



Community Council
of the
Royal Burgh of Peebles and District

Minutes of the 318th Meeting of the Community Council which was held on Thursday 9 May at 7.35pm 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, H Young, J Wilson, M Bruce, M Marshall, P Maudsley (Chairman), S Coe, S Watson, Cllr Pirone, Cllr Small, Cllr Tatler.

In attendance: M Davey of the Peeblesshire News, K Guiney Chair of the Peebles Business and Retailers Association.

Members of the Public: K Young, L Thomson, R Rowe.

Apologies: L Lovell-Henderson, Cllr Begg, Cllr Douglas, Cllr Thomson, S Mackay.

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 parties out with the meeting will not be identified unless relevant.

Open forum: Two members of the public from Rose Park, K Young and L Thomson, were in attendance. They were asking for some assistance regarding the repair of some boundary walls. They are concerned about who should pay for the repairs to the wall, not least because Hanover are handing over factoring responsibilities as of 27 September. The residents have no idea about the apportionment of the costs nor how much those costs will be. There is confusion as to who owns which wall, but the residents have received nothing in writing. M Marshall agreed to look at their title deeds to see if he can clarify anything. The residents want to be kept informed at all stages and included in any decision-making. They also pointed out that some of the paths are crumbling and falling away which is proving challenging for those with mobility issues and is a trip hazard. Cllr Pirone said all residents should report it on the website. The Chair said the PCC will write to Cllr Begg to voice all their concerns and ask for definitive answers. Cllr Pirone suggested inviting Cllr Begg to a site visit with residents and council officers.

Approval of the Minutes of 11 April 2024: The minutes were approved M Bruce proposed and S Watson seconded.

Matters arising from last month's Minutes:

Peebles parking fund money delay. It was agreed to leave till next month when the Chair will chase yet again.

Fish fountain: There was a lot of feedback, which has been collected by the Chairman, and it has been sent to Cllr Tatler who should take the lead. Cllr Tatler said that most of the feedback was to keep the fountain in the same place and to have it repaired. He can provide the detailed report of what needs to be done. He suggested that the costs could be split between crowd funding and the parking fund. He will send a copy of the report to the Secretary. A descriptive panel should be looked at too. Cllr Tatler will also return to obtain a quote for an alternative to water, e.g. a static plastic representation of water.

Tourist Board on Tweed Bridge: A Mackenzie confirmed it is going to Ian Thorburn to be painted.

Broken library lift: Now repaired.

Build-out on High Street bus stop: Positive feedback from SBC.

S Watson pointed out that the build out by the new Hydro crossing made Innerleithen Road narrow and it was not possible for two lorries or buses to pass. It is also difficult to see because it is very flat and therefore hazardous to pedestrians. The Chairman suggested everyone take a look and it could be debated next at the next meeting.

Chairman's report: This had been circulated.

Police report: Not received.

SBC Cllr reports:

Cllr Begg: Cllr Begg was absent, and the Chairman asked if anyone had an update on the fencing along the side of the Tweed? Cllr Small confirmed it was discussed during the recent walkabout but no timescale agreed. Cllr Tatler believed that it could be done together with the work being done by Destination Tweed as that is the next section to be developed.

Cllr Pirone: Following the success of the shelter in Victoria Park, she is going to Bonnyrigg CC to speak to them. Other communities are going to look at programmes for youth shelters that the council could partner with. She paid tribute to M Bruce and his involvement and what this may mean now mean across the Borders. The debate about the transformation of Live Borders is still ongoing. She encouraged people to think about their leisure facilities for the placemaking consultations. What do you want? What do you need? G Macdonald said they need to get out into community, e.g. the mobile library service which is needed and appreciated. The Chair said that he did not believe that public ownership is the answer.

Cllr Small: He had been part of the recent walkabout where the Cllrs had come away with a list to take things forward. The town is not in bad order, but a tidy up and some paint would make a difference. He pointed out that one of the mobile library vans was irreparable and two new ones are on order.

Cllr Tatler: The Destination Tweed path consultation is important, and he asked everyone to get involved. The online consultation about decriminalising parking is continuing across the Borders and everyone should take part. The Gypsy Glen Hill race is going ahead on 15 May, and he is still looking for volunteers.

Treasurer's report: There has only been one small transaction, so the Treasurer had not prepared a statement.

Planning Report. The report had been circulated. M Marshall said there had been a few small applications and one big one. The big project being the Leithenwater windfarm. He has the report if anyone wants to read it, it is very large. They have formally made their application and there is around three months in which to make any comments. There is information including eagle projects, tree felling and bird strikes. If you want to comment, please do. We have a duty to the town to let them know what is going on. We should monitor it over the next couple of months. The public will share the benefits with other communities. This is a good time to talk to other councils to develop a trust and discuss how we deal with the money. The Chairman agreed there are a lot of implications that we have not thought of. M Marshall, M Bruce and the Chairman should have a discussion. The PCC does not handle cash and can only be a medium for information. The Secretary is going to check with other communities who have been through this. M Bruce advised asking Broughton CC.

