

Royal Burgh of Haddington and District Community Council

Minutes of meeting 13th October 2020, 7pm (meeting held online)

1. Sederunt

Jan Wilson (Chair), Fiona McEwan (Secretary), John Hamilton (Treasurer), Pat Lemmon, Paul Darling, Morgwn Davies, Rab Moran, Theresa Laing, Graham Samuel, Fiona-Frances Adam, Jack Worden

In attendance

Cllr John McMillan, Cllr Craig Hoy, Cllr Shamin Akhtar, Cllr Tom Trotter, Robert Flood (KA), Thomas Guy (KA), Diann Govenlock, Karla Green (HBCP), David Barrett, Cameron Ritchie (Courier), Anna Faulkner (minutes' secretary).

2. Apologies: Erica Muirhead, Jim Graham, PC Colin Boyd

Jan welcomed Karla Green, Chair of the HBCP

3. Minutes of 8th September

Approval of the minutes was proposed by Fiona McEwan and seconded by Rab Moran

4. Matters arising

4.1 Preston Tower, redirection of monies: at the last meeting it had been queried why the Whittingham Drive money was redirected to Preston Tower and the CC asked whether this was appropriate and was this money not ringfenced for Haddington town centre regeneration. Jan said that they had only been given a couple of days' notice of this and therefore did not, as a CC, have chance to comment. Tom agreed that it was disappointing that the money is not being used in Haddington but pointed out that the money had to be used by the end of September, not leaving much time for discussion or comment. Craig thought so too but will check and confirm at the next meeting. **Action Craig**

Jan said it was very disappointing that the money went elsewhere, there are plenty of projects in Haddington that could have benefitted. She also apologised for her previous comment about the leader of the council – John accepted her apology. He confirmed that the redirection on money was approved by the Scottish Government and that visitors to East Lothian will still benefit from the upgrade at Preston Tower. There is still money available and the town centre steering group will discuss. He also said that Mitchell's Close will be included in discussions. John listed all the projects in the town which have benefitted and will send out a copy of the Cabinet Papers and minutes from meeting (**Action John McM**).

Jack added that he thought John sounded very defensive – the CC have every right to challenge decisions. He was under the impression the steering group had not met since March. The concerns are that ELC do not engage with the appropriate bodies, like the CC and this is wrong.

As to the steering group, Jan said we are still waiting for feedback on last meetings and have still not had a reply to a letter written to them about a year ago. Pat added that everything has stalled since March due to the pandemic and assumed that nothing would be decided until the steering group could meet again.

Shamin added that she had made sure the CC had all the information regarding the money for Preston Tower and no-one got back to her to say they were not in agreement with it. She also does not recognise the large number of groups opposed to it. She did confirm though that they do take any comments very seriously.

4.2 Remembrance Day: Jan confirmed there will be no parade this year. Those involved will just meet at the gate to lay the wreaths (Fiona has them ordered). To allow for social distancing the timings of such will be arranged so not all groups are there at the same time. The Pipe Band major has offered to play the pipes in the graveyard at this time. Subject to change, John McM said the church service will go ahead. He thanked Fiona for ordering the wreaths and for coordinating the event with the CC, pipe band, Nungate Gala, Rotary etc. Morgwn suggested this was an opportunity to lay the wreaths exactly at 11am, in line with the rest of the country. He questioned why the CC laid them before 11am. Jan explained that this had always been done to allow everyone to get into the church for the poppies at 11am. John said the main thing was paying our respects and the timings are not so important.

5. Treasurers Report: Community Council Accounts, October 2020

Account balance for month

- CC BoS Account balance: £27,356.03* as of 5/10/2020 (£4K pending payments – Xmas light junction boxes)
(the above balance includes the ring fenced Lending library and Food and clothes voucher grants, excluding Cash box monies)
- *Lending Library monies £2,369.29 as of 8/10/2020 (this figure included in the CC BoS Account balance above)
- *Food/Clothes voucher monies £1,500.00 as of 8/10/2020 (this figure inclusive of the CC BoS Account and CC Cash box balances)
- Events Group TSB balance: £1,952.93 as of 31/8/2020 (No activities in last 6 months, hence date showing - No cheque(s) pending.)
- Held in cash-box: £343.32 as of 5/10/2020 (CC cash = £283.79 (incl Food and Clothes monies), Events cash = £59.53)

Highlights

- No significant highlights.

