

Info and documents available online at:

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

Present: Barbara Elborn (sec) Jim Lewis (chair), Rob Irwin, Barry Hawkins, Shane Mitchinson, Keith Brough, SBC Councillors Watson McAteer, Annette Smart, Jane Cox

Apologies: Chris Ruddock, PC Allan Patterson

Welcome: 2 members of the public

1) **Apologies** Chris Ruddock

There were no declarations of interest received from members.

2) **Financial report 2023-24**

- a) Review of accounts report prepared and submitted for scrutiny, endorsed independently by Scott Wilson who kindly reviewed invoices, and checked the bank statements. Copies available on web site. There were no questions arising. Accounts were accepted, proposed by RI, seconded by KB.
- b) Forward planning Outline of estimated spend next 12 months shared; some o/s invoices can now be paid. Granted sums would provide for increased sums for secretarial duties, cost of web hosting/admin to update the pages as well as small sums towards maintaining the CCTV.
- c) Changes to signatories for bank account, resolution proposed: Add JL, remove Scott Wilson, Martin Walker, Gordon Steele, Shaun Turnbull. Amend address to BH to receive mail and bank statements. Resolution was signed by BH and will be submitted with relevant forms to amend account details.
- d) This concludes the current Treasurers role, once paperwork confirmed then files handed to new signatory to manage accounts. Relevant paperwork to be submitted to SBC to secure 2024-5 grant.
- e) All CC members agreed to abide by the code of conduct enabling the Treasurer to submit the claim for the CC grant to be paid.

2) **Police Report**

- a) Hawick & Hermitage avail for review online

3) **Minutes of last meeting** accepted as a true record, but JL wished it recorded that two previous CCs had covered the new bus timetable and comments expressed in the last meeting were felt to be an unfair reflection of the work undertaken by the CC to deliver a timetable which met the needs of the majority within a significantly reduced timeframe. They were proposed by JL, seconded by RI.

4) **Matters arising:**

- a) **Bus timetable update** – best workable solution proposed but now on hold as costs exceeded available funds. SBC to respond with solution for next meeting. Continuing concerns raised over time to resolve this with less time to trial a new service linked to grant sums/fixed timetables.
- b) **Bins** – 2nd bin located outside health centre
- c) **Holm Bridge upgrade status** – images provided to SBC; Cllrs requested to follow through for opposite side for works to be completed. Two SBC officers responded seemingly not communicating internally.

d) **Speeding vehicles** – 32 reported/tracked. Stolen dog recovered via vehicle identified from CCTV.

f) **Ettleton & Castleton Cemetery paths status** - No actions were taken on Ettleton following the short-term budget opportunity. CC stressed need for actions and accepted a photographic record of the state of the road, headstones, boundary, and user feedback which would be shared with SBC officers to seek immediate and urgent actions. The CC thanked Angela Lockerbie for efforts to co-ordinate this on behalf of users, the record would be shared and posted online.

g) **Potholes** – Cllr McAteer provided a copy of a member's briefing note on the actions taken by SBC regarding potholes, this will be shared on the community web site.

h) Unpaid work within Community update

JL had contacted the Dave Berry UPW Project coordinator who advised that large jobs such as mowing riverbank clearing was not under their remit. They could clean signs. List of jobs needs to be collated and forwarded to the UPW dept at Scot Borders and possible site visit to arrange. JL to follow up.

i) **Capital Works 2024-25:** Cllr Cox shared program; street lighting upgrade planned for Copshaw Place £20k and works to Tinnis Bridge masonry repairs £15k.

j) Flood Group subgroup

A discussion was had over the future role of the flood group. This ultimately was to sit as a subcommittee of the CC. JL to communicate with the flood Group over this role. Flood group to meet on 29/4 to discuss and give feedback to the CC as no member of the flood group was present.

5) Planning:

a) **Pines Burn Wind Farm community benefit fund update:** Meeting April 20th, T&L CC's Pines Burn CLG draft will be tabled, CCs to nominate respective rep to take place on the board. Draft proposal prepared. Discussion on use of the funds – previously funds were double the proposed benefit and considered reasonable sums to support large project/s, now this is likely to be only £5-6k. There is merit in considering pooling the sums for wider gain and working collaboratively; rural CCs suffer from lack of investment in land management by SBC as some of this is non statutory; roads, water runoff, hedgerows, lack of signage on B and C roads etc. This approach will be considered going forward.

b) **Teviothead/Muirhall CBF** update T&L CC's not happy about progressing. Feel Muirhall pushing for contracts to be in place when we don't know what the share ownership offer is. REMA consultation on grid connection has implication on rural site deployment and will impact Muirhall and EDF proposals. Discussion on the issues as part of the CC roundtable on 20th - outcomes will be shared with Muirhall and the wider group of CCs.

c) **Permitted Development Rights update:** subject to parliamentary scrutiny, changes are expected to come into force on 24th May this year: Scottish Government outline that, in view of the cost and climate change crisis, the changes introduced by the Order provide additional flexibility for homeowners to install a range of domestic microgeneration equipment without a planning application being required. At this point in time, Officers at SBC are currently reviewing the changes, prior to them coming into effect on the 24th of May. Over the duration of the coming weeks, the department will be reviewing the changes to the permitted development rights, including any

implications for the current adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance on Replacement Windows.

Subsequent comment received from SBC: *The Scottish Government's Phase 3 Review of Permitted Development Rights has been laid before Parliament and the changes to the General Permitted Development Order (which set out PD rights) will come into force on 24th May 2024. You can find that here. This will provide additional domestic PD Rights in conservation areas to help support renewables equipment, such as solar panels, wind turbines and heat pumps and well as alteration/replacement of windows to improve energy efficiency. We're still assessing the implications of this, including for our own policy. From what we can see from our initial reading, the **changes will allow the installation of UPVC windows in Conservation Areas under PDRs, subject to certain conditions around opening mechanism, colour and glazing pattern. I know that's a recurring issue in Newcastleton, so it's likely to be welcomed locally.***

So that's the good news. The bad news is that, rather than simply being a case of being permitted development that people can get on with, the Government has seen fit to make this another category of development where the unwieldy and confusing prior notification process applies, meaning that homeowners still need to go through a notification process to let us know what they're doing, which we'll still need to administer. So, along with the implications of the changes, we'll also need to consider how we're going to deal with that de facto application process.

We will be reviewing the new PDRs in advance of the 24th May and will consider what impact that will have on officers handling of planning apps and also whether our SPG needs to be updated. I hope we'll have some publicly available guidance in the run up to the changes coming into force.

6) Consultations/correspondence

a) **Potential Vulnerable Areas (PVA) Consultation – SEPA:** flood group encouraged to respond to this on behalf of the community.

7) Public forum/Community issues

a) Area Partnership Meeting 26/3/24 Feedback – participating communities agreed current format and structure not working as it should and that the current process was considered a platform to discuss grant funding and not much else.

b) **Community Grant Fund update** – granted as requested and allocated in the budget accordingly.

c) **Lynx:** The Missing Lynx Project – social engagement and consultation/request for attendance at next CC actioned. The Missing Lynx Project is designed to provide a range of opportunities to listen and explore people's thoughts and opinions around bringing lynx back. The project is a partnership between the charities: Northumberland Wildlife Trust, The Wildlife Trusts nationally and The Lifescape Project. Ways to be involved in the social engagement and consultation. www.missinglynxproject.org.uk.

d) Issue 6 of Explore Magazine on the web pages

e) Full copy of the Borders National Park submission also on the web page

8) Date of next meeting: **May 14th 7pm village hall**

