



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

**Minutes of the 292<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Community Council held on Thursday  
10<sup>th</sup> February 2022 at 7.00pm via Zoom.**

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

**In attendance:** H.Scott of the Southern Reporter, John Hislop of the Peeblesshire News.

**Members of the public:** David Ferguson, Dr Drummond Begg and Dominic Ashmole

**Representing Peebles Resilient Community:** Paul Spence

**Apologies:** C.Forsyth, Cllr Bell

Presentation by Paul Spence of Peebles Resilient Community Group (PRCG).

Paul and Bob Kibble are joint leaders of the PRCG which has around 140 volunteers. PRCG is a 'supplement' to council and emergency services, not a replacement. SBC should be the first port of call except when life is threatened and 999 should be used. Mr Spence explained how the group was formed after the floods in 2015, and how the community benefits. Activities have included assisting residents of Tweed Green and Cuddyside during floods, helping businesses and vulnerable members of the community by clearing snow, and collaborating with the Covid-19 Mutual Support Group during the pandemic by delivering shopping, collecting prescriptions and collaborating with SBC.

They also helped to deliver over 1,000 lunch time meals and 300 evening meals per month as part of the COVID-19 support group.

Their plans for the future are

- to regroup and restructure after Covid-19
- Plan for a future exercise with SBC
- Develop a strong base of First Aiders and trained defibrillator users
- Encourage schools to get involved and for pupils to have a knowledge of first aid
- Raise awareness of PRCG to get more volunteers
- Enhance social media and local press communication to continue awareness

Details about the group can be found at

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/PeeblesResilience/>

The email address is [PeeblesRCG@outlook.com](mailto:PeeblesRCG@outlook.com)

The Chairman thanked Mr Spence for his presentation, as well as thanking him and his team of volunteers for all the support they provide to the community, especially during the pandemic. Mr Spence said that Community Councillor S.Hamilton was also a vital part of that community support. Mr Turnbull asked about the best method of contacting PRCG? Mr

Spence responded that PRCG can be contacted via Facebook page or by email, but in an emergency contact should be made by phoning SBC on 033 100 1800 first.

Mr Spence suggested that he or Mr Kibble could attend the Community Council meetings from time to time to give an update on their activities, and Mr Turnbull said they would be very welcome.

S.Rae asked about the source of data used by PRCG. Mr Spence said that they can access SEPA river gauges and Met Office warnings in the same way as members of the public, as well as receiving information from SBC.

O.Olesheva asked how residents can sign up to volunteer? Mr Spence said that contact can be made by email or Facebook. A spreadsheet is kept of volunteers and their skills. Ms Olesheva suggested that she put a link to PRCG on the 'Businesses in Peebles and Surrounding Area' Facebook page (of which she is an administrator) which has 4,000 followers.

**Open Forum:** no matters were raised.

**Apologies for absence:** C.Forsyth and Cllr Bell.

**Approval of the Minutes of 13<sup>th</sup> January 2022:** Proposed by P.Maudsley and seconded by O.Olesheva

**Approval of the Peebles Community Council Data Protection Policy** (which was circulated to Community Councillors and the SBC Councillors for Tweeddale prior to the meeting): Proposed by G.Ramsay, seconded by S.Watson. The Chairman said that the policy will be adopted by the Community Council from now on, and thanked S.Rae for his work on the policy.

