



Galashiels Community Council
Burgh Chambers
Wednesday 10th May
6.30pm
Minutes

Present

Judith Cleghorn, Tracey Alder, Tom Ingoldsby Rick Kenney John Hazle, Drew Tulley Claire Howden Eileen Frame, Liz Jardine Marion Romeril Pauline Ward

In Attendance

Cllr Andy Anderson, Cllr Aitchison, Cllr Harry Scott, Cllr Euan Jardine
Callum Hodgson – Border Telegraph
11 Members of public
Ewan Jackson – Live Borders

1. Apologies

Tony Brown, Celeste Di Vito Kevin Ryalls, Kevin Drum Helen Calder, Police Scotland, Tracey pointed out that this would-be John Hazle's last meeting on the Community Council before leaving to go to live in Cyprus. The Community Council and Councillors wished John and his wife Moira good luck for the future.

2. Minutes Approval

An accurate Minute of the Meeting 5th April 2017 was approved by John Hazle and Seconded by Drew Tulley

3. Matters Arising

On the subject of the Gala waterways Group using a Chainsaw and whether it was going to add an additional cost to the Community Council Insurance: Tracey finally received a decision from the SBC Insurance Dept. based in Edinburgh stating *the insurers have confirmed that as it is limited use and being carried out by a trained member they are content to cover this at no additional charge. They commented that it also sounds as if the felling of trees would definitely be a benefit to the CC's insurance rather than a hindrance.*

4. Police Report and Questions

No Police present- report at end of minutes.

5. Speakers - Ewan Jackson – Live Borders

Live Borders was previously – Borders Sport and Leisure Trust, with recent changes to ownership etc Live Borders has become responsible for Sports Centres, Libraries, Museums and Community Centres etc.

In 2005 the Trust was worth 2,8 Million and at present are at 10.5 million.

Live Borders is acting for the community with a 15 strong Board of Trustees with Peter Duncan in the Chairs position. There are 3 directors and they all meet 6 times a year.

Who we are at the heart of Live Borders is a commitment to improve lives through physical activity, sport and culture. In this aim, we are driven by our Mission Statement: "To be a successful, sustainable business providing quality opportunities that inspire people by participating in physical activity sport and culture...."

100 people are employed across Galashiels and Langlee.

Galashiels Library is the most expensive establishment to run and keep.

Challenges that face Live Borders are – Funding- Finance and capital investment is a challenge.

Programming and opening hours are a challenge.

QA - What plans does Live Borders have for sports and cultural activities for the school holidays this year?

A. We will again be running a whole range of sports, arts and cultural activities for a wide age range during the holidays. This will include sports facilities; pools; libraries; community centres and available school facilities. These will all be advertised on our website; Facebook and Twitter and in the local press.

QA. - Are there any plans for Live Borders to carry out an updated facilities strategy since the last one was carried out some years ago?

A -This is something we have to look at in the future but we have a number of issues to consider including the increased number of facilities the company is now responsible for; future budget challenges and consideration of the age of the buildings and whether they are still going to be fit for purpose. 67 buildings are not used as much as they should be.

QA- Why are the newspapers being taken out of the libraries?

A- Staff say they are not getting used very much and it will only be the national papers being removed not the local press. The choice to stop the papers was seemingly too much political content.

QA – Galashiels Swimming pool- there are not good enough facilities for disabled people and they are having to use other pools in the Borders.

QA – Museums Service including Old Gala House was due to have a magazine/leaflet printed and put out ... no one knows Old Gala House exists. We are still waiting for this to be published and put out.

QA- what is happening with the Ability Centre part of the Focus Centre, Cllr Aitchison said he would update on this at the next meeting.

Speaker – Jason Curran – Jason Curran wanted to say a few words about re launching the Friends of Gala Policies Initiative. Building was pushed out of this area and it was reserved as a woodland area and now would like to work with Community Council and other organisations to get the area spruced up and looking like a proper natural environment, Sewage needs emptied, railings need removed and bring it up to date so that Ranger led walks can be done. Jason has a date to meet Craig Blackie for a walk around the area. Comment made that the Gala policies group and the Langlee woods groups were joined up and the person responsible for arranging the meetings has not done so since last year, we are still awaiting a meeting being scheduled.

