



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

**Minutes of the 335th Meeting of the Community Council which was held on
Thursday 11 September 2025 at 7pm in the Burgh Hall, Peebles. The
meeting was recorded for the purposes of Minuting and Reporting.**

Present: A Snoddy (Secretary), D Ashmole, F Richardson, G Ramsay, H Young, J Wilson, M Bruce, M Marshall (Planning Convenor), S Coe, S Watson, Cllr Douglas, Cllr Tatler.

In attendance: K Peebles of The Peeblean; I Dempster, Dean of The Guildry Corporation of Peebles.

Members of the Public: H Ferguson; C Scott

Apologies: P Maudsley, G Mackie, J McMordie, G MacDonald, K Guiney, S Mackay, A Mackenzie, Cllr Thomson, Cllr Begg, Cllr Small, Cllr Pirone, PC G Beaumont, the directors of the Eastgate Theatre were unable to send a representative.

In the Chair's absence, the Acting Chairman M Marshall 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 <https://ccrbpeebles.co.uk/>

Open Forum

H. Ferguson, a member of the public, raised strong concerns about the proposed closure/change of use of the Drill Hall. The Hall is well used by the public and community groups, including the lunch club and local volunteers. The building has historic importance, having been used by the Home Guard, with a rifle range underneath. SBC has been reviewing the Drill Hall for several years. Consultants' reports have been produced, the most recent around 4–5 months ago. A new consultation is underway, with suggestions that community facilities across the Borders may need to be rationalised. Concerns expressed: Decisions may be made by officials outside Peebles. Lack of visible support from local councillors. Risk of losing the contribution of volunteers who support town initiatives (e.g., floral displays). Wider impact on community life and cohesion. A [petition](#) has been organised to oppose the closure. The view was strongly expressed that closing the Drill Hall would be "a disgrace" and harmful to the community.

The Acting Chair acknowledged the points raised and noted the importance of capturing these views. The group agreed on the need to protect such institutions. Possible funding support may be available via Live Borders. Their CEO may be able to assist. Recent activity at the Hall includes new tables and chairs being purchased and a skip placed outside. C. Scott, a member of the public, asked about ownership of the Drill Hall. The Acting Chair confirmed it belongs to SBC, but it is part of the cultural estate.

Approval of the Minutes of 14 August 2025

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 August 2025 were approved, subject to the amendment that A. Mackenzie had tendered his apologies and was not present. Proposed by S. Coe, seconded by M. Bruce.

Matters arising from the Minutes:

The sandbag store on Caledonian Road has been repaired and restored.

The wrongly worded plaque on the gold post box will need to be replaced. Cllr Pirone is not present to give an update.

Haylodge Park. S Coe said that everything is still going ahead. Funding is being worked through and there is no fixed timescale for the work to be completed.

The area around the Spigot Mortar near Tweed Bridge is still being completed and there may be some refinements to the enclosure.

CCTV at Kingsmeadows toilets. Cllr Tater confirmed that the cameras are temporarily elsewhere and on their return the positioning will be looked again. They are motion-activated.

Police Report: The police report for this month had not been received by the Secretary prior to the meeting.

Chairman's Report: The Chairman's report was circulated prior to the meeting.

The Acting Chair talked about the recent Live Borders meeting that took place with CEO Catriona McAllister, described as straightforward, focusing on current issues and exploring ways to improve arrangements. Claire Swann, of School's Out, and volunteers provided examples of community work and input on financials. The CEO listened and acknowledged there is still work to do. Discussion included community ownership: the volunteers indicated they do not support full community ownership. Suggested the community could operate the facility with some operational responsibility, while Live Borders provides a budget. The current model at the Drill Hall: Managed by a committee. Committee handles bookings, repairs, and volunteers. Live Borders cover utilities, insurance, etc. No staffing costs. CEO was impressed by the committee and their 5-year plan with projections. Committee does not want community asset transfer of the building but do want to explore a community operating model. SBC officers appear willing to consider the model, recognising the Drill Hall's value as a community asset.

