

Royal Burgh of Haddington and District Community Council

Minutes of meeting 13th April 2021, 7pm (meeting held online)

1.Sederant

Chris McEwan (Chair), Pat Lemmon (Vice Chair), Fiona McEwan (Secretary), John Hamilton (Treasurer), Therese Laing (Planning), Paul Darling (Planning), Jan Wilson, Rab Moran, Graham Samuel, Fiona-Frances Adam, Jack Worden, Jim Graham, Erica Muirhead, Morgwn Davies, Steven Spence

In attendance: Cllr John McMillan, Cllr Shamin Akhtar, Cllr Tom Trotter, Karla Green (HBCP), Alison Covgrove and Stuart Leslie (RAGES), Cameron Ritchie (Courier), Anna Faulkner (minutes' secretary).

Apologies: Cllr Craig Hoy, Police representative

2. Adoption of minutes - 9th March 2021

Corrections:

Item 10. HBCP: Pat reported the survey of the log cabins, not Karla. 'They would' should read 'the promotions group'. Last sentence: talks had broken down therefore the promotions group are keen to look at it.

Approval of the minutes was proposed by Jack Worden and seconded by Fiona-Frances Adam

The community council send their condolences to the royal family on their loss of Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. He visited East Lothian on a number of occasions over the years. He will be sadly missed.

3. Invited speaker – Alison Cosgrove and Stuart Leslie, RAGES

Background: Alison gave a brief background on RAGES:

Set up in 1999 in response to poor services

Membership organisation (currently 200+)

Cover all stations in E Lothian

Projects completed include extensions to Longniddry/Prestonpans parking, increase in services, reinstatement of station at Reston. East Linton station is next project. Lots of support from elected politicians, particularly Iain Gray

Now looking towards future project of reinstating rail link for Haddington.

Stuart Leslie (resident)

Huge increase in population (East Lothian has increase by 20% in last 20 years). A rail link for Hadd would be a great opportunity for commuters, leisure and travel allowing easy and fast link to Edinburgh and beyond.

Climate change – push for renewable energy is another good reason for elec trains. Decrease air pollution etc

Proposed sites: i) to the south of the town – not viable now due to construction of ELCH, ii) Oak Tree junction, iii) Alderston House. Pros and cons to all sites

Potential problems: lack of capacity on the east coast mainline. Alternative would be to build a relief line in the meantime – to the north of the dual carriageway. The new development at Blindwells could probably be served by this line also.

Frequency: proposed half-hourly services

After much discussion Chris suggested members put all their questions and comments in writing to the Secretary and this can be presented to RAGES for comment. John McM agreed and asked that this be copied to himself, Peter Forsyth and the Planning Dept.

Thanks to Alison and Stuart for attending tonight.

4. Matters arising

4.1 Item 13.1 Athelstaneford playpark: Steven took this to Shamin – request for picnic benches etc at the playpark. Shamin confirmed an application has gone to the housing partnership and will also be in touch with the area partnership re funding. She will report back

5. Community Reports

Knox Academy: none present

Blooming Haddington: Chris congratulated Rab on his recent award. Rab pointed out that there are lots of people involved and hoped that they get recognition too.

HBCP: Karla reported that the town centre is coming back to life after the most recent lock-down. Some finding business is slow but steady with lots of local support. Thanks to Ross Prentice who has offered 20 businesses free advertising on his buses. Website is coming along and will be going live soon – lots of positive feedback. Promotions Group – ongoing arrangements for a Hadd Community Day to celebrate end of restrictions and to thank everyone who kept things going through the pandemic – proposed date Spring 2022. Glad to report 3 new businesses in the town, Café Luca, Scooter/motor bike shop and Barbers on Hardgate.

Area Partnership: request for funding for speed signs (discuss at Councillors Corner)

Tenants and Residents Assoc: Hadd West still trying to get together

Police/CAPP/PSP: All reports have been circulated to members. Jim, Therese and Graham attended a recent meeting about engaging young people. Very positive and encouraging meeting with ideas which included the tennis club and football sessions. Shamin agreed – it was a very proactive meeting and she encouraged the group to work with Dianne Govenlock who is fantastic at securing funding for such projects. Graham said that there are discussions re getting S5/6 pupils involved.

CAPP priorities:

1. Speeding on Haldane Avenue, West Road, Pencaitland Road and Briery Bank, Haddington
2. Youth disorder, town centre Haddington
3. Speeding in East Saltoun

