

Royal Burgh of North Berwick Community Council

Minutes of the 416th Public Meeting held at 19:30 on Tuesday 1 March 2011 at the Fire Station, North Berwick

Present: Cllr P Burton Chairman
Cllr K Smith Secretary
Cllr E Danks Treasurer
Cllr M Baker Vice-Chairman
Cllrs, J Goodfellow, L Hall, R MacEwen, W Macnair, S Sinclair, I Watson

In attendance: ELC Cllr N Rankin, PC Banks, Ms P Earle, local press, Mrs J Marr, Mrs P Macaulay, Mrs H Smith, Mrs A Hall, Mrs L Armstrong, Ms G Prince, Mr P Smith, Mr S Smith, Mrs J Smith, A N Other

- 1 Apologies for absence** **Action**
Cllrs R Bryson, J Scott, PC Dobbie
- 2 Minutes of meeting held on 1 February 2011**
Item 9.8 should read "A request was made to approach ELC informally to request that a time limit be put on property advertisements and for planning not to be made retrospectively."
- 3 Matters Arising**
- 3.1 *Twinning Association*
(3.1) Cllr Goodfellow would take over as the representative of the Community Council from Cllr Hall at this Association and would attend the meeting on 14 March with the Chairman. **JG/PB**
- 3.2 *Yacht Club*
(3.2) PC Dobbie had arranged a meeting to discuss diversionary activities for young people.
- 3.3 *Christmas lights*
(5.1) A letter had been prepared for personal delivery to residents and traders in the High Street whose properties would be affected by the installation of new fittings for the lights and whose permission would be sought.
- 3.4 *Older People's Strategy*
(6.1) Mr Small and Mr Leys had met with the Friends of the Edington to discuss the new joint committee and its future role.
- 3.5 It was understood that physiotherapy services in the North Berwick Health Centre would be transferred to Belhaven Hospital. The Friends of the Edington did not seem to be aware of this plan and their Chair was making enquiries.
- 3.6 Mr I Donald was attending a meeting in Musselburgh, on behalf of the day centre, to discuss Scottish Government changes to funding being spent in East Lothian. It was understood that this was being planned over three years.
- 3.7 *Transition North Berwick questionnaire*
(12.2) Several councillors had attended the workshop which had considered the responses to the questionnaire, although not all had been representing the Community Council. It was again noted that some houses had apparently not received the questionnaire. 292 school pupils' households had responded and a further 226 responses had been received through the direct mailing. Responses had been interesting and would be discussed at a future meeting.
- 4 Police report**
- 4.1 17 crimes had been committed, with 9 solved. The solvency rate was

currently over 50%.

2 x domestic incidents	1 x failing to keep dog under proper control
3 x theft	1 x assault 1 x wildlife crime
4 x vandalism	1 x theft by housebreaking
1 x forgery and uttering	3 x road traffic offences

4.2 Most calls made to the police were grade three or more, showing that there had been little serious crime. Most reporting was on Tuesdays and Thursdays, which was surprising, although trends were difficult to show where crime was low.

4.3 *Dog warden patrol*
No violations had been found during the recent patrol and dog bags had been supplied. Awareness stickers had been posted in problem areas.

4.4 *Lochbridge Road speeding*
A hand-held radar initiative would be conducted in the near future.

4.5 *Antisocial behaviour patrols*
These would be held in conjunction with community wardens and ELC liaison officers.

4.6 *Youth surgery*
Surgeries would be held at the Hope Rooms on Friday afternoons.

4.7 *Pubwatch*
A second person had been added to the 'banned persons' list. There had been no incidents in the previous month.

4.8 *CAPP meeting*
Attendance at recent meetings had been disappointing. The meetings were a good tool in understanding the wider perspective of a community and issues not brought to light through other forums. More advertising would be initiated. The next meeting would be held on 30 March at 19:30 at the police station.

4.9 *School checks*
A multi-agency approach would be used to focus on safety at schools. Focus would be on pedestrian habits, safer crossing, pedal cycle safety, use of safety belts and booster seats, correct parking and vehicle maintenance.

8 Planning matters

8.1 *Hope Cottage, 2 Melbourne Road*
Cllr Goodfellow outlined the planning application and reported that objections had been received regarding raising the height of the roof. Mrs H Smith spoke on behalf of the residents of Victoria Road who were attending the meeting. She stated that their objections were threefold:

- the plan was an unsympathetic development in a conservation area
- the design would cause a detrimental impact on a tourist amenity
- the plan indicated overdevelopment of the original site

8.2 Mrs Smith elaborated on each of the above.

8.3 The development would demolish the architectural integrity in the conservation area. The high elevation would hide the multiplicity of roof heights, detracting from local style and views. All views from Victoria Road would be affected and the sweeping view over East Bay broken.

8.4 This was a pivotal point for tourism. A visualisation of the new building was tabled. It was noted that a neighbouring building had been modernised but had retained its character, which the design under discussion would not. The orientation was such that the most visible aspect would be the large gable end. The loss of amenity for visitors and local residents should be weighed against the gain for only one resident.

8.5 There was concern that the building may be sold shortly after completion of work, should planning permission be granted. Light in neighbouring houses would be affected and it was noted that there were precedents in refusal of planning permission when neighbouring properties would be overshadowed.

8.6 The history of the building was discussed and the differing levels of Victoria Road houses was noted to preserve the medieval plan of the former pilgrimage centre. These levels and the rear elevation of Victoria Road were only visible from the corner affected by the proposed build. The town was in danger of losing small areas of character and its smaller dwellings.

8.7 The character statement of conservation areas was described and it was noted that guidance from the Scottish Government exhorted architectural and visual qualities which gave rise to character. It was felt that ELC should advertise planning applications which may be controversial in a conservation area.

