



Newcastleton & District Community Council
Minutes of digital meeting 11th May 2021 @ 7:00 pm VIA ZOOM

Present: Greg Cuthbert, Marcus Day, Lyndsay Patterson, Barbara Elborn, Keith Bough, Iain Crosbie, Ashley Thomson, Ian Nichol, Rob Irwin, Margaret Elliot, Scott Wilson, Cllrs McAteer, Turnbull.
8 members of the public **Apologies:** none received

- 1. Welcome & apologies** Chair welcomed all to meeting, advising Primary school update was moved to the June meeting. Barbara Elborn noted conflict of interest (planning).
- 2. Teviot Windfarm presentation** Jamie Leslie and Graeme Kerr, Muirhall Energy presented outline of plans. Scant on details ref site, heavy on community benefit. Challenges noted as length of disruption given scale of build, implications on community ref transportation during key elements of build when traffic likely to be diverted via village, impacts on delays travelling to/from school, and to employment in Hawick. Increased water run-off from concrete platforms likely to impact the Slitrig rather than Liddel watershed. Concerning cumulative impact given further windfarm plans; Wauchope East/West and Newcastleton Forest. They were thanked for attending, [presentation available on website](#). Scoping response agreed with addition to Dark Sky referenced required.
- 3. Minutes of the last meeting** – April 2021 were agreed. Proposed LP, seconded IN.
- 4. MATTERS ARISING:**
Flood group feedback. CC/NDCT/NVFG met with SBC and SEPA to review plans for Holm Hill Dev and opportunity to incorporate natural flood measures. Dry gravel extraction could be unitised to provide the base for creating new access for replanting forestry and upgrading the paths. Priority would given to paths across Head Bridge/end of Sawmill plantation Walk to enable easier access adjacent to Blackburn Falls. Riverside inspection undertaken; remove trees and willow blocking flow where identified, willow on village side should be cropped where identified. Landowner permissions required. Window to extract gravel was time sensitive – up to Sept. NDCT would need to submit application for review by SEPA (4month window). MOP reported challenges at Steel Road end which would be followed up by Cllr McAteer as this was in ULHCC catchment.

CCTV update: KB reported meeting with PC Walker and police assistance provided to support community bid. Documentation being created to comply with data protection guidance and an operations manual, which will become the Code of Practise once finalised. All sites now confirmed and planning application ready to submit.

CC received note passed via NDCT in response to their newsletter from a MOP asking if the community had been consulted. This was affirmative and reiterated; CCTV had been discussed at meetings since the attack at Toll Bar Cottage, outcomes reported in minutes and a full plan and proposal detail, coupled with a FAQ guide was included in the CC Newsletter circulated Nov 2020 seeking feedback. Commenting in response to whether or not it was necessary to support flood measures the CC explained that since the cyber attack on SEPA systems, access to readings was challenging and the community did not have access to previously available public data during the last flood. Discussions with SBC flood management team concluded that having eyes-on the water and ongoing capture of water habits would be helpful in the village flood planning. In addition, giving emergency bunker access to see what was happening at various points in the community when a flood event was happening was seen as being valuable. The CC reiterated adherence to legal requirements confirming that all visible household windows would be blacked out so there would be no intrusions of individual privacy.

5. **COMMUNITY MAINTENANCE :**

Houghton Park still no progress on planned works to upgrade pathways and roadside. Cllr Turnbull advise writing to new CEO about lack of works being instructed and the untimely delay on this project.

Riverside fencing now approved, monies received, works authorised, waiting for completion.

6. **AREA PARTNERSHIP UPDATE** – community grant fund & format Details on the website – no one has come forward to put themselves or their groups forward for the assessment panel to award grants. CC agreed to let other CC's within the partnership move this forward and follow the majority.

7. **COMMUNITY VOICES: RETURN TICKET** Local filming Monday. Wider communities need to engage and participate in the project.

8. **PUBLIC FORUM/COMMUNITY ISSUES**

20 MPH changes – CC continued to express concerns that they have NOT been consulted on recent changes now implemented to change the zoning of the speed limit. SBC now advised public consultation commences May 11th. CC response to consultation on web site.

