**Newcastleton & District Community Council**

**Minutes of digital meeting 10th March 2021**

**@ 7:00 pm VIA ZOOM**

**Present:** Greg Cuthbert, Lyndsay Patterson, Barbara Elborn, Keith Bough, Marcus Day, Iain Crosbie, Ashley Thomson, Ian Nichol, Rob Irwin, Margaret Elliot, Cllrs McAteer, Turnbull, and Edgar

6 members of the public **Apologies**: Scott Wilson

**Welcome:** GC welcomed all to the meeting.

1. **Minutes of the last meeting – Feb 2021**

Email received from Cllr Paterson on Mar 4th  stating that the record ref point of order was incorrect regarding paperwork for meetings. Secretary stated that the point raised in the meeting was about the January minutes which were distributed as recorded in the minute. The point he makes in his email was not discussed in the February meeting, members agreed the minute was a true record of statements made in the meeting, the minute stands.

Second email also received on Mar 4th from Cllr Paterson ref item 6a local trades; Cllr Paterson wished it recorded that he did also speak in favour of local traders.The secretary reported that whilst his screen was on, he was not in front of it when asked for comment which is why only comments from Cllr McAteer and Cllr Turnbull are noted in the minute. Members agreed the minute was a true record of statements made in the meeting, the minute stands.

Minutes were accepted as a correct, proposer Margaret Elliot, seconder Keith Brough.

1. **Matters arising:**
   1. **Flood group feedback/flooding**

Detailed summary of actions and recommendations now compiled from Resilience Group and CC to add to the learnings for future flood preparations. Full review meeting with SBC and relevant public sector agencies to be convened.

New Newcastleton Volunteer Flood group meeting scheduled for Feb 15th. Initial membership will comprise of members of Hawick Flood Group, plus 2 x CC, 2 x NDCT, 2 x Resilience, public sector agencies when appropriate, SBC flood team, plus following members of community: Tom Brown, John Scott, Barry Jackson, Diane Adamson, Lee Musson, Jenny Wilson, Rodney Groom, Jackie Taylor, Gillian Scott

SBC provided better community support following this flood incident. Housing is still an issue for some but mostly now all rehomed temporarily. Hardship fund supporting those who have applied and is committed to doing this until April.

Cllrs were asked for update on B6399 road closure at Whitrope Tunnel given ongoing challenging situations with waters/rising levels and if these would be completed and reopened as scheduled Fri 12th March. Cllr McAteer sought clarification from Cllr Edgar, Executive Member for Infrastructure, Travel and Transport, as he was present but received no reply.

* 1. **CCTV update**

CC members formally thanked the seven other Teviot & Liddesdale communities; Hawick, Burnfoot, Chesters, Bonchester Bridge, Denholm, Upper Teviotdale & Borthwick Water and Upper Liddesdale & Hermitage for their support in granting the community fund to allow these works to commence. The CC also wishes to thank the voluntary groups; Newcastleton Business Forum, School Partnership, Community Trust, Polysport and Scottish Land Fund as well as the private donors who have made this become a reality. In addition, we will be relying on the support of the locations identified to host the systems to allow us to plug into their power supplies so huge thank you to all of these too. This has taken some time to pull together but progress to complete the paperwork and get works completed by the summer has now commenced.

* 1. **Community Maintenance**

**Drains** – Concerns still over lack of effort to resolve the blockages in the drains at the south end of the village. Even out with flood and heavy downpours these continue to cause concern near properties with them all slow to drain away. SBC again requested to address issues (a call-out was made during the meeting given the rising waters which had already crossed the grass verges on the riverside).

**Houghton Park and Oliver place pathways and road surface** – works confirmed as being allocated and will commence in the new financial year.

**Recycling bins** – ongoing issues ref regularity of collections given road closures. This is a constant issue and needs further discussion within SBC to overcome this. The is a growing need for recycling and more frequent collections or more bins are required to meet the community’s needs.

