

DENHOLM & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL ON WEDNESDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2024

Present:

Community Councillor G Crew	Chair
Community Councillor D Hutchings	
Community Councillor S Passmore	Treasurer
Community Councillor D Ploughman	
Community Councillor W Roberts	Secretary

In attendance:

Councillor S Marshall	SBC
Councillor C Ramage	SBC
Councillor N Richards	SBC
7 members of the public	

Prior to opening the agenda, Chair expressed the condolences of everyone attending to the family of Mr Ron Swinton, Secretary of Hopkirk Community Council, who had passed away suddenly during the week, and all observed a minute's silence in his memory.

1. **Apologies for Absence.** CCs L Ferguson, C Nicol, M Richardson. Cllr Marshall apologised that he would have to leave the meeting at 7.30 pm.
2. **Declaration of Interests.** Chair called for any declaration of interest, either in general or when related to a specific item under discussion. **All**
3. **Minutes of the Last Meeting held 17 Jan 24.** The minutes were proposed by CC Ploughman and seconded by CC Passmore. Approved.
4. **Matters Arising.** Sec addressed the outstanding action points from the last meeting:
 - a. **Telephone Box (Item 4a).** CC Hutchings reported the repairs had been completed. Chair thanked him for his efforts.
 - b. **Village Hall Defibrillator (Item 4b).** Project was still on-going. **Ferguson**
 - c. **Village Green Notice Board (Item 4d).** Cllr Ramage reported that SBC had agreed to rectify the problem.
 - d. **Rubbish Collection (Item 4e).** Cllr Ramage understood that the rubbish beside the Village Hall had now been cleared.
 - e. **Denholm Website Proposal (Item 7b and 7c).** Sec had spoken to Mrs Jane Curry who managed the Denholm Village Website. She had agreed that this was available as a common site for all the various community organisations to post their information. Local organisations should contact Mrs Curry for details.

Sec explained that the D&DCC agendas and minutes would now all be posted on the Website, accessible via the side heading "D&DCC".
 - f. **Minto Speed Limit Changes (Item 11).** Sec had explained to the Minto residents requesting the change that the CC had accepted that the limits would be reviewed under the next scheduled SBC review. However, he had also advised them that they were, of course, free to approach SBC directly on the matter, should they so choose.

- g. **Small Grants Scheme (Item 15).** Cllr Marshall presented the CC with a “Pop-up Bobbie” (policeman image with speed camera), to be used at the discretion of the CC. The model had been funded through the SGS, which was now exhausted, but with new funds due in the next FY.
 - g. **Denholm Newsletter (Item 17a).** Chair was pleased to report that Ms Vicky Oswald had agreed to take over the task of editing and distributing the Newsletter. She planned to publish the next edition early in March and thereafter on a bi-monthly basis.
5. **Police Report.** Chair had circulated the MMWR for January to members. There were no comments.
6. **Treasurer’s Report and Foundation Scotland Update.** Treasurer presented her report. Details of recent activity in the three accounts are summarised in the attached annex. Treasurer had approached Foundation Scotland regarding the 2023 allocation which was still awaited, and had been assured these would be transferred shortly. There were no outstanding invoices.
7. **Correspondence.** Chair had distributed received correspondence. She reported three items:
- a. **Cold Comfort Scotland Meeting.** Chair informed the CC that a meeting was scheduled for 24 Apr 24 in Falkirk.
 - b. **Denholm School.** Chair read out a letter from Ms Munro at SBC detailing the method of establishing the staffing levels at the school which were based *inter-alia* on the number of pupils registered. The staffing levels would be reviewed in June and again in September of this year.

Mr Gordie Campbell (present) stated he understood that pupil numbers were falling and were predicted to fall again over the summer, probably resulting in a need for fewer classrooms, and that we should expect teacher numbers to fall commensurately. He also predicted that the position of Head Teacher would also be lost. Cllr Ramage undertook to look into the issue.
 - c. **Denholm Church Clock.** Chair had received a letter from Mr Iain Smith of Ruberslaw Kirk Sessions regarding the church clock, which was now in urgent need of repair and regular maintenance. SBC had hitherto been responsible for this work, but had indicated they were no longer able to do so. The letter stated that Ruberslaw Parish Church did not have the necessary funds, and Mr Smith was seeking assistance from the D&DCC.

The meeting agreed that the clock was an important feature of the community, and its current unserviceability was unacceptable. However, there were questions whether such work was eligible for funding from FS monies and this would need to be investigated. Treasurer to clarify.

