**Yetholm and District Community Council Meeting**

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

**Tuesday 25 August 2020 at 7.00 pm**

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

**Apologies:** Angela Walker (AW), Denise Allan (DA)

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

**Members of the Public**: 2

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| 1 | **Apologies for Absence:** as above. It was noted that the Community Police Officer would not be attending as the police force had said they did not have access to Zoom but had said that a monthly report would be circulated as normal. No report had been received.  |  |
| 2 | **Minutes of the Previous Meeting** |  |
| 2.1 | The Chair drew the attention of the meeting to the minutes of the previous meeting held on 28th July 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.  |  |
| 3 | **Matters Arising/Outstanding** |  |
| 3.1 | With regard to minute 3.1 the Chair reported that Kevin Lees and Euan Gibson had strimmed the path from the Youth hostel to the Haugh.  |  |
| 3.2 | With regard to minute 3.2 the Chair reported that the waste bin had been moved to the position near the Youth Hostel to deal with an increase in dog fouling along the path leading to that point.  |  |
| 3.3  | With regard to minute 3.3 the Chair reported that the list of locations of all benches had been emailed to KL and would be discussed later in the meeting.  |  |
| 3.4 | With regard to minute 3.5 SM the Chair asked if the potholes had been filled and SB responded that some had but the material was coming out again.  |  |
| 3.5 | The Chair invited ER to speak on the current Dairy Wood position. ER reported he had visited the locale and spoken with residents. He had taken some photographs and sent these to the SBC Tree Officer, a trained forester. It seemed that the fir tree was not threatening the garden hut, but the overhanging branches could be trimmed back using a right of abatement with the branches handed back to the landowners. The sway on the trees abutting Dairy Lane could be reduced if the ivy were cut to base as it would then die back. Some pruning would also be beneficial in dealing with overhanging of Dairy Lane. The matter had then been raised with the Church of Scotland in Edinburgh as the site was owned by the Church of Scotland. The Church of Scotland had responded by said the matter was the responsibility of the local church authority referring to Ecclesiastical Law but nonetheless proposed further discussions to sort it out. SK said around £2,600 had been spent with a professional tree surgeon to fell trees and the felled trees left to be used a firewood by local people. The site had been a tipping ground and the works had been carried out to effect improvements. After further discussion, it was agreed to have a site meeting with residents and the tree surgeon to seek an amicable solution.  |  |
| 3.6  | ER said that the people responsible for the incident at the Border Hotel had been invited to visit that establishment to apologise and had done so.  |  |
| 3.7 | The bottle bank now had signs saying all glass types could be placed in all containers.  |  |
| 4 | **Members of the Public – Issues and/or Concerns** |  |
| 4.1 | The Chair said a number questions had been sent by a member of the public and would be dealt with in the meeting.  |  |
| 4.2 | A member of the public asked about whether permission had been obtained for the placement of the container, who the key holders were and what equipment was stored in it. SB responded that it was temporarily positioned on the playing field. A permanent site was to be discussed. The container was currently in the playing field in case the shop used the pavilion as a temporary location and all equipment in the pavilion would be placed in the container during that period. There would be access to all the required parties using a combination lock.  |  |
| 4.3 | A member of the public asked about the split of the playing field between SBC and James Wauchope. After discussion the consensus seemed to be that there was not a definitive answer, but the SBC had the village end and the further rend was owned by James Wauchope. The latter did not raise any objections whenever matters affecting the playing fields were proposed provided no costs were imposed upon him.  |  |
| 4.4 | A member of the public asked about the cost of booking the pavilion. It had been £7 per hour previously but the pavilion was not currently fit for purpose until works are carried out and heating installed. It will become £8 per hour when it is ready. Further updates would be made via Facebook. Insurance was in place for public liability.  |  |
| 4.5 | A member of the public asked about camping on the playing field and whether insurance was in place. It was confirmed that public liability instance was in place for the playing field. The recent camping had been a small group of disabled children with facilities provided by their carers. It was a one-off and had been discussed and agreed at the last meeting. It was noted that there was camping on the village green in Kirk Yetholm.  |  |