Given the depth of opinion aired, the meeting concluded all households within the village limit should be protected; the zone moved back to the old 30MPH limit any deceleration zone implemented prior to travelling into the village. There was no footpath in the North and many welcomed the lower speed limit which had encouraged them to walk more frequently. Those in the south were concerned with young children who had been encouraged to walk and cycle to school under the slower measures.

Cllrs advised that this was a proposed as a temporary infrastructure project (£1.2m) to encourage walking and cycling under lockdown measures. This is exactly what had happened locally so in that respect the project was successful, but the manner in which it had been implemented without prior consultation was challenging. This was a case of SBC implementing change and asking afterwards. The CC was encouraged to write the SBC about this and other outstanding issues.

30MPH at Tinnis Bridge SBC had advised that the short-term restrictions reducing speed to 30MPH were due to expire on June 4th. It was the consensus of the meeting this should be kept permanently but extended to cover the whole of Underburnmouth benefiting SBC by continually protecting the Bridge with lower speeds, also benefiting residents slowing speeding traffic; there are houses, a working farm steading and two junctions. In the event this was deemed impossible to action the CC requested that SBC remove the national speed limit sign from the back of the 30mph sign south of the Bridge, which encourages an acceleration zone right through Underburnmouth.

It was the conclusion of the meeting the SBC felt it was appropriate to limit speeds within built up areas but not in Hamlets and outlying areas where there were residential pockets suffering from speeding traffic. The CC would seek clarity on this policy and press for a continuation of the 30MPH restriction.

Garden waste Feedback from Cllrs Cllr Turnbull had fwd response from SBC to request for more solutions locally - other than notice about £40k fine liable if caught dumping in rivers and a reminder about their commitment to recycling there was a complete lack of understanding about community need; not even an acknowledgment of need for more bottle banks given the increased amount of recycling. The CC felt this lack of consideration was frustrating particularly in respect of green waste where residents had significantly more green waste than those in urban environments and had to travel a 50 miles round trip to take it to a recycling centre. Cllrs suggested this be added to the note of complaint.

Grass cutting/Weeds/Setts– The CC expressed thanks for the improved cut and finish on the riverside and squares citing quality of equipment utilised versus the normal equipment available, requesting this be used in future to maintain the tidy appearance. CC requested SBC give advance notice so vehicles could be moved when SBC undertook maintenance of the roadside setts.

Road Closure Signage – this had again been lacking, not visible at Hawick, nor at exists from Bonchester Bridge on the B6399. Many visitors reported no signage forcing them to drive back to Hawick or via Bonchester to take alternative routes. No diversions were signed.

Police non-attendance – not meeting regularly would see a widening of relationships and this was of concern. Attendance by them at recent Area Partnership meetings were seen as positive and it was suggested that even if Police were unable to attend local CC meetings that a monthly meeting of CCs with Police via zoom/teams might be preferable to not having any contact at all. The report was robust, and data led but this did not substitute for proper discussion on issues. Cllrs would seek feedback on this suggestion.

Campervans overnight parking in Douglas Square – the CC was asked for permission to allow this for an event and was advised it was not in the gift of the CC to grant. Breaking bylaws parking overnight was at own risk.

9. **PLANNING** - application 21/00665/FUL no issues. **Polysport request to CC** to apply for change of use saving planning fees was agreed.
10. **CORRESPONDENCE:** Democracy Matters Phase 2, <https://www.visitnewcastleon.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/local-governance-review-democracy-matters-phase-2-1.pdf> LIVE Borders reopening dates announced – SBC website. Police Report – [Hawick & Hermitage Ward April](#)
11. **Copshaw Gardeners** – spring planting request for help and support on Saturday May 29th 11am Douglas Square. Many green fingers make light work!

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tue June 8th @ 7pm. If practical/permissible held publicly. Look out for notices.

Speaker – Andy Jones, Headteacher, Newcastleon Primary School and Newcastleon School Partnership