

DENHOLM & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL ON WEDNESDAY 17 JANUARY 2024

Present:

Community Councillor G Crew	Chair
Community Councillor L Ferguson	
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
2 members of the public	

1. **Apologies for Absence.** CCs D Hutchings, C Nicol, M Richardson.
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 15 Nov 23.** The minutes were proposed by Sec and seconded by CC Ploughman. Approved.
4. **Matters Arising.** Sec addressed the outstanding action points from the last meeting:
 - a. **Telephone Box (Item 4b).** On-going. CC Hutchings had agreed to action. **Hutchings**
 - b. **Village Hall Defibrillator (Item 4c).** CC Ferguson reported the project was still on-going. She and Treasurer would liaise to establish the likely costs involved. **Ferguson**
 - c. **SBC Planning Notification Policy (Item 4e).** Sec expressed his appreciation that one application (see Item 8a below) had been notified direct to the CC.
 - d. **Village Green Notice Board (Item 4e).** Chair reported that she had been unable to open the noticeboard and asked for rectification work to be done asap. Cllr Ramage offered to report the problem to SBC. **Ramage**
 - e. **Rubbish Collection (Item 4f).** CC Ferguson reported that the rubbish which had lain by the resilience store by the VH was yet again still there. Cllrs Ramage and Marshall both offered to raise the matter with SBC. **Marshall
Ramage**
 - f. **Donation (Item 6b).** Chair reported that Johnson Oils had donated £270 towards the CC's Christmas activities, and that this had covered the cost of the Christmas boxes for community children in full. Sec to write thanks. **Chair**
5. **Police Report.** Chair had received an apology from the police that the MMWR was delayed and could not therefore be presented.
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 (*to follow*). There were no outstanding invoices.

- Treasurer reported a £50 credit in the account from an unidentified source. She would continue to investigate. **Treasurer**
7. **Correspondence.** Chair had distributed received correspondence. She reported 2 items:
- a. **South Scotland Land Use Consultation.** There was an on-line event on 31 Jan 24, and the consultation was due to end on 23 Feb 24. The link for the consultation: sosrep.dumgal.gov.uk/whats-happening
- b. **Denholm Website Proposal.** Mr Miller (attending) asked if the CC had any response to a Feuars proposal emailed in mid-December, for a single common information website for the various village bodies, such as the D&DCC, The Feuars, and Village Hall etc. Chair and Sec both had difficulty recalling the matter.
- [Afternote: Chair and Sec later found the website proposal email in question, dated 13 Dec 23, and apologised for failing to address the matter, which had been overlooked during the Christmas festivities. This will be discussed with CC members.]* **Chair, Sec**
- c. Mr Miller also pointed out that he had been unable to find recent D&DCC agendas and minutes on the village Facebook page. Sec asserted that he always sent these documents to the person administering the website, and he understood that these were indeed being posted as requested.
- [Afternote: Contrary to Sec's assertion at the meeting, Sec also later confirmed that the last agenda and minutes available on the Denholm Village Facebook site were for the Aril 23 and Jun 23 meeting respectively. He was addressing the issue with those concerned and would endeavour to rectify the problem.]* **Sec**
8. **Planning Applications.**
- a. **23/01826/FUL – Alteration/Extension at Old Schoolhouse, Minto.** Sec had circulated the application and no comments/objections had been received from members. He had therefore submitted a D&DCC response accordingly on 15 Jan 24 to meet the SBC suspense date.
9. **Teviotdale & Liddesdale Area Partnership.**
- b. **Area Partnership Pot A and Pot B.** CC Ploughman stated that the next meeting was on 20 Feb 24 and asked if there were any projects for the £5,284 still available for the Denholm pot. CC Ferguson indicated she was hoping to provide an estimate for repairs to the community shed now owned by the Village Hall, and that this would be a candidate for the funds. **Ferguson**
- CC Ploughman also enquired what representation was required for the Pot A Assessment Panel, in light of the retirement of CC Joe Somerville. Cllr Ramage undertook to clarify the situation and let him know. **Ramage**
- a. **D&DCC Representation.** CC Ploughman explained his frustration at the way assessment meetings were being run and the inappropriate interventions from a particular (unnamed) Councillor. He thus felt unable to continue as the D&DCC rep, and asked for another member to replace him. Chair thanked CC Ploughman for his contribution over recent years. Members were asked to consider taking over the role. **All**
10. **SBC review of Financial Support to CCs.** The outcome of the review was awaited.