| 4.6 | A member of the public asked about the liability for the use of strimmers for clearing the paths by people using their own equipment. It was believed that while individuals were acting on the authority of the CC and carrying out such works on its behalf they would be covered by its insurance unless the individual was using their own defective equipment. It was noted that the same applied to those individuals carrying out tasks of the village resilience group. A grant is received from SBC for certain work and is down as agent of SBC.  |  |
| 4.7 | A member of the public asked about the effect of the construction work at Yetholm Mill House obstructing the footpath particularly when the fence was reinstated preventing walkers using the adjacent land. The signpost was on the other side of the road but had previously been next to the Yetholm Mill House sign. There is now a large block of concrete blocking the way with steps and a log cabin.  |  |
| 4.8  | A member of the public asked about the packhorse bridge which was further along the path. It had fallen into some disrepair and was unstable. The meeting agreed the matter would be with SBC for investigation as to ownership and safety.  |  |
| 4.9 | A member of the public asked about the camber on the footpath from the War Memorial to the Youth Hostel.  |  |
| 4.10 | It was agreed that SBC councillors would together inspect the three preceding items.  |  |
| 4.11 | A member of the public asked about asked why large areas of grass on the playing field had been left uncut. The benches there were inaccessible. SM responded that only ride on mowers had been used initially. ER further responded that hand cutting was now recommencing but may be made difficult because of the height to which some grass had grown. Some areas had been turned over to “biodiversity” which may affect access to some seats. ER said he would look into the matter and seek further information.  |  |
| 4.12 | A member of the public asked about future camping on the playing field. It was confirmed it had been a “one-off” and no more were planned.  |  |
| 5 | **Police Report**  |  |
|  | It was noted that no report was available. The Chair said she had spoken with the community police officer and had been told a report would be distributed but had not yet been received. The Chair reported that some members of the public had raised issues about speeding tractors, and these had been referred to the police. A response had been received that officers would investigate.  |  |
| 6 | **Festival Committee Update:** |  |
|  | SS confirmed that there was nothing further to report. There reiterated that here would need to be a discussion in the coming months about appointing a new Chair to the Festival Committee. It was noted that the constitution required the Festival Committee Chair to be a member of the Community Council but was not required to be the Chair of the Community Council. SS repeated her request that those present to give the matter some thought.  |  |
| 7 | **Portfolio Presentations:** |  |
| 7.1 | **Housing and Planning - Shane Black (Vice Chair)** |  |
|  | SB said there were two applications for new windows. Both were just replacement and renewals of like for like. SB had no news on the appeal on the Kirk Yetholm application in respect of the house in KY for which an application for planning permission has been refused. SM said the meeting at SBC planning appeal committee had been adjourned for a site visit but because of Covid-19 that would not take place until a risk assessment had been carried out. A member of the public asked about the letters in support in relation to the site in Kirk Yetholm which were agreeing that it would “tidy up the site” when the applicant owned the site and was able to keep it tidy of he so wished, in any case. SM confirmed that in the appeal papers there had been mention of a tree having been removed for that purpose. There were no other new applications to report.  |  |
| 7.2 | **Finance – Susan Stewart**  |  |
|  | In the absence of AW, SS presented information which she had been given by AW. Income was £11,633 and expenditure to date was £10,726. There was a surplus of £907 and £5,523 brought forward. Current funds stood at £6,430 of which £1,000 had been ring fenced for the village shop project. £955.28 had to date been spent on resilience. Delivery of the new benches had taken place and were stored at the pavilion and would be positioned in due course.  |  |
| 7.3 | **Yetholm Resilient Group – Stuart Kelly** |  |
|  | SK said there had been an outbreak of five Covid cases in Hawick and one at Selkirk High School. It could not be concluded that “things had returned to normal”. He did not want Yetholm to be the next Aberdeen. SS confirmed that resilience group is winding down as from 1st September but will stand ready if there is a second spike.  |  |
