

Royal Burgh of North Berwick Community Council

Minutes of the 471st Public Meeting held at 19.30 on Tuesday 1 September 2015

in The Fire Station, Station Road, North Berwick.

Present: Cllr S Sinclair Chairman

Cllr K Smith Secretary

Cllrs E Danks, P Hamilton, D Kellock, W Macnair, D Ritchie, J Scott, H Smith, I Watson

In attendance: ELC Cllr J Goodfellow, Adam Elder (Vice Chair of Business Association), members of the public, local Press, Mrs A Turgoose.

1 Apologies: Cllrs M Baker, G Johnstone, P Hamilton, ELC Cllrs D Berry and T Day, Police Scotland. The Chairman informed the Council that Cllr George Johnstone had resigned from the Council as he had secured a job in a new location. She would write thanking him for his valuable contribution.

2 Minutes of the Meeting held on 4 August 2015.

2.1 The adoption of the Minutes was proposed by Cllr J Scott and seconded by Cllr W Macnair.

3 Matters Arising.

3.1 (3.4) In view of the delay in commencing work to extend the platform at the station, the Chairman would request a progress report.

3.2 (4.6) The Secretary had contacted the owners of the Blenheim Hotel who were pursuing a course of action.

3.3(10.1) The Law Race had attracted a large number of entries in the region of 230/240 runners.

4 Police Report

4.1 In the absence of police representation for the fourth consecutive month, the Secretary read out the Police Report. The Report is attached.

4.2 Cllr H Smith commented on the reference to Fringe by the Sea in the Police Report with the suggestion that there were no major issues. She disputed this. There had been complaints and she asked what criteria the Police had used when rating incidents eg seriousness, numbers of incidents. She emphasised that this was a criticism of policing, not Fringe by the Sea. ELC Cllr Goodfellow advised that the matter should be taken to CAPP. The Chairman reported that, at a recent meeting, the Sergeant had been unable to clarify the meaning of "numerous" as he had not written the report. This Police Report would be forwarded to ELC Cllr Goodfellow and the Chairman would also

write to the Police. ELC Cllr Goodfellow confirmed that ELC Cllrs were due to meet Police Inspectors later in the month.

- 4.3 The Chairman had requested that the Police Report was displayed outside the Police Station and this was under consideration. At present, there is a delay of one month in the report being seen by the public.
- 4.4 Cllr Scott asked if there had been any issues at the Highland Games. Cllr Danks confirmed that, despite an increase in attendance figures, there did not appear to have been any problems.

5 Business Association (BA) Update.

- 5.1 Adam Elder, BA Vice - Chair, thanked the Community Council for their support in respect of the proposed Information Point in the town centre which had now been approved. While some information was now available at the Westgate Gallery, more details would be available within Whynot? Councillors were given an update on the BA which was being revitalised following a period of stagnation. The new website which would be online within one week was to be the launch pad for the new BA and the plan was to encourage the 30 lapsed members to reengage. It was designed to increase footfall into North Berwick and provide information. The Chairman commented that there appeared to have been good progress. Mr Elder agreed and explained that a computer would be available in Whynot? as would a leaflet stand and a free telephone for visitors. The BA was in discussion with ELC regarding improved signage from the station to the High St and the Information Points. The Chairman offered the BA the opportunity to participate in a walkabout in the town with Keith Scott, looking at parking etc.

6 Community Resilience.

- 6.1 The Chairman and Cllr Ritchie were due to have a planning meeting with Colin Baptie on 7 September. In advance of that meeting Cllr Watson was asked to purchase a Pay as You Go Phone as had been previously agreed. Councillors were reminded of the table top exercise to take place in the Community Centre on October 27th and attention was also drawn to a request from Sandy Baptie for volunteers to take part in a "safe haven" exercise planned for 8 October in Port Seton.