At the meeting on 9 September, with all representatives; initial response was very positive. CEO sees potential for the Drill Hall model to be replicated in other communities, such as Innerleithen. No decisions have been made yet regarding closure or asset transfer. Concerns raised about Gytes site: No information yet on proposals. Innerleithen is Common Good; no asset transfer planned. Lack of management at Gytes could pose risks. Sporting organisations continue to collaborate.

Everything has been based on a consultant's report: Focused on saving £1 million across the estate. Did not consider income or community involvement in depth. Drill Hall committee strongly disagrees with some of the report's conclusions. Live Borders has acknowledged these points and is open to alternative models. Some sites may require more investment; some may have to close. SBC process: Following forums, officers will review and create reports. Reports will go to committees for further scrutiny. Council will make final decisions. Reports will be published publicly.

Community fundraising could supplement budgets to meet local needs. PCC recorded that their members endorse Claire Swann's input and related reports.

Planning Report: The report had been circulated. No questions raised. Ballantyne Place: The Planning Act indicates it is not possible to remove the condition protecting the play park from the 2002 permission (completed almost two decades ago), this has been queried with SBC legal. Kingsmeadows: Environmental Rights Centre for Scotland have submitted a complaint that SBC have not responded to ERCS' 9 Jul 2025 [letter](#).

Windfarms: Progressing discussions with Foundation Scotland, Innerleithen and Eddleston; real funding £156,000 per annum for five years. Question of how funds should be divided and managed across communities. Innerleithen proposed 1/3 ring fenced for Innerleithen. Eddleston and Peebles preferred funding be shared approximately equally per capita and empowering funding committee to depart from this guidance. Proposal: Acting Chair suggested 90% allocated to larger grants, 10% to microgrants for small items (e.g. Hi-Viz vests) , with the fund responsible for allocation. M Bruce expressed concern about dividing funds geographically: Initial disappointment that Innerleithen wished to carve out their own share. Belief that funds should be managed as one pot, with a joint board deciding based on community benefit, not geography. Some projects (e.g. in Peebles) could benefit wider communities. Discussion on models: M Bruce favoured one pot, one board approach. Acting Chair will repeat the invitation to Innerleithen to join Peebles' and Eddleston's model. Cllr Tatler suggested considering participatory budgeting (community voting on projects). Possibility of one-off funding vs. annual allocations raised. Foundation Scotland to manage the process: Applications expected to open in a couple of months. Need to recruit a decision-making panel. PCC should have a representative. Importance of appointing panel members without strong affiliations to local groups. Suggestions will be made, but final board appointments will be the responsibility of Foundation Scotland.

Peebles Community Trust: The PCT report had been circulated, and an update was provided on the possible purchase of the Bank of Scotland building, which is not yet advanced. A meeting has been held with the funder, and a loan of £200,000 has been agreed in principle. Subcontractor costs were discussed, and it was noted that there is no wish to enter into conflict with other buyers. The proposal is to create a bank hub. No decisions have yet been made regarding School Brae. Recruitment of new directors is ongoing, with six applicants being spoken to. The PCC confirmed its support for the bid.

SBC Councillors' Reports

Cllr Douglas: The updated community council scheme was [approved by SBC](#) 19 Dec 2024, [consultation](#) completed in May and work was now coming to a close after five years. A special meeting of the council will take place on 25 September to [approve the new scheme](#). On windfarms, SBC has [objected to the Ditcher Law windfarm](#) by Oxtou due to adverse impacts on residential amenity and landscape.

Cllr Tatler: Cllr Tatler reported on issues with retailers regarding crime, noting that Deputy Local Area Commander for the Scottish Borders Rory Caverhill will meet with the retailers' association to discuss. The Baptist Church project is progressing, though taking time. Permanent CCTV is in place across all towns and is functioning, with some tweaks ongoing ahead of a formal launch; it is already operational. There are hopes to obtain additional mobile CCTV units. A newsletter is being prepared with Live Borders, promoting work at the Drill Hall and Memorial Hall, and providing contact details for community councils.

