### Upper Liddesdale and Hermitage Community Council

**DRAFT ISSUED**

Minutes of meeting held on

June 27th 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Minutes</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Present** | Community Councillors: S Laing, L Scott, R Scott, T Tennant and S Hartley  
Ward Councillors: Ron Smith and George Turnbull  
Apologies: A McNeil, SBC Ward Councillor Davey Patterson. Community Police Officer Allan Patterson |  |
| 1. | **Welcome** | Chair |
| | Toby welcomed everyone. | |
| 2. | **Minutes of Previous Meeting** | All Councillors |
| | Chairman proposed the minutes from the previous meeting and asked all Councillors to confirm that they had read them and accepted them.  
S Laing and R Scott seconded them | |
| 3. | **Police Report** | SH |
| | Allan Patterson unable to make the meeting. Steve Hartley presented the police report for the period. This is appended | |
| 4. | **Teviot and Liddesdale Area Forum** | RS |
| | Robert Scott confirmed he went to the 8th March meeting and there was nothing applicable to our Council. He also mentioned that many were late to this meeting due to the change of venue. He was unable to make the last meeting due to it falling in the middle of lambing. The Ward Councillors present confirmed that there was nothing applicable to us that was missed.  
Lawrence Scott asked the Ward Councillors about the changes to the Ward Boundaries. Both Councillors confirmed that we would remaining in the Hawick and District Ward. | |
| 5. | **New Planning Applications / Consultations** | SH |
| | S Hartley confirmed that there was only one new application during the period and this was for a new ‘chalet’ at Singhdean as part of the holiday complex. Unfortunately this planning package was received after the cut-off date for lodging comments and thus none were made and nor was this document shared with the community for this reason. No comments were made during the meeting. The Ward Councillors confirmed that the permission was | |
6. **UL and H Finances**

S Hartley presented the accounts during the previous AGM. Please see attachment to that.

7. **Newcastleton and District Development Trust.**

Steve Hartley gave an update on the progress of the Trust. In Summary:

> ‘We have now submitted the final plans for planning permission – anyone interested can view these / leave opinions in Buccleuch House. Alternatively I can arrange for electronic copies to be forwarded.

The plans have been shaped by feedback from the community and in some ways have been a complete reversal on what was originally intended. The proposal is now for 3 retail spaces available at very low rent along and a Community Hub providing access to Super-Fast Broadband as well as office equipment useful for micro businesses. Upstairs there will be a large office which will be available for rent – although in the short term it will more than likely become home to the Trust as other projects are rolled out.

The entire project is aimed at helping stimulate business in the area and with it employment.

Outside the forecourt will have one double sided unmanned fuel pump and two EVC points kindly supported by SBC’.

8. **Roads and Bridges**

*Bank Erosion* – there has been significant bank erosion to the river bank on the south side of the bridge over to the McGregor’s Property (Whiterope Foot, Hawick, TD90LZ), North of the cattle grid. This is now likely to undermine the road in the very near future and urgent attention is needed. Sandra McGregor commented that you can really only see the damage from the field side, not the road side (i.e. the side of the MacGregors Property). This has been going on for about 9 months.

*Road Repair* – 2 months ago the Gorrenberry to Billhope road (C77) was patched and was meant to be skimmed. This has unfortunately not happened and holes are now opening up between the joins in the new tarmac to the old.

*Road Repair* – Gorrenberry to Hermitage Hall (C77) – there are now significant
holes all the way down this road but in particular between Braidlie Farm and Dinley farm where in sections road users are running the verges to avoid the holes.

*Hermitage Bridge* – the bridge at Hermitage Hall has recently been hit and there is a significant crack from the top of the parapet to the bottom.

*Riccarton Bridge* – a few weeks ago Geoffrey Kolbe met Engineers surveying the bridge doing their 6 year audit for SBC. They commented that the bridge was a nice bridge in good condition. This was extremely worrying given the ongoing issues with this bridge. Ward Councillors were asked to check this for the Community and make sure that, as a result of this survey, work was not cancelled or ‘knocked’ down the list.

---

**Mobile Phone / Broadband**

Steve asked if anyone had noticed the fluctuating access to 3G in the village recently? This has been caused by the testing of mobile masts.

With the demise of the Airwaves system currently used by the emergency services EE have won the contract to provide mobile signal coverage across all of the roads in the country and this includes us. Lobbying is well underway and it is hoped that public access will be permitted meaning the vast majority of places will have EE mobile signal within the next year or so.

A member of our community has recently had a satellite broadband package installed and Steve was hoping for support from him so he can put together a fact sheet for other people that may benefit from such technology based on his experience.