6. Galashiels Academy Update n/a

7. Sub Group Update

Development Plan

Judith gave out an up to date copy of the development plan to everyone

Planning Applications

No planning applications

Gala Waterways

Next meeting 6th June at Old Gala House.

EVENTS

Work progressing on river lighting project – still awaiting costs but these have been promised for this week

We are looking at a torchlight parade and other entertainment, will report back as and when this info is available.

We will be taking the lead on a new project – installing walking/cycling/horse riding trails from Langlee, along the old drove road to Stow, along with a pump track at Langlee. We will be working with Stow Community Council, Tweed Horizons, SBC and other agencies as required. This is a huge project, costing around £750k and will give Galashiels and the Borders a state of the art facility. There will of course, be further commercial benefits – cycle shops, business for cafes etc, and eventually, business for hotels and B&Bs in the area.

GALA in BLOOM

The summer planting on the station has been started at Lowood Nursery; I have been along to see them and they look stunning already. They will be put on the station at the end of May/beginning of June. The cost of these plants is £754, including replacement liners for the planters, and donations have come in to cover this cost from Scotrail and the Focus Centre.

The planting in the Queens garden will be checked and increased by the end of this month, some annuals added. Once the perennials are fully established and grown, there will be no need to add annuals.

The design for the bench should be here in the next few days.

8. Chairs Report

Judith welcomed the new Cllrs and said a big thank you to the 3 Cllrs who were no longer part of SBC. Special thanks to Bill White who we shall miss immensely.

LRA –

The main issues at Langlee are as usual, the rubbish collections, dog fouling and damage to the playpark. I am meeting with Ruth Collin, SBC, and with housing officers from Waverley and SBHA in an attempt to resolve this ever-present issue.

I have had Sutcliffe Play, who installed the playpark, down to have a look at the damage, along with Craig Blackie, SBC. It was agreed that we should have the floor fixed, remove part of the surrounding wall and increase the lighting to the park. We shall apply to various funders to cover the cost.

Saturday 27th May Borders College Nursery will have their annual spring sale at the Campus by Milestone garden centre.

9. Treasurers Report

The balance on the books at 30th April is £1071.77.

10. Secretary's Report

Tracey mentioned that she and her crochet ladies had been approached by Energise Gala to help make a wall feature coming from a window (yet to be decided) of poppies. The ladies were asked to crochet 637 poppies to commemorate the 637 that lost their lives at the end of WW1, so this will be started this year ready for 2018 to coincide with the end of the war. CC have offered to pay for materials. It was also noted that Galashiels Relief fund will look at contributing.

The Weekend walking festival went very well yet again so help we will be doing it again next year but we need a lot more volunteers on hand to help out.

11. SBC Councillors Update

Cllr Aitchison

Sandy paid a personal tribute to John Mitchell and Bill White who both lost their seats on SBC as Elected Members. Sandy said he was gutted, but we need to get on and focus on what is important and he hope to see the initiation of Gala Schools.

Cllr Euan Jardine

Thanks for the welcome and I look forward to working with you all.

Cllr Harry Scott Thanks for welcome

Cllr Andy Anderson again, thank you, it's going to be a long learning curve and nice to see so many of the public here.

12. AOB Community Council

Parking in Netherdale – no meeting has taken place yet and parking is exasperated, area is very trafficked, buses, cars and HGV's some feel that the police should be more active but it's not feasible. A solution needs to be found and we need to work constructively. Judith will organise the meeting.

Judith had a reply from Tracey Logan about the Dog Fouling and introducing a By-Law at Netherdale and the answer was not the one we wanted and we will not be accepting this answer.

There should be dedicated areas for walkers to walk their dogs. It might be an idea if the CC write to the Scottish Government to see if they have any kind of legislation.