**Matters arising from the Minutes:**

- Minute Secretary still required
- Public toilets: Cllr Tatler said that each Borders town has one set of toilets open. In Peebles that is the toilet block in Kingsmeadows Car Park. He is awaiting costings for re-opening the toilet block in the East Station Car Park, and would hope they could be re-opened in March. If it is only possible to have one set of toilets open then he suggests that the East Station toilets would be preferable. The topic of keeping the toilets in Haylodge Park open throughout the year, instead of the summer months only, will be discussed at the next Common Good meeting. Cllr Tatler has asked SBC to remove the sign directing people to the public toilets (which are now closed) in School Brae.
- Speeding on the Glasgow Road: See under Any Other Business.
- CCTV cameras: L.Turnbull has been in correspondence with Jason Hedley of SBC about the current state of CCTV cameras in Peebles, and concluded that both the cameras and the recording equipment which is located in the Drill Hall are probably defunct. M.Bruce suggested that if all shops and businesses in the Old Town, High Street, Eastgate and Northgate had CCTV cameras in their windows, facing outwards and with appropriate signage in place, then the main thoroughfares would be covered. Mr Bruce knows from his experience of having cameras installed to protect the Men's Shed and its assets that the cameras, and the quality and accessibility of the images, are low cost and highly effective. L.Turnbull said he thought that with proper controls and proper signage the

suggestion was a very good one. The rest of the Community Councillors agreed it was an idea worth pursuing. L.Turnbull suggested a small sub-committee be formed to take the matter forward. He and Mr Bruce will be part of the sub-committee and anyone else who wishes to be involved should contact them. Mr Bruce suggested that O.Olesheva might put a post on the Businesses in Peebles Facebook page to gauge shopkeepers' initial responses.

- Overgrown hedges and obscured sightlines: Most Community Councillors have walked their allocated routes and reported back to A.Snoddy. Any outstanding reports should be sent to her within the next 7 days, and she in turn will pass them on to SBC for action. Cllr Tatler said that Craig Blackie and Neil Pringle of SBC Neighbourhood Services were pleased to hear about the initiative.

**The Police Report** was circulated prior to the meeting, as were Mr Bruce's comments on it. Cllr Tatler reported that the Community Action Team have been dealing with parking issues, anti-social behaviour incidents (including patrols at in Victoria Park playpark), and they have been monitoring the mobile CCTV in School Brae. Cllr Tatler reports issues raised at CC meetings to the CAT Team to follow up. Cllr Haslam clarified that the Councillors meet with Police Scotland, and that in addition Cllr Tatler meets with the CAT Team Tasking Group. Mr Bruce pointed out that the CCTV camera in School Brae is resulting in youngsters moving out of its range into the shadows, and he would hope the CAT Team would be aware of this. He reiterated that if every business in the main thoroughfare had CCTV cameras then although it might result in antisocial behaviour moving elsewhere at least it would be away from the town centre. L.Turnbull pointed out that the CAT Team costs a lot of money and wondered if perhaps some of that funding would be better used to employ 'street pastors' (he used the term loosely) who could meet, engage with, and divert youngsters from anti-social behaviour? Cllr Tatler said that there are street pastors in Galashiels and Melrose who work from late evening until the early hours of the morning. Mr Bruce will investigate further, and Cllr Anderson gave him the website: [www.streetpastors.org.uk](http://www.streetpastors.org.uk). However Mr Bruce thought it would be more appropriate for SBC to provide the funding for such an initiative and not be dependent on a charity. Cllr Tatler suggested he put in an application for funding to SBC with as much background information as possible. Mr Bruce and S.Hamilton, who are looking into ways to reduce anti-social behaviour, reported that the response to the recent pupil survey has not been as swift as they would have hoped.

Cllr Haslam said that the Tweeddale Councillors had been invited to a meeting of the new Peebles High School Youth Parliament on Monday, and she would encourage Peebles Community Council to invite members from the Youth Parliament along to talk about the matters which concern them.

#### **Chairman's Report:**

L.Turnbull attended the online Tweeddale Area Partnership meeting where Hannah Lacon (Tweeddale Community Engagement Officer) gave a presentation about her work with young people.

The complaint submitted to the Community Council last month is still being dealt with.