Next meeting 24/05/21 at 1830 via Microsoft Teams

Connected Community from Dianne - update

- i. The reconvened Haddington & Lammermuir Children and Youth Network met on 25th March, there was a good turnout and representation from Haddington CC, groups starting to make connections. The date of the next meeting is Thursday 3rd June 3.30-5pm.
- ii. Easter holiday provision – Bridge Centre staff have issued over 140 Easter Activity packs to children living in the Ward through local primary schools, Hazel our Family Support Worker and Pat and Linda at Lammermuir Larder.
- iii. The U12s football sessions is running from Tuesday 6th April to Friday 16th April in Neilson Park from 11.15am – 1.15pm, joint project with Sports Development and Connected Communities. Packed lunches provided by Bridge Centre staff and the children are supported over lunch by the outreach youth workers. Thanks to Haddington Rugby club for use of the toilets. For more information and to book places please contact Michele Mitchell on 07525909393 or Justine Bradd 07971794361
- iv. Over 12s football session running Tuesday 2.30pm -4.30pm and Saturday 7-9pm on the first and second week of the school Easter holidays at the 3G pitches at Whittingehame Drive. This will be turn up and play with a more targeted approach to advertising.
- v. Crisis Handling Awareness training is being organised for May 2021 – 2 x 1.5 hours on zoom delivered by CHANGES to help support someone experiencing any kind of crisis, max. 20 places. For more information and to find out if there are any available places contact Diann 07970189338
- vi. Haddington & Lammermuir Area partnership next meeting is on Thursday 29th April on zoom. The focus will be to look back over the last year 20/21 to capture what the partnership has achieved and the projects it has supported throughout the year.
- h. Rotary - working with keep Scotland beautiful, blooming Haddington.

6. Correspondence – various circulars sent to members via email

Includes:

Linda Sneddon – ELCH garden project, looking into a well-being garden etc for patients and the community. Put in touch with BH, Amisfield Walled garden and VCEL. Given her options on funding.

Hepburn Doocot – oldest heritage centre dating from 1583 and birthplace of the Saltire. Requiring upgrading to cladding and external walls. Funding applied from Viridor and asking villagers and councillors for letters of support. All agreed to this.

Action Fiona McE

7. Councillors Corner

7.1 Update from John McMillan:

ELC Budget meetings which decided on a rent freeze for tenants and Council Tax Freeze took up a considerable amount of time, and a summary of the budget is attached. Papers are available online and all such meetings are now broadcast live and available as recordings.

Funds have been set aside for Economic Development and Tourism and this will allow some discretion in support for projects which may attract jobs and support businesses to set up and grow, as well as supporting tourism and ideas to encourage visitors.

ELC continues to pay a range of support grants to businesses and also has a Discretionary Fund which tries to support local businesses who have fallen through the gap.

Planning Committee is delayed until end of March.

Other local CCs have concerns about the Hutting Development at Bolton Muir Wood and Papple Steading.

Licensing Sub Committee meets on Thursday to determine taxi/ window cleaner and HMO licenses.

Capp meeting was well attended, and included members from the newly constituted Haddington West TRA which was facilitated by Sue Cairns with Cllr Akhtar and myself attending.

PSP was held on Friday last.

Police and Community Wardens met with HRFC to improve security around the clubhouse.

Council Officers attended a meeting with residents to address issues in Brown St.

The Tourism Strategy Group met under Jack Worden, and liaised with Council.

Personally worked with a number of businesses and residents on a range of issues –roads, housing, lighting, parking and disabled parking and storage of market cabins which were dealt with by officers and Police.

Attended Connected Economy Group meetings, and Business Gateway meetings in ED role. Attended East Lothian Food and Drink Board as they move into their second 5 years in existence.

Farmers' Market held at end of February- numbers around 500 reported, but seen as success by traders

Note that Michael Williams MBE will retire as Lord Lieutenant on 15th March and Roderick Urquhart will assume the role.

Super links between OCK, Lammermuir Larder and Meadowpark (Knox) in terms of volunteering.

Pleased to see positive posts from John Gray Centre publicising their work and archives.

7.2 Hopes Reservoir: Jim asked views on the proposed changes regarding access/parking here. John McM said that officers are in touch with the landowners – problems have arisen with cars parking and blocking drive ways etc. The issues are complex but talks are ongoing and he will report back once more is known.

7.3 Mill Wynd: Graham brought up the issues raised in this area – empty area beside the Care Home, broken mirror and plans to widen the road (tree stump). Tom said that roads dept do not recommend that a mirror be in place. Will look into the positioning of the tree stump. John McM said that the preferred option would have been for this road to be closed to through traffic but this was vehemently opposed. Option for one-way would be better received – Jim agreed that this would be the better option.

7.4 Speeding: Chris asked what options we have regards encouraging observance of speed limits in the town. A recent visit with the police to the West Road saw 15 cars stopped doing over 20mph. A recent meeting with Peter Forsyth told the CC that speed signs were too expensive. It was suggested that electronic signs are the best but would have to apply for funding for these. Pat suggested we approach the developers for funding – Shamin thought it was worth asking. John McM wrote to road officers regarding issues around the town and mobile signs as an option were raised - will report back when more info avail. Chris suggested 20mph signs painted on the road plus flashing electronic signs would be good.

