

**Royal Burgh of North Berwick Community Council**

**Minutes of the 469th Public Meeting held at 19.30 on Tuesday 07 July 2015**

**in The Fire Station, Station Road, North Berwick.**

**Present:** Cllr S Sinclair Chairman

Cllr K Smith Secretary

Cllrs M Baker, E Danks, P Hamilton, G Johnstone, D Kellock, W Macnair, J Scott, I Watson

**In attendance:** ELC Cllrs D Berry, T Day and J Goodfellow, Mr Thomson, local Press, Mrs A Turgoose.

**1 Apologies:** Cllrs D Ritchie and H Smith, Police Scotland.

**2 Minutes of the Meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2015.**

**2.1 Conservation North Berwick Presentation**

(5.4) Amendment to paragraph 2: *Cllr Ritchie reminded Councillors that a decision had been postponed to allow for clarification on "enablement". ELC Cllr Goodfellow confirmed that the car park had to be in position before the housing could take place...*

**2.2 Amendment: "repainting" to be amended to "replacement"**

(9.2)

The adoption of the amended Minutes was proposed by Cllr D Kellock and seconded by Cllr M Baker.

**3 Matters Arising.**

3.1 There were no Matters Arising.

**4 Police Report**

4.1 The Secretary read out the Police Report which was based on incidents between 02/06/15 and 05/07/15. There may be other incidents but, due to their nature or ongoing investigations, it was not possible to divulge full details.

4.2 There were 180 calls to the Police in the month. The calls had been broken down in terms of the agreed priorities for the Ward.

**Road Safety**

**You told us that there were issues with speeding motorists and inconsiderate parking, especially in central areas and near schools.**

There were numerous parking complaints including reports of overnight camping at various carparks, Glenburn Road and the Seabird Centre. Police patrols are being stepped up in the area to discourage these incidents (parking/ obstruction etc.) As a result of the inconsiderate parking in controlled areas, these are continuing to be dealt with by parking fines (6 issued). Residents of Beach Road have complained regarding buses dropping off golfers. A joint approach is being considered in an attempt to resolve the matter. Police received a report of vehicles speeding along St Andrew's Road. None traced.

## **Antisocial Behaviour**

**You told us there were problems with littering, violent conduct, young people causing disturbance, antisocial behaviour and rowdy drunken behaviour.**

Numerous noise and loud music complaints resulted in one male being arrested on his ASBO. A couple were arrested from the County Hotel after causing a disturbance. They were extremely unhappy to have missed breakfast!

A female was arrested after causing a disturbance outside the police station.

There is an ongoing neighbour complaint where numerous calls were made to the Police, all minor issues. The Community Warden is aware and offering assistance. Two acts of vandalism on the High St. Windows were smashed.

Report of a fight in the Lodge Grounds involving a large number of youths - On Police arrival it was over and dispersed.

## **Substance Abuse**

**You told us you were worried about people using and dealing drugs in the area and their subsequent behaviour**

Police received a report of youths smoking cannabis outside the Sports Centre. Area was searched with a negative result. Further patrols were carried out in the area, also negative.

## **Theft**

**You told us you were worried about security and the theft of personal possessions such as power tools, bicycles and money.**

There have been five reports of theft by shoplifting since the last Community Council report. Most have involved large theft of alcohol from the Convenience stores in North Berwick. Positive lines of enquiry are being pursued.

On 14/05/15, Police received two reports of theft from locked vehicles in the town. Enquiries are ongoing in an attempt to identify culprit(s). At this time, it is not known if the incidents are linked.

A youth was assaulted on the beach after a party. His money and were phone stolen. The culprits were known to him and have been identified.

Two outboard motors were stolen from boats in the harbour. Enquiries continue.

White diesel was stolen from a lorry near New Mains.

***Should anyone have information in relation to criminality, they should contact Police Scotland on 101 or Crime Stoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.***

### **4.3 CAPP: Meeting 24/06/2015**

Evening checks of known beach hang outs at Yellowcraigs to prevent antisocial behaviour. Consider working with First Bus to see if drivers can phone in about large groups of youths with alcohol coming into the area.

**Action by Police and Police Wardens:** Police patrols during weekends, when duties permitted. Murdo MacKinnon at Musselburgh First Bus Depot will brief his drivers to call in if groups of youths are travelling by bus with alcohol.

- 4.4 Parking on High Street during the week, Quadrant between East Road and Marine Parade at weekends.

