



Community Council of the Royal Burgh of Peebles and District

Minutes of the 325th Meeting of the Community Council which was held on Thursday 12 December at 7pm in the Burgh Hall, 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 Holt Cabrera, J McMordie, J Wilson, M Bruce, M Marshall (Planning Convenor), P Maudsley (Chairman), S Coe, Cllr Douglas, Cllr Small, Cllr Tatler, Cllr Thomson.

In attendance: M Davey of the Peeblesshire News.

Members of the Public: D Hodson, R McDowell.

Apologies: K Guiney, S Mackay, S Watson, Cllr Begg, Cllr Pirone.

The Chairman welcomed all 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 outwith the meeting will not be identified unless relevant.

Reports referred to in the Minutes are available to view at www.ccrbpeebles.co.uk

The Chair extended a very warm welcome to Joshua Holt Cabrera. J Hold Cabrera is an S5 pupil from PHS and was attending with a view to joining PCC. The Chair said it was important that younger people were represented.

Presentation by Dave Hodson about Tweeddale Youth Action

Dave Hodson, Manager, handed out a copy of the Tweeddale Youth Action Report to the Trustees for the year ended March 2024. It contained information about staffing, the project, activities, Food Punks, Bike Punks, holiday programmes and trips, art initiatives, funders' information and their outlook. D Hodson talked to PCC about TYA, all the good work that it does and the challenges it faces.

TYA has been around for 25 years, set up in response to the perceived need for some young people who do not form part of other groups. There are youth clubs and now a pizzeria. Innerleithen also has Bike Punks which is a workshop. There are drop-in sessions for all High School aged people which, among other things, provide some transitional life skills and vocational training. The sessions run all year round, including school holidays, and are free. Current membership is around 200 young people. The young people come from different social backgrounds, and everyone is welcome no matter what their background.

TYA endeavours to give a platform for young people to be heard. R McDowall, a member of the public also involved with SBC Youth Learning and Chair of Peebles Youth Voice, said that all youth workers are keen for young people to engage in all forums, but it is not an easy sell. These platforms give them a safe space. This is part of community learning development (CLD). These youth groups are not run by the police, nor teachers but can assist with helping young people feel valued and listened too. To aid emotional resilience too.

The Chair thanked D Hodson for the presentation and for the recent guided tours he'd had of their work in Peebles and Innerleithen. The work being done is very impressive.

G Macdonald asked about the age range of the young people. D Hodson said they range from P6 right through to those who leave school and become volunteers. The sessions are screened by age. G Macdonald then asked what TYA needs, what would make a difference? D Hodson said funding and awareness. He would like everyone to know about TYA and to share what they do in a positive way.

G Mackie asked about staffing and the funding of salaries. D Hodson confirmed there were both paid staff and volunteers. The core costs for running TYA are around £85,000 a year but overall costs are around £250,000 a year. The new pizzeria will be an additional cost.

J McMordie asked how the public can see progress and keep in touch? D Hodson said their FaceBook page is very active, they have a website page [www.tweeddaleyouth.co.uk], and regularly submit information to Peebles Life Magazine.

Open Forum: Nothing.

Approval of the Minutes of 14 November 2024: There was an amendment to November's Minutes to clarify the proposed maintenance of the Fish Fountain. Floral Peebles, for example, would respond if the water needed topped up, drained and refilled and if litter needs removed, and report faults and similar day to day working problems. They will not be responsible for things like repairs on the motor/pump, electrical faults, and any possible damage. The Minutes were approved as amended by S Coe and seconded by A Mackenzie.

Matters arising from the Minutes:

Tourist pointer signs: This work is completed. Thank you to the Callants.

Parking fees: Cllr Thomson said a paper is going to SBC about parking fees in general and there should be some actions arising from that. The Chair wanted it noted that this was raised more than two years ago. Cllr Thomson said it was being dealt with.

Shop Window (Della's): Cllr Tatler confirmed there is a meeting of the Chambers Institution Trust on 22 January, and he was confident there would be no problem using the window for local notices.

Fish Fountain: The Chair had a document issued by SBC, dated 24 June 2013, which evidenced that it does belong to the Common Good. His questions now are, can the CG trustees walk away from a responsibility to maintain a public asset? Can the CG trustees ask the parking fund to pick up some of the cost of repairing it? Should the public be asked to contribute? Cllr Tatler said it is not currently registered so it will need to be registered. Cllr Thomson said she will take that up and research it. Cllr Tatler said the updated costs quote is still required.

Gold post box: Cllr Pirone is still endeavouring to get the missing plaque replaced.

