



Community Council
of the
Royal Burgh of Peebles and District

Minutes of the 296th Meeting of the Community Council which was held on Thursday 9 June 2022 via Zoom. The meeting was recorded for the purposes of Minuting and Reporting.

Present: L Turnbull, S Rae, A Snoddy, G Mackie, F Richardson, P Maudsley, M Bruce, J Crawley, S Hamilton, G MacDonald, L Hayworth, A Mackenzie, J Mitchell, O Olesheva, G Ramsay, J Shearer, S Watson, H Young, Cllr Small, Cllr Pirone, Cllr Douglas, Cllr Thomson

In attendance: E Smith, S Ritchie and M Davey of the Peeblesshire News

Members of the Public: J Smith, M Pearson

Apologies for absence: Cllr Tatler, Cllr Begg, A. Mackenzie and C Forsyth; later apologies from J Crawley, J Shearer and Cllr Viv Thomson

Welcome: The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting. We have two new co-opted Community Councillors: Gill MacDonald and Fiona Richardson. F Richardson is our new Minute Secretary. F Richardson was nominated by L Turnbull and seconded by G Ramsay. G MacDonald was nominated by S Watson and seconded by L Hayworth. The Chairman asked for approval of the Minutes of the meeting that was held at Peebles High School on 24 May. This was a special meeting to discuss anti-social behaviour involving young people. The Minutes have been circulated. Approval of those Minutes: M Bruce proposed and P Maudsley seconded. Any issues arising from the Minutes will be picked up under the agenda item for policing and anti-social behaviour.

Presentation: A presentation was scheduled to be given by John Dalrymple of Peebles Baptist Church. J Dalrymple was unable to attend the meeting.

Open Forum: Nothing raised.

Approval of the Minutes of 12 May 2022: G Mackie proposed and M Bruce seconded.

Matters arising from the Minutes:

Post Office: The post office is closing on Glen Road, the shop is to remain open. Cllr Pirone had previously been tasked with looking into this. Cllr Pirone confirmed that the Post Office was sorry that the current owners are giving it up and are looking for alternatives. These have not been received yet and Cllr Pirone chased this week. Cllr Pirone also asked why the current owners are giving up. The owners want to increase the shop floor area to optimise their sales, and the counter was in the way. Moving the counter was the issue. Cllr Pirone said that once upon a time there had

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been funds for such things, but that does not appear to be available now; again Cllr Pirone is checking with the Post Office. The post office in the shop will temporarily close. Cllr will update before, or at the next meeting. Thank you to Cllr Pirone for her efforts.

Plaques: A Snoddy had been investigating commemorative plaques for Peebles. Historic Scotland manage these. They are only available if the person has been deceased for over one hundred years and associated with the building where the plaques would be. Therefore, not applicable for the wall down Pennels Close. A Snoddy has reported her findings to Cllr Tatler and awaits to hear next steps. The Chairman suggested we could do something ourselves and A Snoddy agreed.

Eastgate toilets: A Snoddy confirmed these are now open from 9am to 9pm. SBC have confirmed that if there is any evidence of vandalism, they will have to think again.

Bins on Tweed Green: A Snoddy reported that SBC are prepared to provide an additional bin and need to know where to position it. J Shearer will meet with A Snoddy and a representative from SBC to discuss. A Snoddy is awaiting contact from J Shearer.

Bollards at Cuddyside: A Mackenzie raised last time. A Snoddy updated that Cllr Begg is putting together a small funding scheme and is going to include the bollards. Cllr Begg needs to know how many bollards should be included. This is with A Mackenzie for now. Cllr Pirone confirmed this will be included in the "small schemes" funding that all the councillors are discussing at the moment.

Cyclists Dismount Sign: A Snoddy confirmed that SBC have told her they are going to be replacing it.