Sarah Laing confirmed that her satellite broadband was excellent and provided by QSAT, another provider included TooWay. Another resident confirmed they used the recommended satellite provider from BT, who were offering a discount on this at present.

---

**Windy Edge and Wauchope Wind Farms**

*Windy Edge* has been granted permission on appeal. What has also come to light is the fact that Infinis is on the market and a new owner is expected to take control in early July. All the work that was done via Chris Little on the Community Benefit Fund is now a little up in the air. We therefore need to engage with the new owners as soon as they’re in place to try and get some agreements in place. As an aside to this if a CBF is forthcoming how does the community see it being managed / obtained / etc? By all account Foundation Scotland are not the most slick organisation to manage these funds and a more local solution should be preferred. (To be discussed at the next meeting).

One resident commented that it was unlikely that the development would go ahead, given the current state of the grants available (or lack of them). Robert Scott (landowner of the proposed site) commented that he believed they would go ahead and although he wasn’t party to all of the negotiations he
thought that funding was in place.

A note was made that planning only lasts 3 years but that an extension can be granted.

EnergieKontor / Pines Burn – we weren’t invited to the party. Steve only heard about it 3 days prior to the “open day” event at the Harwood Estate and since then he’s been in dialogue with Duncan Taylor – Project Manager who has sent a brief overview. If anyone would like this, please contact Steve.

Wauchope and Newcastleton – this scheme is now likely to be split and it is unlikely that this will come to planning in the next 12 months.

11

Larriston Forrest

FCS have awarded the grant to plant Larriston and their decision includes the acceptance that it will have an irreversible effect on the beauty of the valley but...FCS say their NEED for more trees overrides all of these concerns.

Lawrence Scott suggested that we write to the Minister of Agriculture and/or others to advise them of the Larriston situation and the blanket planting that this area is suffering from and the irreversible damage to good and productive farms that this causes and of course the bumper affects that this then has... employment / young people staying in the area etc etc.

Sarah Laing strongly agreed and suggested that Lawrence drafted something and she would type it up and perhaps circulate to other groups in the area to do the same thing... local NFU, Newcastleton CC etc etc

12

Public Forum / Local Issues

Resignation – Alan McNeil sent his resignation to Toby. The Community Council now has three options which they must think about in time for the next meeting:

a) Do nothing – operate with 5 Councillors until the next election.

b) Hold a bi-election to replace Alan

c) Hold a bi-election to replace Alan and make Steve’s position elected (he is currently co-opted). This would enable the UL&HCC to co-opt a new member should someone leave (we are only allowed one co-opted member). Steve would have to stand for election as his position would be open to anyone else qualifying in the community to stand for.

Judith Turnbull advised that, depending on which option we go for, an election will need to be held between 14 and 28 days after the decision and an election after the holiday period is probably best as it negates the need for a postal vote.

School Bus. SBC have offered the contract of busing the kids to Hawick High School to a company from Gretna as opposed to Telford’s although Telford’s will retain the feeder bus contract. What is known is that the company that has won the contract does not have the necessary permits in place or a suitable vehicle and SBC have been giving him time to comply. Rumours are abounding but the latest is that he will not be accepting the contract and SBC will have to now offer it to another company. The Ward Councillors confirmed

LS / SL

LS and all

SL

SL
Business as usual.

**Postcards** – Sarah Laing commented that there was plenty of new people in the area and the council should do another maildrop to introduce the council and get peoples contact details. Instead of posting she suggested visiting folk and splitting the area up to do this. SL to progress this before next meeting.

**Buccleuch** – Sarah Exton was meant to be giving an update on the significant erosion problems at Hartsgarth road end but was not at this meeting. There is not much of the fireld left and the electricity pylon is edging closer to the waters edge again – this, if it goes, will disrupt the electricity supply to the valley significantly! Sarah L to get update for next meeting.

**BT** – the phone wire on the C77 near Hermitage Castle is holding a significant tree up – this need to be dealt with! SL will email BT.

**A7** – Bod bought it to the Ward Councillors notice that there is a large larch tree preparing itself to roll down the hill and block the A7 opposite the end of the Hermitage road at Burnfoot Farm end. The field is owned by Ewesleas. Discussion about the state of the water that lies on the road at the Moss Paul straight was also bought to the Ward Councillors notice.

**Footpaths and Signage** – it was bought to the Councillors attention that the footpath over the tunnel (above Whitrope Cottage) and in that area of Whitrope is dangerous with many holes etc. New signage is needed around Whitrope for the footpaths to ensure walkers are kept safe and on the right path! Bod/Steve to discuss this and possible grants with Susan Kevan at SBC Council.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>15</th>
<th>Date for next meeting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22(^{nd}) August</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 16 | Toby thanked everyone for coming and closed the meeting. |