7 Area Partnership (AP) – 3 Wishes Exercise

- 7.1 Cllr H Smith gave a resume of responses to the survey to date, with two weeks left for responses. She had collated and categorised these into items that needed money, possibly involving smaller amounts, longer term projects which could require a partnership approach and major wishes which were not in the gift of the AP, for example infrastructure matters, extended surgery, schools etc. She noted that there were few surprises with several themes emerging such as the need for opportunities for young people. Cllr H Smith asked for a steer as to what the Council wished to submit. The Chairman replied that coastal erosion, better signage, increased number of Big Belly

bins, more seats at the seafront and toilets at the station had all previously been identified by Councillors. Cllr H Smith reminded Councillors that the formalised response was due by 22 September. The next Area Partnership meeting on September 8 would be a public one so more views might be obtained there. Greater numbers supporting an initiative were likely to carry more weight. The Chairman asked Cllr H Smith to circulate the findings and all Councillors to submit suggestions to Cllr H Smith who would collate the ideas. In response to Cllr Danks query if the Youth Network and Schools were responding, Cllr H Smith affirmed that schools, Guides etc were participating. The survey was on the web and Facebook to encourage as many people as possible to respond.

- 7.2 The Chairman reiterated that the AP meeting on 8 September in the Hope Rooms from 7-9pm was the first public meeting. It would take the form of a presentation by ELC Planning and Service Managers, followed by a question and answer session. To raise awareness of the event, posters, Community Noticeboard, Facebook etc would be used in an effort to attract interest. It was hoped that the Courier would carry an article about the consultation.

8 SEPlan Main issues Joint Meeting with Gullane CC.

- 8.1 The Chairman reported that a meeting would take place with Gullane CC on 9 September in the Hope Rooms.

9 East Lothian on the Move

- 9.1 No Councillor had attended the workshops but the Chairman had attended an afternoon session. Both she and ELC Cllr Berry were disappointed at the absence of any representatives from the bus companies or Abellio. Feedback to Cllr H Smith indicated that the evening workshops had been interesting and informative. An update should be provided at the next Area Partnership meeting.
- 9.2 The Chairman had been informed that the issue of the Finger Post signs would be rectified shortly. There had been some misunderstanding, despite ELC Cllr Mcmillan having visited North Berwick. She thought it would be helpful if ELC representatives drove into and around the town to fully understand the problems.
- 9.3 Cllr Watson highlighted the frustration of drivers who drove around the town attempting to locate parking places. He produced some examples of posters he had developed to help drivers locate longer term or "overflow parking spaces" which gave an indication of time to access the seafront on foot. This common sense approach was supported by other Councillors. The Chairman agreed to discuss the suggestion of posters along the lines suggested by Cllr Watson with Peter Forsyth of ELC. A town map devised by ELC Road Network Management showing parking places was discussed. Cllr H Smith highlighted possible confusion regarding disabled parking signage. It was also agreed that clarification regarding the definition of "short" and of "long term" was required. ELC Cllr Goodfellow explained that, in car parks, short stay

meant 3-4 hours, not a full day. This would become enforceable from March /April 2016. Replying to a query from Cllr Ritchie about the limits of “long term”, he advised that this generally meant 8-12 hours to which the Chairman commented that the issue of campervans had not gone away. The fact that the residents use public car parks for long stay parking was raised by Cllr Ritchie. Taking on board Cllr Watson’s suggestion of posters, ELC Cllr Goodfellow believed that three additional signs at the short stay car parks, for example the Glebe, directing drivers to long stay/ overflow spaces could help.

- 9.4 Cllr Macnair had been made aware of difficulties experienced by North Berwick residents when visiting the Royal Infirmary Hospital due to lack of coordination of bus services. ELC Cllr Goodfellow offered to check this out.

10 Website Update

- 10.1 The Chairman and Cllr H Smith had met with Pete Lugton who had also developed the Haddington CC webpage. He had proposed a more dynamic page which would clearly state the role of the CC and would feature Facebook on the front page. The Chairman would provide a description of the role and responsibilities of the Council. She invited suggestions as to preferred links, noting that ELC and NB Business Association had already been agreed. Cllr Watson commented that more organisations could be added over time. The Chairman advised that Ian Goodall would take photographs of Councillors for the web.

