



NEWCASTLETON
COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Newcastleton & District Community Council
Tuesday, January 9th, 2024 at 7pm
Minutes of Ordinary Meeting

Info available online: <https://livenewcastleton.com/community-services/newcastleton-and-district-community-council>

Present: Barbara Elborn (sec) Jim Lewis (chair), Rob Irwin, Barry Hawkins, Keith Brough, Lisa Rogers, Shane Mitchinson, Chris Ruddock (part). **Apologies:** SBC Councillors Annette Smart, Watson McAteer, Jane Cox, PC Allan Patterson. **Welcome:** 4 members of the public

1) **Declarations of Interest:** BE Item ref Coulter Sike

2) **Police Report:** Hawick & Hermitage report delayed till later in month, will be circulated/added to web pages when available. Local report provided by PC Allan Paterson and read in his absence: Hi folks 2024! Cannie believe I am still here, oldest copper on the beat in the division! Must be something infectious about this village. I would like to say a heartfelt well done to everyone from the village and beyond who attended Philips funeral, especially Shaun and his boys, bringing him along the street in style for the last time, a real credit to all giving him such a send-off, I was honoured to play a wee part, certainly had me with a lump in my throat.

DECEMBER

- Call regarding a local resident's vehicle having number plates being cloned, becoming more common with the increase of congestion, clean air driving/ bus lane charges in urban areas. Unscrupulous drivers in high charge areas trace a vehicle like their own, make number plates with the other vehicles reg and fit them to their car. The registered keeper for the cloned plates gets charged/fined, not the cloned vehicle. This needs to be reported to Police who will contact the area of charges directly and put a Police National Computer marker on the registration, so if the number passes Automatic Number Plate Recognition cameras or is checked by Police the vehicle will be stopped and checked.
- Call regarding possible distress flare in Singdean forest area. Checks made and it turned out to be a meteor shower which could be seen as green streaks in sky.
- Caravan abandoned at side of Hermitage Road after tow hitch snapped. No Police action.
- Vehicle became stuck in flood water, vehicle was rescued, no further issues. No Police action.

JANUARY

- Concern for elderly resident who activated panic alarm, Police contacted by care company, local Health Centre staff resolved the incident.

Minutes of the last meeting: Dec 2023 were accepted. Proposed by RI, seconded by KB.

3) **Matters arising:**

- a) **Douglas Square build outs** nearing completion just awaiting bollards. CC has noted Jan as the 1st of the 12 months for review for the scheme; if residents feel the build-out is not working, causing issues SBC gave reassurances it would be reviewed.
- b) **Riverside lighting** - Cllr Smart provided feedback, budget required for legal searches as required to identify ownership. To be carried forward
- c) **Bus timetable/community consultation** - Further issues experienced since last meeting. SBC propose consultation which was requested for Jan but no dates yet proposed from SBC.

CC received notice of another incident today: 9-1-24 'the x95 didn't turn up again this morning as it had broken down. I had to go and get XXXX which then meant I was late for work too. It was either him be late again and lose his job or me be late, so we took the risk of me being late instead. Still waiting on a letter of apology from any of them or an explanation for the last time I don't know how much longer we can continue like this. I just feel I wish XXXX could afford to take his own car to work. Then we wouldn't have this problem it's not the travelling to work it's the parking as well. It cost an absolute fortune to park in town".

d) **Holm Bridge upgrade status** - Ongoing

e) **Horse signage** Cllr Cox not present, to be carried forward.

f) **Playpark consultation** update Received notice that site now delayed until much later in year. Contested, meeting with SBC to understand lack of progress given this has met their timetable so far and is an integral part of the community positioning as a day trip destination. Meeting Jan 16th

g) **Flooding – Nov 27th feedback** - bund effectiveness tested; reached bottom of the riverside edge in the north/middle, higher in the south. Further erosion and flooding at the show fields, concerns ref erosion underpinning Whithaugh Bridge, and impacts on east and west banks, flooding at the south end with run off impacting grounds of Toll Bar Cottage. Concerns about increasing vegetation and rocks collecting in/near the spans of Holm Bridge again reducing flow. The CC will seeking clarity on past works ref the drainage and gully clearing as this was post 2020/21 floods. CC proposed meeting with SBC flood team locally to review sites, suggest this is post Feb 6th when LM is available to attend.