CC BoS Account transaction highlights, since last report

- Payment of £50 monthly secretarial fees.
- £6 Direct Debit payment for monthly charge of Resilience mobile phone.

Lending Library - £2,975 ring fenced within CC account: £605.71 spent to date leaving £2,369 remaining.

- No new transaction recorded.

Food and Clothes Voucher - £2,550 ring fenced within CC account: £800* spent to date leaving £1,500 remaining.

* This figure doesn't include the £250 used from the Pat Moncrieff donation. This section only reports on the Grant monies.

- £200 cash paid out for Food/Clothes project. £200 to Pat, and £50 to Council's Janette Middlemass.

Events Group TSB Account transaction highlights, since last report

- <Events meetings currently suspended>

Cash transaction highlights, since last report (CC: from CC cash, EC: from Events Cash)

- Cash for Food and voucher paid out, see entry above in Food and Clothes voucher section.
- <nothing to report> apart from ongoing secretarial payments to Anna.

5.1 Annual Report/Audit: the audit has not been done as yet

6. HBCP (Hadd Business Community Partnership) – Karla Green

6.1 Update: a walk around the town was undertaken which was very helpful. Businesses are taking a while to recover, many are struggling for survival. Due to all the restrictions the hospitality and travel industries are also very hard hit. Grants are available – just need to apply. Antisocial behaviour an ongoing issue, particularly in Brown Street, High Street areas. Felt that the meeting last night was very constructive – another planned for next month.

Pat concurred that the walk about was very successful – they are to arrange a meeting with Shamin. Graham, Pat and Doug to discuss what needs done going forward. She also agreed that last night's meeting was very positive with available sources for funding on offer. She also said that the Rotary have agreed to take over Santa's sleigh.

Teresa suggested that new signage for the town should be dealt with as soon as possible – it should be very clear to people coming to the town where there is parking available. Pat said that Tom Reid was happy to speak about this.

Craig added that there had been great feedback on the newly painted shop fronts in the town centre – excellent to see and will pass this on to the shop keepers.

Jack asked if there was any formal tourism strategy. John McM said that tourism strategy was imbedded within the economic strategy. They are continually looking at ways of supporting the hospitality sector. He has had lots of meeting with all the groups involved regarding events etc. The council comms team also promote via social media etc. He listed a number of events in the planning including St Mary's Martinmas, Egyptian exhibition with the National Museum to name a few. Recovery and Response are also looking at rural areas and trying to support them. John said there is lots going on in this area and this will continue. He wondered if the Events Group needed a new face and energy. Jack was interested to hear that towns have their own integrated strategy and would be happy to be involved in this within Haddington. In previous years we did have a tourism office of a sort in Haddington, manned by volunteers within the library – unfortunately this is no longer. Teresa said she would also be keen to be involved. John said he would set up a meeting w/b 26th to discuss.

Action JMcM

(Karla left the meeting)

7. Knox Academy Update

7.1 Update: Thomas said they were all coping with the restrictions within the school – face masks are worn going between classes. Some assemblies have also been held.

7.2 Poppy Scotland: Robert said they are trying to run this as normal as possible – many boxes have already been delivered round the community. They will also have 2 slots within Tesco in the week leading up to Armistice Day.

7.3 Activities within the school: some extra curricula activities have been introduced as much as possible within the current restrictions – mostly outdoor activities. Study support classes are also running. They also have mental health support workers coming to the school after the October break. On this note they have asked for feedback on support for parents – asking for any suggestions. Overall things are running as well as possible but staff and pupils are ready for their break in October.

