**Newcastleton & District Community Council**

**Minutes of informal meeting**

**23rd November 2020 @ 7:00 pm VIA ZOOM**

Newcastleton CC met virtually via zoom to host an informal meeting to discuss challenges facing the community.

Apologies were received from Keith Brough, Marcus Day and Rob Irwin

Greg chaired the informal session. Informal minutes of the last digital meeting were accepted, proposed by Lyndsay, and seconded by Margaret.

1. **Matters arising**
   1. **Digital AGM and community newsletter** Printed by Rock (est of £100) distributed w/c 23rd Nov. Agenda on display in pagoda and businesses. Newsletter urges more to come forward to create a community flood group, become a member of the CC and feedback on the CCTV proposals which incorporate measures to protect the exits/entrances, school and help early warning measures for flood.
   2. **Community Transport update** Since last meeting met with Telfords, SBC Wheely Matters group and Teviot Wheels. Outreach Team have created a potential solution for health users; booked via COGs not directly with organisations the local bus service will arrange to collect from front doors; morning bus to Hawick either delivered to appointment post drop offs or transferred to second vehicle (Teviot Wheels or similar) for onward destination. Free time to complete appointments prior to collect/return to bus depart for return to village. The cost of the ‘service’ element is awaited but will not be any more than COGs charges were. This is better than nothing and best we can hope for in the short term. Timetable/leaflet being prepared for distribute to users is being prepared and we will promote it as an alternative service to all. Does not help our young folk, so we need to tackle that next.
2. **Flooding** - update SBC flood meeting and riverside

**SBC flood review** – not very helpful but Resilience Group since made progress with NHS ref access to Health Centre/usage and also the Fire Service ref training and support in a crisis. Priorities of CC circulated in the newsletter, seeking flood group members key to keeping stuff moving. CC role must be to drive forward on flood scheme, to keep pushing SBC and influencers to do this to bring it forward. SBC agreed to consider working with community to support a better early warning system as snow melt was not measured by SEPA but the combination of weather events combined is when the community suffers the most. This is seen as a key part of delivering some relief to residents on the riverside and others whose homes were flooded in February.

Fencing is planned to stop access to the vulnerable banking which continues to see erosion. SPEN now planning to move the exposed cabling with further works to relocate the pole at later date, the guides/support for this are vulnerable so likely early 2021. Details of fencing plan included in the newsletter; SBC small schemes applied for fund (£720) to be undertaken to match the fencing on the residential side of the pathway. This element yet to be resolved.

1. **Pandemic contingent planning** - Resilience proposals circulated. Excellent detailed proposal by the team which has received positive feedback from the relevant authorities, still lacking some stuff but all under control. Comms will be in place shortly; radios for key members, laptop, and connections etc. just waiting for stores of PPE in case of emergency need, Will all be sorted prior to Xmas shutdown in case of emergency. Health Centre organising extra telecoms lines etc. Great job.
2. **Roadworks** - expected to be complete by Fri Nov 27th. Douglas Square now looks even more neglected than it did previously. Efforts to be made to try to sort this for Spring 2021, Greg meeting with STTF to follow up. They have also offered a further Smiley to be located at the southern entrance to the village, Greg to determine best location.
3. **Village maintenance** 
   1. Bottle bank – been emptied recently
   2. Drains and maintenance pre-winter; Grit bins been righted and filled, drains been flushed
   3. Dustbins collections – not completed given challenge of getting round corners with roadworks. Bins expected to be uplifted this Thu 26th.
4. **Public Forum/Community Issues**
   1. **Charity door knocking** – this occurred from Breast Cancer Now over the weekend of Nov 21/22. The CC received a number of calls of concern ref unwanted callers asking for donations on doorsteps. When challenged they stated they came from Hawick, but accents were not local. There was no sanitising seen. The nature of many houses means that 2 mtrs distancing form doors is not feasible – you would be on the road. They did not socially distance from properties even though they were asked to step back. An enterprise hire van with a Hi Viz driver was parked in Douglas Square. Police were notified but not in the village able to take any action. The CC continues to be concerned that organisation think it appropriate to enter a rural remote community door knocking in a pandemic particularly when we have been asked NOT to travel unnecessarily. The organisation was contacted for clarity and to confirm that the collectors were operating as claimed. This is their response:

