

Galashiels Community Council Minutes of Meeting

Chair	Angela Crow	Minute Taker	Erin Forster
Date & Time	6:30 pm on Wednesday 1 st April 2026 at Burgh Chambers, Galashiels		
Meeting Schedule	First Wednesday of every month at 6:30 pm		

	Topic/Key Discussion/Agreement	Action
1. PRESENT	Angela Crow (Chair) (AC), Jim Johnston (Vice Chair) (JJ), Erin Forster (Secretary) (EF), Richard Romeril (Treasurer) (RR), Sandy Walker (SW), Brian Edgar (BE), Shelagh Johnston (SJ), Lisa Anderson (LA), Cllr Fay Sinclair (Returning Officer) (FS), Cllr Neil Mackinnon (NM), and 2 members of the public (MoP). APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Apologies were received from Marion Romeril (MR) and Sheila King (SK). WELCOME and INTRODUCTION FS welcomed all new Community Council members and thanked previous members Judith Cleghorn, Bill White, and Rick Kenney. She also welcomed the returning members, and all members introduced themselves in turn.	
2. DECLARATION of INTERESTS	No conflicts of interests were noted.	
3. APPOINTMENT of COMMUNITY COUNCIL OFFICERS	FS chaired the election of Community Council office-bearers. - The election of AC as Chair was proposed by BE and seconded by SJ. - The election of JJ as Vice Chair was proposed by AC and seconded by BE. - The election of EF as Secretary was proposed by AC and seconded by RR. - The election of RR as Treasurer was proposed by BE and seconded by SJ. Chairing of the meeting was passed from FS from AC. - AC proposed to co-op LS as Vice Treasurer. No objections were raised and the motion was agreed by the Community Council members. LA will qualify for voting rights after attending three meetings or six months after co-option (whichever is shorter).	

4. APPROVAL of PREVIOUS MINUTES and MATTERS ARISING

- Previous to the meeting, AC circulated updated minutes for the previous Community Council meeting. At the time, she had attended the meeting as a member of the public. Returning Community Council members that were in attendance at the meeting agreed the updates. SJ added additional correction, stating that she was in attendance at the meeting and SK and MR were absent.

MATTERS ARISING

Owner	Action	Status	Notes / Update
Angela Crow (Chair)	Email updated constitution and Equalities Statement to members.	Open	
Richard Romeril (Treasurer)	Confirmed required number of bank account signatories.	Open	
Angela Crow (Chair) and Jim Johnston (Vice Chair)	Understand the status of the outstanding 2025 Christmas Lights invoice.	Open	
Jim Johnston (Vice Chair)	Request access to the Scottish Borders Council E-planning system.	Open	
Lisa Anderson (Vice Treasurer)	Explore gift options for previous long serving Community Council members.	Open	
Erin Forster (Secretary)	Create Community Council Facebook page and website.	Open	
Erin Forster (Secretary)	Contact public library to agree process for making Community Council minutes available.	Open	
Erin Forster (Secretary)	Contact Scottish Borders Council to book Burgh Chambers for future Community Council meetings.	Open	
Fay Sinclair (Councillor)	Speak to Public Health Department regarding restaurant skip usage.	Open	
Erin Forster (Secretary)	Request road closure reports.	Open	

