



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

**Minutes of the 314th Meeting of the Community Council which was held on Thursday 11 January 2024 at 7pm in the Burgh Chamber, Peebles. The meeting was recorded for the purposes of Minuting and Reporting.**

**Present:** A Mackenzie, A Snoddy (Secretary), F Richardson, G MacDonald, G Mackie (Vice Chairman and Treasurer), G Ramsay, J Wilson, L Lovell-Henderson, M Bruce, M Marshall, P Maudsley (Chairman), S Coe, S Mackay, S Watson, Cllr Begg, Cllr Douglas, Cllr Small,

**In attendance:** M Davey of the Peeblesshire News.

**Members of the Public:** D & M Anderson, C McKay, S Grewer.

**Apologies:** A Cormack, J Shearer, Cllr Tatler, Cllr Thomson, Cllr Pirone.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded everyone that the meeting was recorded for the purposes of minuting and reporting. The minutes will be published with names of the public unless requested otherwise. Third persons out with the meeting will not be identified unless relevant.

John Crawley has signified that he will not seek re-election. J Crawley was a long-time member and was thanked for his service and valuable contribution over the years.

The Community Council welcomed four new coopted members: Michael Marshall, Alison Cormack, Jacqueline MacDougall, and Sheila Mackay. A Cormack and J MacDougall could not attend the meeting this month.

### **Open forum**

Mr Marshall raised concerns relating to two new planning applications from Granton Homes relating to Kingsmeadows House. Currently, Granton have approval in principle for 10 flats and have until March to meet the planning conditions. The two new applications are full Section 42 applications and apply to change just one condition on each. There is no full scrutiny again by SBC, only scrutiny relating to the specific items raised. The effect could be to extend the original permission from the two months outstanding to another full 5 years. Mr Marshall requested support as follows:

- **Condition 2 – [24/00030/FUL](#)**
  - What we hope PCC asks of SBC:
    - treat this single word change as non-material (section 64<sup>1</sup>) change.
    - **if** it needs changing then change the existing condition
    - don't grant a new permission.
- **Condition 7 – [24/00031/FUL](#)**
  - To stop condition 7 from applying to the entire woodland and parkland
  - Restricting it to the site of the new flats only
  - What we hope PCC asks of SBC:
    - SBC is right to control the effects of cumulative development.
    - In this conservation area woodland on banks of the Tweed SSSI
    - Refuse the application.
    - Keep the protection for the wider woodland.

- ... and add a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) for the woodland.
- Granton have had their permission for the best part of a decade.
- Don't give them 5 more years on a technicality.
- This needs public scrutiny.
- Let Granton make their case for the full application – under current legislation.

The Chair put this to the PC Councillors, and it was agreed PCC would write and object to both proposals and that the Chair would write to J Hayward at SBC in support of the foregoing.

**Approval of the Minutes of 14 December 2023:** A Mackenzie proposed, and S Coe seconded.

**Matters arising from the Minutes:**

**Funds due from parking fund:** Cllr Tatler not in attendance.

**Website for PCC:** The Peebles Community Trust used to host the website for PCC, but they no longer have the resources, and the website was now very out of date. We have had offers from M Marshall and J MacDougall to help.

**Parking in Haylodge:** Cllr Tatler was not in attendance but had indicated that it would be included in the next Common Good meeting agenda.

**New Cemetery:** Cllr Tatler has asked SBC for an update. Cllr Thomson has said that the officers had it is scheduled to discuss later this year.

**Plaque on gold Post Box:** Cllr Pirone has contacted the Post Office regarding this.

**Flooding:** The festive break had been quiet. J MacDougall has agreed to be the PCC representative for flooding if she is elected.

**Chairman's report:** The report had been circulated. Nothing to add.

**Planning report:** The report had been circulated. S Coe confirmed he'd not had any updates from Peebles High School. The Baptist church site is still for sale. The 100 lodges at Rosetta Road had had 4 objections. Peebles Civic Society noted concerns about the traffic flow on Rosetta Road. March Street Mill: the Heritage and Design Officer has submitted a report which is available to read on the SBC planning portal. The Boiler and Engine House was being sold separately. J Wilson pointed out that the impact of both major developments will impact the road from March Street to the top end of Rosetta Road, and should be looked at in conjunction by SBC, whereas they are currently being looked at as two separate applications. The Chair agreed and said the PCC could put a note in to that effect. S Coe agreed with J Wilson's point. He said that a traffic report should be done in respect of the Rosetta application which also takes into account the new housing developments set out in the LDP and that Rosetta Road is identified as a two-way street, which it effectively is not. S Coe agreed to draft something to go to SBC.