The Old Schoolhouse, Tweed Green: S Coe reported on the Schoolhouse, noting that matters are progressing, with a structural survey completed and results expected soon. Discussions are taking place with solicitors to determine the way forward, and a meeting has been scheduled. PCC is acting on behalf of the owners, and once the way forward is clear, a relevant person will be brought in to assist. The Acting Chair thanked S Coe and M Bruce for stepping in.

Chambers Institution Trust: The report had been circulated. The first phase is moving on and a SCIO is being set up.

Peebles in Bloom: About 120 enthusiastic gardeners with their friends and families attended the Peebles in Bloom Presentation of Awards event on 21 August. The Burgh Hall looked lovely with tablecloths supplied by Peebles Hydro and the stage decorated with flowers donated by Pentland Plants. We must thank our five teams of judges for giving of their time and expertise, Garrie Rennie for once again being a terrific MC, Chris

Mackie for organising the wonderful raffle which raised a significant amount of money, George and Joshua for working so hard behind the scenes in the kitchen and Christine Bruce and Ann Maudsley for their support. Thanks also go to those who embraced the floral shirt competition with good humour, and the Community Councillors and SBC Councillors who attended. Thanks to Catriona McKay for compiling the slideshow. There was a hiccup when the slideshow could not be played but we hope that with the help of Chris Wood, our Peebles in Bloom IT support, we can sort out the gremlins before next year's event. The Acting Chair thanked G Macdonald, the Secretary, and the entire team.

AOB

Ian Dempster, Dean of The Guildry Corporation of Peebles thanked all the Community Councillors on behalf of all at The Guildry Corporation of Peebles. He congratulated everyone on the excellent work being done, which replaces what The Guildry Corporation of Peebles started hundreds of years ago.

G Macdonald had reported that the area around the rugby hut at Haylodge Park is untended. The Secretary has written to the Secretary of Peebles Rugby Club, and is waiting for a reply.

S Watson said Peebles had had a great Highland Games this year and thanked everyone who helped and all the volunteers who make it possible

Cllr Tatler was asked who is going to be the liaison contact at SBC for the Christmas Lights organisations in the Scottish Borders? He said that Caroline Cochrane will set up a group. The Secretary will send C Cochrane any contact details she holds.

The PCC is investigating sound systems to help everyone hear one another at meetings.

Some saplings growing out of the wall at Kingsmeadows Gardens had been reported and they had been dealt with by C Johnstone of SBC the following day.

Freshers Week at Peebles High School is on 23 September from 6-7pm. F Richardson and H Young will attend on behalf of PCC.

It was asked why the building that used to be The Potting Shed is still for let? The Secretary will contact the letting agent and query.

Cllr Thomson had noted that the notice boards in car parks were out of date. Cllr Tatler reminded the PCC that they are to look at all the town's signs and put together a scheme that is collegiate. The Secretary will send out an email to all PC Councillors. Cllr Tatler would also like to know where all the green boxes are so he can arrange for their decoration.

H Young asked about the old science block at Peebles High School. Cllr Tatler advised that there are no proposals or planning applications at present and it is a case of waiting to see, though some safety improvements are planned. The Capital Investment Programme Board has proposed demolition. Cllr Tatler has been asking questions and is awaiting further information. S Watson noted the need for parking but felt it would be a shame to demolish the building. Cllr Tatler will provide updates as they become available.

D Ashmole raised the issue of signage for cycle paths, noting that while the paths are excellent, it is not always obvious where cyclists should go within the town. Cllr Tatler confirmed that this will be addressed as part of the Destination Tweed project.

M Bruce raised concerns about the "keep left" signs at both entrances to Peebles, which are obscured by muck and weeds. He suggested the Community Payback Team might be able to assist. Cllr Tatler said that there are not many people available on the team, and M Bruce agreed to send him the information.

S Coe asked about the proposed build-out for buses, noting the need for consultation and feedback. Cllr Tatler advised that a view would be sought, and the Secretary added that it had been mentioned but not yet actioned. S Coe also raised concerns about weeds in the Cuddy affecting flood capacity. Cllr Tatler confirmed awareness of the issue and advised that it is in hand.

The meeting ended at 2045hrs.

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

..... Chairman

..... Dated

DRAFT