



Galashiels Community Council
Burgh Chambers
Wednesday 1st November 2017
6.30pm
Minutes

Present

Judith Cleghorn, Tracey Alder, Tom Ingoldsby Claire Howden, Eileen Frame, Celeste Di Vito, Helen Calder, Bill White

In Attendance

Kathryn Wylie- Southern Reporter, Callum Hodgson –Border Telegraph. PCAlastair Macrae. Cllr Jardine, Cllr Anderson, Cllr Scott
9 Members of the public.

Paul Franklands SBC

Chair Judith Cleghorn welcomed everyone to the meeting and said how nice it was to be back home in the Chambers but thanked Langlee Community Centre for accommodating us over the last 2 months.

1. Apologies

Rick Kenney Tony Brown, Kevin Ryalls, Cllr Aitchison Drew Tulley Liz Jardine. Marion Romeril

2. Minutes Approval

An accurate Minute of the Meeting 11th October was approved by Helen Calder and Seconded by Claire Howden

3. Matters Arising

4. Police Update and Questions

PC Macrae reported that vandalism had been a problem of late.

Lots of youth issues and the Policies seem to be an ongoing problem.

Comment: one of the SBC Councillors suggested that they work with the police to come up with some kind of strategy to look at sharps and how this is dealt with following needles being found by Waterways group on the High St car park

QA if there are any Special Constables being drafted in to Galashiels? PC Macrae said he was not aware of this.

5. Speakers

Paul Frankland – SBC spoke about the repairs to Lowood Bridge. Grade B-Listed 2 span masonry arch bridge built some 250 years ago.

Spans River Tweed has a single traffic lane controlled by traffic lights, and at-grade edge strips for pedestrians.

B6374 Gala–Melrose road is a vital transport link for surrounding area, carries around 5000 vehicles per day.

Principal Inspection was carried out in 2016 by Consultant Engineers Fairhurst and involved: • Close inspection of all of bridge structure • Taking cores through the bridge arch • Diver inspecting central pier and abutments.

All information gathered was then used to allow a Structural Assessment of the bridge to be made • This concluded that Lowood Bridge was in a fair to poor condition and as such several areas of the bridge were deemed to require repair work, most notable; stitching of cracking within the arch barrels • Essential Masonry repairs of arch barrels • Rebuilding of bridge parapet walls • Scour repairs to central pier foundation

Consulting Engineers Fairhurst were then commissioned to undertake detailed design of the necessary Repair Works and in consultation with Council Engineers a Bridge Management Strategy was devised; – Short Term Place 26 tonne weight limit on the bridge – Medium Term Undertake Stitching and Essential Masonry repair work on both arch barrels Rebuild parapet walls Undertake Scour works to Central Pier Undertake repairs and repointing work on Wingwalls and Central Pier – Longer Term Give consideration to waterproofing the structure Continue inspection regime.

26 tonne Weight limit was applied in Spring 2017 and is a precautionary measure which takes the heaviest vehicles off the bridge structure whilst preparatory work for the essential repair work is completed • Preparatory works have included: – Detailed structural design work – General Ecological Survey – Bat Surveys – Trial pits on the bridge to locate major gas and water mains (July 2017) – Discussions with SEPA, SNH and RTC, HES, Scottish Lime Centre – Discussions with Council's In-house Contractor and scaffolding contractors – Liaising with adjacent landowners

Preferred Way Forward: – This review work has concluded the most practical and efficient way to undertake the works whilst minimising disruption to the public is to: - • Undertake works in 1 phase utilising scaffolding • Currently intended that these works will start in Jan/Feb or late June 2018 and initial estimate is that they will last for around 18-20 weeks – still being finalised • During the works the bridge will be closed.

Fully aware of the disruption that the closure will cause but a full closure is unavoidable as the bridge is so narrow and repair works are extensive • Key events we are aware of: – Melrose Ride Out - 18 June 2018 – A6091 Galafoot Bridge Deck Refurbishment (Trunk Road Works) – A6091 BGH Junction Improvement Scheme (Trunk Road Works) • These events will need to be taken into

consideration when programming the works • But with an estimated working period of 18 – 20 weeks it is obviously not possible to cater for all.