**Chambers Institution Trust:** L.Turnbull made the point that, contrary to an expression used by Cllr Bell at last month's PCC meeting, residents are *beneficiaries*, not stakeholders. He has written another letter to SBC querying some aspects of their previous letter. He received a

response (on the morning of this meeting) but feels it does not address the points raised. Peebles Community Council and Peebles Civic Society are composing a letter together to the people of Peebles and Tweeddale outlining the issues involved as well as the history. The letter, in its draft form, has been already shared with other local organisations. They are committed to signing the letter which will indicate to SBC that there is support for the actions being taken on behalf of the beneficiaries of the CIT. A copy of the draft letter has been sent to other Tweeddale CCs asking if they would sign it. We have not yet received responses from them, but they may be waiting to discuss the matter at their next monthly meeting before replying.

#### **SBC Cllr Reports**

- Cllr Anderson enjoyed attending the meeting of the new Peebles High School Parliament. The Council has funding to undertake a feasibility study into Electrical Vehicle charging and will be consulting with residents and Community Councils over the next 6 months. She would encourage PCC to contact that group which is being led by Ewan Doyle. The Scottish Government have just announced a £60 million fund to increase the network of EV charging points. She has been liaising with residents in March Street about speeding along that road. SBC are willing to undertake another survey to monitor car speeds in March Street. There has only been one injury there in 10 years so the installation of speed humps is unlikely but build-outs may be considered. S.Rae, who lives on the Edinburgh Road opposite the junction with March Street, reported that cars sometimes travel at 80 mph. He wondered if a raised junction might be the solution? Cllr Anderson replied that various options to slow down traffic will be considered after the survey has been completed. Nominations are required for Tweeddale Citizen of the Year. The closing date has been extended to 25<sup>th</sup> February 2022, and the nominations should be sent to [lmcgeogh@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:lmcgeogh@scotborders.gov.uk). J.Shearer asked for the 20mph signs which are painted onto the road surface in March to be refreshed. Cllr Small confirmed he has already asked SBC for this to be done.
- Cllr Haslam told the meeting that white-lining cannot be done in cold, wet weather so has to be undertaken in the Spring, Summer and Autumn. She expressed thanks to local residents for accommodating the passage of oversized vehicles through the town to the new water treatment plant at Bonnington Road.
- Cllr Small spoke with P.Gilhooley of SBC to see if HGVs could be banned from March Street, but it is not an option. He suggests noting the registration number of any vehicles which are speeding and passing the numbers on to the police. S.Rae said that one cannot get through on the police telephone number, or it is reported but no further action is taken, or it is not possible to note the registration number due to the vehicle's speed.
- Cllr Tatler: Together with SBC Officers he has been looking at the condition of the paths on both the north and south sides of the Tweed to see what needs to be done to improve them. They have also been looking at ways to remove the obstruction (*the*

*raised path*) at Haylodge. He and Community Councillor A.Mackenzie recently met with Craig Blackie and Paul Franklyn of SBC, Jeremy Cunningham of Sustrans and Alex Wilson of Peebles Community Trust to discuss options. The SBC Officers and Cllr Tatler are also in discussions about improving the riverside path from the footbridge over the Cuddy to the steps leading up to the 'obstruction' at Haylodge. He is aware that there are a whole range of future plans and initiatives for the pathways: improvements to the paths, a flood protection scheme, and plans by Destination Tweed. All these projects need to be co-ordinated so a Peebles Accessible Paths Group will be set up. That will not preclude short term action to resolve the poorest parts of the paths, and Cllr Tatler hopes to come back to the Community Council with some costs for that.

Peebles Parking Group. The group has met to discuss charging – which hours, which days? – and how the parking funds might be used. Consultations will be held over the summer months with residents, visitors, traders and others, and a report will be submitted to Tweeddale Area Partnership in the Autumn, before agreed changes are submitted to SBC for approval. In response to a question from L.Turnbull Cllr Tatler confirmed that the fact that some car parks are Common Good assets while some car parks belong to SBC will be included in the discussions.

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

**The Planning Report** was circulated by P.Maudsley prior to the meeting.

Cloich Windfarm: SBC have until 7<sup>th</sup> March to submit any comments. PCC have submitted our observations while two other Community Councils have submitted objections. The archeological officer's report makes for interesting reading.