7.5 Shamin update: baby swing to be replaced in Neilson Park. She will also follow-up on the double yellow lines requested for Victoria Bridge/Hardgate. Seggarsdean Park – more picnic benches and equipment for the area. Athelstaneford – zoom meeting held with the villagers re the playpark – Shamin working on this

7.6 Athelstaneford: Steven is working on a community club within the village. He is happy to pursue this but will need help from volunteers. Dianne Govenlock will be a great help with this. John McM suggested they also contact the NB partnership for help with funding, along with the Rotary Club in Hadd.

8. Treasurers Report: Community Council Accounts, April 2021

Account balance for month

- CC BoS Account balance: £18,490.31* as of 8/4/2021 (£10,164 net, incl CC £4,335 pending payments + the ring fenced Project monies) (* this balance includes the ring fenced Food and Clothes, COVID 19 and Tablet grants (excl cash box monies))
- Events Group TSB balance: £369.68 as of 8/4/2021 (No cheque(s) pending.)
- Held in cash-box: £160.34 as of 8/4/2021 (CC cash = £105.05 (incl Food and Clothes monies), Events cash = £55.33)

Highlights

- £1000 paid to Girl Guides for refurbishment of the county cabin.
- Our yearly Public liability insurance through Zurich has been paid £351.05.

CC BoS Account transaction highlights, since last report. £10,164 net total after pending deductions + ring fenced monies, not incl CC cash box.

- Payment of £50 monthly secretarial fees – paid as cash.
- £6 Direct Debit payment for monthly charge of Resilience mobile phone.
- COVID ring fenced monies balance is: £2,404
- Xmas lights 2020: £444 paid out for cherry picker to remove Xmas lights. This bring total for this year's lights to £3,067. Note there was not enough balance in Events group account to pay for this, so paid from CC account (and reason this entry is showing in this section)
- Flowers bought for Golightly family after the passing of ex Community Councillor John.

Food and Clothes Voucher - £5,169 (£4919 nett) ring fenced within CC account: £1009 remaining* (includes the £750 left from Pat Moncrieff's donation).

* The above figure now includes what's left of the £1000 pledged from the Pat Moncrieff's donation - £750 remaining at time of print.

- £40.87 cash donation from Victoria Inn collected during their Xmas Teas, donated to Food and Clothes project.

Events Group TSB Account transaction highlights, since last report. £369 net total after pending deductions, not incl Events cash box.

- <Refer to update on Xmas lights costs in the CC section of this report>.

9. Licencing and Planning

9.1 Gardeners Arms: change of use to 3 flats proposed. No objection was made to the flats but the CC suggests they would prefer to see retail units on the ground floor. Paul will write to planning with this. *Action Paul D*

9.2 Brown Street: Erica asked when something was going to be done about the derelict building. It was confirmed that the council own this – John McM said there are plans for this area and will report back when more info is avail.

10. Community Council Sub-groups

Resilience: Pat reported £700 left in the clothing grant. The Lammermuir Larder has over the past 9 weeks completed 75 orders, helped 201 people (146 of which are children) and 48 pets. Thanks to the East Lothian Food Bank, Area Partnership and the Comm Council for help with funding.

Events Group: meeting was held recently where some activities were discussed – business shop-front - dressing-up competition, treasure trail, bingo session. The corn exchange is still not available for bookings so all else in limbo.

Town Centre Update: Graham said nothing to report as such as meeting has been rescheduled.

There was some talk around making sure the retail park and the surrounding housing does not become a separate village from the town – people need to be encouraged to come into the town centre. We also need to ensure a relationship is built between the businesses in the retail park and the current town centre businesses. John McM agreed – 'don't talk down your town centre'. We need to get together, hold workshops etc and be proud, resilient and positive about the future. Some 600k is avail – the council are in response mode and getting grants out to businesses. Graham asked that himself, Chris McE, Karla, Pat and Paul Kinnock are all copied in to TC/Vision meetings etc so all kept in the loop.

John McC said that all TC's got the same money allocated and all chose to spend in different ways.

Haddington Tourism Strategy & Development Group: Jack reported securing a grant of 3k from the Common Good Fund.

Thanks to Chris and Fiona for the swift production of the new Constitution and to John H and councillors for help with financial information. Work ongoing re caravan/camping site, history/cultural tours, town markets etc. John McM confirmed meeting to be held bringing all the groups together to discuss the way forward – an interested investor has been found – will explore possibilities and report back.

11. Any other business

11.1 Haddington Website: We now have full control of the website. Still got some technical issues regarding transfers but working on it. Funding has come from the Business Assoc/Tech Army and are trying to link in with the tourism/historical sites. Chis said we are going to need funding to buy the domain and plug-in's. Looking at around £500. Jan proposed and Pat seconded this sum. No objections were noted.

11.2 Town House meetings: it was suggested the earliest the CC could be back for in-person meetings would be September

Date of next Meeting: Tuesday 11th May 2021 online at 7.00pm.

Outstanding Matters Arising from previous minutes

2018

Feb Wynd by Leisure Time -?signage
Road by car park – Nungate Bridge
Mill Wynd – tree stump at corner -? Removal
ALL THREE ABOVE WILL BE CHECKED

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

2019

June Sunken drain at Tesco entrance

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

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

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