Councillors yesterday. Cllr Bell, in his role as Co-Chair of the CIT Board of Trustees, acknowledged receipt of the letter. He asked when the contents of the letter were discussed by the Community Council? Mr Turnbull said the contents had been discussed by PCC for some weeks. L.Hayworth said that he could confirm that as a Community Councillor he had received and approved the contents of the letter. He suggested that Cllr Bell might like to confirm with other Community Councillors that they, too, had received the draft letter, considered and approved it. Cllr Bell said that again he would remind PCC that the six SBC councillors are full members of the Community Council and should have had sight of the draft letter. Whilst he would have chosen not to comment on it, it went out in the name of PCC and they should have been kept informed. Mr Turnbull noted his comment.

### **SBC Councillor Reports**

#### **Councillor Anderson**

Kingsland Primary School and concerns about speeding on the Glasgow Road: Cllr Anderson understands that Community Councillor H.Young and the head teacher have arranged a meeting with P.Gilhooly of SBC to discuss the matter.

She has approved the opening of the toilets in the East Station car park.

She followed up O.Olesheva's report about the poor road surface at Tweed Green. An inspection was carried out and patching has now been done.

She has been in contact with P.Maudsley about Crossburn Caravan Park and Ballantyne Place. An SBC officer is going to look at the controversial site at Ballantyne Place and see if any enforcement action is appropriate.

Cllr Anderson explained that this was her last meeting with PCC. After 5 years' service she is not standing for re-election in Tweeddale West. She has 9 Community Councils in her area and has a good working relationship with the others. She hopes that after the May election we can get past the current stresses. The situation was not helped by the letter sent from PCC to all SBC Councillors saying that the local elected Councillors were intent in ignoring the wishes of local residents. The six SBC Councillors work very hard on behalf of their constituents. She hopes that when this Community Council meets with the newly elected SBC Councillors that some of the aggro will dissipate, and she wishes the Community Council well.

Mr Turnbull thanked Cllr Anderson for her candour. He thanked her on behalf of everyone for all her hard work over the years. There is a perception that SBC, as a whole, are not actually listening to the Community Council. The role of PCC is to represent the views of the community, which it does. He acknowledged that the relationship over the past year has been difficult, but it is because we are asking difficult questions on behalf of the community and will continue to do so. However, like Cllr Anderson, he hopes that after the election PCC will have a better relationship with SBC going forward.

#### Councillor Bell

Cllr Bell today attended a meeting about National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) which will set out the Scottish Governments priorities and policies for the planning system up to 2045. The Local Development Plan has been submitted to the (*Scottish Government*) Reporter. Cllr Bell read through the representations in the LDP, many of which were from Peebles. Issues which Officers considered contentious have been forwarded to the Reporter for consideration. It was important to submit the LDP today before complex changes in the planning system take place. It will be many months before it comes back. When it does, with any modifications by the Reporter, it will be in its final and defined form.

Cllr Bell will attend another meeting about NPF4 tomorrow. There is considerable concern among several organisations that NPF4 is not adequately representing rural economies and issues. Cllr Bell invited any attendees at this meeting who would like further details to email him.

Cllr Bell wished Cllr Anderson well with her plans to contest a seat in Dundee Council. He is also standing down at the forthcoming local election after 10 years as a Councillor. This is his last PCC meeting as he is unable to attend the next one in April.

He said that PCC has to find a way of letting go of issues if what they want cannot be achieved for valid reasons. He offered that thought as an observation, not a criticism. He finished by wishing the Community Council well.

### Councillor Haslam

Cllr Haslam said she endorsed what had been said by both Cllr Anderson and Cllr Bell, and that it had been a privilege to work with them both over the past 5 years. She, too, is standing down in May but hopes to attend the PCC meeting in April. She is delighted to report that the initial designs for a skate park have been submitted for planning approval. Peebles Skate Park Group have been campaigning for this for 10 years. She will continue to encourage a closer relationship between the Youth Parliament and the Community Council.

The Queen's Jubilee Fund. Many other Community Councils have applied for funding to hold events to mark the Jubilee, and Cllr Haslam would encourage PCC to organise something.

### Councillor Small

Cllr Small reported that SBC Planning Committee, on which he sits, has been very busy lately. He is standing for re-election.

### Councillor Tatler

Cllr Tatler is also standing for re-election.

The Executive meeting of the Council last week approved funding of £100,000 from Place Based Investment – a Scottish Government programme – to refurbish and upgrade the Burgh Hall. The Small Schemes Funding was increased from £35,000 this year to £80,000 next year. There is also additional funding for what was previously called the Community Fund and is now called the Neighbourhood Support Fund.

There will be a meeting of the Peebles Accessible Paths Group in the next couple of weeks and it will be attended by Duncan Morrison, the SBC Flood Management Team Officer, in order to discuss how paths might be affected by the flood protection plans.

Peebles Baptist Church. Cllr Tatler has received an update from John Dalrymple, Building Convenor of the church. He is very keen to come along and talk to PCC about their plans and progress.

The Parking Group met this week to discuss off street parking in Peebles. Community Councillor S.Watson was in attendance. A draft consultation has been drawn up and will be shared with PCC for feedback before a wider consultation takes place over the summer months.

Gypsy Glen Hill Race. It will take place on the 11<sup>th</sup> May 2022. Cllr Tatler has agreed to be in charge of the marshalls of whom we need about 9, traditionally provided by PCC. A.Snoddy confirmed that Community Councillor C.Forsyth has agreed to once again go to top of the hill. Cllr Tatler will contact Ms Snoddy for more volunteers nearer the time.