Kingsmeadows has received 250 objections and an update on the decision is awaited.

M Marshall said the PCC website contains information on how to put in planning objections and comments.

Old School House: In Cllr Begg's absence, the Chairman said that it had now been revealed that several people have died, and the ownership of the property had moved on. He has been told there is a plan to progress the matter. Cllr Begg wrote to ask for a meeting, but no date has been received. S Coe said we should continue to press for the meeting.

Chambers Institution Trust: S Coe said that there is no material update but that there are meetings scheduled. Things are moving forward. All very positive. The acoustic panels should arrive next week. G Macdonald asked where the High Street artwork is going? Cllr Tatler said they are checking for the best location.

Peebles in Bloom: G Macdonald confirmed that everything was progressing well and thanked the Secretary for all her updates to the various media outlets. The nine judges are now in place. The next PIB meeting is on 29 May. G Macdonald would like full attendance from the PC Councillors on 15 August. The garden nominations will be carried out by the PC Councillors during the week of 15 July and the allocation of the areas will be soon. Please donate something for the raffle hampers and she would like to see everyone in floral clothing on the presentation evening.

Peebles High School: T Compton, from the Parent Council, has sent a report. He is pressing the head teacher for the engagement session. They had asked for a representative on the project steering group, but this was denied by SBC. Now there is no community nor parental input on the governance making the decisions. S Coe said there needs to be involvement in the steering group and the PCC should make that point. It was agreed that the Secretary would draft a letter.

AOB

Campervans and motorhomes: Cllr Tatler had had a meeting a couple of weeks ago which had been a starting discussion setting out a clear role and remit for the working group. This group would look at facilities in Peebles for campervan facilities and there was a series of actions taken from that discussion including localities.

R Rowe, from Go Tweed Valley, was in attendance and wanted to know who else might need input; should we include local retailers in the group? We could use existing car parks to make money. We should look to the free Aires in France as a model (see the British Campaign for Real Aires UK www.campa.org.uk). These sites are for self-contained motorhomes. Consultation in the town is crucial to get this right. How do we get it started? Cllr Tatler agreed we need to find out what residents think, and visitors. How do we lead it? A plan will hopefully be formulated at the next meeting. Cllr Tatler would like the PCC to take the lead on the consultation and invite comments and feedback. G Ramsay pointed out that it would need to begin with the SBC legal department. H Watson pointed out that there are several issues to be discussed, including management, litter, overflow. R Rowe said that Dumfries & Galloway have already done work on this. Private landlords may have appropriate hard standing to offer pitches. M Marshall said we would need to consider the environmental impact. The Chairman agreed some items would be more difficult to deal with than others, but it would bring benefit to the High Street, which is important, but where do we put them? G Macdonald said the public may offer some good suggestions.

J Wilson commended all involved in sorting out the fair which had to be moved off Victoria Park last minute due to the bad weather. The information was delivered well and positively. She's also seen the new post box on Glen Road which is good.

Cllr Pirone confirmed that SBC is looking at a strategy for Aires for campervans. There will need to be robust consultation as it needs to be right. Although PCC should be involved, it is important to check what the Economic and Development Department have planned on consultation.

S Watson mentioned the roadworks in Peebles and asked if it was impacting on shops? K Guiney, from the Retailers Association said, yes. One of the retailers had had the worst trading week since opening. Cllr Pirone said that she was told the works would be for 7 days.

M Bruce thanked Cllr Pirone for her kind words to him regarding his involvement with the shelter and the onward success that is being discussed. The Tweed Green shelter is being painted and the railings should be taken down so it can be used. Cllr Tatler will put it on the agenda.

G Macdonald said that the Barony has taken on The Cross Keys, and we should support it along with all other businesses in Peebles.

A Mackenzie has observed some of the work starting in the cemetery on the headstones. There are only two workers covering all of the Borders. Dumfries & Galloway mark the graves and then there is a two-week grace period before they are laid down. Peebles flattens them right away. The government should acknowledge that time should be allowed for the families to make them safe. He is also of the view that the stones should be repaired because the costs would be minimal. G Mackie said there is a health and safety risk to be considered.

K Guiney, from the Retailers Association, has noted the new CCTV down at the Cuddy. New signage too along Bridgegate. Can we get the same for School Brae? Cllr Tatler confirmed there had been at one stage. Cllr Pirone agreed to speak further to K Guiney about it.

The meeting ended at 2108hrs.

The next meeting will be on Thursday 13 June 2024 in the Burgh Chamber (or Hall).

..... Chairman

..... Dated