



Newcastleton & District Community Council
Minutes of digital meeting 8th June 2021 @ 7:00 pm VIA ZOOM

Present: Lyndsay Patterson, Greg Cuthbert, Iain Crosbie, Scott Wilson, Keith Brough, Ashley Thomson, Margaret Elliot, Rachel Norris, Andy Jones, and Claire Musson.

Welcome and Apologies: Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, introduced Andy Jones Headteacher and Claire Musson from the NSP. Apologies received from Barbara Elborn, Ian Nichol, Rob Irwin and Marcus Day.

Andy Jones – Newcastleton Primary School Headteacher

Andy Jones started by noting that everybody including the school have had a tough year with COVID restrictions, he advised the new Delta variant restrictions will remain in place to help keep the school open. It is possible for some adults to now enter the grounds but they are still unable to enter the buildings. Children can now mix in the playground but indoors restrictions are in place.

As sole head he is now able to focus on Newcastleton Primary; his vision is to focus on families and the community. He reported that the new outdoor area has had a huge impact on the children. The woodland walk is completed, children can now walk all the way around and have built a den. He noted when on playground duty there were no children in the playground, they were all in the outdoor area! Future plans include Rock UK bushcraft lessons, (money ring fenced for this), once restrictions are lifted this can start. The school is looking forward to having the community visit the school when possible. He is hopeful for the new year and wants the school to be the beating heart of the community.

Questions raised

1. Ventilation in the building; windows do open, and this is deemed sufficient, children during colder days are allowed to keep on their coats.
2. Understood staffing would remain the same next year. 3 classes: P1-3, P4-5, P6-7. Two positions for additional needs being sought for support plus one more paid for from the Paid Equity Fund to support another support worker Mon to Fri am.
3. Uptake for 2021/2022 School year: 5 will be leaving, 7 are coming up from Nursery.
4. 68 children currently in the school, classes are 25 max.
5. Upgrade the school building/facilities unknown. Newcastleton Primary was in better condition than most, but concerns remain about the heating which has had issues, they hopeful this may get rectified soon. If any plans do materialise these will be shared with the CC and community.
6. Help/support for children transitioning to Hawick? due to COVID this had been done on teams. Discussion held regarding integrating children sooner in the process not just in the

last few weeks before the school term ended. This will be looked into via the active schools team. MATHS and Language teacher coming to Newcastleton would also help with this process.

Claire Musson – Chair of the Newcastleton School Partnership

The CC congratulated NSP on the success of the Outdoor area, special mention to Sarah Laing who got the project of the ground. NSP thanked the community as the project wouldn't have gotten off the ground without the generous donations of supplies and time. NSP (Claire, Sarah, and Heather) now meet with Andy Jones every three weeks to discuss projects or update regarding anything the school may need. Current project - wellies and waterproofs for every child kept at school to enjoy outside area all year round.

NSP would like to focus on more enrichment learning such as Arts, Drama, Science etc. Keen to keep the children numbers in the school by making the new families into the village feel welcome and involve members of the community with specialist skills in teaching/engaging with the children when possible.

The CC extended invites to both school and NSP to continue to attend future meetings, sharing challenges with the CC and elected Cllrs would overcome some of the issues previously encountered.

Minutes of the last meeting – May 2021

Proposed by Scott Wilson, Seconded by Keith Brough

Matters arising:

CCTV update – Keith advised that the planning application has been sent in. One change to the application is that Buccleuch House will now house the server, due to the internet facilities this will be more practical.

Community Maintenance:

1. Garden Waste – no update, it was noted by the new fence on the waterside garden waste had been thrown over the banking.
2. Houghton Park – Noted that it does not meet criteria. There are wider issues than this; proposed to seek SBC officer to review all pavements with CC someone; main street by SPAR, by the Olive Tree, riverside steps where MOP fell due to the uneven ground.
3. Riverside Fence – Thank the Councillors for their support with the Small Schemes, now been completed.
4. 20 MPH correspondence unclear need more clarity from previous meeting regarding the sign fiasco.

Area Partnership update:

No real update as AP were meeting tonight

Community Voices Project: Return Ticket – Slow steady progress, CC/Trust had met with Sir Peter Hendy, Chair of the UK Connectivity Transport Review.

Holm Hill Update: Forest plans ongoing, leaky dams included in felling and other sites, waiting to review these proposals with SBC flood mngt team/JBA Engineering consultants. Replanting plans hopefully shared in Aug with view to implementation next Spring subject to SEPA approval of dry gravel extraction. Expect to do this prior to Sept when the opportunity closes until 2022. It will require volunteers/muscle to support this effort as well as helping to clear foliage on the riverbank. This is NOT the responsibility of either the Trust or the CC but if the community wishes to help itself before next Winter, then there needs to be some effort to do this when waters are low. Requests for volunteers will be made once approvals and resources like equipment have been source

Planning: No objections

E&L: Rachel Norris advised her last meeting; been covering local issues for the E&L for 21 years but has decided to move to be with her family in Northumberland. The CC thanked her for her hard work and support over the years and we wished her the very best for the future.

Wild Camping: Keith brought up signs re wild camping. We need to think what needs to be on the signs, also times the toilets are open and if they could be kept open for longer for people camping. Plus, more bins to be down by the green bridge and dog bins around the village.

Date of the next meeting – 10th August 2021