

Peebles & District Community Council

Chairman's Report – February 2025

1.0 Peebles Town Action Plan (Place Planning)

The Peebles Place Plan has now been approved and Registered. This is good news. However, the less good news is that Crick Carleton has now retired from leading this. Peebles owes a great debt to Crick for his lead and the prestigious work that he has done over a number of years. Without him, this would not have happened. However, with Crick's departure there is a void to fill. Written into the plan is the appointment of a "Town Manager". A town Manager is a paid position and will require funding and therefore a grant application will be required. A selection process will be needed, and a lead body will be required for oversight. As an interim measure, your Chair recommends that the original working party members with perhaps some additions, such as councillors representing East and West Tweeddale, business representatives, youth leaders and other key persons meet to discuss a way ahead. With Crick's retirement, this writer believes that a PCT Board member is essential. Key issues include:

- A new Chair to take this forward
- A lead for grant application for the position of Town Manager
- Who else should be invited into the group – closing the democratic deficit?
- Terms of reference for the group
- Any other immediate needs

2.0 NHS – Community Hospitals Review

There is no update from NHS Borders. However, an email received just before Christmas indicated that the new CEO was looking for community feedback again. An invite was received from Borders Community Action on behalf of NHS on 15 January with a closing date for a reply of noon on the 16th! I used some NHS contacts to no avail and also emailed BCA. I never received a response.

3.0 Tweeddale Area Partnership

Presentations were given on the SBC Community engagement strategy and the youth engagement strategy. On the former, your Chair does have a perception that SBC has improved, but that it has a very long way to go. On the latter, it was mostly "you can do this, and you can do that". There appeared little appreciation of the resources or abilities of Community Councils, nor of the workings of the TAP.

A working group is to be set up to look at parking across Tweeddale.

Updates were given on the Flood Advisory Group and the Chambers Institution, and three grants were approved. Peebles Bowling Club £7,150; Tweeddale

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Flood Advisory Group £4,104; Tweeddale Rideability Group £777.24. An application from Broughtonknowe Community Woodland Ltd for £5,000 was deferred.

The next meeting is 25 March 2025 in the Burgh Hall.

4.0 Baptist Church Hall – Cleland Site

No new information received by PCC or PCT so far as the writer is aware.

5.0 Meetings Attended This Month

09.01.25	PCC Meeting
28.01.25	Meeting Patricia Purves of Walkerburn Community Council
30.01.25	Robin Tatler and Anne (Sec)
04.02.25	Tweeddale Area Partnership
06.02.25	Pre-meeting meeting
11.02.25	Meeting Drummond Begg & Malcolm re the Old School House

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

Your Chair is now lead for the Tweeddale Area CCs with Patricia Purves of Walkerburn as deputy. A letter has gone out to all CCs asking for input, however at this time there have been no replies. It was emphasised at the TAP, that if there was little engagement, then the initiative would fail.

There is no update on the SBCCN.

7.0 Peebles Youth

No new information.

8.0 Tweeddale Area Flood Advisory Group

The application for a grant has been approved and the walkie talkie radios can now be purchased.

9.0 The (3) Salmon Fountain @ the Eastgate

Please see emails below and Facebook post. We should thank Ruaraig for this intervention and his offer to look after the routine cleaning and maintenance.

[Hello everybody. Ruaraig Mclver here from Beltane Studios Ltd designers and manufacturers of the Millennium Fountain in the Eastgate.](#)

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I am getting a little alarmed at the lack of understanding surrounding the current issues with the fountain and also surprised that nobody seems to ask us about it. We are after all the experts and are right on your doorstep. The only problem the fountain ever had is that it was not installed properly in the first place. The vandalism was very likely instigated by the unkempt condition it was in.

In March last year after I had noticed the loose salmon, I wrote a Report on the Fountain with our recommendations for its proper restoration along with our estimate for carrying out the necessary work at cost price. If anybody would like a copy, please DM me with your email address and I'll forward it to you. In regards to the PN article there is no need for a quote for weather proofing. That was never a problem. I also fail to see how moving the fountain could keep down costs- it will have the same requirements no matter where it's placed, and it already has an electrical supply at least with a water supply nearby. What safety concerns could there be with where it is? When the fountain is up and running as it should be I will be more than happy to look after routine cleaning and maintenance myself.

Very best wishes ,
Ruaraig

On 6 Feb 2025, at 18:03, Peter Maudsley <Peter-mariner@hotmail.co.uk> wrote:

Hi Ruaraig

Your post has been copied to me, and it makes perfect sense. This has been going on for some time and finally resulted in the PN article.

The starting point was Councillor Robin Tatler raising the subject and wanting PCC to take responsibility for trying to raise money from the community and also promising that the Parking Fund would make up any difference.

SBC apparently was not going to be responsible for it. Neither were we; we don't have either funds or resource. Robin talked to Floral Peebles who said they would look after the day-to-day cleaning, etc. but not take any responsibility for repairs, etc. going ahead.

Robin was adamant that Neither SBC nor Common Good were responsible. Then we managed to prove that the Common Good did in fact own the sculpture. Therefore, it is their problem to decide on the appropriate measures to be taken. I believe that they have discussed it in committee, but I have no idea of what they have decided if anything.

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I have a background in Health and Safety amongst other things and have no idea, other than the normal issues related to work of anything that would be considered a problem. My position is

1. It is owned by CG
2. It is a valuable part of the community infrastructure
3. It needs to be brought back to life
4. If there is a cogent argument for moving it, it would need to be properly discussed
5. Once back to life it should be maintained
6. As they own it, they should pay for it and manage anything that needs managed

I'm quite happy to meet with say Viv Thomson who is Chair of the CG and yourself to suggest a sensible way ahead, but of course it would need agreement by all the Councillors.

Regards

Peter Maudsley

Good evening, Peter ,

Thank you very much for your email and for taking the time to answer my concerns as concisely as you have. I certainly have a much better understanding of where all this stands now. I will be contacting CG to offer our help and hopefully save some well-intentioned people from any further wild goose chases.

Best regards , Ruaraig

Peter Maudsley
Chair
Peebles and District Community Council