CC received request to build up the bank on the corner of Tollbar Cottage field to protect properties. CC advised resident SBC to need to confirm proposed actions would not impact properties elsewhere.

h) **Ettleton Cemetery update** - No progress, unfortunately both Ettleton and Castleton Cemetery experiencing significant issues ref access with mourners for internments both now requiring restricted attendance due to safety concerns. This continues to be an ongoing issue and is having a debilitating impact on those who wish to visit and for funerals themselves. Photos will be shared of recent Castleton site and efforts made again to engage SBC on this matter.

4) **Planning**

a) **Pines Burn Wind Farm community benefit fund (CBF) update/transport issues** Meeting Jan 10th with other CCs to agree revised offer. Circulate outcomes post meeting. Meeting planned Feb 6th with developer.

b) **Teviot/Muirhall** Application to Local Energy Scotland submitted by NDCT on behalf of participating CCs to seek funds to support legal advice on structure of vehicle to host the CBF.

c) **Flatt Farm update** - agent requested meeting Dec 14th. JL/BE attended fed back concerns and received further updates Jan 9th shared at meeting. Subsequent advise shared with the householder:

- Pipework – CC advised residents to seek input from SBC Environmental Health dept – they have responsibility for protecting private water supplies and should have all the maps etc to review.

- Ecology report: Red listed species – not enough detail on mitigation measures referenced in the report or recommendations to employ methods to do this. Dismissive ref to this in the exec summary subsequently provided.
- Alluvial plain – given issues and subsequent imagery the CC now has for Kershopefoot from Dec 27th/Storm Gerrit this continues to be major concern to the CC – any planting of any significance that obstructs flow leaving south will back end into the community. This is a major issue and there is a very strong argument for more lands to be left to support flood mitigation measures which have not been acknowledged by the agent. It is disappointing that the agents have ignored the community concerns in this regard. The CC will now seek SBCs flood team for opinion and report back.

CC Acknowledged trails/walks/parking had been included and this was welcomed.

This minute will be shared with Scottish Forestry to reiterate the CC's ongoing concerns regarding the implications of the site ref the flood plain.

- d) **Coulter Syke Forestation feedback** - Report and link circulated. Chair subsequently provided the following statement in response to the report: *A strong consultation that has engaged the community reflecting the high number of respondents/attendees. This project provides direct benefits to the local community as well as additional attractions to attract visitors. CC strongly supports this project looks forward to seeing it all come to fruition once planning approvals are forthcoming.*

5) **Public forum/Community issues**

- a) **North Hermitage Street** - CC received request to consider additional measures to protect cyclists/walkers: *'many vehicles coming into the village from the north do not start to slow down until near the auction where the flashing light shows their speed. Similarly, many vehicles leaving the village start to accelerate once they have passed the auction. Children are being encouraged to walk or bike to school but it needs to be safe for them to do so. Coming into the village, the 20mph sign between the start of the 20mph zone and the auction is very small, similarly the one on the road going out.'* CC supports this request and reminds all of SBC's previous comments ref the challenge of providing a path adjacent to the roadside. It will ask SBC to move the current slow down messaging to the entrance to the village to support this request.

6) **Consultations/corrs**

- a) **Scottish Borders National Park** update – CC is pleased to note this was not supported by SBC given the wider held views that this is unwarranted.
- b) **Regional Land Use consultation** - Wed 31st January Online (6.30pm-7.30pm)
<https://SOSDRLUFOnline.eventbrite.co.uk>

7) **AOB**

- a) **Area partnership** minutes will be circulated
- b) **T&L grant funding criteria** to be revisited to allow rural communities to use sums to support employment if required
- c) **Static Caravan** on land south of the village; complaints about its location, impact on the landscape and it is has been granted relevant permissions
- d) **Barriers Under Burnmouth Bridge** – given works completed/signage agreed why are these still present.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Tuesday Feb 13th 7pm village hall