Central Baguette, the application has been renewed and is going ahead. Project Pizza is the name of the business, and all the information is on the portal. It was agreed the PCC would write in to support the application.

Tweedbridge Court and the failing wall. PCC has chased and has been told they will hear back soon.

**Police Report:** Not yet received. M Bruce asked if it could be sent at least one week in advance of the meeting and Cllr Begg agreed to raise it. M Bruce had circulated his report.

**Peebles Community Trust:** M Bruce had circulated his report. He was frustrated by the lack of communication from SBC. Two applications for community asset transfers had been sent three months ago and all that had come back was one brief email. M Bruce pointed out that it is community groups of volunteers making these types of applications and they simply do not have the time to waste. Cllr Begg asked for copies of the correspondence so he could take a look and chase for an update. S Coe felt that the old railway building in the Edinburgh Road car park should have listed building status.

**Peebles Youth Voice:** M Bruce had circulated his report. The recent event at the Eastgate Theatre had not had as much of a take up as was hoped. L Lovell-Henderson suggested that it might have benefited from better and earlier advertising. The Eastgate Theatre should also have been advertising in good time. It would help to have a contact in Peebles High School. Disappointment was also noted at the lack of representation for the PYV from parents in the community. The Chairman again highlighted how difficult it is to raise volunteers and interest and has been emailed by a member of the public that in a school of circa 1,400 pupils one would expect a reasonable number of parents would have sufficient interest in their children's wellbeing to attend the Parents Council and contribute.

### **SBC Councillors' Reports**

**Cllr Begg:** Cllr Begg had met with council officers, developers, and allotment holders at March Street Mill to look at a few key issues. He had attended a Peebles town bus service meeting. They are looking at finalising the new timetabling and to see how Standalane/Violet Bank can be incorporated. Letters had gone out to the residents of Hydro Gardens/Innerleithen Road regarding the Tweed route (Berwick to Moffat), as the crossing construction is now going ahead. Cllr Begg asked everyone to support the sub-postmasters. They are independent contractors and are not the Post Office. Please do not boycott them.

**Cllr Douglas:** Cllr Douglas said that the Peebles bus group meeting was productive. All Tweeddale Cllrs met with P Gilhooley to talk issues over road lining and parking issues. This has been progressed, although Traffic Regulation Orders are difficult to get and take a long time to put in place. There are parking issues around Peebles High School because of the ongoing building works; some teachers and pupils are parking across local residents' driveways. There is a School Project Team meeting next week with Councillors and the parking issues will be raised again then.

Consideration of the budget is ongoing. SBC have received the settlement from Scottish Government. Overall funding is slightly more than expected. Council tax freeze is being budgeted at 5% whereas SBC were looking at only a 4% increase. It is still going to be a difficult process as inflation is higher and there will need to be economies. There is also the extra £1.5m to fund Live Borders on top of their annual allowance. There is going to be a review of them and all their premises. The Chairman said it would be helpful to have someone come and speak to the Community Council to give a briefing on the background of how Live Borders operates as he for one did not understand the process.

In respect of grant applications from the Neighbourhood Support Fund there have now been 14 received in the last couple of weeks. J Wilson asked about the running of Live Borders and Cllr Douglas confirmed the whole structure is being reviewed. SBC will be overseeing the management of the trust. Cllr Begg said the question of whether there is a pathway to recovery was raised and it was decided there is. The Chair asked if there were community representatives on the Board? Cllr Douglas said there were. Cllr Douglas suggested emailing Jenny Craig to see if there is someone who can come to a meeting to discuss.

**Cllr Pirone:** Cllr Pirone had sent a report in her absence. The Police are aware of the drug paraphernalia under Tweed Bridge. The Youth Shelter for Victoria Park is now on order. Cllr Pirone mentioned the retiring Head Teacher and the incoming interim Head Teacher as well as the new head teacher of Priorsford Primary School who is due to start on 29 January.

**Cllr Small:** Cllr Small noted the police had attended the road outside Kingsland school on Monday morning to do speed checks which was good to see. A damaged and unsafe tree in Haylodge had now been taken down.

**Cllr Tatler:** Cllr Tatler's points had been covered.

**Cllr Thomson:** The decision letters had gone out to Hydro Gardens and there would be a further meeting soon.

**Old School House:** The Secretary asked if there was an update? Cllr Begg is chasing. It was agreed this should be a standing item on the agenda.

**Bin Days:** The Secretary asked what had become of the printable bin collection timetables? Cllr Douglas said there is a new computer system under construction. You can still go on the website and put in your postcode to see the next collection.

**Treasurer's Report:** The report had been circulated. We have now received the annual grant from SBC but are still awaiting the grants of £240 for Peebles in Bloom and for the bench.

