



Galashiels Community Council
Zoom
Wednesday November 4th 2020
6.30pm

MINUTES

In Attendance

Judith Cleghorn, Tracey Alder, Rick Kenney, Bill White, Liz Jardine, , Richard Romeril, Marion Romeril, Gordon Richardson Dougie Johnston
Cllr Aitchison
Cllr Jardine
Cllr Scott
Callum Hodgson Border Telegraph
Paul Kelly – Southern Reporter
5 Members of Public

1. Welcome and Apologies.

Judith welcomed everyone to another zoom meeting of the Community Council
Apologies Cllr Anderson Lorna Hanif Eileen Frame

2. Minutes Approval

An accurate Minute of the Meeting 7th October via Zoom was approved by Rick Kenney and Seconded by Judith Cleghorn

3. Matters Arising n/a

4. Police Update

5. Sub-groups Update

John Gray of Gala in Bloom gave an update on the plans for Bank Street Gardens and Old Gala House. The proposal if agreed by the Community council is to return to the plan that would have been put in place for this year, similar to last years .

There will be reduced planting at Old Gala House.

£500 has been donate by Royal British Legion

£100 Sanderson Trust

Judith spoke about plans to make Gala a floral town. There will be Plants and Planters on the River fence located by Argos, 2 Planters in Douglas Bridge shopping area and 5 in Channel Street. We are looking in the region of £17,000.

Gala Policies – issue reported last month is now sorted. 10-12 people attend the Litter picks in the policies.

Walking Festival Event 5th and 6th December 4 walks all sold out thanks to the efforts of Dougie Johnston More spaces have been added.

6. Chairs Comments and Questions

First of all, I have to say this has been a terribly busy few weeks and it is such a pity we cannot yet meet face to face. It looks as though this will continue for some time yet.

I would like to touch just briefly on the new 20mph speed limit that has been introduced in the Borders and in Galashiels in particular. I feel this needs some discussion by the community council and I would like it put on the agenda as a particular item for the next meeting. Meanwhile, would you please consider the following:

- So far as I am aware, there has been no consultation on this change
- In the region of £1.2million has been spent on setting this up
- Has any analysis been done on the extra emissions that a slower vehicle produces?

These are just three of my thoughts – I am sure you have more – please email any comments/questions directly to Tracey, copied to me please, in time for them to go out prior to the next meeting, so that they can be discussed at that meeting.

The new school – this will be discussed later under AOB.

I was disconcerted to learn yesterday that SBC have put up the cost of uplifting unwanted domestic items to £40 for up to 5 items.

SBHA regularly uplift fly tipped items in their areas, and they explain that it costs £75 per man and lorry for an uplift, double this if 2 men are needed – plus SBC tipping charges.

This money comes out of rents and I assume it is the same with other housing associations.

This is all on top of the issue of destroying the look of our streets, and further out of town, our countryside.

I seek your approval to meet with the housing associations and with the relevant SBC staff, to see if we can find some sort of solution to this ongoing problem. If any Councillor would like to attend this meeting, it would almost certainly add more weight to getting the issue highlighted and resolved.

7. Treasurers Update and questions

Finances for the Community Council as of 31st October are as follows:

Gala in Bloom	£9486.36
Policies	£329.07
Christmas	£8813.65
Community Trails	£525.56
Resilience Fund	£465.33

Unrestricted Funding £2007.07
Total **£21627.04**

It should be noted that since the end of October, we have received donations for Gala in Bloom of £500 from the Royal British Legion and £100 from Gray Sanderson.

The annual allotment from SBC has not yet been received, although the 2019/20 accounts were submitted some time ago – this is no doubt down to the current Covid 19 situation.

8. Secretaries update -

9. Vice Chairs update – Planning and Licensing

Rick read out the only planning application in this month for St Aidan 's church, no adverse comments.

10. SBC Councillors Comments and questions

Cllr Jardine – Budget to deal with Covid situations will soon be available again from SBC

Cllr Aitchison – Tapestry building visit was excellent and going forward we are looking forward to this being a town effort and bring the town together, still animosity and people have to realise it is here to stay.

Cllr Aitchison suggested that it would be good for members of the Community council to visit the Tapestry building and this was welcomed by all. QA - Has anything ever been done about pedestrianising Channel St? A meeting is to be planned with Roads and Tapestry people to look in to this.

Cllr Scott – . In response to Judith's comments about the uplifting of fly tipped items he said Cllr Anderson is chasing this up.

Cllrs had a visit to the tapestry building

Marion Romeril on behalf of **Cllr Anderson** – Richard and Marion will be meeting with Chloe Dobson from Living Streets to look at dropped curbs and street furniture.

Poppies – shops and businesses have been asked to display poppies in windows as there is no Remembrance parade. Girl Guides and Brownies have been involved in this .

Comment- We need to keep updated about the empty shops in town.

11. AOB

Trails – Bill White mentioned briefly that they are just at the stage of putting a committee together to take forward the Trails from Langlee through to Stow.

Stuart Gordon – Member of Public and Resident of Scott Crescent

Stuart gave a good representation of the views of the some of the public in regard to the plans to build the new Community School on land in Scott Park and the fact that majority of the green space may be lost.

There are a few alternative ideas that the developers, SBC, and the Architects have come up with and nothing yet has been finalised .

John Gray spoke and raised that the location of the new Academy is not in accordance with the Local development Plan – this states that the Scott Park is a **Key Green Area**. Judith said that the Local Development Plan would be discussed at the next Community Council meeting

Chairs Comments on the New School Issue

I think we all have our particular issues regarding the new school, so I will start if I may, then I will throw it open to everyone else. We have been advised that the Focus Centre will be incorporated within the new school, so my issues are for the community. During the presentation, I did not see any particular space devoted solely to the community and I got the impression that we would have to fit in basically where we could, as and when rooms were free.

The Focus Centre has been there since 1971 and I have chaired for the last 25 years. We have built up a rapport with the community, our classes, groups, and events are many and varied. We charge modest prices and in return, we get commitment from volunteers, friends and offer a service like no other to many people.

I appreciate that a community section in a new school is the modern way, but it does not mean it is the right one; all the bookings would go through Live Borders, we would no longer be able to donate to worthy causes within the town such as schools, other community groups, Christmas Lights and Gala in Bloom.

I think losing the Focus Centre and not giving us an equivalent facility within the new school is definitely not what should be happening, and I will fight such an arrangement all the way

Date of next meeting by Zoom -2nd December 6.30pm