11. **Minto Speed Limit Changes.** Sec outlined the situation and reported the latest email correspondence. SBC had assured him that the matter would be addressed in the scheduled review of road safety arrangements, due in 2025, and to bring this forward could only be done at the expense of other scheduled work for the authorities. Minto residents had asked if the CC was prepared to intervene in an attempt to accelerate the matter, but the meeting agreed that this would not be appropriate in light of SBC's position. Cllrs indicated that the Minto residents were, of course, free to approach SBC directly on the matter, and Sec would convey this to those concerned.

Sec

12. **Main Street Footway.** Sec understood that SG had now implemented the change in regulations banning vehicle parking on footpaths throughout Scotland, and he had asked Philippa Gilhooly whether SBC intended to apply this change in The Borders. She had indicated that SBC did not have the necessary funds to implement and enforce the new regulation and that, in the meantime, SBC would be taking a "gentle approach" by posting appropriate signage and warning notices on offending cars.

There followed a discussion highlighting the negative impact on village businesses of implementing the new rules and possible solutions, including a footpath within The Green in order to accommodate parking on the north side of Main St. A member of the public attending, while agreeing with the business-related issue, also stressed the priority of ensuring pedestrian safety, to which all CC members agreed. The matter would need to be monitored.

13. **Denholm Placemaking Project.** As a member of the Placemaking Working Group, Mr Miller reported that the 23 Nov meeting had been postponed, and there had been no progress to date. The proposed survey of public opinions had still to be drafted, and he suggested that this survey should initially be "tested" among interested groups, such as CC members, to establish the appropriateness of the questions. This was agreed, and it was hoped CC Hutchings would be able to take the issue forward soon.

Hutchings

14. **EV Charging Points.** CC Ploughman said there was no news on the project, and he was becoming concerned at the lack of response from Scottish Power to his recent enquiries. It was confirmed that some legal documents required from the Village Hall and from the Feuars had been sent to SP.

15. **Small Grants Scheme.** Cllr Marshall indicated that a total of £3.5K was still available for proposed projects, and Cllrs were pressing hard for these funds to be carried forward in the next SBC budget. CC members were encouraged to bid appropriately.

All

16. **Wind Farms Update.** Chair reported that she and Sec had recently attended a meeting of local Community Councils called to agree a common approach to WF related issues generally, and particularly relating to Community Benefit Funds. Mr Philip Kerr and Ms Barbara Elborn were leading on the issues and would be meeting with developer reps and with the SG to press the concerns of the communities affected.

Chair reiterated the concerns of local residents and businesses over the disruption caused by the transport of blades to the Pines Burn WF site, and the need for adequate compensation. It was noted that the period of "abnormal load disruption" had now been extended from 22 Dec 23 to 31 Mar 24.

17. **AOB.**

- a. **Denholm Newsletter.** Chair reported that she was hopeful that a new manager for the newsletter had been found, and she would continue to liaise with that person over the coming days.
- b. **Denholm School.** CC Passmore was pleased to report that she had noticed a significant improvement in the atmosphere at the school following recent concerns/problems, and that some parents who had indicated their intention to move their children to another school, had now decided to remain at Denholm. Chair was concerned that the recent withdrawal of some children could lead to a reduction in teacher numbers; Cllrs suggested that Chair email SBC to seek confirmation of the latest position.
- c. **Potholes.** Cllr Marshall said he had reported to SBC Roads a number of potholes around the local area and would monitor work to implement repairs. He also thanked all those who had made similar reports to SBC and he encouraged everyone to follow suit.

It was also reported that a deer recently killed on a road in Cavers, and that the remains needed to be collected. Cllr Richards offered to report to SBC.
- d. **Thanks.** Mr Miller asked that thanks be passed to those who had rectified the situation with the damaged Christmas tree on The Green. Chair said she would be contacting those concerned with the CC's appreciation for their efforts.

Date of Next Meeting. D&DCC would next meet on **21 February 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

26 Jan 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)