**100 pages of draft paperwork setting down how Community Councils should be run:** SBC had issued a revised draft set of paperwork for all the Community Councils asking for their feedback. It had been reviewed by The Chairman, the Secretary, the Treasurer and the Minute Secretary and recommendations had been sent back to SBC. Most of it is standard and not too different to what is already in place. The updated rules are all well-intentioned, however one area of concern was the recommendation to stop honoraria. The Chair pointed out that the Secretary attends to PCC business six days a week. The Treasurer indicated that payment for non-councillors would be authorised but not for councillors, and that did not make much sense. The Chair will write and raise the concerns.

**Chambers Institute Trust:** S Coe hoped that by the time the next meeting was held the acoustics will be fixed in the Burgh Hall. Council officers are working hard on the validation response to the government which is being made in conjunction with the other partners. A further response is required by 8 February after which the final details will be pulled together. The CIT has no detailed design, and everything is based on estimates. The project team is helping as much as they can. Previous costings are now out of date, but we need to be able to explain the scope of the project to the UK Government. £4.1m is not nearly enough, £10m is roughly what would be needed and so there will be discussions to agree how to tailor the money. There is a lot of work to do in a short space of time. They have employed an experienced fundraising consultant who will help with the business plan and hopefully look at a heritage lottery fund bid further down the line.

#### **AOB:**

The Chairman confirmed that PCC had sent Campbell Wilson, the Head Teacher who is leaving PHS this month, their very best wishes for the future.

G Macdonald asked if A Cormack's comments on the 3G pitch disabled access had been addressed yet? Not yet.

The Secretary would like to run a PCC survey. The plan is to ask the people of Peebles to tell us three things they like about Peebles and three things they do not like. This would help the Community Council address issues and it would also raise the PCC profile. The survey would also be submitted to the Peebleshire News and posted on social media. The Secretary is looking for volunteers to help, this would involve asking the residents, in the High Street and Tesco. Anyone willing to help should speak to the Secretary.

**2024 elections:** The following Community Councillors had come to the end of their term and were asked if they would like to stand again for re-election:

1. Anne Snoddy will stand again.
2. Scott Watson will stand again.
3. Julie Shearer – not in attendance.
4. Allan MacKenzie will stand again.
5. George Ramsay will stand again.
6. Malcolm Bruce will stand again.
7. Lennox Lovell-Henderson will stand again. (Co-opted)

**Leithenwater Wind Energy Hub:** Doug Wilson from Smithy House Associates is coming to speak to us at our February meeting about Leithenwater Wind Energy Hub

The Secretary asked when we might return to the Burgh Hall for our meetings? That will depend on when the sound issues are resolved.

The Chairman had attended a U3A lecture on the Great Polish Map of Scotland which is situated at the Barony Hotel near Eddleston. The presentation gave the history and noted that it had been very nearly lost through neglect. A charitable group had saved it and completely refurbished it at a cost of circa £150K and volunteer work that probably saved close to £1M over ten years or so. The speaker was concerned that now ownership has reverted to the Barony Hotel, it may not be being maintained adequately and could once more be lost. This would of course be a tragedy.

G MacDonald had said she had received a lot of good feedback for the Lloyds Pharmacy in the High Street. The Secretary will email them to let give them the positive feedback. G MacDonald had attended the meeting about the local bus service, together with all the local Councillors. Again, Borders Buses had not sent a representative which was considered counterproductive. Their bus drivers were applauded by the local access group for being extremely helpful. **AMENDMENT:** Two representatives from Borders Buses were in attendance and their contribution was very positive.

S Watson wanted to note, again, how the buses arriving and departing at the bus stop at the Post Office are often three at one time, meaning the bus at the rear is across the pedestrian crossing. It's not acceptable. The Chair noted that PCC hds been categorically told prior to the crossing being established that this would never happen.

Cllr Douglas asked if people have objections to any planning matters, they should write in as individual residents as well as informing the Community Council. There needs to be 5 or more objections before it goes to committee but these need to be 5 or more objections from individuals.

A MacKenzie asked about the testing of stones in the graveyard. The modern stones are now being tested. Would it be possible to have this announced somewhere? Cllr Dougals confirmed it would be announced in the local press and on the gates of the graveyard.

PCC noted thanks to all involved with the Christmas Lights Association for a fantastic display this year and for all their hard work putting the lights up and taking the lights down. M Bruce confirmed it takes seven weeks to put up around £100,000 worth of lights and a great deal of hard work. The association would welcome more volunteers.

The meeting ended at 20:34hrs.

The next meeting will be on Thursday 8 February 2024 at 7pm in the Burgh Chamber.

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Signed P Maudsley (Chairman)

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Dated