A total budget of £640k has been set aside by the Council to undertake these essential repair works • Main Benefits: – Repair structural integrity of the bridge – Allow weight limit to be removed – Return to normal traffic use – Will include re-surfacing of the bridge deck • Issues: – Will require a lengthy bridge closure with associated disruption – Works are targeting essential repairs not a complete bridge refurbishment.

Everyone in surrounding areas and Emergency Services will be fully informed.

QA- Have Historic Scotland contributed to the cost – PF No.

QA- There is going to be a possible 300 new houses being built will the bridge cope? PF –Developers may decide to build a new bridge.

6. Galashiels Academy Update N/A

Kevin Ryalls was not present at the meeting. Recent auction at the Academy to raise funds for the school took place and was attended by some of the Community Council. The Community Council kindly offered to pay for the school Defibrillator. This let some of the funds raised be spent on other areas in school.

One of the items up for auction was Headmaster Kevin Ryalls as slave for a day. Between them Judith and Tracey fought off the bids of a lady on the next table and final bid was £600 won by Tracey. Judith decided instead of getting Kevin to do the cleaning, the time would be better used working together with the Academy, Community Council and the Focus Centre (who funded the bid) to get everyone working together to bring the 3 Communities together to make a difference in the wider community.

7. Sub Groups Update

Ongoing

Planning and Licensing Applications

Applications for Planning – no major concerns.

Gala Waterways

Claire referred to the latest minutes of Gala Waterways and voiced that it had been noted down about Waterways possibly breaking away from the Community Council and “going it alone” especially to look at the purchase of the piece of land adjacent to the Mill Lade . The main worry is not the actual piece of Land but the cost of work and what would happen if developers decided to fill in the lade. Judith said that she will attend the next waterways meeting and speak to the members.

New owners of the Retail Park are willing to work on the Waterwheel and make something more of it.

Next work party Saturday 4th November.

8. Chairs Update

Judith was at a meeting on Monday at SBC regarding the future of Beech Avenue

9. Treasurers Update

The current balance in the account is £1360.00. Christmas Event raffle ticket sales are going well. There are still plenty available.

10. Secretary's Update

11. SBC Councillors Comments and Questions

Judith asked all present if they approved that all reports be received with the Agenda sent out by Tracey on the Monday before the Community Council meeting. All agreed that this was a much better idea and saves so much time.

Cllr Anderson – Winter planning is going very well with the use of new technology that lets SBC see not only where gritters are but where they have been.

Comment made – there are far too many automated extensions to go through at SBC on the 0300 number if you want to speak to someone specific. Is there any way that this can be looked at and made easier? Cllr Anderson said he will look into this.

An observation was made about the windows in the Chambers following the recent dry rot works. The window frames have not been painted for nearly 20 years.

Cllr Scott –Now a supporter of the Tapestry coming to Gala

If the public are able please report potholes in the road via the SBC website. It takes a while to organise for these to be looked at and the work done.

The Tapestry Building should now be known as its proper name as a Cultural Building for the textile industry that we are known for.

Comment made – Could one of the Cllrs please find out about the promised Hotel for the next meeting? Cllrs agreed to look in to this.

Cllr Jardine – No Questions asked directly

12. AOB Comment made – in 2007 the question was put to the Head of the Council about a new school in Gala and we were promised that it was in the plans – Where is it? We are getting left behind. We should be inviting Donna Manson to a meeting to explain where we are in the standing for a new school.

QA – Why are there no fireworks display in Gala? Basically down to money and the volunteers to organise it.

Member of the public – Regarding the Waste Transfer Station- lots of issues would stop the planning of this let alone its approval if this was the first time around. The noise, Dust and dirt, vermin, number of vehicles using that stretch of road would all cause a problem and we hope the Councillors will take responsibility for the C77 and the amount of danger there is and on the subject of the Tapestry, we have been forced to take it and let's hope it's as successful as you figure it will be.

Date of Next Meeting December 6th Burgh Chambers - 6pm start