

Peebles & District Community Council

Chairman's Report

June 2023

1.0 Holistic Transport Review

The writer has a meeting scheduled with John Curry (SBC) and Crick Carlton (PCT) on 27/06/23 at SBC HQ. It is acknowledged by all parties that several different issues all overlap each other, such as this initiative, parking, placemaking, etc. This will need consideration.

2.0 Peebles Town Action Plan (Place Planning)

A meeting was held with Kenny Harrow and Hannah Lacon of SBC and with Crick Carlton to discuss Place Planning and its wider implications. Currently there are too many loose ends to report in detail. Once concrete ideas and proposals are available, they will be shared with the team. See 1.0 above.

3.0 UCL Cycling World Championships.

No change

4.0 Volunteers Fair

PCC were represented by the writer supported at varying times throughout the event by Jacqueline Wilson, Sam Coe, Gill McDonald, and Anne Snoddy. Although the event was billed as lasting from 10:00 to 16:00, it ended really at 14:00. From our perspective it was disappointing in that only one person left their contact details, and no one raised any comments. We had also hosted the Christmas Lights and Peebles Flower Club. The latter did receive a little interest. However, the event was worthwhile for its networking.

5.0 Tweeddale Area Partnership

Next meeting is 13 June in the Burgh Hall.

6.0 Police

As indicated at the last meeting, the writer sent an email of thanks to PCs' Carsley and Moody. There was no response although the writer did briefly discuss this at a U3A event attended by the former. Also as evidenced, we have still not been given the benefit of an attendance by officers in probably 12 months or more.

Peeblesshire News 19/05/23 Front page.

["The much-loved common ridings are celebrated in communities across the region each year, with officers policing events to keep the public safe. But that](#)

Peebles & District Community Council

Chairman's Report

June 2023

support is in line to be reduced amid “significant budgetary pressures” at Police Scotland. Chief Inspector Vincent Fisher, local area commander for the Scottish Borders, said: “As with many other public bodies, Police Scotland is subject to significant budgetary pressures. We must prioritise those demands that present the greatest threat, risk or harm and align our resources accordingly”.

Your Chair views this with considerable concern. On the one hand we are told that Lothian and Borders Police will have 8 additional officers and on the other, that these same police can no longer support events such as our Beltane. The article went on to say that the police had consulted with interested parties. No one has consulted with us. When Police Scotland was formed, we were informed that it would provide an improved service and flexibility would allow resource to be moved to where it was needed. Patently, this was incorrect. The PCC has noted on several occasions that many feel subject to double taxation, firstly, through PAYE, etc. and secondly through council taxes. In this case, circa £560,000 in the Borders to provide the Community Action Teams (CAT). Are police Scotland also removing cover from sporting events in the towns and cities? By what authority and with what accountability can ordinary members of the public close roads? With the authorities abrogating their responsibilities, who will police road closures?

Your Chair recommends formally endorsing the letter printed in Peeblesshire News 26/05/23 from Mr. Les Turnbull as the PCC position on this subject. Further, as your Chair, I ask our elected councillors the following questions.

- Can you confirm that one of the primary functions of Police Scotland is public safety?
- Assuming that public safety is a primary function, why then festivals. Scotland intend abandoning policing of the Beltane and other festivals.
- Does the presence of hundreds of horses and many hundreds of people in a town present significant potential danger to the public if other members of the public choose to ignore road closure orders?
- If the police do not put out the necessary signs, who will and under what authority?
- Under what authority can members of the public, i.e., the Beltane committee, stop vehicles from progressing along any street where a road closure order is in place?
- If the police are not present how will enforcement action be taken if offences are committed?
- The dates of our festivals are known years in advance, why has Police Scotland not made adequate preparations to ensure that these events are policed effectively?

Peebles & District Community Council

Chairman's Report

June 2023

Historically, police were embedded in their communities and knew the people, gave comfort by their presence, and gained valuable intelligence through their contacts. Local policing has been closed down and contacts with community councils have been reduced if not removed altogether. These issues are raised constantly with members.

Your chair suggests that we pen a formal letter to our elected councillors to reflect our concerns.

7.0 Town Maintenance

Last month we reported on a walk around to review maintenance issues that should be addressed in the town falling under Tweeddale West. The writer suggests a similar exercise would be useful with at least one Tweeddale East Councillor and Neil Pringle from SBC. This may address concerns raised by more than one resident relating to maintenance on that side of the town. Issues raised by the public.

- Wall on the south side of the Tweed adjacent to the Tweed Bridge Eildon Site. This is now 3x the problem as when first reported and is being vandalised. A repair now will be much cheaper than a repair later!
- State of the Kingsmeadows car park, the white lines in carpark need repainted.
- State of the Kingsmeadows car park toilets. The toilet doors look awful.
- The fence next to the steps into Hay Lodge is now collapsing altogether.
- The tourist notices are even more discoloured.

8.0 Peebles in Bloom

A great deal has been happening relating to Peebles in Bloom and Gill held a meeting with Anne, Fiona, and the writer to plot a way ahead. Gill will expand on the status.

9.0 Public Toilets

We were in receipt of an email from SBC asking for feedback from the community on what we want to see and what the "Gold Standard" may be. What are the main requirements and expectations. – Members to email the writer with your views and comments and we will forward them to SBC.

Peebles & District Community Council

Chairman's Report

June 2023

10.0 Kingsmeadows Post Office

A notification from the Post Office in essence notes that it was a temporary closure, but that it will not reopen.

Peter Maudsley
Chair
Peebles and District Community Council