**Action:** High visibility patrolling carried out by locally funded officers during trading hours. Also, drivers were spoken to during evenings and weekends. A number of tickets have been issued in Gullane and North Berwick.

- 4.5 **Other incidents of note:** Several window cleaners were operating without appropriate ELC licences. They were cautioned and charged accordingly and reports submitted to the Procurator Fiscal.

A taxi driver was operating out with the terms of his licence and a report was submitted to the Procurator Fiscal (PF) in conjunction with Police Scotland Licensing Officer

Parking Issues in Glenburn Road, Lochbridge Road and St Andrew's Street, dealt with by Officers.

A smashed shop window on the High Street reported 7 June. Enquiries ongoing

Several thefts from local shops

Email received about parking outside LOCO( Nisa) store. Information that customers and delivery vehicles were parking in a dangerous manner on corners

**Issues raised:** Fly tipping at Glenburn Road – already dealt with by ELC.

Keith Tait reported that a memorial bench on the Law had been ripped from its concrete base and set on fire. A number of pathway signs had also been damaged and set alight. Information suggested that visitors may have been responsible. There had been a report that youths had built a gang hut on private land near the Whisky Bottle. Keith Tait would visit with the Countryside Ranger.

Following complaints about grass being dumped on the West Beach, Keith Tait would speak to the Golf Club as greenkeepers were suspected.

ELC Cllr Goodfellow raised the matter of an unlicensed motorbike being used regularly on the track between Dirleton and Yellowcraigs. He also suggested that a Law View tenant was still causing disturbance to neighbours despite an ASBO.

**Agreed Priorities:** 1) Police/ Wardens/ ASBO Team to carry out regular checks at an address in Law View re breach of ASBO 2) Police to tackle parking problems including at the Quadrant between Marine Parade / East Road and outside LOCO.

- 4.6 The next CAPP meeting would be held on 29 July 2015 within the Council Chambers.

- 4.7 The Secretary had received an email regarding an incident at the Blenheim Hotel. On 14 June the owner found that the back gate had been opened and a number of school pupils were found to have broken in and caused a lot of damage. Arrests were made and boarding had been put in place in an attempt to secure the building. Cllr Scott had learned from a different source, not the owner, that someone walking on Beach Road on the Saturday night had

reported sounds of breaking glass to the Police. It was alleged that the Police said they could not respond as they did not know who owned the property. When the owner reported the break in on 14 June, it was 40 minutes before the Police attended the scene.

- 4.8 The Chairman commented that there appeared to be both an escalation in the scale and range of crime in the area. Cllr Baker noted that there had been no mention in the Police Report of the theft of engines worth approximately £20,000 from Rhodes Steadings. The Secretary drew attention to the opening clause in the Police Report which indicated that there could be other incidents of which it was not appropriate to divulge details. Several Cllrs felt that an explanation from the Police for the 40 minutes delay was required while Cllr K Smith expressed dissatisfaction at their failure to attend after the first report of a possible break in. The serious nature of the damage was a concern for all Councillors. The absence of Police at the CC meeting meant that questions went unanswered. ELC Cllr Berry concurred, noting that there wasn't always a Police attendance at CAPP. He had suggested that, as there were now no Community Officers, perhaps local Officers could rotate the duty to ensure a presence. The Chairman supported this as a reasonable proposal. The Community Council would write to invite Police to the August meeting.
- 4.9 In response to Cllr Macnair's question regarding Police Officers being stationed in North Berwick, ELC Cllr Berry clarified that the Police presence in the area, which he understood to be a Sergeant and four Police Constables, only mustered in North Berwick. The Chairman had understood, from a previous Police presentation, that there would be a greater Police presence in the town. Following ELC Cllr Berry's comment that the police call centre ranked each call received against five priorities and this would determine the response time, ELC Cllr Goodfellow queried the priority given to the call about the Blenheim Hotel.
- 4.10 Cllr Danks was concerned that, having phoned 111 to report a theft, she was advised to send an email to the Police Scotland website.
- 4.11 ELC Cllr Day informed Councillors that these issues had been raised with the Police and he had been invited to a meeting within the next month to hear how Police grade the incoming calls. He offered to provide feedback. ELC Cllr Goodfellow wanted clarification on what constituted "locally funded Officers".
- 4.12 **20's Plenty** – presentation by a resident, Mr Thomson.

