**Royal Burgh of North Berwick Community Council**

**Minutes of the 472ndPublic Meeting held at 19.30 on Tuesday 6 October 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, H Smith, I Watson

**In attendance**: ELC Cllrs T Day and J Goodfellow (part of meeting), local Press, Mrs A Turgoose.

**1 Apologies:** Cllrs M Baker, W Macnair, D Ritchie, J Scott. ELC Cllr D Berry, Police Scotland

**2 Minutes of the Meeting held on 1st September 2015.**

2.1 The adoption of the Minutes was proposed by Cllr H Smith and seconded by Cllr D Kellock.

**3 Matters Arising.**

3.1 (3.1) The Chairman reported that the plan to extend the railway platform had been indefinitely postponed.

3.2 (4.3) The Chairman would follow up the proposal to display the Police Report outside the Police Station.

**4** **Police Report**

4.1 The Police had planned to attend but had been required to attend an incident in North Berwick. In their absence, the Secretary read out the Police Report. The Report is attached.

4.2 In response to comments that there appeared to be an increase in crime, ELC Cllr Day advised that there had been an increase in shoplifting. This was a national trend. House breaking remained at around the same level and traffic offences had shown an increase.

4.3 Regarding antisocial behaviour in the vicinity of the bus shelter on Dundas Road, Cllr Danks reminded Councillors of the suggestion to move the bus shelter to the top of Abbey Road to meet the needs of elderly residents.

4.4 Cllr Hamilton reported that the management of New Year celebrations had been discussed at CAPP. The possibility of closing the road had arisen. Both Cllr Hamilton and Cllr Watson confirmed that if the Police chose to take that course of action, they, not the Community Council, would take responsibility for it. Cllr Hamilton noted the positive response to the increase in parking tickets.

4.5 ELC Cllr Day reported that a new Traffic Warden should be in place next year. The post would be funded by ELC from fines and revenue from coastal car parking fees.

4.6 Cllr Watson related an experience in Edinburgh where residents purchase a book of tickets enabling them to park. ELC Cllr Day believed this was a private initiative, not funded by the Council, similar to the system operated by the Seabird Centre where an external company monitors and manages parking.

**5 Business Association (BA) Update.**

5.1There was no representation from the Business Association and no report was available on this occasion.

**6** **Area Partnership (AP) – 3 Wishes Exercise**

6.1 The Chairman distributed a list of the short term high ranking priorities which had been agreed at the meeting on 9th September. She informed the meeting that there had not been a quorum so the AP Chair decided to vote on the items on the list with absentees being allowed to respond within three days. She expressed disappointment at the low turnout without explanation. Approval was given for a wide range of projects across nine themes not all of which she, as NBCC Chair, would personally have supported. There was extensive discussion on the merits of the voting system and outcomes. It was accepted that it was a far from ideal system but, as it was the first year, it would be a learning process with refinement and more information being available in the future. A degree of compromise was necessary and Cllr H Smith commented that while not everyone could agree with all the projects, there had to be something for all parties. North Berwick had the largest population within the AP so being equitable was never going to be easy. It was noted that Longniddry had decided to concentrate on one main project while this AP had taken a broader approach. Cllr Danks queried the small amount of funding available for signage when this had been recognised as a concern in many areas. Cllr H Smith responded that there was the possibility for some additional funding as £17,000 remained unallocated. It had been agreed to set up working groups tasked with driving the projects forward. The NBCC Chairman suggested there was a need to review the process and the makeup of the AP.

7 **Community Rail Partnership (CRP).**

7.1 The Chairman was pleased to report that Harry Barker had been appointed as Chair of the CRP. This should prove helpful in progressing issues including connectivity of transport services. As a first aim, the Partnership had approved the restoration of the mural at Prestonpans station and a meeting with the restorer would be held on 12 October.

7.2 To celebrate National Poetry Day a poem by Robert Louis Stevenson “ From a Railway Carriage” was read out. The birth of the poet in 1850 in Edinburgh coincided with the opening of the branch line to North Berwick. The Chairman would display a copy of the poem at the station.

7.3 The Chairman would continue to press for toilets at the station. She reiterated that Abellio would not fund toilets as responsibility appeared to sit with ELC. ELC Cllr Day responded that that there was the possibility of a joint approach. Councillors recalled previous objections from residents of Station Court to the installation of toilets. Apart from the siting and capital cost, maintenance and cleaning costs would also need to be considered. The Chairman pointed out the existence of self cleaning facilities. She was pleased to know that the issue of toilets was under discussion.

**8 Website Update**

8.1 The Chairman expressed some disappointment that, although up and running, there were some issues to be finalised, for example, the domain name still had to be transferred. The web designer had been asked what further information was required to expedite matters.

8.2 Ian Goodall would attend the mid month meeting on 20 October to take photographs of Councillors. These would be put onto the website.

8.3 As new Chair of the Association of East Lothian Community Councils, Cllr H Smith asked if the NBCC web could act as host to the Association which was being relaunched and required an online presence. Information would be cleared in advance with the Community Council. This request was supported with no problems being foreseen.

**9 Minute Secretary**

9.1 Following two years in the post, the Minute Secretary was stepping down after the November 2015 meeting. The position had been advertised.

**10 Planning Matters**

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

**20 Fidra Road EH39 4NG:** Alterations, extensions to house and associated works. No objection was raised.

**4 Marmion Road** **EH39 4PS:** Replacement of Scottish slates withSpanish slates,replacing gutters and downpipes**.** No objection was raised**.**

**Scottish Water Compound Heugh Steadings EH39 5NP:** Installation of smart metering mast and associated works. No objection was raised.