Commemoration of witches in Peebles: The chairman confirmed that this had received a lot of press interest, including local press, The Scotsman and the BBC who had covered it. S Ritchie and E Smith were in attendance. The Peebles Common Good Fund had met on 8 June and E Smith had attended. They have given permission for a memorial on Tweed Green, which is great news. E Smith has been having a look to find the best location. E Smith will return to the committee with suggestions and drawings. E Smith will keep the PCC updated also and welcomes any input from the councillors. S Ritchie thanked the PCC for their ongoing support.

Parents issues sub group: H Young updated regarding the safety outside Kingsland primary school. Traffic calming measures. P Gilhooley had sent over three options to the parent council and the school. If agreed, SBC will erect over the summer holidays. It had been agreed by the parent council and the school to move forward with option 3 which is the pencil bollards, 4m apart and in different colours. There was an open discussion and the chairman agreed that PCC is happy with the proposal and H Young should go ahead and action this. Thank you to H Young for her work on this.

Police Report: M Bruce has circulated his comments, however the report had been prepared ahead of seeing the update from Police Scotland. He has now seen their update and has a couple of comments. M Bruce pointed out that the crime statistics are no longer being added to the report, it is simply a link to another report from a quarterly meeting. This in turn means that we will see the same set of statistics for three months in a row. M Bruce said he was not consulted regarding this change and is going to speak to Police Scotland. M Bruce has been told that Sgt Granger is moving on, and we do not know who his successor is going to be. Once he finds out he will arrange a

meeting with the new officer and discuss the reporting changes. The chairman pointed out that better communication from Police Scotland about changes would be helpful to all concerned.

Chambers Institution Trust: The chairman reminded the committee about the use of the term beneficiary and the term stakeholder. Cllr Bell wanted clarification. We have provided that clarification by letter sent to the Chief Exec of SBC, and it was sent to all trustees of CIT. The chairman asked the Cllrs if they'd had sight of that letter? Cllr Pirone confirmed that they had. Ongoing issues with CIT: complaints from an organisation that used the hall that it was dirty. They complained to Live Borders who manage the hall on behalf of the trustees. No response yet. Trustees had met yesterday and the chairman asked who the new chairman is? Cllr Pirone confirmed that it is Cllr Tatler, with vice chair Cllr Small. It was suggested that the two positions be changed, before the five year tenure is finished, to provide change and balance. There will be a further meeting/workshop on 28 June to discuss further. The chairman said there are other outstanding matters to discuss but these would be left until the meeting on 28 June. The chairman has had a conversation with the councillors and felt it helpful to have a meeting, including the chairman, S Rae and P Maudsley and the six Cllrs to talk through the issues facing the community. This would include the Common Good Fund, the CIT, planning decisions, etc. This would help everyone understand the community-based issues more fully and would be on a fairly informal basis. The PCC would be brought up to date in the July meeting.

Chairman's Report: The chairman thanked all the Cllrs who attended the meeting at PHS on 24 May. It was a good meeting. It was well attended and included the Rector Campbell Wilson, Police Scotland, E Smith from TYA and members from SBC. PHS released findings of a survey done amongst pupils asking for their feedback on what they wanted around the town. M Bruce has put this detail in his report and the chairman asks everyone to read it. Hopefully, we can supply the young people with what they need and move forward. A Snoddy asked what the next steps are. The chairman said that he and M Bruce are going to sit down and work out how to bring some of the plans to fruition, such as places to hang out and toilet provisions, and to set down some costs estimates. M Bruce pointed out that it was a missed opportunity by SBC not to put in a shelter and a toilet provision with the plans for the skate park in Victoria Park. M Bruce suggested to the Cllrs that there would be merit in reconsidering this. Cllr Pirone agreed. G Macdonald pointed out there had been lack of toilet provision for Greener Peebles. Cllr Pirone suggested an application to the neighbourhood fund might be considered here. L Hayworth suggested that perhaps the school could find a way to let the young people know about local activities at the beginning of each school year.