Campervans: M Bruce had looked at how it was dealt with in Callander. It was not much different than Peebles and they appear to have the same problems. Forest Scotland have some dedicated parks which are now going to be available all year, rather than just the summer season, for a modest fee. A Mackenzie said that Fife is the example to look at. It was agreed that both Moffat and Hawick also had good provision and were booming. J Wilson said that tourists used to bring their caravans to Peebles regularly, but they do not now because there is nowhere to pitch; we are losing tourists.

Costa Coffee Building: K Guiney had reported that repairs have started on the building and to the door. She also said that the premises that was Zenwells Gallery was going to become a One Stop convenience store.

Keystore Signage: Correspondence had been sent to SBC asking about the temporary signage, no response yet. A chaser will be sent in the new year.

Old Schoolhouse, Tweed Green: There was no update; Cllr Thomson confirmed that SBC are going down the compulsory purchase order route and that can take up to 18 months. The Secretary confirmed that she had written to SBC about the tree growing out of the roof and that there may be a health and safety issue. They had responded saying it was not a problem.

Chairman's Report: This had been circulated.

Town Action Plan: C Carleton is retiring at the end of December, and a new Chair would be taking over.

Haylodge Park: Cllr Thomson said the recent meeting had gone well and there were different proposals discussed. There will be a Common Good meeting on 9 January to follow up. S Coe said he did not agree with the location for the proposal. G Ramsay said the discussion should be opened up so the people of Peebles can vote; it should not be left to the Cllrs to decide. Cllr Thomson said feedback was discussed at the meeting and the users of the park and the groups were involved. No decision was made at that meeting. It will be discussed further at the next Common Good meeting. S Coe said there should be a public consultation as many people who use the park have not been involved. The Chair pointed out that there have been several objections raised by members of the public and that there are very strong views regarding the sledging slope, both for and against. He believes it should go to the community for consultation. Cllr Thomson said the sledging slope would not be touched. G Ramsay said there are concerns about the part in front of the sledging slope. Cllr Thomson said it will all be presented to the Common Good meeting and the discussion will take place at that meeting. Cllr Tatler said it is written into the Common Good that if there is to be a change of use there must be a consultation. The PC Councillors unanimously agreed there should be a consultation.

Baptist Church: There was no update from the group to either the PCC or the PCT. M Bruce said he understands they are still seeking their charitable status, so are still active.

SBCCN (Scottish Borders Community Councils Network): Cllr Tatler said there is meeting next week to discuss the scheme review.

Tweeddale Area Flood Advisory Group: Funding is still being waited on to purchase VHF handheld radios.

Enquiry about Grass Cutting at Kingsway: This has been resolved and Cllr Tatler has spoken to the concerned resident.

Tweedbridge Court: The Chair had asked all PC Councillors for suggestions, on behalf of SBC, for names for the new development at Tweedbridge Court. The suggestions made were: Caledonian Court – to reflect the railway history, Tweedbridge Court - to reflect the existing history, Tweedside Mill - to reflect the weaving history and something to honour Sir John Campbell who had recently died and was held in high regard in the community. After further discussion it was put to a vote and Caledonian Court received the highest number of votes.

Planning Report: This had been circulated.

There had been a meeting earlier in the week where the Kingsmeadows House section 42 application was refused. S Coe said this was a good result for the community and it was significant nationally with issues where section 24 is being used as a device to circumvent normal planning procedures. M Marshall said the next thing to look at would be community ownership. Cllr Tatler said this had been looked at in 2014 and was a good idea.

Horsburgh Ford letter: M Marshall has drafted a letter to go to SBC having been asked to find out why the development at Horsburgh Ford has stalled. The draft letter had been circulated. S Coe questioned whether permission-in-principle was correct, and M Marshall explained this had been reviewed with a solicitor. The Chair

agreed there is no harm in asking the questions of SBC. Cllr Tatler suggested PCC write to Eildon or SBHA as they may wish to make a bid given the current housing crisis.

Police report: The report had been circulated. The Chair said he was pleased to read that there was around a 50% reduction in incidents in Peebles compared to the previous month's. M Bruce had attended an online meeting with the new Community Officer and it was a very positive meeting. The new officer is keen to get to know his communities. It was agreed that the multi-ward report would be more informative if it reflected trends to give a more visual representation. The Chair noted that he would like to have had a police presence this month in order to give some praise for their present successes.

PCT Report: The report had been circulated. There were no questions.