2 other letters received, 27 out of 41 toilets will be charged – comfort scheme introduced whereby toilet use is free in certain establishments and they will receive money from SBC or a community partnership to subsidise the use of toilets.

Also letter about a Stopping up Order at Braw Lads Brae

13. Open Session Members of Public

Comment- Hustings was very enjoyable

Mr McKenzie finally got a letter from Christine Grahame and was disappointed, why is it so hard to get a proper answer. Mr McKenzie has a very long recording lasting an hour of all the noise and the abusive threats that occurred on 19th April at just before 11pm. He is still awaiting the police turning up after calling them.

Can we also send congratulations to Kevin Drum who got voted in as an SBC Councillor?

14. Date of Next Meeting – 14th June AGM 6pm -

Normal meeting will resume at 6,30pm

Police Report

Our focus is to reduce crime and disorder, to increase public reassurance within our community and to KEEP PEOPLE SAFE.

We will continue to work closely with our partners and find effective long-term solutions to the issues you raise.

We continue to work on issues raised in relation to the multi-ward Member Plan with the priorities being violent crime, drug dealing and drug misuse, inconsiderate driving and anti- social behaviour.

Violent Crime

- Within the Galashiels and Langlee area there has been 12 calls relating to disturbances.
- Serious Assault on 21-year-old male outside Tesco supermarket – CID Officers are progressing positive lines of enquiry.
- We have seen a number of common assaults (6) reported to police, predominantly alcohol related. These incidents are all subject to ongoing investigations and charges have already been preferred against a number of individuals responsible.
- 20-year-old and 24-year-old male arrested for assault, assault on Police (one officer injured), breach of bail, breach of curfew and outstanding warrants.

Substance Misuse

- Over the month of April there has been 09 recorded calls in relation to drugs misuse.
- 30-year-old male charged with possessing Cocaine and Cannabis.
- 2 x males charged with possessing Class A drug, namely Cocaine.
- 19-year-old female charged with possession of Heroin and Diazepam.
- 29-year-old female charged with possession Class A drug.
- 38-year-old female charged with possession Class B drug.

Police Officers conducted 3 x stop/searches on persons whom have been found in possession of controlled drugs

Reducing Antisocial Behaviour

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Protecting People

- 22 calls relating to Missing Persons or concern for person incidents – these calls often require significant police resources and time.
- 28-year-old male arrested for a Hate crime offence – appeared from custody at Selkirk Sheriff Court.
- 66-year-old vulnerable male victim, pick-pocketed on bus in Galashiels. Police worked closely with Border Buses to secure CCTV evidence.
- 24-year-old and 25-year-old male arrested and both remanded – one receiving 8-month imprisonment for numerous additional thefts of charity boxes.

The local community officers continue to carry out work with vulnerable groups in order to provide them with suitable safety advice. We continue to work with partner agencies in Housing, Health and Education in order to combat any issues that may arise.

If any members of the community council have any concerns regarding vulnerable members of the public that may need some help and advice please pass details to us and we can assist.

Other Issues of Relevance

There have been less shoplifting offences in month of April, repeat offenders are being dealt with by the Courts. 3 males and one female have been identified and reported for 4 theft shoplifting offences in April.

April showed an increase in theft of motor cars and thefts from vehicles in the town. Police have identified a 28-year-old male who has been remanded in prison for a crime wave of theft, whereby 4 cars were stolen. A further 6 thefts from cars was also attributed to him. Cars and stolen property were recovered by police.

THESE THEFTS COULD HAVE BEEN PREVENTED IF MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TAKE BASIC CRIME PREVENTION MEASURES. KEEP HOUSE DOORS, WINDOWS AND VEHICLES LOCKED.

NB. MANY INSURANCE COMPANIES WILL NOT COVER YOUR LOSS IF THEY BELIEVE YOU DID NOT SECURE YOUR PROPERTY ADEQUATELY.

During a separate incident, a 29-year-old male who was seen walking through the town trying car doors was traced by Police and found in possession of numerous stolen property from insecure vehicles. Proof, these type of opportunist criminals exist and are operating in your area.