Mr Thomson raised his concerns about the number, positioning and size of signs in the Glenburn Road/ Lochbridge Road area. Cllr Watson agreed that it appeared to be a piecemeal and inconsistent approach but suggested that the work was incomplete. ELC Cllr Goodfellow thought that that the legislation was not yet in place. However, Cllr Macnair was aware that some drivers doing over 20mph in the area had been stopped by Police. The Chairman would seek clarification on the legislative position from ELC Transportation Dept and on the measures to be introduced, bearing in mind Cllr Hamilton's view that some of the signage was too high. All supported Cllr Macnair's suggestion that painting the sign on the road would be helpful and this should be raised with Transportation. Mr Thomson, and Cllr Hamilton, also drew attention to motorists speeding between the Aldi entrance and the chicane in Glenburn Road. In view of this information, ELC Cllr Goodfellow agreed that it was appropriate to delay plans to remove the chicane near the garages until 20's Plenty was in place.

## **5 Business Association Update.**

- 5.1 Although invited, there was no Business Association representation at this meeting. The Chairman restated her wish to have the practice reinstated. Cllr Macnair offered to follow this up with the Association. He understood that there were not many active members but the Association was keen to improve information for tourists.

## **6 Facebook and Community Council website**

- 6.1 **Facebook:** The Chairman was concerned that some of the comments on Facebook bordered on being libellous and stated that, should such comments appear again, she would have no hesitation in taking appropriate action. She reminded Councillors the website was still on trial and that posted comments needed to have the support of the Community Council. There were four Monitors whom she relied upon to pass on queries to the appropriate person or to circulate among Councillors. Cllr Danks was concerned about the negative impact on the town that such comments created. In relation to planning matters, many felt that some members of the public did not fully understand the system and attributed responsibilities to the Community Council which in reality rested with ELC. Cllr Kellock believed that the statement issued by the Secretary in respect of the proposed development in the Glebe was very clear. Facebook was regarded by ELC Cllr Berry as “a free for all”, ad hoc medium, as there was no control over the Comments facility. An alternative, he suggested, was a monitored blog or a website with a comments facility. The Chairman clarified that the potentially libellous comments had been on North Berwick News and Views.
- 6.2 **Website:** It had been accepted that the present website was not satisfactory. The Chairman had obtained one quote for refreshing the site but would seek others. Both ELC Cllr Day and Cllr K Smith offered to pass on details of other organisations. Information would be circulated.

## **7 Community Resilience Plan.**

- 7.1 The table top exercise for the North Berwick Resilience Plan would take place on 27 October from 6-9 pm. Sandy Baptie from ELC would be present. The Chairman and Cllrs Ritchie would meet prior to the exercise. Cllr Watson would provide an update on the purchase of a telephone, as previously agreed.

## **8 Area Partnership**

- 8.1 Cllrs Danks, H Smith and the Chairman had attended the last meeting, Cllr Watson being present as the Youth Network representative. Environmental issues had been the topic for discussion with the Councillors participating in a “Three Wishes” exercise. They had been asked to return to their Groups and complete a questionnaire with three questions and scope for three answers against each question. The task was to be completed by 18<sup>th</sup> August. The Chairman had planned to deal with the response through the Council forum. However, Cllr H Smith had already put the questionnaire onto the CC Facebook page, inviting the public to complete the questionnaire. The understanding of the Chairman, Cllrs Danks and Watson and ELC Cllr Goodfellow was that it was not for individuals to complete at this stage, responses should come from Groups on the Area Partnership. Lack of information about ELC plans and resources was seen by some Councillors as a barrier to making informed and realistic responses. However, Cllr Watson emphasised that this was a wish list which was

seeking ideas and might result in some common themes emerging from a number of Groups which could assist in the planning process. The Chairman agreed with Cllr Kellock's suggestion that Councillors circulate their ideas before they came to the next meeting. Cllr Macnair suggested coastal defences, road repairs and a traffic warden as appropriate wishes.

## **9 Community Rail Partnership**

- 9.1 The Chairman had attended a Partnership meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> July and reported that an extension to the station platform, planned for July, would now take place in August. There will be a 4 week notice period with local residents receiving written information. There will also be a drop in session to update on the plans but she was already aware that overnight work could be anticipated. Given that this was a major piece of work, the Chairman had taken the opportunity to raise the question of the provision of toilets, yet again. She highlighted the new leaflet, East Lothian Scenic Line, which would be available at Waverley and stations en route. ELC Cllr Berry confirmed that North Berwick station had a good supply of leaflets but suggested that they needed a wider distribution. Cllr Macnair concurred, suggesting placing them in local hotels and other accommodation, including caravan sites. The Chairman would put one in the Community Noticeboard. A larger print run should help ensure appropriate distribution.

