

Peebles & District Community Council

Chairman's Report – June 2025

1.0 Tweeddale Area Partnership

Meeting with SBC CEO is still outstanding due to illness. This meeting will, when it takes place cover additional issues such as planning, Live Borders and other items. It is worth noting that our last meeting regarding the Old School house was deemed a success.

2.0 Illegal Vapes and Tobacco

Since the last report, Willie Rennie, Leader of the Liberal Democrats in Scotland has written to the Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home affairs as follows.

Dear Angela

I am writing to bring to your attention concerns raised regarding the enforcement of laws against the sale of illegal vapes and tobacco products. Recent reports indicate significant disparities in enforcement between Scotland and other parts of the UK. I have been informed that in 2023, over 1.5 million illegal vapes were seized across the UK, valued at approximately £9 million. However, data reveals that 95% of illegal vape sellers faced no penalties, with only a small fraction receiving fines or other sanctions. For instance, a couple in Hammersmith who sold illegal vapes containing nine times the legal e-liquid limit were fined £4,000. In contrast, Scotland reported nearly 15,000 illegal vapes seized in 2023, yet fines issued amounted to just £850. This stark contrast raises concerns about the effectiveness of current enforcement measures and their impact on public health, especially among young people.

Additionally, a community councillor's attempt to report alleged illegal sales via the 101 service was met with the response that it was not a police matter. Furthermore, the Advertising Standards Authority has stated that marketing practices related to these products fall outside their jurisdiction, creating a regulatory gap. I would be grateful if you could provide clarification on the Scottish Government's plans to address these disparities and enhance enforcement measures to protect public health and uphold the law.

Yours sincerely

Willie Rennie

Liberal Democrat Member of the Scottish Parliament for Northeast Fife

3.0 Baptist Church Hall – Cleland Site

At the time of writing, no new information received by the writer. Councillor Tatler appears to continue to have some positive information. Hopefully, he will feel able to share this with our team.

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4.0 Meetings Attended This Month

08.05.25	PCC Meeting
12.05.25	Town Team Meeting
14.05.25	Teams meeting with SBC on Old School House Gypsy Glen Hill Race
20.05.25	Meeting on windfarms with Chair of Eddleston CC
22.05.25	Civic reception at SBC HQ
27.05.25	Town walkabout with councillors
28.05.25	Chambers Beneficiaries online
05.06.25	Pre-meeting meeting

5.0 Working party on non-financial support to community councils and the working party on the Community Councils Network.

Again, no update from SBC on the working group on non-financial support. This appears to have died!

There is no update on the SBCCN. This is now more than 12 months since the last actions. It also appears to be dead!

However, with both subjects, there has been no close out, just a dismal silence.

6.0 Place Making – Town Action Plan

The Town Team met, and discussions followed the agenda noted in the May Chairman's report. The following attended or sent apologies.

Name	Representing
Robin Tatler	SBC Councillor
Peter Maudsley (Interim Chair)	Peebles Community Council (PCC) Chair
Michael Marshall	PCC Planning Convener, Kingsmeadows SCIO and Windfarm Lead
Sam Coe	Peebles Civic Society (PCS) Chambers Institution Beneficiaries Group
David Pye	Peebles Community Trust (PCT) Director
Malcolm Bruce	PCC / PCT
David Hodson	Tweeddale Youth Action (TYA)
Kerry Guiney	Peebles Traders Association (PTA) Chair
Richard McDowell	SBC, Oor Space Youthy
Allan Mackenzie	Guiterbluids Chair, Callants Chair
Fiona Dalgleish	Peebles Foodbank
Neil Dalgleish	Tourism
Lorna McCulloch	Borders Community Action

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APOLOGIES	
Paul Spence	Peebles Resilience Group
Anthony Newton	PCS Secretary
Iain Gibson	Youth supporter
Adrian Dunn	Citizen's Advice Bureau
Rosie Barley	Eastgate Theatre Trustee

Issues Arising (Abridged)

- Agreed that a Town Manager is required
- Agreed that the Town Team should be a membership organisation similar to Tweed Forum possibly in the form of a Community Interest Company (CIC)
- Membership to be drawn from all local charities and organisations with a membership of circa 25.
- Will require a core team
- Suggested approach to windfarm negotiation agreed
- Following the meeting Fiona Dalgleish volunteered to step up as Chair and an email poll of members endorsed this with a substantial majority. Thus, your Chair will stand down at the next Town Team meeting.

7.0 Live Borders

An article was drafted for Peebles Life and has been published. A letter has been drafted for Peeblesshire News and has been submitted. Your Chair has copied all 67 Borders community councils with anything considered of possible value to them, to help them with their own arguments. Sadly, only a half dozen responded.

This writer's view is that the process initiated by SBC is deeply flawed and that to have initiated it in advance of the appointment of a new CEO who is ultimately responsible for the management going forward has little validity and should not have happened. Members have already seen a critique of the SBC commissioned report and understand the issues relating to it. However, this has been exacerbated by the consultation and its attendant questionnaire. A recent email to PCC has underlined the issue. **"As regards the questionnaire, again I agree that it is a totally skewed questionnaire and will not give a fair and transparent result. I did attempt to fill it out both as a club and as an individual and very quickly realised that it wouldn't be worth the time and effort"**. That is also this writer's view and of some others who are known to have attempted to complete it.

Peter Maudsley
Chair
Peebles and District Community Council