*“Thank you for calling to express your concerns with our door-to-door fundraisers. Once again, please accept my sincere apologies, it is never our intention to make anyone feel uncomfortable with our door-to-door fundraisers. We do currently have door-to-door fundraisers in the TD9 area, so I can confirm that these were legitimate fundraisers. You can find out where exactly our fundraisers have been through this* [*link here*](https://breastcancernow.org/sites/default/files/fr_locations_wc_23.11.20.pdf)*.  Part of the monitoring process is to take in to account feedback that we receive from members of the public, which will help guide our decision making and revise and improve our activity, so we do appreciate you taking the time to share your concerns with us.*

*We have carefully considered potential risks to members of the public and fundraisers in relation to COVID-19 and have put in place measures to minimise these. This type of fundraising - and the thousands of people who choose to support us in this way – brings in vital funds that we need to carry on our world-class research and life-changing care. This method of fundraising has raised millions of pounds for Breast Cancer Now since we started public fundraising in 2007. Normally, Breast Cancer Now funds around a third of all breast cancer research in the UK. Due to lockdown measures, we are facing a huge drop in income which could be devastating for progress on preventing breast cancer, saving lives and helping people affected by breast cancer to live well. We will certainly pass on your comments to our door-to-door fundraising agency as we take all feedback seriously and would not wish to cause alarm to members of the public.*

*We have carefully considered potential risks to members of the public and fundraisers in relation to COVID-19 and have put in place measures to minimise these. These measures are as follows;*

* *A heath questionnaire will be answered prior to a fundraiser's working day, those with symptoms of COVID-19 will not fundraise and will be directed to the NHS advice*
* *Fundraisers will ensure a two-meter distance between themselves and members of the public and will not fundraise in areas where this is not possible*
* *Fundraisers are required to remain outside of properties at all times*
* *Fundraisers are required to wear personal protective equipment including face coverings and regularly sanitise their hands*
* *Fundraising materials will not be given out directly to members of the public, unless specifically requested*
* *A contactless sign up method will be offered if a member of the public chooses to donate*
* *Fundraisers will not knock on doors where there is a clear indication that the householder is self-isolating or does not wish to receive callers at the door*

*However, it is certainly not our intention to cause any distress or concern to members of the public, and we are continually reviewing this activity to make sure all fundraising activities that take place on behalf of Breast Cancer Now are done in accordance with government advice and with the safety of both the public and fundraisers at front of mind.”*

The CC remains concerned that a national door knocking charity think it appropriate to continue their practise under current pandemic measures and will raise the matter ref clarity with the local authority, elected members, MPs and MSPs to reassure members of the public locally.

* 1. **Pathways Oliver Place –** ownership issues need to be clarified to determine the responsibility of the paths as well as Houghton Park. These continue to deteriorate.
  2. CCTV update – as detailed in newsletter. Need costs for project to get application in for funding.
  3. Local Development Plan feedback email circulated for discussion. Letter to SBC to be sent
  4. Area Partnership new format/structure – paper circulated base don creating a SCIO to manage funding opportunities as well as formalise a new way forward for AP meetings with clear chairmanship and issues raised form the local communities covered.

1. **Community issues:**
   1. Buccleuch House update – building warrant challenges, scaffolding hopefully onsite early Dec with works to phase commencing shortly after. Phase 2 appointment before Christmas.
   2. Christmas Cheer – program of events activities circulated. Xmas light up Dec 6th.
   3. Eildon Housing – eviction implemented but problem not resolved. Meeting with Eildon needed to review next steps and seek ways to manage this to a conclusion so that community needs can be put first.
2. **Date of next meeting – AGM Dec 7th zoom 7pm**