Graham Samuel has information and will send it over to Robert. *Action GS*

8. Blooming Haddington (BH)

8.1 Rab reported general weeding and tidying ongoing around the town including the memorial garden, lady kitty's and the oriental garden. The baskets are not down yet – hoping for another few weeks as they still look good.

9. Councillors Corner

9.1 Update (Craig Hoy): Survey - Craig has conducted a survey of residents and those who visit the town and has nearly 300 responses. He will produce a report but would be happy to share the full details - with respondents redacted for GDPR - to the community council. The survey looks at a cross section of issues affecting those who live in, work in or regularly visit Haddington.

There have been a few complaints about the speed of agricultural vehicles on both Dunbar Road and from the Gifford direction into Haddington. He has spoken with Colin Boyd about using the police cut-out in these areas.

9.2 PSP: following the latest PSP meeting John McM has been in touch with Colin Boyd regards the next CAPP meeting. He congratulated Colin on doing a great job in communicating with all the relevant bodies and keeping them all well informed.

9.3 High Street Hero's: Shamin spoke about the Shop Local Scheme. All the local businesses who kept going through very tough times lately – all of them deserve recognition.

John McM added that many business partners are working to support our local retailers with 17.4 million available for them to tap into. He is due to speak to government ministers to find out how our businesses can do this.

9.4 John McMillan update (email):

Recent key Council activities-

Planning Committee considered application for Letham Mains and approved subject to condition on vehicular access to the lane at Letham Holdings being prohibited.

Licensing and Licensing sub-committee sat.

Connected Economy Group met and Sub Groups on Town Centres, Tourism and Hospitality and Employment and the Rural Economy meetings during the month. Discussions on support, digital and online marketing, support for businesses and 20 minute communities. Shop Local and Gift Card schemes under active consideration

Monday 12th – meeting with Visit Scotland Director on future of tourism, staycations etc, and partnership meeting with HBCP and CC and ELC in the evening-very positive.

Council is introducing a trail of a new system for constituents to contact councillors on-line, using the NEAR ME platform used by NHS.

PSP met on Friday morning and makes progress. CC and HBCP in attendance. Operation Juneau launched by Police to tackle drug crime across the County

LEADER meeting tomorrow, and Scot Govt meeting with Minister on business issues planned for end of the month.

Meetings with constituents on , inter alia –

Speeding in Haldane Ave, parking on Hospital Rd and note that that the Community Hospital is handed over by the Project Team following receipt of planning certificates.

Briefings on bike hire and cycle racks and Hope Park diversion- to be consulted on- as part of temporary Spaces for People project . Safe routes to school and signage being addressed.

Supported Farmers' Market, and Pipe Band campaign- dealt with business concerns over lockdown and help with sustainability and inquiries from new businesses looking to set up and invest in Haddington.

Housing issues and roads problems few, but reported. No drainage or lighting issues reported to me

St Columba's Hospice planning a tree in the Pleasance and candle campaign following up on last year's success.

John Gray Centre – opening and looking to new exhibition.

Enjoy classes- online. Aubigny Centre open and positive feedback.

Blooming Haddington on Planning matters

News

Working with Royal British Legion on ideas for Remembrance with ELC staff and others. To be confirmed, subject to guidance.

Rotary planning to light up the kirk to mark International Polio Day around 24th October with help of St Mary's. Kirk looking at options for Martinmas which is always a successful event in the community.

10. Police Questions – report received from PC Colin Boyd

10.1 CAPP priorities

1. Parking in the areas around the Haddington primary schools during the prohibition times.

2. Youth issues within Neilson Park.

3. Anti-Social Behaviour in and around Ross's Close, Haddington

Next meeting: date to be confirmed

11. Planning Applications

11.1 Letham Mains: a further 250/300 houses have been agreed (previously turned down). This is based on a number of changes which the CC had commented on, one of which was an extension to KA. John McM said that planning has been agreed in principle with the proviso that no access is available via Letham Mains Holdings.