Peebles in Bloom 2022

The chairman reported that he has a new volunteer for the Peebles In Bloom 2022 project. Her name is Val Ferguson. V Ferguson has been a judge in the past. V Ferguson is going to create some new categories in order to engage some new entrants. The chairman thanked A Snoddy for all her hard work in the past to get us to where we are now. V Ferguson is looking for volunteers from PCC to get involved. The chairman encouraged the members to think about getting involved. A Snoddy

said that it was likely that V Ferguson will delegate blocks of gardens to the councillors, and that everyone should look out for that coming into their email inbox.

Councillor reports:

Cllr Pirone:

Cllr Pirone has been doing lots of induction and forming committees. This is taking up a lot of time. The Cllr visited Jubilee celebrations. She is working with Hannah Lacon to tap into funding for different groups. She is the new Chair of the police scrutiny board in the CAT team. Cllr Douglas is also on this board. Cllr Pirone will ask about the police reports and feedback to M Bruce. Regarding Peebles in Bloom, there is a gateway scheme – did the PCC know about it? A Snoddy confirmed they did. The chairman asked when the review is to start? Cllr Pirone confirmed she does not know yet and will ask whether members of the community will be involved.

Cllr Douglas:

As with Cllr Pirone, it's been a steep learning curve over the last month setting up new committees and attending intensive training. Cllr Douglas is on the planning committee and licensing board, which take a lot of training. He's been attending to a lot of work for the ward; personal issues that have arisen. Enduro had lots of parking issues, for example. He attended the CIT meeting and the Peebles Common Good, both very interesting. He's keen to involve the community. He has been elected as Chair of the Tweeddale Area Partnership and wants to involve PCC. The chairman wished him luck and said the local involvement is needed.

Cllr Small:

Cllr Small confirmed it's all go with the inductions at the moment. They need a few weeks to move into the allocated committees. All Cllrs will work together to make the best. Cllr Small has put himself forward for the planning committee. We'll have two voices which is good for Tweeddale. The chairman said that developers are hungry to develop in the area and that to date he's not convinced that the committees have appreciated Peebles' needs as well as they could.

Treasurer's Report: G Mackie's report had been circulated. He wanted to add that today he had received a cheque for £100 from Moorfoot Runners for the PCC's involvement with the Gypsy Hill race. This was welcome and many thanks to those who participated.

Planning Report: P Maudsley confirmed that his report had been circulated. P Maudsley attends the Common Good meeting as PCC representative and attends the Institution meeting as well and feeds back his comments to them. Any questions on his report? The chairman thanked P Maudsley for his detailed report and for the points he's raised. The meeting on 28th should be constructive. M Bruce wanted to add that the Scawd wind farm development was going to be put on hold as there were nesting eagles seen in the vicinity, and that needed to be investigated.

L Hayworth asked if we had public access to the LDP plan that had been submitted by SBC to Scottish Government? Do any of the Cllrs know? The new Cllrs are now on the Common Good Committee

and will be managing the assets on behalf of the people of Peebles, can they ensure that the extensive list of fixed assets from the financial report that was developed, with a legend, are identified, so that the trustees and people can see what these assets are? It should be up to date and should be available to all. P Maudsley was impressed that remedial works in South Parks had been dealt with swiftly. Live Borders had let us down with the hustings bookings, where the booking had not been made, and the Drill Hall has also had recent issues with bookings and access. The chairman agreed there are booking issues and asked the Cllrs to investigate. Cllr Perone said it can be discussed at the meeting on 28 June and Cllr Tatler to be reminded of these issues. Cllr Pirone said we should report back any issues so they can put together a dossier. A Snoddy said there is a change in management in the Drill Hall and things should improve.

Cllr Small commented on the LDP question. It's not gone to Government yet, it's still with the council. He will update us in due course.

Peebles Community Trust: M Bruce has circulated his report. There is now a sub-funding group in the board to make best use of time and they are currently pursuing funding for the complete refurbishment of the building. This will allow the School Brae Hub to give the town some space. This may mean re-siting the Reuse Hub. There may be a discussion to be had re the SBC assets within Peebles to see if they are being used to their full potential and, if not, whether they could be used for, e.g. the Reuse Hub. The chairman said this is a good point. The Reuse Hub had been a great success and benefits the community.