Mr Maudsley would welcome any comments after the meeting about either the planning application to change the use of an office building in Dovecot Road into holiday flats or the three holiday pods proposed at the Park Hotel. A.Mackenzie clarified that the Dovecot building had never been an office. It was a garage for the Robert Noble Mill. Mr Mackenzie said he has spoken with Randal Dodds, SBC Planning Officer, about the fact that there are 4 parking spaces associated with this plot shown on the SBC Planning Portal. He said that there are definitely not 4 parking spaces. In addition the plans show a bike repair shed is to be built on top of a reed bed which deals with sewage. SBC seemed unaware of this complication. Mr Mackenzie will email Mr Maudsley his concerns and the meeting agreed that PCC will object to the application. Cllr Small pointed out that if PCC objects then that is classed as one objection. Five objections or more requires an application to be brought before the Planning Committee.

**Scottish Borders Community Council Network:** P.Maudsley has contacted the other Community Councils in Tweeddale but so far only four, including ourselves, are interested in forming a focus group. Two CCs responded that they felt SBC do not listen to concerns. Cllr Small pointed out that West Linton CC is in abeyance at present

but hope to become re-established next week. Perhaps if Mr Maudsley emails them after that he may get a response. Cllr Anderson said that the CCs with which she is involved all had a good relationship with SBC. Mr Maudsley clarified that it was not his comments, but comments that were passed to him. Cllr Anderson said that perhaps they should be followed up.

Mr Maudsley is aware that the closing date of the consultation on National Planning Framework 4 is 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.

**Peebles Community Trust:** the report was circulated prior to the meeting by M.Bruce.

### **Any Other Business**

- Community Councillors J.Mitchell, S.Hamilton and H.Young have been speaking with parents of pupils at Kingsland Primary Schools to find out what their concerns are, and the main one is speeding on the Glasgow Road. Ms Young said that P.Gilhooley of SBC has confirmed that new 20mph signs will be going up. The School Parent Council feel that this alone will not reduce speeding and would like to see traffic calming measures implemented as well. The Parent Council hope that PCC and the SBC Councillors will support them in their endeavors. L.Turnbull said he had received a plea from residents who live near the school that rumble strips are not used because of the noise they create.

L.Turnbull confirmed that the Parents Council had the support of PCC in looking for ways to make the road safer, and Cllr Anderson confirmed the support of the SBC Councillors. Mr Turnbull encouraged the 3 Community Councillors to press ahead with their planned consultation with the parents of school pupils. Ms Young also suggested that one of the 20mph signs could be located further west beyond the school boundary to give lorries more opportunity to slow down. Cllr Anderson suggested a virtual meeting with the 3 CCs, Ms Gilhooley and representatives from the Parents Council, to discuss the best location for 20mph signs. Ms Young and Cllr Anderson will liaise with each other to set up the meeting. Ms Young said the Parent Council would like to know who best to speak with regarding Safe Routes to School. Cllr Anderson confirmed that Ms Gilhooley's team have the resources around Safe Routes to School and so the subject could be included for discussion at the forthcoming meeting.

L.Turnbull said that Sustrans and Peebles Community Trust have worked together to look at better and safer routes to move around the town, including Safe Routes to School. All the information will be on display at the Whole Town Action Plan Open Forum in the Burgh Hall on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2022. This is being hosted jointly by PCT and PCC and he asked for CCs to volunteer at it, but if unable to help at least to try to attend to see the plans on display.

- Community Council Meetings will continue to take place online meantime.
- Queen's Platinum Jubilee: Cllr Tatler explained that SBC have set aside £70,000 for communities across the Borders to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The grants are up to £2,500 which will be distributed on a 'first come, first served' basis. He said that a lot of communities have already applied. Mr Turnbull invited any CCs with suggestions to contact either himself or Cllr Tatler.

### **Round the Table:**

A.Snoddy said support is required for the Gypsy Glen Hill Race which will be held on either Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup> May. About 9 volunteers will be needed, 2 of whom will do the registration of runners and one who will go to the top of the hill. She will ask for names of volunteers just as soon as we get a definite date from the organiser, Mike Pearson.