## **10 Calder and Crawford Cup Putting Competition 21 and 23 July.**

- 10.1 Cllr Johnstone advised that posters would be on display during the week, in Clubs, Caravan sites, noticeboards etc. Other Cllrs offered assistance with organisation on competition days and Cllr K Smith offered to forward the rota so that gaps could be identified and filled.

## **11 Law Race - 5 August**

- 11.1 A request for funding to pay for medals had been received. The Treasurer noted that the last payment was three years ago when £100 had been donated. As the list of competitors had grown, so costs had arisen. Cllr Macnair understood that a large quantity of medals had been purchased on the last occasion so additional medals had not been required until now. To Cllr Danks's suggestion that the organisers were asked how much money was required, Cllr Macnair thought £100 should be offered in the first instance. The Chairman would advise the Treasurer when she had more information. Following discussion, it was agreed that Councillors should be in attendance at the Harbour from 7.15pm onwards on 5 August.
- 11.2 Cllr Hamilton recalled an incident when he had found a young girl who had participated in the Race but had become lost and was in a distressed state. He had ensured that she reached the Harbour area safely but wondered if management of the event was adequate. Cllr Danks offered reassurance that there were sufficient marshals and helpers available.

## **12 Beach Wheelchairs**

- 12.1 The Chairman confirmed that Cllr Ritchie was involved in training volunteers. All Councillors congratulated Cllr Johnstone on his marathon fundraising golfing effort which to date had raised £850. ELC Cllr Day advised that the project would be officially launched at the Harbour on Saturday 18 July at 10am.

### **13 Planning Matters**

**The following new applications were viewed, discussed and commented on, where appropriate:**

13.1 **Quality Street: Siting of bench and tree seat.** No objection was raised.

**St Margaret's Hall, Dunbar Road EH39 4DG:** Formation of vehicular access for a temporary period of nine months. A question would be raised regarding parking /delivery arrangements.

**14 West Bay Road EH39 4AW:** Alterations to house and formation of hardstanding areas. No objection was raised.

**Shipka Cottage, Abbotsford Road EH39 5DB:** Alterations to house. No objection was raised.

**Balgone Barns Farm EH39 5NY:** Alterations, extension to agricultural building to form one house and associated works. No objection was raised.

**1B Fowler Court EH39 4HX:** Alterations to flat. No objection was raised.

**2 Melbourne Road EH39 4JP:** Replacement roof lights. No objection was raised.

**Gilsland House, Newhouse Road EH39 5JA:** Approval of matters specified in conditions of planning permission in principle 14/00008/PP. Erection of one house, carport and associated works. No objection was raised. (Cllr Macnair left the room during discussion of this item).

**Rosehill, 8 St Margaret's Road EH39 4PJ:** Extensions to house and formation of dormers. No objection was raised.

**27 St Andrew's St EH39 4 NX:** Alterations and heightening of extension. No objection was raised.

**Lawrigg West Cottage EH3 5NP:** Extension to house and formation of dormer. Information requested following discussion on 2 June had been provided. No objection was raised.

### **14 Reports from Groups and Societies**

14.1 **North Berwick Trust:** Cllr Baker, Chairman of the Trust, emphasised that, when Councillors go onto the Trust, they are acting as Trustees, not Community Councillors. In discussion, concerns were expressed regarding the negative comments on Facebook, often targeting individuals. There was general agreement that more public information about the Trust could help clarify the position, perhaps providing details of the backgrounds of Trustees. Cllr Baker agreed to explore possibilities. As Chair, on behalf of the Trust, he provided the following official statement issued on 7 July 2015. He stressed that this was not a Community Council announcement and requested that the Statement was communicated through the Press and appropriate information points.

#### **North Berwick Trust Statement 07/07/15**

1. The Trust is committed to transparency, but its ability to say anything at the moment is limited, because negotiations with a number of potential partners are ongoing.
2. No land has yet been sold.

3. North Berwick Trust are working with Walker Group under the existing Agreements. In terms of these agreements Walkers have limited development rights which they are currently exercising.
4. No funds will be available until the instalments due on the land to be sold exceed the cost of the infrastructure.
5. The Trust looks forward to sharing more information with the North Berwick Community when it becomes possible.