5.	CONSTITUTION and EQUALITIES STATEMENT - The last constitution was adopted in 2014. AC will email the Community Council members an updated constitution with the changes from the last constitution highlighted for members consideration. The updated constitution will be proposed for adoption at the next Community Council meeting. - In the same email, AC will include the Equalities Statement, which will also be proposed for adoption at the next Community Council meeting.	AC AC										
6.	BANK ACCOUNT SIGNATORIES - The Community Council members agreed the three signatories for the bank account will be RR, LA, and AC. RR will remove past Community Council members as signatories and enquire with the bank if a fourth signatory is needed based on the bank account signing rules. If a fourth signatory is required, it was agreed to be EF. - The Galashiels Community Council Constitution states documentation of any accounts held in financial organisations shall be made up of two of three office bearing members.	RR										
7.	PLANNING SUBMISSIONS It was agreed JJ would review planning applications in his role as Vice Chair and would circulate them to the Community Council members. JJ to contact Declan Hall, Democratic Services Team Leader, Scottish Borders Council, to request access to the E-planning system.	JJ										
8.	GIFTS There was discussion about purchasing keepsake gifts for past long serving members of the Community Council. LA will explore options for gifts including costs and report her findings to the next Community Council meeting.	LA										
9.	TREASURER’S REPORT - In February 2026 the only income was a £250 private donation for Gala in Bloom. Expenditure was £133.81 to reimburse a past Community Council member for water browser spare parts, £32.40 to reimburse MR for the purchase of a gift for the past Community Council Chair in recognition of her long service. Bank charges were £4.45 - In March 2026 the only income was a business donation for Gala Policies. As Gala Policies do not have a bank account, the Community Council has been entrusted as the financial steward of their monies. Expenditure was £360.60 to reimburse a member of the public for items purchased for Gala in Bloom, £28.85 to reimburse RR for the purchase of a gift for a past Community Council member in recognition of his long service. Bank charges were £5.17. - As agreed at the previous Community Council meeting, various monies have been transferred. Remaining Trails monies have been transferred to the Community Council, £5,838 of Floral Gala monies have been transferred to the Langlee Residents Association and £1,000 has been designated for Gala in Bloom. <u>Designated funds</u> <table><tr><td>Christmas Lights</td><td>£2,225.20</td></tr><tr><td>Residual Gala</td><td>£55.14</td></tr><tr><td>Gala Policies</td><td>£483.39</td></tr><tr><td>Gala in Bloom</td><td>£3,859.52</td></tr><tr><td>Gala Community Council</td><td>£774.05</td></tr></table> - The designated funds for Christmas lights are earmarked to pay an outstanding 2025 electricity invoice. The amount of the invoice is more than what was expected. JJ and AG	Christmas Lights	£2,225.20	Residual Gala	£55.14	Gala Policies	£483.39	Gala in Bloom	£3,859.52	Gala Community Council	£774.05	JJ /AG
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	will speak to the past Community Council member who was querying the bill with the energy supplier to understand the status of the issue and provide an update at the next Community Council meeting. This year responsibility for Christmas lights is being passed to BID For Galashiels. Any remaining Christmas lights monies after the outstanding 2025 invoice is paid will be transferred to BID For Galashiels.	
10. POLICE REPORT	The police report was noted, and no discussion points were raised.	
11. COMMUNICATIONS and LOGISTICS	- AG proposed to the Community Council members that a Community Council website and Facebook page should be created, which was seconded by SW. EF will progress with creating the website and Facebook page. - As per the Galashiels Community Council Constitution, minutes of meetings must be made available for inspection by members of the public at the public library. EF will contact the public library to agree a process for making the minutes available. - AG proposed changing the Community Council brand from a crest to a version of the Heartlands of the Borders brand. It was agreed that a maroon version of the brand will be used for the Community Council. - EF will contact Declan Hall, Democratic Services Team Leader, Scottish Borders Council to book Burgh Chambers for future Community Council meetings.	EF EF EF
12. COMMUNITY EVENTS and NEWS	- Saturday, April 4th – Galashiels Spring Clean-up meeting at 09:45 at Stirling Street carpark, Galashiels. - Saturday, April 4th – Heartland Market and Easter celebration event, with the market starting at 10:00 at Market Square and the Easter celebrations starting at 2:00 pm at Bank Street Gardens. Galashiels. 10th Annual Galashiels Walking Festival with events starting towards the end of April 2026. - Galashiels is bidding to become the UK Town of Culture 2028, which is competition being run by the UK Government's Department for Culture, Media and Sport. Driven by local partnerships, the town aims to celebrate its identity a Borders cultural hub. A decision will be made in late spring, and the winning town will receive £3m.	
13. SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCILLORS REPORT	- At an Executive Council meeting FS challenged the decision to use Galashiels paid parking monies to balance the budget instead of funding community projects. The decision was taken to the Scrutiny Committee where it was agreed the community projects would still have to be funded, but from other sources, as it's illegal for the Scottish Borders Council to not have a balanced budget. FS is doing a review to understand the status of the community projects and the funding still required. - FS is waiting to hear when the Paid Parking Working Group will meet, as a parking report is expected to be included on the agenda. For the next financial year (2026/2027) the paid parking monies will be limited to funding roads projects only. - FS has launched the Borders Buddy project again this year, which provides knitted mice toys to children moving from nursery to primary one (circa 1,000 children). A hundred mice have been received from a maker from Romania and 400 copies of the pattern have been sent to care homes, church groups, and craft groups. Some as far away as Orkney, Wales, and Sussex. - NM thanked FS for her efforts in challenging the paid parking monies decision taken by the Scottish Borders Council.	

	- NM is working on developing the Langlee Locality plan, which is currently in consultation and takes in East Galashiels and Melrose Gait along with Langlee. The aim is to understand the concerns of the residents, any issues they're experiencing and what they would like to see. - The pond in the policies has been filled with water and the water flow blockage removed. - The replacement works for the Glenfield footbridge is expected to start at the end of April 2026, where crossing won't be possible for approximately four weeks.	
14. COMMUNITY COUNCILLORS REPORT	- BE raised a concern from residents regarding Paolo's Italian restaurant's skip lids being left up, causing litter issues. The Community Council discussed writing a letter to the business to raise awareness, but instead FS agreed to speak to the public health department within the Scottish Borders Council for them to investigate. - BE raised a concern from residents regarding inconsiderate parking at the Focus Centre, while the carpark at the old Gala swimming pool is built. It was agreed that the matter was for the police and any residents experiencing their car being blocked-in should contact the police. - BE questioned whether local vape shops had been checked to ensure they met fire safety standards, given the recent Union Street fire in Glasgow. It was agreed this was the remit of Trading Standards and not the Community Council. - JJ informed the Community Council that the high-end sound system purchased by Energise Galashiels has been moved from Galashiels Academy school to the Borders College and it is available for use by the community. Any residents interested in using the sound system should contact Energise Galashiels. - RR requested road closure information for Galashiels is continued to be shared with Community Council members. EF will contact Declan Hall, Democratic Services Team Leader, Scottish Borders Council, to request the reports are forwarded to the Community Council Secretary for distribution to members.	FS EF
15. DATE of NEXT MEETING	Meetings will be held on the first Wednesday of every month at 6:30 pm at Burgh Chambers, Galashiels. Wednesday 6th May	