



Community Council of the Royal Burgh of Peebles and District

Minute of the 164th Monthly Meeting of the Community Council of the Royal Burgh of Peebles and District held in the Old Council Chamber, Chambers Institute, Peebles on Thursday 10th June 2010.

Present: D Pye, A Stewart, J Swanson, G Rennie, W Barrett, J Key, R Tatler, L Smith, D Tawse, R Noble, J Calder, C Carleton

Also in attendance: Cllr Garvie, Cllr Archibald, Cllr Calvert, Cllr Herd, L Morrison, L Scott, I Wilson, K Mathison, Eric Hobson MBE

As an addition to the agenda, Eric Hobson gave a short presentation on the criteria for judging Peebles in Bloom. While it was important to take into account seasonal variations and recent changes in the weather, the suggested criteria are:-

- Visual impact – the “WOW” factor; Variety of plants included in the garden; The amount of work involved in developing the garden; Combination of colour used; Position of the garden and amount of light; Use of space and the design of the garden

The chairman thanked Eric Hobson MBE for his visit and talk on aspects to consider when selecting gardens for further judging. The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting and introduced the visitors.

1. **Apologies for absence:** A Kubie, W Sandland, Lothian and Borders Police, Community Wardens, Cllr Bhatia, Cllr Logan, D Wright, W Goodburn, A MacKenzie
2. **Open Forum:** Laura Scott, Secretary of the Peebles OAP's Association raised a concern about the local bus service on behalf of the OAP's Association. The buses are described as too high with narrow aisles and no space for shopping. Cllr Archibald asked whether this was an old bus or a newer one. J Calder said that the operating company, First Bus had 2 buses they use and one bus is more suitable for elderly passengers and will be used as much as possible. W Barrett confirmed that this bus was back in service.
L Scott also raised a personal concern about the speed of traffic on Kingsmeadows Road and the use of mobile phones when driving as well as cyclists using the pavements. D Tawse confirmed that this is also a problem in the Old Town. The chairman will continue to raise safety issues with the Police and SBC Community Wardens.
Action: chairman
3. **Minutes of the meeting of 13th May 2010.** D Wright, in his absence, had highlighted a small amendment regarding parking at the Old Town. The minutes were otherwise accepted as true record, proposed by G Rennie, seconded by W Barrett.
4. **Police and SB Wardens Report.** These had been circulated prior to the meeting. J Key asked whether more signage could be erected regarding dog fouling, as visitors may not know that they must clear up after their dog. Cllr Garvie confirmed that the law is very specific and dog fouling is an offence, ignorance of the law is not an excuse. J Key also asked whether teenagers were subject to fines for littering in the same manner as adults. Cllr Garvie confirmed that teenagers are subject to the same laws with respect to littering as adults. D Pye agreed to continue to highlight concerns with the wardens and the Police and will recirculate contact details for the wardens.
Action: Chairman

5. Matters arising from the Minutes of previous meeting held on 13th May 2010

- a) **Town bus service to Haylodge.** Cllr Garvie said that proposals for a bus service had not been satisfactory so far and First Bus had been invited to the Area Committee for discussion about this and parking in the Eastgate. Cllr Garvie expressed considerable concern about this issue and said he felt First Bus had behaved in an irresponsible manner. J Calder said he felt that fault lay with both First Bus and the Council and that the bus company must meet its contractual obligations. L Morrison raised concerns that the town bus does not connect with the BGH bus. It was confirmed that First Bus had addressed this and the buses did now connect. Cllr Archibald said that a lack of competition between bus companies had placed First Bus in a strong position and if they decided not to continue with the contract then it may be difficult to find another operating company.
- b) **Leadburn Junction.** Cllr Archibald confirmed that discussion was ongoing with Midlothian Council. A report in the Southern Reporter regarding signage at the junction is unconfirmed.
- c) **Crossing at Old Town.** No progress. G Rennie highlighted that this had been ongoing for 14 months now. Lack of funding indicates that this may not be a priority.
- d) **Disabled Parking.** This has been approved but has still to be implemented. Cllr Calvert will raise the issue at the next Area Committee.
- e) **Cuddy Footbridge.** The chairman had been able to confirm that work is to be undertaken by SBC shortly following the damage suffered recently and the bridge was to benefit from a full refurbishment.
- f) **Toilets at Haylodge.** A complaint had been received about the closure of the toilets. Cllr Garvie said that although it was to be hoped that the toilets would reopen, financial constraints meant this may not be a priority. G Rennie suggested that additional signage be placed on the toilets to indicate where alternative toilet facilities could be found. L Morrison suggested that a scheme be implemented whereby local business provided toilet facilities. Cllr Archibald confirmed that the Council have no obligation to provide toilets but that those provided are of a high standard.