14.2 **Christmas Lights:** Cllr Scott will contact Members to arrange a planning meeting.

14.3 **Police related matters:** ELC Cllr Day advised of plans to establish a Police and Fire Services Scrutiny Board. This should encourage more local engagement with the Community. Cllr Hamilton questioned the absence of a Police presence at the forthcoming Highland Games. Cllr Danks replied that security would be in place and that the Police were content with the arrangements, adding that drinking would not be permitted outside the Rugby Club premises. The Chairman noted that potential issues appeared to have been considered and that was reassuring.

14.4 **Coastal Communities Museum:** Cllr Watson encouraged Councillors to visit the new exhibition "From Rigs to Riches".

14.5 **Harbour:** Cllr Macnair reported that work on the harbour wall was progressing satisfactorily.

## 15 **Correspondence**

15.1 The Secretary had received advance warning from Phil McLean (ELC) of a forthcoming consultation on the MIR for the second Strategic Development Plan for Edinburgh and SE Scotland. She would circulate information on the consultation which would run from 21 July until mid/late September. An event for Community Councils would be held on 4 August in Haddington 6.30 – 8.30pm.

15.2 **Glebe development.** The Secretary read aloud Isla Aitken's website letter, as Ms Aitken had requested. The letter would be acknowledged with thanks. The content of an email from Mark Richardson, acknowledging the fair way in which the application had been handled at the NBCC meeting of 2 June, was also read out.

15.3 **Street Names:** Douglas Seaton had forwarded a number of suggestions for Street Names, including the names of some former Provosts. It was agreed that the topic required a full discussion at a midmonth meeting. Meanwhile, the Secretary would request further details from Mr Seaton.

15.4 **Station Court:** Residents had written regarding unresolved parking issues. The Secretary confirmed that there had been an attempt to arrange a meeting with Transportation but this had not materialised. As no update was available, she would follow up. One resident planned to discuss the situation with ELC Cllr Goodfellow.

15.5 **McCarthy & Stone:** Planning consent had been granted for the 41 retirement flats, shared areas and business units. Demolition of the Ben Sayers factory would begin within the next few months. The Chairman had secured agreement that the grass would be cut.

15.6 **Resuscitation Conference:** Details of the Scottish Community Resuscitation Conference in St Andrew's had been circulated.

16 **Any other competent business.**

**Polystyrene containers:** The Chairman introduced this item on behalf of Cllr H Smith who had requested that the Council buy the outstanding stock of polystyrene containers from NB Fry. There was consensus that this was an inappropriate use of money. Also, it was accepted that NB Fry was not the only North Berwick business using such containers. There was support for steps to encourage use of biodegradable containers – the Chairman believed that the Business Association would have a view on this. Cllr Hamilton highlighted that a paper product was used in the Gullane shop and queried if that had been agreed as part of the planning process. Cllr Macnair suggested that the ELC Licencing Board was approached for clarification and this action was agreed. To encourage businesses, Cllr Watson considered that a flyer promoting good environmental practices, with the additional benefit of enhancing the town could be to be a useful step. Cllr Scott thought there could also be merit in encouraging the public to persuade shops to adopt biodegradable products, perhaps through an article in the next Newsletter.

**Beach Huts:** More information and illustrations had been obtained but, although a nice idea and successful elsewhere, many questions in relation to North Berwick remained. Legal advice from ELC would be required as a first stage and careful thought given to a possible location in view of tidal factors. There was also the question of the temporary/ permanent nature of the structures. It had been suggested in the publicity received that the huts could be rented with a percentage of profits going to the Community Council. Cllr Macnair was aware of a previous North Berwick interest in beach huts and offered to investigate.

**The Scottish Open Golf at Gullane:** Councillors had been asked if they would assist in handing out leaflets on North Berwick station to golfers alighting from the Edinburgh train on Friday, Saturday and Sunday 8am - 10am. Buses would collect passengers at May Terrace. The Chairman would confirm arrangements. She also said that the provision of temporary toilets had been mooted but Scotrail appeared unaware of this.

**Trees:** Cllr Hamilton reported that tree branches near the Scout Hut were obscuring the traffic lights. This matter would be passed to ELC.

17 **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Community Council will be held at the Fire Station, Station Road North Berwick on Tuesday 4 August 2015 at 19.30.

