

Royal Burgh of North Berwick Community Council

Minutes of the 421st Public Meeting held at 19:30 on Tuesday 2 August 2011 at the Fire Station, North Berwick

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

In attendance: ELC Cllr Rankin, PC Banks, PC Dobbie, Ms P Earle, local press

The Chairman thanked Cllr Baker for chairing the July meeting in her absence.

Action

1 Apologies for absence

Cllrs J Goodfellow and J Scott.

2 Minutes of meeting held on 5 July 2011

The minutes were approved, being proposed by Cllr Bryson and seconded by Cllr Hall.

3 Matters Arising

3.1 *Repair of pavement*

(3.8) It was noted that the pavements in the whole of the High Street were in a bad state of repair, resulting in frequent accidents. It was requested that the area opposite the Blenheim Hotel be highlighted. It was felt that, despite a statement to the contrary, the pavement outside Greggs the Bakers could be heightened. It was understood that ELC Cllr Berry was communicating with ELC.

3.2 *Edington Hospital bins*

(3.5) The Chairman confirmed that she had enquired about planning permission prior to the July meeting. An application had been submitted and NBCC had requested that it be taken off the list, which ELC Cllr Rankin stated would be done if the presumption was that permission would be granted.

3.3 *Concrete sleepers at East Beach*

(3.1) ELC Cllr Rankin had made representations to the ELC Area Officer East, who had referred the matter to Landscape & Countryside, who were at present on annual leave.

3.4 *NHS physiotherapy services*

(5.1) A councillor had requested a self-referral form from the local GP practice but they had no knowledge of the system. A trial of the system through the internet had not worked as the links were not functioning. Mr Brockie of NHS Lothian had also been asked about self-referral and how the public would be informed of this system. He was aware of who would undertake this. Although he had been offered space in *North Berwick News* to explain the position, it had not been taken up.

3.5 *East Lothian Community Planning*

(7.3) ELC Cllr Rankin had asked for an extension of the deadline for the local community planning survey.

3.6 *CCTV base*

(11.1) The councillors who had visited the base had found it very informative. Staff was doing a good job, which involved more than simply watching the streets.

4 Police report

- 4.1 There had been a total of 22 crimes, of which 19 had been solved, giving a solvency rate of 86%, which was an improvement on the 37% from the same time last year, although it was to be noted that recorded crimes were higher at that time. The breakdown was as follows:
- 4.2 Possession of controlled drugs – 1 Possession of a knife in a public place – 1
Assault – 1 Breach of the peace – 1 Police assault – 2
Resist arrest – 1 Domestic assault – 1 Drinking in public – 3
Possession of an offensive weapon in a public place – 1
Threatening behaviour – 1 Attempt to pervert the course of justice – 1
Failing to obey a no entry sign – 1 Theft – 4 Vandalism – 3
- 4.3 Patrols had been increased in Hamilton Road and no further reports of disturbances had been received. The public should inform the police if this was not the case.
- 4.4 PC Dobbie had enquired about the designation of the footpath/access road at the tennis courts in order to deal with parking on it. Registration numbers of vehicles parked there should be reported. It was noted that the tennis club had a key to the bollard and that it had been left down on occasion.
- 4.5 Youths had been issued with fixed penalty notices and had had alcohol seized from them. A number of other persons had been found in breach of the alcohol byelaw and had been issued with fixed penalty notices.
- 4.6 All cycling incidents were being examined individually as it was sometimes the case that cycling on the pavement was safer than on the road (e.g. Dirleton Road). A full description of the cyclist, their clothing and their bicycle should be given to police to follow-up. Persons cycling in the wrong direction on a one-way road would be charged. It was noted that cycling was permitted in the Lodge Grounds although one old sign remained to the contrary. It was noted that cyclists attending the topper event had been informed of traffic directions, as they had been unaware of the one-way regulations.
- 4.7 Upon enquiry, PC Dobbie confirmed that ice cream vendors needed a licence. One seller had been moved on at the Lifeboat Fete. It was noted that one van by the Seabird Centre had its engine running constantly.
- 4.8 Several calls had been received relating to possible bogus workmen in the Lochbridge Road area, who claimed to be working on loft insulation on behalf of ELC but who had no identification and no Council livery. ELC had explained that, although such work was being undertaken, householders would have been previously informed and arrangements made with them. The public should be aware of the Nominated Neighbour Scheme, which would enable anybody who was wary of speaking to doorstep callers to direct them to a neighbour who was willing to speak to the caller on their behalf. Information on the scheme was available in libraries, on request from the police and at police stations.
- 4.9 PC Dobbie had tested the speed restrictions in Ware Road and not found a problem with the positioning of the bumps. She was willing to attend any meeting NBCC wished to organise with ELC to discuss the matter and reminded the public to report badly-parked vehicles which prevented safe driving.
- 4.10 A final answer was still awaited about the time taken for the call centre to answer.
- 4.11 On discussion about the continuing problem of caravans parking at East Bay, the **KS** Secretary confirmed that she would follow the matter up with ELC.

