**Yetholm and District Community Council Meeting**

**Minutes of the Meeting held online by Zoom Call.**

**Tuesday 23rd February 2021 at 7.00 pm**

**Present:** Susan Stewart (SS) (in the chair), Shane Black (SB), Graeme Wallace (GW), Angela Walker (AW), Stuart Kelly (SK), Cllr S Mountford (SM), Cllr E Robson (ER).

**Apologies:** Iain Dougal (ID), Denise Allan (DA)

**In attendance:** John Stobart (JS) (Secretary)

**Members of the Public**: 2

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|  | **Minute**  | **Action**  |
|  | **Apologies for Absence:** as above. It was noted that the Community Police Officer would not be attending as the Police Force have said they do not have access to Zoom. The Police Report is referred to below.  |  |
|  | **Minutes of the Previous Meetings** |  |
|  | The Chair drew the attention of the meeting to the minutes of the previous meeting held on 25th January 2021 and asked for any comments or corrections. There were none except as noted in the matters arising set out below and, subject thereto, the minutes were approved by the meeting and signed by the Chair. |  |
|  | The Chair drew the attention of the meeting to the minutes of the 24th November 2020 and asked the meeting to note a correction to “*shares and donations*” rather than “*shares and loans*”. This was approved. The record would be corrected.  |  |
|  | **Matters Arising/Outstanding** |  |
|  | With regard to minute 3.5 concerning the type 2 material there was no progress to report. The matter was ongoing. SB will report further when progress is possible.  |  |
|  | With regard to minute 3.10 the Chair confirmed the invitation to the Cheviot Area Partnership had been received.  |  |
|  | With regard to minute 10.1 on the potholes it was noted that half of the Main Street in Town Yetholm had been resurfaced in 2018 but the other half still required to be done. SM said it was hoped that the other half of the Main Street maybe included in the 2021/22 programme of works. The proposed programme of works was still in preparation. The Chair reported correspondence from a member of the public on the same subject. SM noted that the weather had made the condition worse and repairs were not possible if the conditions were at or below freezing but additional contractors had been engaged for the work. It was noted that it had become a traffic hazard as motorists were now driving on the wrong side of the road to avoid the potholes. It was accepted that there was a backlog of work exacerbated by the limitations on working arising from the Covid pandemic.  |  |
|  | With regard to minute 10.2 the Chair noted that ER had confirmed that it would be September at least before any formal elections to YCC could be held. Invitations had been made to individuals to be co-opted onto the YCC and JS had accepted.  |  |
|  | With regard to minute 10.3 SM confirmed that Environmental Health were looking into the matter.  |  |
|  | With regard to minute 10.4 ER confirmed in respect of Proctor’s Smiddy that first there may be issues for Environment Health and the officer at SBC had been in touch with SEPA about the licences required for certain activities on the site. Secondly, about half of the site had planning permission for commercial use. The northern part of the site i.e. nearer to Kelso does not have planning permission. A response is awaited from SEPA. Thirdly the general issue of road safety had been raised with the police who had agreed to deal with any hazards that might appear. The matter is ongoing.  | ER  |
|  | With regard to minute 10.5 dealing with the issue of the runoff of water on the Halterburn Rise it was confirmed that the issue had been passed to SBC officers. It was noted that the boundary wall on the Staerough Hill side of the road was collapsing in a number of places and debris from it was blocking the roadside drain.  |  |
|  | **Members of the Public – Issues and/or Concerns** |  |
|  | A member of the public confirmed that a concern had been submitted about an apparent change of use at Maple House. SBC planning department have responded that they are looking into it. SM said that the issue was that if self- catering use was being conducted then it would be a breach but if it were purely an announced intention at the present time but had not been implemented then there would be no current breach. If there is any evidence of breach then enforcement action would be taken. There was also a letter from another resident about the matter. In addition trees had been cut down which had been shown as being retained on the plans.  |  |
|  | **Police Report** |  |
|  | The Secretary reported that a police report had been received since the last meeting and had been circulated. The Secretary said police reports tended to arrive on or about the 1st of the month for the preceding month and were therefore out of synch with the YCC meetings held at the end of the month. SK said it would be useful to have police input on a number of matter that had been raised. SM responded that that he and ER could take up any issues direct with the police authority. SB said the issue of the bus shelter being set on fire had been reported to the police. SM confirmed that SBC had been asked to inspect the bus shelter for water and other damage after the incident.  |  |
|  | **Festival Committee Update:** |  |
|  | The Chair confirmed that a further meeting of the Festival Committee had taken place at which matters had been discussed. Outside events may be considered and the persons due to be Principals had indicated that although disappointed they would be willing wait until next year. Outside events would be announced when appropriate.  |  |
|  | **Portfolio Presentations:** |  |
|  | **Housing and Planning - Shane Black (Vice Chair)** |  |
|  | SB reported that there was not much activity but the letter about Maple House had been received. On the former surgery site there were proposal to change the interior slightly.  |  |
|  | **Finance – Angela Walker**  |  |