11.2 Calder Loan: application has been lodged for 2 houses in this area. Paul will ask for an extension on this so the CC can fully debate as he feels that the plans are not in keeping with the area. Fiona will send out the application no to all CC members.

Action FMcE/PD

11.3 Planning Liaison officers: Jan said that previously there were 2 officers and asked if anyone would volunteer to help Paul. It was agreed that Morgwn would do so. A monthly report needs to be produced to keep the CC informed.

12. Correspondence – all sent to members via email

12.1 Email correspondence: a large number of emails were received by CC members in response to the West Road proposal therefore it has been decided we need a dedicated email address. This is all@haddingtoncc.org.uk. This will prevent personal email addresses being used. Graham will send to Cameron who will advertise in the paper and make it clear that the CC are available on this email Mon-Fri between 9-6pm and not weekends. It was also suggested any business for ELC go direct to them and not the CC. Jack thanked Fiona McE for her work dealing with and distributing all the correspondence, which is a huge job.

13. Haddington Community Development Trust

13.1 Update: Jack reported that a meeting has been held with CC and the HCDDT regarding the website. Very positive meeting and Graham has now been tasked with looking at possibility of integrating the two websites. Graham said this was still in discussion regarding costs etc but agreed that it was a very good tool for the town to have. They are also looking at possible funding sources. It was agreed that this is a positive step and may also be a driver for a virtual high street. It was stressed that this is still very much in the development stage and much more discussion is necessary. Morgwn added that we had never spoken about a virtual high street and would the businesses be contributing to this. It was reiterated that this is very much in the development stage and all avenues would be discussed further.

After some discussion it was decided to put this to the vote. Fiona McE formally proposed that the CC take over the website – a show of hands revealed 8 members agreed, none objected to it and one member abstained. Therefore the motion was carried.

Thanks for Graham for all his work on this. John McM agreed that this was the right decision and will support them as much as possible.

Funds – there are a number of groups suggested who could benefit from the money left, these include OCK, Bridge Centre and the Rotary – final decision pending.

14. Events Group

14.1 Christmas lights: two trees have been ordered and the lights will be going up – this process will start at the end of October and the switching on will be beginning on Nov. Jan will speak to Steven about the process of putting up the lights – they will have to be careful and observe the social distancing rules etc. As there cannot be a ceremony/gathering of people for the switching on Graham wondered about live-streaming it. It was suggested that this might encourage people to gather around the tree if they were aware this was happening. Pat suggested we only announce it very close to the time so people don't have time to attend – all agreed this was a good idea.

15. Area Partnership (AP) - no update

16. AOCB – none

Date of next Meeting: Tuesday 10th November 2020 online at 7.00pm.

Outstanding Matters Arising from previous minutes

2017

14/2 Roads issues: pole in pavement, Pencaitland Rd, diversion signs, dumped cones etc
Athelstaneford: speeding signs, signage at cemetery

11/4 Lights out on Nungate Bridge

13/6 Ball Alley – pole sticking up
Tyne Walkway – flooding(behind St Mary's)

10/10

Traders licence – concession available

12/12 Station Court – disrepair of the road

2018

Feb Wynd by Leisure Time - ?signage
Road by car park – Nungate Bridge
Mill Wynd – tree stump at corner -? Removal

March Whittingham Drive
Unlit bollard at PO/Gateside development
Traffic lights at Ideal Garage junction – sequencing

May Hardgate – parking spaces
Victoria Terrace – double lines on pavements

June Dog bin at golf course

2019

June Sunken drain at Tesco entrance

Nov Sandbags

Transportation Dept. -Pot Holes and Broken Slabs throughout the Town & Athelstaneford

Pot Holes: Ideal Garage junction, Stevenson, West Road surfaces, Whittingham Drive, Sidegate, Monkmain Road

Uneven Pavements: High Street, Market Street, Court Street. St. Anne's Place, Mitchells Close (11/1/11)