11 Pedestrian Crossings

- 11.1 The Secretary had forwarded suggestions to Colin Baird (ELC Transportation.) These were acknowledged and the response had been copied to the Area Partnership. A Dunbar Road crossing, taking into account the location of Aldi, crossing at junction of Lodge and St Baldreds’s Road near the entrance to Lodge, Kirk Ports/ Lodge entrance and the narrowing of East Road were included in CC suggestions. ELC was already considering some of these measures. Cllr Ritchie had learned that, once Aldi had opened, there would be a traffic audit in that area. She also raised the matter of the impact on traffic of the proposed housing in the Tesco area and the Mc Carthy & Stone development. Cllr K Smith advised that “Safer Routes to School” was also under consideration. The Chairman was pleased to note that ELC was taking action. Cllr Danks was concerned about impact of traffic from the new CALA Homes and Trust land estates. Cllr Macnair believed that the pathways within the CALA estate created a reasonably safe route to schools.

12 Planning Matters

- 12.1 Cllr Kellock reported that the Forth Street Lane application and the change of use application at Green Apron Park had been approved. The complex at Whitekirk had also been approved with various conditions. Cllr Scott asked for details of the Hotel Group involved but ELC Cllr Goodfellow advised that details were not available.

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

12.2 **I Rhodes Cottages, Lime Grove EH39 5NL:** Change of use of domestic garden grounds for the siting of one holiday cabin and associated works. Following discussion it was agreed to raise concerns regarding parking arrangements as parking was limited in that area. It was unclear if the site of an existing garage would be used for parking. Confirmation that the cabin could be used only for holiday use would also be sought.

Windygates, Windygates Road EH39 4QP: Erection of house and associated works. The proposed removal of trees would be queried.

Elanora, Dirleton Road EH395DF: Extension to house to form ancillary residential accommodation and erection of summerhouse. No objection was raised.

Howard Selby Autos Heugh Road EH39 5PS: Extension to garage and associated works. No objection was raised.

Mizzentop 9a Westerdunes Park EH39 5HJ: Replacement door. No objection was raised.

Flat 5 18 Fidra Road EH39 4NG: Alterations to flat. The presence of a single door between the toilet and kitchen areas was discussed but it was thought that Planning would resolve this. No objection was raised.

1 Fenton Newmains Cottage Drem: Alterations to one house to form two houses. No objection was raised.

22 York Road EH39 4LX: Alterations, extension to flat, formation of hardstanding and decked areas. The small window appeared to be out of character. Also, UPC would be unacceptable if visible from a public place. The use of timber cladding, as opposed to matching stone facing, would be queried.

Adjacent to 18 Dirleton Avenue, Ware Road: Installation of BT cabinet. No objection was raised.

Tantallon Road: Planning permission in principle for mixed use development comprising residential development and Class 4 business units, formation of vehicular and pedestrian access with associated infrastructure, engineering and landscaping works. This application was discussed at length with Councillors and residents raising concerns about the scale of housing planned for the town and the apparent absence of an overall vision, taking into account the impact on infrastructure, school, services and character of North Berwick. A member of the public expressed the view that office space was required and not Class 4, light industrial, business units. Councillors and ELC had originally considered this Tantallon Road application to be preferable to the Ferrygate proposals which had been opposed. However, as the Ferrygate decision had been overturned and building would now proceed, this application could not

be supported. There was consensus that the scale of housing development proposed for the town (in the region of 1000 houses), reflected the piecemeal approach to planning and the absence of full impact analysis. The Chairman encouraged the public to submit individual objections. The Community Council would object to this application. The town was already doing more than its fair share to meet the housing demand and this constituted overdevelopment.

Engine Cottage Abbotsford Road EH39 5DA: Change of use of footpath and formation of vehicular access for a temporary period of 2 years. No objection was raised.

2 & 5 King's Knoll Clifford Road EH39 4PP: Extensions to buildings, formation of external staircase, roof terrace with ballustrades and demolition of part of building. No objection was raised.

2 & 5 King's Knoll Clifford Road EH39 4PP: Formation of hardstanding area, erection of shed and extension to flat 2, formation of external staircase, roof terrace with ballustrades to flat 5. No objection was raised.