* 1. **Area Partnership feedback**

New place planning process presented requiring huge input from communities in a short period of time to meet proposed SBC timetable. Seen by the CC as challenging given resource and capacity issues. SBC acknowledge the need to resource this program but gave no solutions as to how this would be implemented. The length of the last AP meeting was excessive with too many items included on the agenda, calls for shorter agendas and more frequency of meetings given the increasing level of engagement required of communities. Cllr Turnbull proposed going back to 10 meetings pr year which is seen as the right approach. Sub-groups for relevant sectors were discussed; Flood framework group would be the first. This group would seek to invite relevant agencies to talk and explain current policy and to hear concerns of the communities which were constantly being expressed but no actions taken.

* 1. **Extending the Borders Rail to Carlisle - Community Voices Project**

This project was approved for funding at the Area Partnership and will now commence. See separate item.

* 1. **Social Housing and housing generally**

Eildon Housing progress hugely positive but marketing and new approach delayed as flood rehoming means that some of the empty properties will be occupied for some time. However, they report that all properties have now been decorated and carpeted and video walkthroughs recorded. They are in the process of editing these to include information on running costs, locational context etc readying for re-let as soon as able and will work with the CC to implement this when appropriate.

Wider housing issues: NDCT and CC working together to drive forward a new housing strategy. Rural Housing Scotland working with us to develop a scoping program to flesh out opportunities. This will incorporate looking at new rental and ownership models; shared ownership, rent to buy, live - work space homes and other avenues. The team will report back to the community on progress late Spring.

* 1. **Lynx**

Racheal Hamilton MSP, shared correspondence sent to Scot Gov ref current Scottish position in response to concerns raised by the CC about the re-emergence of proposed Lynx at Kielder – an issue to be aware of but is going nowhere fast. Cllr McAteer also reported that SBC had not been approached, nor had their counterparts in Northumberland for licenses but would keep all informed.

1. **Public Forum/Community Issues - Newcastleton Primary School**

Andy Jones declined to meet until end April citing workload pressures. Will be invited to the May meeting to update the community on plans for the school. In the meantime, the CC will seek meeting with SBC to move discussion forward. Concerns particularly regarding the impact of flooding and needs previously raised; D&G again provided support to families, but nothing was received from SBC.

1. **Planning**

SBC granted EnergieKontor permissions to commence the Windy Edge windfarm groundworks to support the turbines. In view of the recent flooding in Newcastleton and the impact of forestation run off contributing to flooding NDCC and UH&LCC requested that this amendment not be approved by SBC. Cllr McAteer spoke on their behalf to the planning committee; there was no community gain, indeed potential increased flood challenges if this proceeded without the turbines being erected. The necessary disturbance to the land for access and materials as well as construction of 9 concrete pads was considered inappropriate until further environmental studies were completed reviewing the impact of this locally. There is an expectation within the communities that this program will increase run off and give wider concerns ref flooding impacts as it evolves. However, SBC planning panel accepted the guidance of officers and approved the amendment which was disappointing to CC members.

1. **Correspondence –** all documents available on web site where relevant:

* Received 11th Feb - **The Future of Social Care and Support in Scotland –** report published, acknowledge contribution as part of the consultation.
* Received 12th Feb – **Asymptomatic testing** – NHS updated issued and promoted on social media. SBC Covid update poste don web site and social media.
* Sent 4th Mar – **Bikers Repair point** – raised again with SBC, agreed to provide one in new financial year just need to nominate a colour and provide a location for it. Yellow in keeping with the Common Riding theme and on the grass verge next to the signage in Douglas Square.
* Received 4th March – **SBC flood briefing** circulated on social media and posted on web site
* Received 4th March – **Hawick & Hermitage Police Report for Feb.** Members asked Cllr McAteer to pass thanks to Sgt Begley for including the rural crime incidents that have happen, it is encouraging that the service acknowledges these just as much as urban issues.

1. **AOB – road sweeping post flood.** White goods and skips need lifting and date nominated for this to be actioned again to give notice to all to remove vehicles to enable a thorough sweep.

Date of next meeting:

**Tue April 13th @ 7pm on Zoom, link on web site and below**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88306155707?pwd=WGY3b3ZHQ1RZdDRJeU1Fdkw2VDNSZz09>

Meeting ID: 883 0615 5707

Passcode: 565582