**Treasurer's Report:** circulated by G.Mackie prior to the meeting. There were no questions.

**Planning Report:** it was circulated by P.Maudsley prior to the meeting. Since then 3 further planning applications have been submitted: alterations to dwelling houses in Elcho Street Mews and Springhill Road, and for the skate park with floodlighting in Victoria Park. Cllr Tatler clarified that the skatepark will not be floodlit. Permission for floodlighting is being sought at this stage so the infrastructure can be put in, in case floodlighting is wanted in the future. S.Rae said that, given floodlighting was one of the contentious issues when a 4G pitch was being mooted, perhaps it would be better if the plans for the skatepark and plans for floodlighting were kept separate. Cllr Haslam added that the intention was never to permanently floodlight the skatepark but instead light it on a 'metered' basis.

There was a discussion about the planning application to create holiday 'pods' in the grounds of the Park Hotel' followed by a show of hands. The Community Council was evenly split between those for and those against so it was decided not to make any submission on behalf of PCC. S.Rae reminded the meeting that Community Councillors could, as always, submit individual comments to the Planning Department if they so wished.

**SBCCN:** P.Maudsley has registered for the Place Making Workshop on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2022.

**Peebles Community Trust Report:** circulated by M.Bruce prior to the meeting. There were no questions.

### **Any Other Business:**

The Chairman commented on how busy PCC is compared with Community Councils in smaller communities. He asked members to read circulated documents before the meetings, and to be ready with any questions they may have so any issues can be addressed quickly.

Mr Turnbull read out a letter from a local resident concerning roadworks. It included suggestions that it would be helpful if the council/sub-contractor had a sign with information about what is being done, how long the traffic lights will be in place and a phone number to call should there be problems with the lights. Sometimes traffic lights are set up a few days prior to the works commencing which disrupts the traffic unnecessarily early. Also on occasion the traffic lights could be taken down much earlier.

Cllr Haslam said that not all roadworks are instigated by SBC though they are asked to do the traffic management for utility companies. The utility companies might ask for the traffic lights to be set up on a particular date and yet not turn up to do the actual work for two or three days after that. If such instances are reported to SBC they will be followed up. She thinks there are penalties, too, if companies exceed the time originally asked for. She will pass on to the Roads Department the suggestion that there should be a phone number on traffic lights to call should they be faulty. S.Rae asked how much notice do SBC receive from, for example, BT Open Reach or Scottish Gas? Cllr Tatler replied, sometimes very little, and sometimes none! SBC Roadworks, however, are announced well in advance with notices in the press, on the SBC website as well as being notified to Community Councils. M.Bruce said he would not support the suggestion that signs are erected explaining the work that is being done, lest they distract the driver.

### Complaint

The complaint covered several issues: possible breach of the Data Protection Act, whether there had been a potential breach of the Community Council Code of Conduct, the letter which had been sent to the Peeblesshire News, and the initial responses by PCC to the complainant. The complaints have been investigated thoroughly and a report produced, which has been circulated. The summary says we identified a possible breach of Data Protection, that it has been acknowledged, and an apology was given. We understand that the apology was accepted by the data subjects, and work has been undertaken to ensure it does not happen again. We understood the SBC Councillors considered the matter closed, as do we. The Information Commissioner's Office identified the possible breach as not reportable as it was not serious or significant enough to warrant investigation. They



recommend the actions which PCC has already undertaken. We are waiting for Data Protection training from SBC. PCC will work to find a more collegiate way of working with SBC and SBC Councillors. On the vast majority of issues we maintain a good working relationship with SBC and SBC Councillors. There were failings in our complaints procedure, never having received a complaint before. These are being resolved. The first steps around any complaints will always be discussion to see if the issues can be resolved. We have found no requirement for Community Councillor Les Turnbull to step down as Chairman of PCC. He retains the confidence of Community Councillors. His conduct has been fully transparent and he has worked with the best of intentions at all times.

Mr Rae noted that we, as a Community Council, do not have access to a legal department to advise us, especially on complex issues. As a statutory body, and as we are all volunteers, it seems remiss that we receive so little support from local or national government. He thanked A.Snoddy, G.Mackie and M.Bruce for their assistance. Members have received the full copy of the report, and a summary will be attached to these Minutes.

Cllr Tatler said there has been a review of a Community Council Scheme in the Scottish Borders over the last 6 months and within that will be advice on how to handle complaints.

Cllr Bell thanked Mr Rae for the Herculean task he has undertaken. He thanked him for circulating the initial draft round the elected Councillors and for taking cognisance of Cllr Bell's concerns. He suggested that if a similar situation arose in the future that it might be worth speaking with the elected Councillors to find out if SBC's law officers could offer support. Mr Rae said that was something he had considered but as the complainant had indicated he had communicated with SBC councillors and SBC's legal department he felt his hands were tied. Everyone in attendance indicated their support for the report.

L.Turnbull thanked Mr Rae for undertaking the task so professionally. He acknowledged it was a huge task involving many, many hours of work.

**The Place Making Workshop** on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2022. P.Maudsley and L.Turnbull will attend. It would be good if one or two others would as well.

### **Round the Table**

J.Shearer asked where she could see the map of the new Peebles to Eddleston pathway. M.Bruce responded that it can be seen on the SBC Planning Portal.

G.Mackie asked if any decision had been made regarding the tenancy of Jedderfield Farm? Cllr Tatler (as Chair of Peebles Common Good) said he was not yet in a position to say.

A.Mackenzie said he appreciated the road repairs which have been undertaken by SBC around the town. He has enjoyed working with the SBC Councillors who are standing down and wishes them all the best.

In conclusion the Chairman thanked the SBC Councillors who are stepping down for all the work they have done for their constituents.

**The next meeting will be at 7pm on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2022.**