Cllr Marshall questioned why SBC had absolved themselves of responsibility for the clock, and he undertook to pursue the matter with SBC. (Cllr Marshall departed the meeting at this point.)
8. **Planning Applications.**
- a. **Briery Yards, Hornshole - Appeal.** A previous application for construction of a new dwelling house had been rejected. Cllrs reported that the appeal was due to be considered on Monday 26 February. Sec indicated he considered the reasons for the rejection were ill-considered and he proposed that the CC submit its support for the appeal. It was

Treasurer

Ramage

Treasurer

Marshall

- agreed that a majority view in favour of the appeal could be submitted. Sec to action as soon as possible. **Sec**
- b. **24/00150/FUL - Text House, Main Street, Denholm - Extension.** The application had been circulated to members. There was general support for the plan and no objections. Sec to respond. **Sec**
9. **Teviotdale & Liddesdale Area Partnership.**
- a. **D&DCC Representation.** Chair asked if any member was able to take over the role as the D&DCC representative on the Area Partnership, but none was yet forthcoming.
- b. **Area Partnership Pot A and Pot B.** Cllr Ramage reported that the Panel had met the previous evening. Efforts were made to simplify the funding process, but these remained on-going. The next meeting of the Pot A Panel was on Monday 4 Mar 24. The next meeting of the full Partnership was on Tuesday 26 Mar 24 in the Hawick Lesser Town Hall.
- The CC had also been asked to provide a representative for the Funding Panel. Members were asked to consider. **All**
10. **SBC review of Financial Support to CCs.** The outcome of the review was still awaited.
11. **Lower Dean – Tree Felling.** Chair welcomed Mr Tom Sellar, a member of the Denholm Dean Committee, who gave a presentation on the plan for tree felling in the Lower Dean. He gave a background to how his committee had been formed and its responsibilities. He explained in detail the plans currently in place, with a sketch-map showing the locations of the intended felling, which it was hoped would be scheduled for May and expected to last for about 2 weeks. Members of the public then asked questions, in particular with regard to the anticipated disruption to access to their homes. Mr Sellar indicated that efforts were being made to minimise such disruption, while acknowledging that some was inevitable. It was hoped that the cost of the work would be covered by the value of the timber harvested. Chair thanked him for his contribution.
12. **Denholm Placemaking Project.** CC Hutchings reported that plans were progressing, with the next meeting of the working group on Tuesday 27 Feb 24. A draft questionnaire would be circulated among CC members for their consideration and comment. It was suggested that the questionnaire might be circulated among all residents via the revived Newsletter. **Hutchings**
13. **EV Charging Points.** CC Ploughman said he had now re-established communications with SP and had received an update on the status of the project. SP had received the legal documents regarding the Village Hall site and the site opposite the Cream Puff café, which appeared satisfactory; however, there were still questions regarding the status of the Fisherman’s carpark site, and its distance from a suitable connection point. Furthermore, SP had identified an underground high-voltage cable at this site which may make it unworkable.
14. **Small Grants Scheme.** See Item 4g above.
15. **Wind Farms Update.** Chair reported that she and Sec had recently attended a meeting of local Community Councils with Energie Kontor and SBC, chaired by Rachel Hamilton MSP, called to discuss issues relating to the Pines Burn wind farm project. Considerable progress was made at the meeting, with EK making some significant concessions regarding the Community Benefit Scheme. EK also acknowledged the considerable disruption caused to local communities and **All**

businesses during the turbine delivery phase, now much delayed, and indicated several lessons had been learned.

16. **AOB.**

a. **Denholm Post Office.** Chair indicated that the process of handing over the Post Office to its new proprietors was currently under way. The meeting agreed that the retirement of Lynn (and Gordon) Ferguson from the PO should be marked and their significant contribution to the community suitably acknowledged. Chair proposed that an “Afternoon Tea” in the Village Hall had been proposed for Saturday 16 March, and appropriate arrangements were in hand.

All

b. **Newsletter.** Treasurer proposed that the cost of re-establishing the Newsletter should be borne by a grant from the Community Fund, and this was agreed.

c. **Hawick Rievers Festival.** Cllr Ramage distributed copies of a brochure giving details of the festival, starting on Friday 22 Mar 24.

d. **Unpaid Work Team.** Cllr Ramage brought to the attention of the CC that the Unpaid Work Team were offering to carry out work for Borders community bodies. Anyone interested should contact 01896 664140 or www.scotborders.gov.uk/unpaidwork

All

e. **Potholes.** CC Ploughman stressed again the extent of the pot-hole problem in the Hassendean area, and others reported similar problems throughout the wider area. All were encouraged to report dangerous pot-holes to SBC.

f. **Youth Club.** Mr Gordie Campbell reported progress on establishing a Denholm Youth Club, and asked whether funding could be made available from the Wind Farm Fund. Treasurer would investigate.

Treasurer

Date of Next Meeting. D&DCC would next meet on **20 March 2024** at 7.00pm in the Village Hall. Chair closed the meeting at 8.25 pm with thanks to all who had participated.

ALL

W A B Roberts
Sec
D&DCC

25 Feb 24

Membership of D&DCC:

Mrs G Crew (Chair)
Mrs L Ferguson
Mr D Hutchings
Mrs C Nicol
Mrs S Passmore (Treasurer)
Mr D Ploughman (Vice Chair)
Mrs M Richardson
Mr W Roberts (Secretary)

Information:

Mr S Marshall (Councillor, SBC)
Mrs C Ramage (Councillor, SBC)
Mr N Richards (Councillor, SBC)
Democratic Services Team, SBC
PC A Patterson (Police Scotland)
Ms J Wilkinson (Clerk to SBC)
Mr J Marshall (The Hawick Paper)
Mrs J Currie (Denholm Facebook)