| 7.4 | **Village Maintenance & Utilities – Vacant** |  |
|  | SS asked the member of the public who had expressed a concern about the state of the benches in the village to indicate if he had progressed the list of benches. The member of the public indicated he did not wish to assume responsibility for the work single handed. Some benches simply needed timber of composite planks refitted over the winter months.  |  |
| 7.5 | **Education - Zoe Keddie** |  |
|  | ZKD was not present. SS confirmed that the school had gone back plan and she had heard nothing detrimental in respect of the school.  |  |
| 7.6 | **Grants- Susan Stewart**  |  |
|  | DA was not present and had sent apologies. SS reported that grants were available for maintenance and these would be applied for by the village. An application would be made to Foundation Scotland on behalf of the community shop for the training of volunteers. It was hoped there would be news about the application to the Scottish Land Fund by the end of the month.  |  |
| 7.7 | **Health & Social Services – Sandi Keddie** |  |
|  | SK was not present.  |  |
| 7.8 | **Tourism – Graeme Wallace** |  |
|  | GW confirmed that the old map from the notice board notice board had been passed to SB who will re-examine the map and see what options are available for just reproducing the map itself. The purpose is to have a map that will assist people in finding their way. JS is having a map made. The two are complementary. JS confirmed he had commissioned an illustrated map (a combination of cartography, calligraphy and landscape) in memory of his recently deceased wife from an artist and illustrator in Northumberland of which prints could be made available for the village. GW said that the gutters were in poor condition and it would be useful and improve their appearance if they could be tidied up. ER said weed killing had not been taking place but some efforts had resumed and ER would investigate.  | SB / GW  |
| 7.9 | **Projects, Events & Pavilion – Iain Dougal** |  |
|  | SS reported that nothing had taken place, but a meeting was scheduled to discuss the matter. The grant had been received and the meeting would discuss the plan of work.  |  |
| 7.10 | **Chair, Website Liaison & Public Events – Susan Stewart** |  |
|  | SS reported that there continued to be hits to the website. The pavilion would be added to the website. Youth Hall is being refurbished using its allocation of grant funding to refit the kitchen. The Wauchope Hall had been scheduled to reopen in August but may now be September. A funeral service had taken place but a ballet class session had not been permitted.  |  |
| 8 | **Scottish Borders Councillors Update** |  |
| 8.1 | SM reported that there was a proposal coming up that all 30 mph speed limits in town and villages would be reduced to 20 mph for an 18-month period. Government funding had been made available to encourage walking and cycling and make roads safer to use. There will be an appraisal by Napier University of the scheme and to assess its impact. ER said that in principle the trail was a good idea but the blanket ban was not the best way forward and arterial routes would need to be excluded. Accidents tended to be on rural roads rather than within the 30 mph areas. ER said that on education he understood from head teachers that the return to school had been successful including the High School. Further adaptations may be required. SS raised the matter of the buses used for the schools not taking fee paying passengers. ER said there were intended to be additional buses for fee paying passengers. SB asked if the 20-mph limit would apply to all roads and ER said it was not being applied to trunk roads. SM said Transport Scotland was doing its own evaluation. ER said the police had said they would not be monitoring every 20-mph zone but would enforce as required. SM said that there was evidence that people would mostly observe the limit and there would be a general reduction in average speeds. ER said that it was acknowledged that a blanket limit would weaken to response to existing 20 mph areas around key areas such as schools but the trial was thought to be the best way of examining the matter.  |  |
| 9 | **Additional Correspondence** |  |
|  | JS confirmed he had circulated incoming letters to the relevant persons as they had arrived.  |  |
| 10 | **AOB** |  |
| 10.1 | SS asked about Remembrance Sunday and the flags. It was agreed enquiries would be made.  |  |
| 10.2 | SS asked that the CC consider the steps required for Christmas trees and lighting starting straight away. SS agreed to locate the form. SK asked people to put their minds to it and that was agreed. SS offered to speak to the SBC and report back.  |  |
| 10.3 | JS mentioned the memorial bench for his wife.  |  |

The meeting closed at 20:25 hrs

**The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 29th September at 7.00 pm by Zoom call.**