8.8 Neighbours would object individually and Cllr MacEwen would contact the Environment Trust to ask that group to reconsider its previous lack of objection. Cllr Goodfellow would put in an objection.

RM
JG

[Visitors attending for the discussion on Hope Cottage left the meeting]

8.9 *Former coastguard station*

The application to convert the building into a takeaway food outlet was tabled and discussed. Mrs Hall, a local resident, felt that it was an inappropriate development for the site as, although it was not a listed building, it stood within an area of ancient monuments. It was noted that planning permission could be granted on a condition of food consumption being only within the confines of the premises. It was felt that the church may be used as a shelter within which to eat, with resultant litter. A food outlet was not considered to be sympathetic to the visual, natural and historic values of the area and there were enough other outlets in the town. The building was not within the remit of the Harbour Trust. It was believed that an architectural survey would be necessary for services to be installed. It was noted that local residents were submitting objections.

[Mrs Hall left the meeting]

8.10 The meeting would discuss the application at a future meeting.

8.11 *Bass Rock development*

Three objectors had spoken against the development of flats at the ELC Planning Committee meeting that day. Mr Goodfellow had also spoken on the Community Council's views on unsafe access. The application had been approved with a measure to examine traffic flow.

8.12 *Uprising*

A site meeting to consider the plan for a youth activity centre had been well attended by the public the previous day. Two residents had objected at the Planning Committee meeting. Cllr Goodfellow had relayed the Community Council's views on parking, late opening and alcohol. The plan had been approved. It was noted that ELC Cllrs Berry and MacKinnon had not been able to speak on the matter at the meeting, although Cllr Berry had spoken as a

private citizen.

8.13 *3-5 Beach Road*

The application to change the use of the guest house to a private house did not meet with objections, although the decline in the number of B&B facilities in the town was noted.

8.14 *6 Heugh Lane*

There was no objection to the plan to extend the house.

8.15 *57A Westgate*

There was no objection to the installation of roof windows.

8.16 *21 Brodie Avenue*

There was no objection to the proposal to extend the house.

8.17 *2 York Road*

There were no objections to the proposals for alteration and the erection of a balustrade at Flat 4.

8.18 It was noted that the recent application regarding Amisford had been refused.

5 Park and ride proposal

5.1 The Chairman had learned of the proposal through the local press. It was felt that the proposal should have come to the community for consultation. It was understood that £600,000 had been assigned in the ELC budget to develop the scheme, which could be controversial in the Strathearn Road/Dirleton Avenue area. It had not been agreed within the town that park and ride was the best way to deal with traffic problems. ELC councillors had not been consulted. It was noted by ELC Cllr Rankin that the plans were in the early stages and that it should be expected to go to consultation. The Chairman would ask ELC Cllr MacLennan to provide an opportunity for consultation and invite his comments. **PB**

6 North Berwick coastal ward museum

6.1 The meeting was pleased that £1.5m had been allocated in the ELC budget. There had been no further details regarding whether this sum was for all services in the building and the meeting looked forward to receiving details. A meeting on how the funds would be managed would be held with officials the following week. An exhibition showcasing the vision for the museum would be held in August in the Hope Rooms. The meeting was pleased that representations of public opinion to ELC had paid off.

7 Exposed sewer pipe, West Beach

7.1 A meeting between ELC, Scottish Water, and Cllrs Burton and Macnair representing the Community Council, had been held to discuss the problem. ELC Cllr MacLennan and Chief Executive Alan Blackie had acknowledged the problem and were keen to solve it. Scottish Water would investigate possible improvement, followed by a feasibility study. It was hoped that ELC could make a financial contribution. A further meeting would be held in two months' time.

7.2 It was noted that it had previously been stated that ponding would be corrected by Scottish Water before the tourist season began. This was not felt to be possible within the bigger picture of the whole problem concerning aesthetics and rocks being washed up and damaging walls. It was noted that three previous attempts had been made to solve the problem. Value-added and not simply cosmetic solutions were needed and there seemed to be a resolve to find a permanent solution.

[ELC Cllr Rankin left the meeting]

9 Reports from groups and societies

9.1 *Communities in Bloom*

Fundraising and publicity had been started.

9.2 *Business Association*

It was disappointing that the Business Association had not been represented at the Transition North Berwick event (see item 3.7). It was understood that the Association had not been notified.

9.3 *Youth Network*

A Community Festival would be held in The Lodge on 18 June. Cllr Watson would provide text for the newsletter. It was hoped that the café would be open by then – discussions for the Youth Café to run it were ongoing.

IW

9.4 *Community Centre*

A new Community Development Officer was in post following a swap with Port Seton. There was a proposal to transfer community development and community facilities to the Enjoy Trust. All management committees were meeting with ELC; there was some concern within the North Berwick management committee.

10 Correspondence

10.1 *Licensing Board amendments*

As was mandatory, the Clerk to the Licensing Board had notified the Community Council that Co-operative Food at 117 High Street would have a new off-sales capacity. Responses should be submitted by 9 March. The Secretary would ask for further details.

KS

10.2 *Community Environment Fund*

There had been 19 applications and the application for funding for the proposed new notice board had been refused.

10.3 *Civic Pride Fund*

Cllrs Macnair and Smith would liaise to apply to this fund for support for the proposed new notice board.

11 Any other business

11.1 *Christmas lights*

The distribution of letters (see item 3.3) was discussed.

11.2 *Association of Scottish Community Councils*

The payment of the membership fee of £15 was agreed.

11.3 *Community planning*

No communication had yet been received.

12 Date of Next Meeting

19.30 on Tuesday 5 April 2011 in the Fire Station