

Upper Liddesdale & Hermitage Community Council

Ordinary Meeting 10th June 2019

Draft Minutes

Location: The meeting was held at Hermitage Hall starting at 7:00pm

Those present were:

Community Councillors Geoffrey Kolbe (Chairman, GK), John Scott (Treasurer, JS), Andrew Warburton (Vice Chairman, AW) and Lawrence Scott (LS).

Councillors: Davie Patterson and Watson McAteer.

P.C. Allan Paterson

Alex Cacciamani and John Seede of Borderlink.

There were also 15 members of the public.

1. Apologies for absence

Councillor George Turnbull, Debbie Thomas

2. Police Report.

P. C. Allan Paterson spoke to his report, which is attached.

3. Report on BorderLink broadband initiative

Alex Cacciamani and John Seed, directors of BorderLink, gave a presentation on the benefits of their fixed wireless broadband network, some details of how it worked, and answered questions on it.

4. Approval of the minutes of the last meeting, 1st April 2019

JS proposed that the minutes be accepted. This was seconded by AW. The proposal was passed unanimously

5. Matters arising

1. JS reported that the Resilience Plan continued to be drawn up and he would present more details at the next meeting
2. JS reported that Royal Mail had been asked about putting in a mail box at the Hermitage Hall junction and they were considering it

6. Treasurer's report

JS reported that since the last meeting, £100 had been donated to the Newcastleton Welfare Group. The £100 ringfenced for the CPR/Defib training had now been paid. There were other postage and printing expenses, incurred for the survey, which had been paid. The balance was now £1481, including ongoing ringfenced amounts of £272, leaving £1,209 for regular expenses.

7. Scottish Border Community Council Network AGM meeting report

GK reported on the main topics of this meeting attended by GK, AW and JS. This was dominated by the election of members to the core group of the SBCCN and the success of the rural Community Councils in the Teviot & Liddesdale area ensuring that the urban Community Councils did not dominate the core group membership for this area. Geoffrey Kolbe of this Community Council and Philip Kerr of Southdean Community Council were elected as core group members.

It had been reported that Hawick Community Council (meeting on this same evening) would consider a motion for Scottish Borders Council to remove funding for the SBCCN. To counter this, GK proposed that, *"This Community*

Council requests that Scottish Borders Council maintain funding for the Scottish Borders Community Council Network to at least its current level.” This motion was seconded by AW and passed unanimously.

8. Equalities Statement.

GK proposed the following motion. *“That this Community Council is committed to implementing and promoting equal opportunities for all in all its activities.*

Our Community Council does not discriminate against anyone on the grounds of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marital status, race, poverty, religion, health, pregnancy & maternity, or sexual orientation either by way of membership, volunteering or participation

We realise that discrimination exists in society (whether protected by law or not) and endeavour to prevent unfavourable treatment where unlawful or unfair discrimination occurs.”

The motion was unanimously accepted and GK signed a statement to this effect on behalf of the Community Council.

9. Report on aquatic life in Larriston Burn

Following a statement by a resident who lives near Larriston Burn, that there seemed to be much less aquatic fauna and flora than he would expect in the Larriston Burn, Tilhill who had planted Larriston Farm as the forestry contractor was asked to comment. GK reported that Tilhill has surveyed the burn and read out an email in which they reported details of what had been found, with the conclusion that the watercourse appeared to be in good health in this respect.

10. To consider a defibrillator to be installed on the B6357

GK presented a quotation for a defibrillator unit and asked for views on installing a defibrillator on the B6357 to compliment the one at Hermitage Hall on the B6399.

It was commented that the defibrillator would need a mains power supply, this limited the number of places on which it could be installed. Too, it was suggested that the time period in which the defibrillator needed to be used for a coronary arrest was about 6 minutes, and it was questioned whether it would actually be useful?

It was decided that further research was needed to see if this would be of any benefit.

11. Sale of Buccleuch land from Hartsgarth to Auchenvivock

Mr Andrew Douglas objected to a statement GK had made in a community email on the subject, in which he stated that much of the land is poor quality grazing and so not much good for sheep farming. Mr Douglas said that GK had been ‘disrespectful’ to sheep farmers who, in the past, had run successful sheep farms on the area, and asked GK to withdraw that statement. GK stated that it had not been his intention to be disrespectful to anyone, and withdrew the statement.