[PC Dobbie and PC Banks]

5 Kirk Ports church tower and roof

5.1 ELC Cllr MacLennan had convened a meeting to discuss the removal of the roof and future planning at the request of NBCC. This had been attended by representatives from the ELC architects and Property Department, NBCC, Historic Scotland and ELC Cllr Berry. It had been most helpful and the presence of Historic Scotland had been extremely useful.

5.2 Although the NBCC Chairman had repeatedly asked for updates on developments since the Community Council had started discussing the tower and the roof, this had not been forthcoming and she was disappointed that no opportunity had been given to raise funds before the removal of the roof. It was again noted that Historic Scotland's offer of assistance had not been taken up by ELC.

5.3 At the meeting there had been recognition that ELC could look into restoration of the roof. Whilst the timbers were not good enough to be re-used, they could be used as templates; it had been hoped that the slates could be saved. The museum group had investigated the history of the church at the time it ceased to be used as a place of worship and it had been found that the elders at that time had agreed that it should be left as a "picturesque ruin", without the need to plan a specific use for the building. Various bodies were working to provide a costing for a new roof. The offer from Historic Scotland was still on the table.

6 West beach sewer

6.1 A meeting had been held between Mr Blackie (ELC), Mr Greenhill and Mr Elliot (Scottish Water), ELC Cllr Berry and community councillors; ELC Cllr MacLennan had not been able to attend due to parking difficulties. A report containing three or four options had been produced. Scottish Water maintained that there was no problem as the pipe was functional; it was unclear whether they had made enquiries regarding funding a solution to the problem and it was known that no funds were available from them at present. This was also the situation with ELC. NBCC would request a budget to undertake a study. It was noted that a recent press report had stated that the Water Regulator had recently suggested that Scottish Water be taken out of public ownership, which might also delay the prioritisation of works considered to be 'aesthetic' only.

6.2 NBCC was pleased that a solution to the ponding problem would be discussed and a scoping exercise would be undertaken, although it was disappointing that no work had yet been done on this. It was noted that this work had been committed to in the past but no action had been taken then. It was reported that a lack of data produced a problem in planning the work. ELC Cllr Rankin offered his assistance in facilitating progress.

6.3 It was agreed that the best, and possibly only, solution was the construction of a promenade. Any option would need a public consultation. ELC Cllr Rankin would **NR** pursue the matter with ELC Cllr Berry to try to obtain funding for a study although the sum involved would need to be known before this was possible. Scottish Water was to be asked to send a copy of the scoping document. ELC Cllr Rankin had **PB** received minutes of the meeting but councillors had not yet seen these. Cllr Rankin **NR** would pass a copy to the Chairman.

7 Transport/parking

7.1 A questionnaire had been issued but it had been difficult to respond as a community council as it was targeted at individuals. It had not been possible to find a follow-up to comments on the earlier strategy policy and it was hoped that all views on the new strategy would be tracked. Cllrs MacEwen & Sinclair had prepared a response to ELC's issues paper on local transport strategy which had been circulated to councillors previously. It was agreed that there should be less reliance on car usage and promotion of facilities for walking and cycling, even in the elderly population where walking, where possible, promoted health. The response emphasised the need to structure transport links in a way which would encourage the use of public transport.

7.2 Comments on the response were invited and the meeting discussed the needs of pedestrians and methods of giving them priority. The response was approved for submission on behalf of NBCC, being proposed by Cllr Danks and seconded by Cllr Hall. Cllrs MacEwen and Sinclair were thanked for preparing the document.