Cllr reports:

Cllr Douglas: The last date for applying pension credit date is 21 December. This will be backdated for the winter fuel allowance. The Community Council Scheme meeting; there is one change in that there will be a special meeting before the full council one on 19 December to go over the proposals. It will then go out to consultation and there will be a final meeting in April 2025. The Drill Hall had some issues last week with the blood donor session as the Blood Donors could not gain access. The Drill Hall does not have paid janitors and is manned by volunteers who do not work weekends. Anyone hiring the hall will need to have an alarm key fob. Unfortunately, the Blood Donors did not have a fob and that caused a problem. It is important to remember that the Drill Hall is run by volunteers and not by Live Borders or anyone else. The reported problem re discarded cigarette butts on Biggesknowe by a local business has been resolved by the licensing officers.

Cllr Pirone: Cllr Pirone had sent a report in her absence: The parking at the High School continues to be a problem and some white lines have been painted. Cllr Tatler confirmed that the police will be checking and issuing tickets. The new school build is ahead of schedule. She's still working with the SPEN project, which is the pylons across the valley. SBC have agreed to contribute £600k to Eildon towards the construction of the new flats at the south end of Tweed Bridge.

Cllr Small: He works closely with Cllrs Thomson and Begg so Cllr Thomson will do the update for all three.

Cllr Tatler: It was agreed that the mural boards from Tweedbridge Court (now Caledonian Court!) would be taken down and erected in the courtyard at Pennels Close. Eildon have asked if they are still wanted? A Mackenzie said the Callants could take them down in January and put them somewhere safe. The correspondence from Boots Chemist where the panels are to go is now out of date and the process with them would need to be updated. RBS will hopefully remove the objects in the middle of the courtyard so it can be used as seating area. Go Tweed Valley are currently going through their bid renewal and are asking businesses to support them by voting. The vote needs to be done by 16 January [www.gotweedvalley.co.uk, or email: rich@gotweedvalley.co.uk]. Cllr Tatler had been on a walkabout with Cllr Douglas, Cllr Pirone and Douglas Ford, Small Schemes Coordinator from Scottish Borders Council. There is still money available to spend. They looked at the bus stop at Priorsford Primary School and the path in the woods near the new playground in Victoria Park that needs to be extended. Cllrs recently had an update regarding the new cemetery and have identified a site and will inform PCC in due course. Topping of graves has been scheduled. The lavatories at Kingsmeadows have been deep cleaned. Clearer signage asking the public to keep their dogs on leads and in control are going to be erected at the cemetery.

Cllr Thomson: There are a few things with small schemes still outstanding. Street names at the end of streets need replacing; however, height has been an issue. All bollards are to be painted in the Old Town, hopefully in spring. There is a joint surgery planned for January. Please be mindful that the SBC offices are closed from 20

December to 3 January, so please send all correspondence before they close. Thank you to the Callants for the fixing the sign pointers. She is going to chase the anti-pigeon spikes for the cross at the War Memorial.

Cllr Small: There was a ceremony recently to formally open the new road crossing on Innerleithen Road. There have been some signs put up for disabled vehicles on the bridge at March Street.

Treasurer's Report: This had been circulated.

Peebles Chambers Institution: No report circulated as there is no update. S Coe confirmed that everything is continuing as it should be. There will be more to report in January. There are many things still to be decided. G Macdonald asked about the CAB. She had been told they are not going to be returned to the building. Cllr Tatler said that was untrue, but the scope of works is still to be decided.

AOB

The Secretary has asked if we can replace the projector screen with one that is more portable. It was agreed it could be replaced. Cllr Tatler agreed to ask if it could be stored in the Burgh Hall.

The proposed build out for the bus stop in the High Street. Cllr Tatler said the six SBC Councillors will need to have a discussion, as there may be money for it.

The Chair had received an email from a member of the public about the area to be resurfaced on Edinburgh Road that had been discussed by Cllr Begg earlier in the year. It has still not been done. Cllr Tatler will pursue and hopes that it will be completed in this financial year. Cllr Tatler will update the Chair.

G Macdonald asked if a bin could be placed at the junction of Kingsmeadows Road and Glensax Road for rubbish and dog waste. There's not one bin between Victoria Park and Cavalry Park. Cllr Tatler will ask. G Macdonald said there is a sheet of metal sitting on the weir on the Cuddy near March Street Lane which needs to be recovered. A Mackenzie said the Callants are looking at that area next week. Cllr Thomson also made a note. .

The meeting ended at 2048hrs.

The next meeting will be on Thursday 9 January 2025 in the Burgh Hall.

..... Chairman

..... Dated