

Heriot Community Council

Minutes of meeting, 8th June 2022

Present: John Williams (Chair), Frank Connelly, Sue Sharp, Helen Brinkworth, Gavin Whittaker, Cllr. Hannah Steel, Cllr. Neil Mackinnon, Cllr. Fay Sinclair, plus six members of the public

No apologies for absence had been received.

1. The new SBC councillors were welcomed to the meeting.
2. Minutes of previous meeting: Accepted and approved.
 - a) Matters arising:
 - i. Underpass – JW had met with John Curry (SBC) about this, but was still awaiting a response. The underpass had been washed, however.
 - ii. SS reported that planning consent had been granted for 22/00490/FUL Siting of 2 “shepherds huts”.
3. Police Report. JW summarised the issues that HCC had with the police reports for the benefit of the new SBC councillors. In essence, the police reports do not report rural crime or its impacts adequately, or at all on many occasions.
4. A7 accidents at Telephone Exchange. GW reported that an on-site meeting had been held at the telephone exchange with Philippa Gilhooley (SBC), other SBC officials, Police Scotland and Cllr Aitchison. The independent expert review of the road sponsored by SBC had reported that, other than repairs to minor road defects, the only reasonable solution was a speed-activated sign in advance of the corner on the southbound carriageway. Other suggestions proposed by HCC, such as reducing the A7 speed limit along this stretch would not be supported by either SBC or Police Scotland. SBC agreed to replace the chevron signs with larger versions, and to install a speed-activated sign.
5. Crime and Farm Thefts: JW had met with Police, Jim Sinclair and quad bike sellers Quadcore. It was reported that Police Scotland had not contacted either quad bike dealer or NFU mutual insurers to determine the scale of the problem. There was disappointment with the apparent apathy from the Police who appear to regard it as ‘mere property theft’, where those impacted experience it as far more serious than that. Cllr. Steel agreed to follow this up and report back the HCC.
6. JW reported on an informal online meeting with Iain Aikman (Chief Planning Officer, SBC) in respect of windfarm planning policy. Noise issues from windfarms were discussed and the report by Prof. Gordon Hughes was submitted. It was requested that the report be considered by Environmental Health and, if they did not feel qualified to assess the report, for it to be put to independent external experts for their opinion. The residential amenity

assessment for the proposed Greystone Knowe wind farm currently excludes Fountainhall, despite it being potentially significantly affected. It was agreed that that would be addressed. Mr Aikman was open to more informal meetings in future on planning issues, but formal meetings would need to be structured in advance.

7. Wind Farms

- a) Greystone Knowe. Gordon Hughes report on noise had been submitted to ECU. Prof Hughes' role and credentials were discussed. It was acknowledged that he was not an acoustic expert, but did have significant relevant experience. The purpose of the report, however, was to raise relevant issues in order to ensure that a proper assessment of noise issues is carried out. The developers are requesting a 37dB noise level, 2dB in excess of the 35dB maximum permitted level. (2dB represents an increase in volume of approximately 60%). It was reported that Matthew Walgate has engaged Ian Kelly to submit an objection to the proposed development due to the significant impact on his property.
- b) Scawd Law. This application is on hold due to eagles nesting in the area.
- c) Wull Muir. No news.

8. Community funds

- a) Churchyard: SS reported that the mason who HCC have engaged to do the remedial work also did the work in Stow churchyard. However, it appears that he did so as a subcontractor of another company that was registered to do the monumental masonry work with SBC, and was not registered in his own capacity. Although slightly farcical and bureaucratic, this has required the work to be put on hold until he completes personal registration as a monumental mason with SBC. There was some discussion about the standards set for modern gravestones if some of those requiring repair are less than a decade old. SS to contact SBC to discuss the standards and ensure that they are met in future.

9. AOB

- a) Forestry scheme between Stow and Lauder. The potential impact of this scheme was discussed for information at this point.
- b) Community Council Network. HB reported that the People and Places survey had been updated to include environmental considerations.
- c) Local Development plans. It was reported that communities have a statutory right to create their own development plans.
 - i. Heriot has partially addressed this, but the work needs revisiting
 - ii. Funding for a railway station between Stow and Gorebridge is potentially available, but should be assumed to come at the cost of significant development.
- d) FC reported that the SBC support grant had been applied for.
- e) The poor standard of fencing along the railway was raised. Andrew Pate (Nettlingflat) had found that his cattle had broken through the fencing and accessed the railway line. Fortunately, this occurred at a quiet period, but required suspension of train services. He reported that, while the fencing materials were of

high quality, the standard of the installation was not, and had led to the failure of the fence. GW agreed to contact Network Rail to request a full assessment of the fencing along the track through Heriot.

- f) The next meeting would include the AGM, probably in advance of community council elections.

The meeting finished at 20:30