AOB:

The chairman had received an email from Border Buses regarding their problems keeping the service running. They are trying their best in difficult circumstances to keep everything running.

A complaint had been received from a member of the public saying the PCC should have done more to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee. This had been discussed several months ago and it was put out to the committee, but because of various commitments no one could take it on. The PCC has responded accordingly.

E Smith asked about the toilets in School Brae. The TYA are sometimes asked by the public to use their toilets. What is happening in School Brae? The chairman gave the background and how the PCC took on the toilets but it was too difficult to manage and SBC have decided not to reopen them. Would the Cllrs like to look at this again? Cllr Small pointed out that a group will be looking at all the public toilets and feasibility, across the Borders, so we should get an update on this in the next couple of months. S Watson commented that he had done work in the toilets and considered that the construction and design of the toilets is flawed and that it would be beneficial to update the design. P Maudsley pointed out that the issue is predominantly vandalism and that CCTV would be helpful. The chairman said that CCTV has been discussed many times and that CCTV in the town centre would help.

A Snoddy wanted to talk about the broken steps at Victoria Park and how they have been awaiting repair for around 18 months. Action needs to be taken. The Common Good trustees should arrange the repair. P Maudsley said a repair, rather than a ramp, would be quicker and cheaper. Cllr Pirone will speak to Cllr Tatler to speed things up. The chairman asked if anyone has strong views on there being a ramp? M Bruce and others said there's no requirement for a ramp.

S Rae: A member of public asked about faded street signs in the town. Cllr Pirone said that anyone can report them as they arise, but if there is a list of more than one, put it in an email.

J Mitchell: thank you to the council clean-up crew that have dealt with graffiti and broken glass, near Rosetta Nursery. There was a prompt response and good job done. Cllr Pirone will feed this back if J Mitchell emails her the dates and places. Colleagues can get nominated for a job well done.

Round the Table

S Watson: The trees on Tweed Green need to be cut back for the Beltane lorries. The County Hotel are spilling out seating and plant containers further onto the pavement – is this allowed? Beltane needs the pavement space for Beltane attendees. Cllr Douglas has not had a licensing meeting and he can put it forward, although it is likely an issue for planning. Cllr Pirone said the premises should know how much space they've been allocated. It should be in their planning permission. P Maudsley agreed to take it up with SBC.

Cllr Douglas thanked everyone for their input.

G Mackie: Tweedbridge Court – when is anything happening? P Maudsley said it is in the planning report, but it's been parked for now.

Gill Macdonald – The lead times for prescriptions from the Health Centre to the chemists in the High Street is set at 10 days, but is often longer. Is there anything we can do to shorten this? Is this normal? G Macdonald works with the elderly and it is causing problems. The chairman said that there were problems before COVID and the PCC invited someone from the practice to come and explain the issues from their end. They did not take up the invitation. P Maudsley agreed that he has also noticed the long lead in times for prescriptions. A Snoddy has also heard evidence to this effect and has agreed to write to Haylodge Health Centre, copying in the Borders Health Board, our MSP and both chemists as this appears to be a local problem. G Macdonald also pointed out that there is no privacy for customers at the chemists' counters, e.g. for methadone patients. The chairman thanked G Macdonald for her comments and suggested we deal with the prescription issue first.

Cllr Pirone asked about the War Memorial outside the Chambers Institute and this year's Centenary. The Lord Lieutenant asked if we could do something to mark the centenary and is looking for suggestions. The British Legion will be contacted and Poppy Scotland. Cllr Pirone asked for views. The chairman agreed to discuss this at the next meeting.

The chairman suggested that the next meeting will be in person in the Burgh Hall and everyone agreed. We will find a way of recording these meetings as this will help with accurate minutes.

A Snoddy confirmed we can have the Burgh Hall free of charge every second Thursday of the month.

The meeting finished at 8.48pm and the next meeting will be on Thursday 14 July at 7pm.