Discussion on what the land could be used for ensued. It was agreed that the land had been a ‘bird paradise’ before the Hen Harriers were protected, but that it was not possible to have grouse at sufficient densities to make it a commercially viable grouse moor in the current circumstances, where the Hen Harrier is protected. It was stated that Langholm Moor held the record for the number of grouse shot in one day, and that grouse shooting benefited the economy of the area. It was also stated that when the heather was properly managed, the sheep used to eat the young heather, but now that the heather is not being properly managed and so much of the land is not much good for sheep farming. It was agreed that the area was ruined for sheep farming and as a grouse moor, and that it would take a large amount of capital and a long time to build it up again, but that this was the preferred future for the Langholm Moor. It was also agreed that the area should not be planted with commercial forests.

12. Response to planning application ECU00001833 for Faw Side Wind Farm

GK stated that this wind farm proposal was not in our area and did not affect us directly in that there were no planned traffic movements through our area and none of our residents were very close to the proposed wind farm. However, GK reported that he had consulted with the host Community Councils and other community groups in the area to ask their opinion and read out some of the responses. GK had summarised these responses, and some observations from the planning application documents, into a series of statements and asked if these statements should form an objection to the planning application. It was agreed that they should.

13. Consideration of a Community Trust after survey and consultation meeting.

GK reminded the meeting that the survey on the Community Trust and the Scottish Borders National Park had not been a poll, and the comments both for and against should be considered qualitatively rather than quantitatively. JS introduced the subject of the Community Trust by reminding the meeting on the reasons this area might want a community trust and the types of community trust that could serve our needs. The comments from the survey, and a summary of the questions and answers from the consultation meeting had been published on the website. After some discussion, JS proposed a motion, *"Our Community Council should proceed with the establishment of a Community Trust in consultation with and guidance of the Development Trusts Association Scotland and The Bridge."* This was seconded by AW. The motion was carried three votes to one (LS voted against)

14. Motion to support the Campaign model for a Scottish Borders National Park

GK declared that he was a member of the Campaign and that he would surrender the chair to AW (vice-chairman) for this item and he would withdraw from the discussion of, and voting upon, this item. LS stated that he was 'confused' in that GK had stated previously that he had nothing to do with the Campaign for a Scottish Borders National Park. GK reminded LS that what he actually said was that he had no personal interest in a Scottish Borders National Park. GK stated that his support for a National Park was because he believed it would benefit the whole community and that he would benefit no more than anybody else if it came into being. Never-the-less, GK thought that his continued participation would 'contaminate' the final vote and so he had decided to withdraw.

AW took the chair and proposed the motion that, *"This Community Council supports the Campaign model for a Scottish Borders National Park."* JS seconded the motion.

JS commented that many of the objections from the survey and in the consultation meeting were with reference to experiences with older non-Scottish National Park models and these objections had been addressed by the Scottish government legislation for Scottish National Parks and by the model put forward by the Campaign where the National Park Authority would be made up of representatives of the local people. JS thought that the proposed Scottish Borders National Park would enhance tourism and be of benefit to the area and on balance, deserved support.

LS thought that regardless of what the Campaign stated, the result would be an increase in rules and planning regulations which would not be to the benefit of the community. LS commented that people who 'earn money' in the area were against it and land owners did not support it. JS responded by giving the example of two neighbouring land owners who did support it. JS and AW argued that everyone in the area had a stake in what happened in the area, not just people who worked the area and the large landowners.

The motion was carried by two votes to one (LS voted against)

15. Roads

LS reported that the B6357 from Lawson Farm to the border with Dumfriesshire was bad, also the road on the Dumfriesshire side.

The cattle grid between Cliffhope and Singdean was also in need of repair - again.

16. Reports of meetings attended

GK and AW reported on their attendance of the Area Partnership meeting on 16th April.

GK reported on his attendance of a South of Scotland Economic Partnership meeting on 3rd June.