Site next to practice green, north of Westerdunes Park EH39 4BB: Erection of shelter with toilet, store, buggy garage, formation of bunding and ramp. No objection was raised.

16c Melbourne Road EH39 4JX: Replacement windows. No objection was raised.

25 Fidra Road EX39 4NE: Extensions to house. No objection was raised. Timber glazing on the north side would be checked.

3 Castleton Farm Cottage EH39 5PN: Extension to house. No objection was raised.

- 12.3 ELC Cllr Goodfellow reported that 21 Westgate was on the delegated list and would be discussed at the Planning Committee, first Tuesday in October. It had been recommended for acceptance.

13 Reports from Groups and Societies

- 13.1 **Esk Leader Programme:** Cllr H Smith had been asked to be part of the LAG, Local Action Group which helps administer/ run the Tyne and Esk LEADER Programme They were waiting to hear if there would be cash available through the Scottish Government and, if so, how much.
- 13.2 **Beach wheelchairs:** A meeting would be held in the Community Centre on 1 October at 7pm. Cllr Ritchie advised that Office Bearers were required and that there was a proposal to apply for charitable status.
- 13.3 **Arts Centre:** A meeting of the Steering Group took place on 1 September. Cllr Watson reported that it had been agreed to hold a mini Winter Festival on 12 December, taking the form of a Day of entertainment.

- 13.4 **Coastal Communities Museum:** Cllr Watson confirmed that the current exhibition, Rigs to Riches, would continue throughout Winter.
- 14.4 **Christmas Lights:** A meeting to discuss arrangements would be held on 8 September.
- 14.5 **Remembrance Day.** Cllr Scott was given approval to purchase a poppy wreath for Remembrance Day. As in 2014, a wreath would be purchased for the Lord Lieutenant and cost claimed back later. The Remembrance service would take place on Sunday 8 November at Abbey Church.
- 14.6 **Friends of the Lodge:** The Chairman advised that the AGM would take place on 7 September at the Café in the Lodge Grounds at 2pm. All welcome.
- 14.7 **Harbour:** Cllr Macnair reported that work on the Harbour wall was continuing apace and was on schedule.

15 Correspondence

- 15.1 Colin Baird from ELC had been in touch regarding the speed reactor signs. The Secretary had advised that the signs should remain in the same locations but facing in the other direction.
- 15.2 The Secretary reported that Iain Gray MSP had written a letter of thanks to the Council for their work and indicating that he would be happy to attend a CC meeting. While commenting that the Council was apolitical, the Chairman extended a welcome to all interested in attending.
- 15.3 Fringe by the Sea. The Chairman had written to John Shaw expressing appreciation for another successful week of events in the town.
- 15.4 There had been one complaint of a lady being hit by a water missile on Raft Race Day. That aside, the Chairman congratulated everyone who had helped with a super, enjoyable event.
- 15.5 The Coastal Communities Museum had offered £100 per issue to secure back page coverage on North Berwick News. The Chairman reported that this sum was much less than the cost of printing but could be looked at next year.

16 Any other competent business.

- 16.1 Polystyrene containers: Cllr H Smith expressed disappointment that, despite assurances that old stock was being used, she had been made aware of a new delivery of polystyrene containers to a popular local take away. She asked if the Council could write, again, to the owner, adding that Dunbar used cardboard containers.
- 16.2 Cllr H Smith raised Facebook concerns regarding parking by campervans in the Imperial car park. She also asked if there were any sanctions against very long term parking in disabled parking bays but was advised that none existed.
- 16.3 The irritating noise of helicopters had been brought to the attention of Cllr H Smith. Complaints did not refer to coastguard or other exercises. As

helicopters do not need to log a flight path, opinion was that little could be done.

- 16.4 Cllr H Smith requested that a date was agreed to discuss Community Council procedures and processes. The Chairman suggested that a mid - month meeting in September or October would be appropriate.

Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Community Council will be held at the Fire Station, Station Road North Berwick on Tuesday 6 October at 19.30.