8 North Berwick Coastal Ward Priorities Survey

8.1 It was thought that the survey had been sent to those who had been present at the community planning meeting held in June at the High School. The survey did not seem to address the matters arising from that meeting, which was felt to be a missed opportunity. It was understood that the report from the meeting had only been circulated to those who had attended and it was noted that it had been almost identical to those prepared for other towns.

8.2 Association of Community Councils (ASCC)

The ASCC would cease after April 2012 as funding had been cut. The unincorporated section had already stopped operating. A letter which John Swinney had written to MSPs had been circulated to councillors. The meeting discussed whether the letter indicated favouring community planning or not. NBCC had not used the ASCC. Cllr Danks would circulate the document she had received from the ASCC so furtherED discussion could take place.

9 Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Fields Challenge

9.1 The Secretary had ascertained that this was a new campaign to protect 2012 outdoor recreational spaces across the UK from development in perpetuity as a living legacy of the Jubilee. No funding would be available from ELC. The Fields in Trust would make the final selection from nominations submitted by ELC and the rest of the country. It was agreed that NBCC would not make a nomination.

10 East Lothian Local Development Plan

10.1 The Plan was in the process of development and would replace the East Lothian Local Plan for 2008. The focus of the new plan would be with community councils, local organisations, infrastructure providers and other agencies such as developers and landowners.

11 Planning

11.1 The following applications were not met with any objections:

8A Hamilton Road

Extensions to house, formation of hard standing areas and installation of roof windows

1 Abbotsford Park, Abbotsford Road

Erection of conservatory and replacement of soffits and fascias

Lloyds TSB, 41 High Street

Display of advertisements

25 Balfour Street

Replacement windows

11.2 The meeting discussed the application for a nursery at Meldorf, Dirleton Road, about which a number of representations had been received. Concerns included the proximity to a fast main road; the proposed entrance and exit may not be adequate and would result in street parking; whether there was enough space for 15 parked cars within the grounds; loss of amenity to neighbours; constant traffic. NBCC would support these concerns.

12 Reports from groups and societies

12.1 *Museum*

The pop-up museum exhibition would start on 08 August. Several applications had been received for positions on the shadow committee running the museum. It was hoped that interviews would start soon.

12.2 *Community and Police Partnership (CAPP)*

The meeting had been pleased that crime levels were low. However, the meeting had not been well attended. It was to be noted that CAPP meetings were for the whole ward and it was suggested that the venue could be rotated to cover the whole area.

Lime Grove Tenants' Association

12.3 Only two people had been present. There had been a lack of response to having estate inspections carried out.

The Lodge

12.4 The Lodge had once again been awarded Green Flag status. It was hoped the flag would be received before In Bloom judging.

North Berwick in Bloom

12.5 The meeting was delighted with the appearance of the new seat outside the Council Chambers in Quality Street, although the problem of litter being thrown into the central area needed to be addressed. International judging would take place the following week and Beautiful Scotland judging would take place then, also.

13 Correspondence

13.1 *Raft Race*

A representative from NBCC would present the prizes at the Raft Race and judge the sand modelling competition. So far as the financial contribution from NBCC was concerned, the cost of prizes had been discussed with the organisers and it had been agreed to reduce the prizes for the sand modelling competition and to put some of the contribution into the collecting box.

13.2 *Electronic circulation of newsletter*

A suggestion from a resident that the town newsletter be circulated electronically to those who stated they wanted to receive it, and could do so electronically, was considered to be unmanageable.

13.3 *SESPlan Development Plan*

Scheme Number 3 had been received and would be circulated to the Chairman and **KS** Cllr Goodfellow.

13.4 *Lammermuir Festival - 16-25 September 2011*

Programmes were distributed.

14 AOB

14.1 *Law Race – 3 August*

As many councillors as possible were asked to attend to distribute medals.

14.2 *Crawford & Calder Cups - putting competitions*

The finals would take place on Thursday 04 August; help was needed with the children in the Crawford Cup finals.

14.3 *Insurance*

The insurance for the museum exhibition, being £79.50, had been paid.

14.4 *Shuttle bus*

A comment had been received that signage for people exiting the train station was not good and that the Seabird Centre sign indicated that people should walk there. This would be discussed under transport issues.

ALL

15 Date of next meeting

19.30 on Tuesday 6 September 2011 in the Fire Station