17. Any other business

AW reported on communications from Philip Kerr of Southdean Community Council, in which he explained that the future of energy was not large monopolistic energy generation plants, but a network of sustainable energy sources to reduce the reliance on fossil fuels. These energy networks would be decided upon by each community. AW reported that Southdean Community Council had joined the Community Energy Scotland to this end and proposed that this Community Council should also join. JS seconded the motion. The motion was carried three votes to one (LS voted against)

GK reported that there was to be a Scottish Borders Community Council Scheme Review and there had been a call for one person to represent the Community Councils of the Teviot and Liddesdale area to be put forward for membership of Working Group which would conduct the review. GK proposed that JS be put forward as our choice for that representative. AW seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

JS noted a letter of thanks had been received from Newcastleton Welfare Group for the UL&H CC donation.

JS reminded the meeting that Newcastleton Community Council was meeting on 18th June and we should support that meeting by having one or more of our Community Councillors attend. GK and JS said that they would attend.

The Rural Transport Conference was being held at SBC HQ on 29th June. JS said he would attend.

14 Date of next meeting

Tuesday 6th August.

The meeting ended at 10:00 pm

Hermitage Community Council, Monday 10th June 2019

APRIL

10th

Call regarding the cutting down of trees in Boozie Woods Newcastleton, by Buccleuch Estates foresters when there were nesting birds.

Work was stopped and Estate managers spoken to, they stated that the necessary checks had been carried out prior to commencement of work.

No offences libelled, however work has ceased on the site.

11th

Call to Buccleuch Terrace regarding mixed race youth visiting the village being racially abused.

Statements noted and a youth was cautioned and charged with making a racially unacceptable comment and a report submitted.

11th

A number of calls from various addresses in the village regarding children being chased through woods, dangerous driving, and threats being made.

Extensive enquiries carried out resulting a male being cautioned and charged with various charges including dangerous driving, and a breach of the peace, a report has been submitted to the Procurator Fiscal.

MAY

13th

Report of a Quad bike being stolen from Hermitage Farm, the quad was seen driving through the village during early hours followed by what appears to be an old style Mitsubishi Pickup.

18th

Theft of a Quad bike from a secure shed at Acreknowe farm, near Stobs, Hawick.

Quad was seen and followed by local resident driving over the border at Scots Kershope, however then lost to sight prior to old Dog and Duck.

A task force has been set up at Galashiels Police Station and are now collating the Quad and tool thefts in Borders area.

Both above thefts are thought to have been carried out by the same persons, the Quads were actually ridden from the locus which is unusual.

Single vehicle unreported VA at South Greenholme Farm, where a vehicle collided with a farm wall, then left the locus without reporting the incident. The vehicle was traced Insurance details passed to property owner and driver issued with FPT.

JUNE

We are now in the summer season and the numbers of motorcyclists has risen again, there have already been several incidents in the area, thankfully none to date have been serious.

Other incidents of interest

During April, the thefts from and of works vans continued, there were vans entered in Jedburgh area, which were then linked to thefts of further quad bikes. A farm 4X4 pickup was also stolen from farm on Carterbar. Evidence suggests the vehicles are crossing the A68 and heading west either travelling through Newcastleton or Via Saughtree into Northumberland.

This is type of incident where the vans are being targeted by electronic keys is not confined to our area, the incidents are being logged literally the length and breadth of the country.

A Poaching incident was reported at Fodderlee arm near to Bonchester Bridge. The farmer found two dead badger and two dead Deer carcasses on his land all animals had signs of having been mauled by dogs. The carcasses have been taken to SASA at Edinburgh for a full post mortem and collection of DNA evidence.

4X4 vehicle which was stolen from the Charlesfield Industrial area in July of 2018 was recently recovered after being involved in numerous thefts and other incidents in the South of England, subsequently when examined it became obvious that it had been moved around the country, an example of how the

vehicles which are being stolen are being used by organised crime groups and moved around the country.

**Community Council Equalities Statement
Scottish Borders Council**

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Signed:  _____
Geoffrey Kolbe, Chair

Approved by Community Council motion at a duly held meeting on 10 June 2019.