

# Heriot Community Council

Minutes of meeting, April 13<sup>th</sup> 2022

Present: John Williams (Chair), Frank Connelly, Sue Sharp, Helen Brinkworth, Gavin Whittaker, Cllr. Scott, plus members of the public

Apologies: Cllr. Anderson, Cllr. Aitchison

1. Minutes of previous meeting: Accepted and approved.
2. Police Report. This contained nothing of relevance to Heriot. In a letter to the police Commander JW had referred to the lack of interest on rural crime in police reports. Cllr Scott commented that the number of serious crimes in urban areas is greater than that in the rural ones, and that can often determine how police focus their efforts.
3. SBC Councillors. Thanks were recorded to Cllr. Aitchison for his tireless service over the years, and the CC sent its best wishes for a well-earned retirement. It was noted that there were 9 candidates for 4 places in the Galashiels and District council ward.
4. HCC Treasurer's report. The current total in the CC accounts is approximately £14k, although most of this is ring-fenced for projects. There is also a significant amount of funding that has been given to the CC from windfarm funds that is available as grants of up to £250 to help fund small projects, and we encourage people to apply for these grants. The total amount remaining with the CC that is *not* ring-fenced is a few hundred pounds.
5. A7 accidents at Telephone Exchange. It had been reported to SBC that the number of accidents at this point on the road far exceeds the official statistics, as most involve single vehicles driving off the road and through fences. At least 20 accidents in the last 7 years were known. GW reported that this was being discussed with Philippa Gilhooley (SBC) with a view to remedial actions. A site meeting had been arranged for the 29<sup>th</sup> April, and that an independent expert review of the road had been requested by SBC, to report prior to the site meeting. The issue of northbound vehicles overtaking long lines of traffic while residents are attempting to turn up to Nettleingflat was also raised, and would be passed on to SBC.
6. Crime and Farm Thefts: A Teams meeting involving the local police, CC members, local councillors and local farmers. The meeting had been mildly informative, but regarded by the CC and, reportedly, by the farmers present as unsatisfactory. JW had subsequently met with Jim Sinclair, Cllr. Scott and two major quad bike dealerships to discuss this issue. There was surprise that the police had not spoken to either the dealers (who had useful information) nor, apparently, to insurance companies to determine the scale of the problem.

Concerns were expressed that the police were not taking the issue as seriously as the impacts on victims warranted. JW had requested a meeting with more senior police officials, and a list of questions was to be drawn up in advance of any meeting.

7. Underpass issues

- a. Underpass. JW had met with John Curry (SBC) to discuss the underpass. The lack of maintenance and care by SBC was discussed, along with design issues and winter support. There appeared to be a willingness to take the issue more seriously than had previously been the case, which gave cause for mild optimism.
- b. Land adjacent to the underpass. This had been investigated as a possible relocation area for the playpark. GW reported that, after months of Network Rail indicating that they owned the land, a Teams meeting had revealed that, in fact, it had been returned to the original landowner. Other options were now being examined to deal with the playpark.

8. Planning applications

- a. 22/00490/FUL Siting of 2 “shepherds huts” for tourism. The CC saw no issues with this application and agreed to write a letter of support to SBC.
- b. 22/00385/FUL Alterations and extension to dwellinghouse at Brothershiels. This had already been passed, but the CC had no comment to make anyway.

9. Wind Farms.

- a. Greystone Knowe. A joint submission with Stow and Fountainhall had been made. The submission referred to the significant impact on Fountainhall and Corsehope. Walkerburn CC has also objected. The noise data for Corsehope has been released by the developer and a preliminary review will be carried out by Prof. Gordon Hughes to inform subsequent discussion. It should be noted that the developer has requested that the noise limits be raised by a significant amount for this windfarm. The SBC response will be made after July.
- b. Wull Muir. It was reported that there has been a lack of information forthcoming about this proposal. A virtual exhibition is now available: <https://www.energiekontor.co.uk/our-projects/wull-muir>
- c. Scawd Law. No further information.
- d. JW will attend a meeting with SBC in late May to discuss wind farm applications. The Scottish Government issued a consultation paper in October 2021 seeking views on their ambition to secure an additional 8-12 GW of installed onshore wind capacity by 2030 (current installed capacity is 8.4GW). SBC Councillors recently expressed considerable concern about this proposal.
- e. SBC were considering their response which did indeed express concern SBC is reported to be contemplating not considering large onshore schemes.

10. Community Funds

- a. Bus shelter at Hangingshaw. This will not be carried forward until the status and position of the bus stop is finalised, following sale of the adjacent area.

- b. Churchyard. Dates have been agreed for the remedial work on the gravestone to be carried out.
- c. Joint newsletter with Stow and Fountainhall CC - to be discussed.

11. AOB

- a. A7 Action group - next meeting in Selkirk. Revival attempt, but no of limited interest to Heriot at present.
- b. SBCCN AGM – Helen kindly agreed to attend this virtually.
- c. It was reported that the minister for the parish is now shared between Heriot, Stow and Caddonfoot Churches, meaning that every third service proceeds without a minister present
- d. CC Elections - it was agreed that we need to arrange elections. This will be discussed in detail at the next meeting.
- e. The Community Council members formally agreed to abide by the Code of Conduct for Community Councillors.

The meeting finished at 20:25.