She also raised the subject of dog fouling in Victoria Park, brought to her attention by Community Councillor Chris Forsyth who was unable to attend tonight's meeting. Cllr Tatler said that there is a group, chaired by Mike Pearson, which is looking at obtaining Green Flag status for the park. He will also speak with Craig Blackie of SBC to see if the signage (about dog fouling) in the park is adequate.

S.Watson asked when the steps – leading to Springhill Road - in Victoria Park will be repaired? Cllr Tatler said that local residents in that area recently received an update. SBC Officers are working on the proposal to replace the steps with a ramp as soon as possible. The matter will be raised at the next Peebles Common Good meeting, because the park is a Common Good asset.

M.Bruce said members of Peebles Callants Club are looking at ways of alleviating the problem of dog fouling outside the Primary Schools, possibly with signage and free bags, etc. He may suggest they extend their plans to cover the entrances to the parks.

He also wanted to mention that there was a very successful drama at the Eastgate Theatre called 'Men Don't Talk' about the benefits of Men's Sheds. Much research for the drama was undertaken at Peebles and District Men's Shed. A congratulatory Member's Motion has been put forward in the Scottish Parliament by Christine Grahame MSP which recognises the very real concerns about mental health issues in the community, and that much of the responsibility for alleviating them falls to third sector organisations such as Men's Sheds which are repeatedly overlooked by administrators when funds are allocated.

L.Turnbull acknowledged the value of Men's Sheds and agreed that they do not get the financial support they merit. He asked Mr Bruce to convey the thanks of PCC to the Callants for their plans to alleviate dog fouling.

Cllr Haslam wanted the Callants to know that there are dog stencils for pavements and paint available at Eshiels Recycling Centre free of charge. Cllr Tatler said that Innerleithen CC had a very successful project to alleviate dog fouling. They installed bins and supplied bags. He will provide Mr Bruce with more details.

O.Olesheva said that she has a pet food business and would be willing to support the Callants' initiative. She is also happy to help with the Gypsy Glen Hill Race.

Ms Olesheva also thinks it is important that the road along Tweed Green is repaired and improved before the summer months and the events and activities which will take place in that area. Cllr Anderson invited her to send her an email about it.

G.Mackie asked if a decision had been made about the tenancy of Jedderfield Farm (*a Common Good asset*)? Cllr Tatler, who is Chairman of Peebles Common Good Fund, said that a process was followed, there is a preferred applicant, a discussion will take place at

the next Common Good meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2022, and it is hoped a decision will be made.

J.Shearer again expressed her concern about cars travelling too fast down the slope at Port Brae on to Tweed Green. Regarding mental health issues she drew the meeting's attention to an organisation in the Scottish Borders called 'Health in Mind'. There is information in Peebles Rugby Club about an organization called 'Andy's Club' which supports men with mental health issues. Mr Bruce said he is aware of 'Andy's Clubs' which are talking groups rather than activity-based groups like Men's Sheds.

H.Young is very pleased that the Callants are planning to do something about dog fouling, a topic which is complained about a lot. She wondered if it would be worthwhile finding out if other local authorities have come up with some effective solutions? As mentioned previously, Ms Young, J.Mitchell and S.Hamilton have canvassed the parents at Kingsland Primary School to find out their concerns, one of which was the speeding on the Glasgow Road but there were others to do with dropped pavements, problems of access, etc. The various concerns will be collated and presented to the Community Council. Cllr Tatler, who is on the Tweeddale Access panel, also asked for a copy of the report.

S.Hamilton is part of the Peebles High School Build Property Team and attended a Zoom meeting with the SBC project manager last week. Ms Hamilton will keep the Community Council up to date on progress. Cllrs Anderson, Haslam and Tatler discussed the timeline for the development. The sport facilities will be created first. Followed by the construction of the building. The plan is for the school to open in April 2024.

**The next meeting will be held online at 7pm on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2022**