**5a Quality Street EH39 4HJ:** Replacement windows**.** No objection was raised.

**Law Primary School EH39 4QZ**: Alterations, extensions to building and associated works. No objection was raised.

**1 Invereil House Dirleton EH39 5DH:** Alterations to building and formation of hardstanding area. No objection was raised.

**1 Invereil House Dirleton EH39 5DH:** Alterations to house and formation of hardstanding area (retrospective). No objection was raised.

**4 Easter Ferrygate Park Abbotsford Road EH39 5DB:** Heightening of roof. No objection was raised.

**4 West Bay Court EH39 4AR:** Alterations to flat. A query would be raised regarding the UPVC windows.

**39 Lochbridge Road EH39 4DK:** Extension to house. No objection was raised.

**57A Westgate EH39 4AQ**: Demolition of gate.

**57A Westgate EH39 4AQ**: Erection of fence, gate, repainting of door and door surrounds (part retrospective). The repainting of the door presented no issues but a suggestion would be made to lower the height of the fence and to retain the original style of gate.

10.2 The rejection of the development application for 21 Westgate was welcomed.

**11 Reports from Groups and Societies**

11.1 ***Environment Trust***: Cllr H Smith would be attending a meeting later in the week.

11.2 ***Association of Community Councils***: Cllr H Smith would provide an update as a future agenda item.

11.3 ***Britain in Bloom***: Cllr Danks advised that five In Bloom volunteers would be attending the UK awards ceremony in Sunderland on 16 October.

**12 Correspondence**

12.1 ***North Berwick Group Practice – alteration to Practice Area***: Information had been received regarding proposals to reduce the area served by the North Berwick Group Practice. There was a projection of 300 new registrations within the next twelve months as a direct result of additional housing. The Secretary affirmed that there should be no impact on people currently registered with the Practice. The changes in boundaries would affect other areas eg Gullane, Dunpender and East Linton. The Secretary would request a short meeting with the Group Practice to discuss the proposals and email Gullane and Dunpender Community Councils to ensure that they were aware of the proposed changes.

12.3 Cllr Danks reported that a Care Commission Inspector had highlighted the positive effect of local engagement in the development of a new Health Centre in Tranent.

12.4 ***Big Conversation***. The Secretary drew attention to an event in the Brunton Hall on 30 October to discuss integration of Health and Social Care in East Lothian. The event format included keynote speaker, information, workshops with 150 spaces being available.

12.5 ***Living Streets*** ***Walkable Communities:*** A series of workshops would be held throughout Scotland. Cllr H Smith expressed interest in attending the event at the Storytelling Centre in Edinburgh on 29 October. The Secretary would forward information.

12.6 ***East Lothian Foodbanks Open Day***: The Open Day and AGM were being held on 18 November. Posters would be on display and a notice placed in the Community Noticeboard.

12.7 ***Scottish Civic Trust Annual Conference 24 November***: Details of the conference which would have a focus on housing in Scotland would be forwarded to Cllr H Smith.

12.8 ***Forth Estuary Forum Conference***: The Conference would take place on 19 November at the Inchyra Hotel, Falkirk.

12.9 ***UN Climate Change Conference Paris***: Keep Scotland Beautiful who would be inputting to the Conference was consulting Community Councils using an online survey. The Secretary would circulate details of the survey.

12.10 ***Christmas Lights***: Cllr H Smith had noted a Facebook request for the involvement of dancers at the Christmas Lights Switch On event. The Chairman agreed to follow up the contact to check what was being offered. Cllr Danks queried the space available for a dancing troupe.

**13** **Any other competent business.**

13.1 Cllr K Smith raised the question of parking restrictions during the recent Mini Rugby Tournament at the Recreation Ground. There was consensus that there had been traffic chaos in St Baldred’s Road with considerable inconvenience for residents. Cllr K Smith expressed concern that, due to irresponsible parking, emergency vehicles would have been unable to use the road. Previous complaints to Transportation appeared to have been ignored. She suggested that having cones on one side of the road could help resolve the matter. ELC Cllr Day stated that Transportation would need to liaise with the Rugby Club and he would follow it up.

13.2 The question of potholes in the top half of the walkway between Abbey Road and the pedestrian crossing lights on Station Road was raised by Cllr Danks who asked if the area could be resurfaced. ELC Cllr Day asked if patching would resolve the problem and, as this was considered possible, he agreed to take the matter forward with Transportation.

13.3 The Chairman drew attention to ELC Cllr Berry’s correspondence with businesses regarding unsightly advertising and flyposting. This approach was welcomed. Cllr Kellock added that not all the adverts even related to North Berwick. The Chairman confirmed that flyposting is illegal and encouraged people to remove any offending notices.

14 **Annual General meeting.**

The Chairman introduced this topic indicating that the absence of an AGM was in contravention of guidance in the Green Book and one would be held in November. No Councillor could recall ever having participated in an AGM with some suggestion that Councillors had previously agreed to continue under the old constitution. The Chairman briefly set out the format for the AGM which would include a statement of accounts, a Chairman’s Report, stepping down of the current Office Bearers and election of Office Bearers.

**Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Community Council will be held at the Fire Station, Station Road North Berwick on Tuesday 3 November. It would be preceded by the AGM which would commence at 7pm.