

## Upper Liddesdale and Hermitage Community Council Meeting 25<sup>th</sup> June 2018

### Draft Minutes

Present; Lawrence Scott (Chair) Geoffrey Kolbe, Mary Howlett.

Apologies for absence; Robert Scott.

Only one member of the community was present and no SBC Councillors, there seems to have been confusion about the date of the meeting.

As the Committee members present constituted a quorum it was decided to proceed.

The meeting began with discussion in connection to apologies for absence and of the definition of “a casual vacancy”.

With reference to SBC Constitution of Community Councils; “A casual vacancy” describes a committee member who is repeatedly absent from meetings without good cause.

Geoffrey Kolbe (GK) pointed out that as Robert Scott and Angie Graham have been absent from 3 consecutive meetings and so they have in effect given up their positions as Community Councillors according to paragraph 6.1.b of the Community Council Constitution. In consequence, a “casual vacancy” has now arisen for each of their positions.

Lawrence Scott (LS) and Mary Howlett (MH) were unhappy with the suggestion that Robert and Angie should be required to stand down.

Further discussion resulted in the proposal that Robert Scott and Angie Graham can remain as Community Councillors, but should be informed of the rule of “a casual vacancy” and issued with a final warning re attendance.

### Declaration of conflict of interests at the start of meetings.

Clarification required on conflict of interests:

GK suggested that in future meetings committee members should be asked if they are likely to have any conflict of interests with items up for discussion on the agenda.

Any conflict of interest must be declared and the committee member stay out of the relative discussion.

### Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes for previous meeting held on 26.3.18, approved as they are presented.

Note made that the last page is missing, the missing paragraphs were briefly read out from notes and publication agreed with amendment.

### Police Report

PC Allan Patterson cannot attend due to incident so no police report.

### Position of Secretary

Angie Graham has resigned as secretary by email on 19<sup>th</sup> June her resignation was accepted and thanks offered for her work on behalf of the community.

GK offered to take over position of Secretary, MH and LS accepted his offer with appreciation.

### Area Partnership

MH attended recent Area Partnership meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2018 at Hawick High School.

MH finds the new format of AP meetings frustrating and akin to a focus group or “talking shop” with apparently little being achieved. Although SBC is working towards a Locality Plan so the information collated at these meeting may be of use in the long run.

A new round of the Locality Bid Fund is due to open soon. Newcastleton was successful in the last round of bids with the village project.

Only the last 20 mins of the meeting is allocated to Open Forum and CC matters. The main topic was grass cutting and problems caused by SBC reduction in cutting of grass in public areas as cost cutting measure.

UL&HCC discussion on any problems in our area caused by less grass cutting. Overlong roadside verges may be an issue. The bottom of Greystone Haugh was noted as being overgrown with bracken.

Farmers will cut some hedges and verges but not until September.

Query Buccleugh Estates responsibilities re grass cutting GK will contact their office about the matter.

### Newcastleton and District Development Trust

No news from N&DDT.

### Forestry

Leahaugh hill is due to be planted but planting licence not yet granted so the land has been offered for summer grass let.

### Borders Railway

Jane Bower attended a recent meeting of South of Scotland Partnership where cross border collaborations were discussed.

There is a move towards more cross border ventures and the Borders Rail seems to be gathering momentum as a flagship project.

The committee considered the question of its support or otherwise for the extension of the Borders Railway.

As the discussion was positive GK proposed that this Committee should support the extension of the Borders Railway from Tweedbank to Carlisle with preference for the route going via Newcastleton.

LS and MH supported the proposal and the Committee agreed that the proposed railway extension would be beneficial to our area.

### Windfarms

Faw Side Windfarm proposal in the Ewes valley; GK read his Response to the Faw Side windfarm, he has submitted the Response on behalf of the committee to E Consents.

Windy Edge; there has been a suggestion locally of a change of ownership of the rights to the proposed windfarm at Windy Edge. It is thought that Robert Scott has obtained the rights.

GK proposed writing a letter to Robert Scott to clarify the situation.

### Borders National Park

Apologies for absence from Jane Bower she is at a meeting about a proposed Virtual Outreach Project.

Description of the Virtual Outreach Project (VOP) from GK.

This is a cross border initiative under the Borderlands Partnership, which has about £10m funding for projects. The VOP is applying for some of the Borderlands funding.

The Virtual Outreach Project is linked with the Campaign for a Borders National Park, it sets out to promote aspects of the Borders including the dark skies and the history of the area to people interested in Astronomy and Archology.

VOP will engage local experts and specialists and make use of village halls as venues for study.

The Campaign for the National Park (CFNP) has asked SBC to approve the idea of a National Park and the idea will be included in the Main Issues Report for discussion.

#### Any Other Business

GK said that although the Committee seems to get little post a number of items are sent by email which might be of interest to the community,.

Geoffrey intends to try and contact people via the electoral role and correspond by postcard suggesting that people should reply with their contact details if they wish to hear Community Council news and give permission for further contact by email.

This proposal will mean that email becomes an immediate form of contact and matters of correspondence can become live issues rather than waiting for a meeting that could be months away.

Andrew Warburton from the floor informed us that the previously repaired cattle grid at Saughtree is now broken again and a danger to motorcyclists in particular. SBC will be informed.

Note also made of two very large potentially vehicle damaging potholes near Burnfoot of Ewes. Jimmy Nixon from Newcastleton had two front wheels of his car ruined by the potholes. The Committee will ask Councillor Patterson to report this to Dumfries and Galloway Council and seek action.

No further business LS declared the meeting closed.

Date of next meeting 24<sup>th</sup> September.

#### Notes of actions promised in tonight's meeting:

1. Letter to Robert Scott and Angie Graham re attendance at meetings
2. Letter to Buccleugh Estates with regard to cutting road verges on Estate land.
3. Letter to Robert Scott re Windy Edge to clarify ownership of rights to the windfarm and establish point of contact for UL&HCC.
4. Contact SBC re missing bar of cattle grid at Saughtree.
5. Contact Davy Patterson re potholes at Burnfoot of Ewes with a view to him contacting D&G Council.