

Heriot Community Council

Minutes of meeting, 22nd May 2024

1. Present: Gavin Whittaker (Chair), Frank Connelly, Sue Sharpe, Helen Brinkworth (minutes), Cllr. Fay Sinclair.
Apologies: John Williams, Cllr. Neil McKinnon.
2. Minutes of April 10th accepted
3. Schools – Fountainhall Nursery

Update from Natasha King on the suspension of Fountainhall Nursery by SBC for the 2024-25 session.

There was a meeting between community members and MP John Lamont on Saturday 18th at Macfie Hall. John Lamont met with SBC Chief exec on Monday morning.

SBC response: No consultation process is required over nursery closures.

Parents have second choice (but parents worried there will be a lack of second choice with student numbers to be over capacity at Stow.)

SBC are saying that low numbers are not suitable for high-quality provision of service.

NK reports that student numbers are above SBC's original criteria, but SBC have now changed to a minimum of five per day. After BBC News report, the SBC response states that the student numbers used in decision making up were taken at the end of Easter term. This contradicts facts that letters were sent to some parents to notify about the changes one week earlier. John Lamont requested that SBC arrange a meeting Monday or Tuesday next week between SBC and parents.

Fay Sinclair: SBC will not change position and claim only one parent wants to increase hours. Closure is counter to SBC policy to reduce travel.

SBC not helping parents to choose Moorfoot or Edinburgh nurseries out with the Borders, which should be an option. Tasha will provide meeting dates when available and arrange so HCC can also attend

GW. Secretary will send follow-up email to SBC.

4. Police Report
 - a. HCC have not received a recent report
 - b. Traffic accidents at the bends by the telephone exchange.
 - i. HGV drove into field heading north possibly with a blown tire.
 - ii. Car off the road by the telephone exchange evening Tuesday 14th.
 - iii. Car came to a stop balanced on stone wall heading south after destroying a chevron sign on Friday 17th.
GW to follow up with SBC regarding damaged sign
 - c. No update about Stow arson incident. Local information is that Stow community members know who is responsible but no arrest yet made. Same person is also thought to be responsible for air rifle shots last year.
5. Planning and Windfarms
 - a. Wull Muir

Scheduled for SBC planning committee in June.

b. Greystone Know

Fountainhall meeting tomorrow regarding Greystone Know wind farm and a possible split of Fountainhall from the joint community council with Stow. The new Stow based community council members are supporting the Greystone Know wind farm but Fountainhall wish to continue position of objection. SBC landscape recommending refusal.

c. Bowbeat.

Extension application for windfarm above Peebles

d. Scawd Law

Update may happen in June

6. Request from A7 Action Group for A7 upgrade ideas

- a. current plan is to straighten the bends, HCC are to request this to be removed
- b. Highlight the danger of crossing to the bus stop due to lack of lighting and the road allows overtaking
- c. A7 – B709 junction. This is a dangerous junction as northbound cars use the southbound right turn filter lane for overtaking. HCC has received reports of cars turning right who were forced out of the right filter to avoid crashing into overtaking vehicles.

7. Community Funds

- a. Frank Connelly treasurer report attached
- b. For future decision, how can we use spare broadband monies?
- c. Free funds
- d. GW applying for funds for dry stone walling and hedging for community training. Dunlaw Trust providing £1500 (£675 less than applied for). HCC to provide £500 funding form DLX fund. Contribution for participants decided at £30 for two day walling course and at £15 for one day hedging course. HCC will ask SSE for extra £675 or the £675 will come from the DLX fund.
- e. MicroGrant application from After School Club to support the summer club for £270 as subsidy of snacks. All agreed. SS to reply.

8. AOB

- a. Safety at A7 - B709 junction. Double lines are not clear enough for drivers to see coming along the road. Northbound drivers are overtaking at the junction. Report from Kevin Roose of a near accident moving into the right filter on the A7. GW to contact Philippa in SBC transport department.
- b. Fountainhall have made an informal enquiry about joining HCC and leaving the joint community council with Stow.
Fay Sinclair: There was a current ongoing planning community consultation for community councils which includes changes to their boundaries. To change the boundary the community council does not need to go to boundary Scotland. SBC

would change the boundary. SBC legal would lead on the process. It would be a local decision.

HCC in agreement that we would need community consultation before making any changes

- c. Defibrillator labels. Dymo label request via Facebook community. GW action
- d. BAM planting tubes available for community reuse. It might be possible to use a skip to dispose of tubes and tractor tire. FS suggestion to contact Amy Alcorn in SBC who might be able to reuse tubes in community garden. HB action
- e. Shoestanes / Dunn's land has been sold to new owners - an investment house. GW: If land available for community use between burn and the train line to the east of the playground it might be used for a community garden area. Request to SEPA for permission and then ask current owners to dredge the bog/pond. Also request for owners to move falling down garage structure.
- f. SS. More community courses would be welcomed and a good use of funds. Suggestions for upholstery and veg growing courses.
- g. The bus stop is overgrown and untidy, GW to ask SBC to action. Floral planters could be used. SS to suggest to Heriot group
- h. Table tennis: request for help to improve containers for storage of table tennis tables. Referred to Macfie Hall committee
- i. FS. G01 school bus leaving Galashiels Academy without students on board – it left early. No response from school or SBC.