|  | AW reported the grant from SBC had been received in the sum of £780. There had been no expenditure during the month. The sum carried forward was £6,163. Thought should be given for amounts required to be earmarked for projects. SK asked if there was any leeway because of the current situation. SK asked that it be checked. SS confirmed that she was aware of the rules being applied with greater flexibility in regard to other organisations. The Yetholm History Society has donated £25 for the use of Zoom. It was noted that The Plough had not paid for its web advert despite three reminders. It was noted that it would be removed at the end of March. On the question of a village charging point, SB considered that that would be a matter for SBC or the Scottish Government. GW asked about the survey of the benches. JS confirmed the report was partly written and would be completed. It was suggested that a phased programme of repairs should be considered. The completed report with photographs was delivered to the YCC members following the meeting.  | JS  |
|  | **Yetholm Resilient Group – Stuart Kelly**  |  |
|  | SK reported first that an Amber Weather Warning had been issued but did not include the Yetholm area and secondly that there had been concerns expressed that although roads had been gritted frequently there had been quantities of snow piled up against pavements making it difficult to cross. SS confirmed that the use the Resilience delivery facility had been minimal during the current lockdown as other methods appeared to have been established by those requiring assistance.  |  |
|  | **Village Maintenance & Utilities – Vacant** |  |
|  | The Chair noted it was vacant. GW mentioned that the brambles were overgrown on the footpath from the Hough to the Friends of Nature House. SS confirmed that two members of the public had from time to time cut these back voluntarily. The Chair also reported that the amount of dog waste left on the footpaths was increasing with many areas covered in waste. Members of the public were encouraged to report it to the Council. It was suggested that placing dispensers with poo- bags at salient points might be another approach. The dog waste bin at the end of the footpath from the History Society building to the Hough was full to overflowing. ER confirmed it would be reported. It was subsequently confirmed that it had been emptied.  |  |
|  | **Education - Susan Stewart** |  |
|  | The Chair confirmed that she had had no negative comments. People were requested not to use the path through the playground.  |  |
|  | **Grants- Susan Stewart**  |  |
|  | SS said that DA had said there was nothing to report on grants.  |  |
|  | **Health & Social Services – Susan Stewart**  |  |
|  | JS confirmed that had taken responsibility for the defibrillators and made himself familiar with the manuals. Subsequent to the meeting JS inspected both defibrillators and confirmed they were in working order although the batteries were down to “2-bars” and should be replaced.  |  |
|  | **Tourism – Graeme Wallace** |  |
|  | GW said there was little to report. The History Society had been invited to use the spare space on the section of the Town Yetholm notice board on which the map had been placed. The bad weather had meant the clothing bank had not been emptied. SS confirmed that she had phoned twice on the matter and would phone again. SK said that there had recently been a report about the anniversary of James V giving gypsies the right to settle in Scotland which could be used to promote Yetholm with people looking up their Romany heritage. In addition, September marked the 250th anniversary of the birth of Sir Walter Scott which could again be used as he was a “Son of the Borders” and knew the area and people here. Both of these could be promoted online in the absence of physical travel. GW asked SK to send an email on these matters for discussion with the History Society which was agreed.  | SK GW  |
|  | **Projects, Events & Pavilion – Susan Stewart**  |  |
|  | In the absence of ID, SB reported that quotes were awaited for work to the roof.  |  |
|  | **Chair, Website Liaison & Public Events – Susan Stewart** |  |
|  | The Chair confirmed the website had been updated. There were no current public events.  |  |
|  | **Scottish Borders Councillors Update** |  |
|  | SM said the Bowmont had changed its course and was getting close to the embankment by the Manse Brae and had been reported to the Highways team. The latter agree that the embankment was in danger of erosion and would cause expense to repair and would be inconvenient if it were closed. Discussion were taking place with SEPA. The Chair confirmed that she had had a number of expressions of concern about the point. ER said he had had an apology from Viridor about the bottle bank not being emptied. It was confirmed that the potholes in the road adjacent to the bottle bank had been filled in.  |  |
|  | **Additional Correspondence** |  |
|  | JS confirmed that all incoming appropriate correspondence had been forwarded to the relevant members for consideration.  |  |
|  | **AOB** |  |
|  | The Chair said she had been informed that a member of the public namely PE had been collecting litter from the road in the loop around Yetholm Mains and had filled a whole bag with rubbish. The meeting noted its gratitude to PE for the tremendous public spirit shown in this. GW said all the roads could benefit from such an approach.  |   |
|  | SB said someone had dumped three household bin bags of rubbish over Venchen Brae. It was noted that that could be reported online to SBC and had been done on other occasions with the culprits being personally identified from materials in the bags .  |  |
|  | It was noted that The Plough had borrowed the marquee from YCC during the last non-lockdown period and it had been blown onto the roof but nothing further had been heard on the matter.  |  |
|  | The new benches were in the pavilion and a decision was required as to their location.  |  |

The meeting closed at 19:56 hrs.

**The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 30th March 2021 at 7.00 pm by Zoom call.**