6. Chairman's Report.

The chairman said that in future he planned to circulate a report prior to each meeting to cover any events between meetings. Only issue at present concerns the recent controversy sparked around a 2nd bridge over the Tweed. He confirmed that planning application for housing south of the river would be scrutinised by the planning committee and recommendation regarding changes to the infrastructure included in any planning decisions.

As a secretary had not been identified at the AGM, Katharine Mathison had been approached and had agreed to take on the role in conjunction with A Kubie. The meeting confirmed this proposed arrangement. All correspondence should now be sent to the Community Council to The Bridge - Tweeddale in future. K Mathison had also stated that she was prepared to manage and develop the website.

7. Secretary's Report - As above, a report will be circulated prior to each meeting in future.

8. Treasurers Report – There is a balance of £1,133.12 at present. There are still accounts outstanding for Activities Week after which it was estimated that a balance of £715 would remain.

9. SBC Councillor Reports:

Cllr Archibald said that progress was being made with regard to returning the Chambers Institute to the Community. In addition plans for the old social work building were also moving forward.

10. Planning and Development. Report previously circulated. There were no additional discussion and the committees recommendations were accepted in full.

11. Committee Reports:

a) Bonnie Peebles - Report previously circulated

b) Community Projects.

- **Activities Week** had been very successful and a formal de-brief would take place once evaluation forms had been collected. The week made a small profit and the committee agreed to ring fence this money for next year. R Tatler said he would also like to thank Derek Lawrie who had designed all the publicity materials. A report to the lottery will be prepared once the de-brief has taken place with a final report being circulated to the press. A letter had also been received from Jeremy Purvis MSP congratulating the group on accessing funding.
 - **Peebles in Bloom.** A Stewart asked committee members to be responsible for judging small areas of the town and a form was circulated for this. Judging to be completed by the next meeting after which a shortlist will be prepared for the 2nd round. The 23rd September has been confirmed as a presentation evening for the event.
- c) **Common Good.** Progress ongoing.
 - d) **Tweed River and Island Project.** A meeting is to be arranged with interested parties.

12. Other items.

- a) **Secretarial Duties.** These were agreed as discussed. A Kubie will be responsible for minutes. K Mathison for correspondence and web development.
- b) **Committee Structure.** G Rennie suggested that committee members should in future be champions for particular areas of interest and list of proposed champion roles was circulated. Champions will report via the secretary prior to meetings if there are particular items to discuss. G Rennie will co-ordinate individual photographs prior to the next meeting and confirmed that it was planned to relaunch the Community Council and raise the profile of the group within the community. An audit of training requirements will also be carried out and funding shortfalls identified. Committees at present:
 - i) Planning - Meets regularly and is fully subscribed
 - ii) Community Projects – The convenor is intending to stand down. Volunteers are needed!
 - iii) Common Good. Full committee at present
 - iv) Safety (Environment and Infrastructure). C Carlton, L Smith, J Key, L Morrison and R Noble all expressed an interest in joining this committee. Previous members who were absent may also wish to be involved.

J Key said that she had been attending meetings of the Venlaw Community Wood as a representative of the Community Council but felt that she did not contribute anything to this group. The chairman confirmed that organisations should be encouraged to come and raise concerns or issues with the Community Council rather than there being an expectation that the Community Council would send representatives to meetings of all the various groups.

- c) **Improving Communications.** D Pye confirmed that notice boards around the town would be useful to highlight the role of the Community Council and raise the profile of the organisation. Stuart McGann of Dunfermline Press was keen to be involved and is planning a series of articles on the public face of wind farms in conjunction with Eon energy company. Hopes to link this to funding for community projects. Projects committee to take responsibility for this going forward.
- d) It is planned to invite a member of the Association for Scottish Community Councils to a future meeting to talk about the role of community councils and this will be linked to further training for councillors later in the year.
- e) **Gateway Signage** – deferred to next meeting.
- f) **Changes to Community Councillors.** W Goodburn has indicated that he is no longer able to take up his position as a community councillor. L Morrison would like to be co-opted and appropriate procedures will be followed prior to next meeting. New community councillor C Carlton was introduced and gave a brief resume.

13. **Miscellaneous Correspondence.** A Letter had been received from Tweed Line Taxi's regarding provision of taxi ranks. Cllr Calvert summarised the situation by making it clear that any decision made needs to consider what is a greater priority, general parking spaces or an increased Taxi Rank. It was also agreed to raise the issue of whether the new taxi bays in the East Station car park were actually required. Other issues were deferred to the next meeting.

14. Any other business:

The chairman proposed a change of venue as current venue becoming too small. Suggestions were: Rosetta Road, Burgh Hall and Gytes. Councillors were encouraged to consider these alternatives before the next meeting at which this would be considered further.

J Calder asked if a letter of thanks had been sent to retiring Community Council members.

Action: chairman

The committee agreed that they wished to make a presentation to outgoing Chairman Ian Wilson to mark his 20 years service to the community council.

Action: chairman and G Rennie

The meeting closed at 21:35 with thanks from the chair.