

Royal Burgh of North Berwick Community Council

Minutes of the 454th Public Meeting held at 19.30 on Tuesday 01 April 2014 in St Andrew Blackadder Church, North Berwick

Present: Cllr S Sinclair Chairman

Cllr K Smith Secretary

Cllrs M Baker, R Bryson, E Danks, D Kellock, L Hall, J. Scott, H Smith, I Watson

In attendance: ELC Cllrs D Berry and J Goodfellow, local Press, Sgt A Doig, PC D Waugh, Mrs A Turgoose, Members of the public.

1 Apologies: Cllr H Flanagan, Cllr W Macnair, ELC Cllr T Day, PC C Banks

2 Minutes of the Meeting held on 4th March 2014

The adoption of the Minutes was proposed by Cllr Kellock and seconded by Cllr Baker

3 Matters Arising.

3.1 East Lothian Health Network

(5.1) The Secretary confirmed that she had circulated information regarding the East Lothian Health Network.

The Chairman reported that two dates, 30 April and 5 May, had been proposed for the Open Meeting. The Hope Rooms was not available on 5 May but availability for 30 April would be checked. The Abbey Church was a possible alternative venue for 30 April.

3.2 Harbour Trust

(10.1) Cllr Bryson reported on a meeting he had attended to discuss plans for the work at Galloway's Pier and the alterations to the changing rooms. He confirmed that work was due to start on 31 March. The Community Council welcomed these significant improvements.

3.3 Community Notice Board

(12.5) Cllr Baker commented on the many positive comments he had received regarding the new Notice Board.

3.4 Old Notice Board

(12.6) In response to a question from Cllr Watson, the Chairman confirmed that the old Notice Board, adjacent to the Police Station, could be used by the Coastal Communities Museum to promote its activities.

4 Police Report

4.1 PC Waugh reported that 67 calls had been received by Police in February. For the North Berwick area there were 7 reported crimes of which 4 had been solved to date.

Breakdown of crimes:

Threatening or abusive behaviour - 2 (1 solved); Theft from a motor vehicle - 1;

Fraud - 1; Assault - 1 (solved); Urinating in a public place - 1 (solved);

Vandalism - 1 (solved)

4.2 CAPP

A CAPP meeting had taken place on 26 March when the **agreed priorities** were -

Parking in North Berwick Ward Area: Police to monitor streets during Easter and the lead up to the summer season.

NISA: Dundas Road/ Lochbridge Road: Police and Community Wardens to give attention to the areas highlighted by incidents of antisocial behaviour (Law View).

Gullane: High visibility reassurance patrols by Police.

The next CAPP meeting would take place at the Council Chambers, Quality St, North Berwick on Wednesday 30 April at 19.30.

If there are any questions, please contact PC Colin Banks on 01620 89358 or colin.banks@scotland.pnn.police.uk or Cameron.tait@scotland.pnn.police.uk

- 4.3 Cllr Bryson asked about the recent spate of house breaking. PC Waugh reported that there was considerable Police involvement to tackle the problem including the use of plain clothes officers and increased stop and search.
- 4.4 In response to questions about the impact of the removal of traffic wardens, PC Waugh confirmed that both Community and Station Officers had parking issues to the fore and were issuing tickets. There was no particular increase in breaches due, it was believed, to the word getting around that tickets were being issued. Cllr Scott enquired if two officers were required to issue tickets and was advised that only one officer was required. Replying to a query from Cllr Danks, PC Waugh confirmed that breach of the 90 minute parking limit, and unauthorised parking in disabled bays were all considered within traffic management.
- 4.5 Cllr Hall expressed concerns about the chaotic parking at Castle Hill on Sundays, including cars parking on the pavement. PC Waugh noted this and agreed to raise it with PC Banks and investigate the problem.
- 4.6 Attention was also drawn to a potential problem later in the year when the car park for touring vehicles in Port Seton would be unavailable. It could be anticipated that 50-100 additional touring vehicles might come to North Berwick.

5 Local Priorities and Budgets for 2014/15

- 5.1 Cllr Scott reported that the Local Community Grant Allocation for 2014/15 was £849 and that our Local Priorities Grant had been set at £8310, (a reduction of about 5%). He would provide full budget details at the next meeting.

6 East Lothian Association of Community Councils (ELACC)

- 6.1 Cllr Scott provided feedback on a meeting he had attended the previous week where Jim Lamont, Head of Council Resources and Willie Innes, Leader of ELC, had given a presentation

on the ELC budget for the next three years. A key message was that money would be tight. Of the funding available, 80% was a block government grant with the remaining 20% being raised from, for example, Council Tax revenue. There would be increased pressure on budgets due to additional statutory requirements, for example the need in the future to collect food waste. Cllr Scott reported that only five Community Councils had been represented at what had been a helpful meeting.

- 6.2 The Chairman indicated that she would write to Lilian Pryde to express disappointment at this poor attendance.

7 Association of Community Rail Partnerships (ACoRP)

- 7.1 The Chairman and ELC Cllr Berry had attended a meeting on 31 March at which it was confirmed that there would be an East Lothian Rail Partnership with the aim of getting more people to use rail to access local attractions. This would entail achieving greater connectivity between rail and buses. The meeting had attracted broad representation with those present keen to achieve better transport links and improved signage. The latter was being addressed with the possible installation of a new notice board at the station in the near future.

- 7.2 The Chairman had raised, again, the question of toilet facilities at North Berwick station. ELC Cllr Berry explained that, as the ownership and operation of the railway involved two different organisations, Scotrail would need to make a request to Network Rail. The kiosk owner had suggested that the toilets could be situated at the end of the building which housed the shop/ waiting area. ELC Cllr Berry considered that the toilets would be locked overnight, possibly by staff who clean the area. ELC Cllr Berry suggested that the case for toilets could be strengthened by a contribution from the Council. He also noted that Network Rail was aware of how well the station was maintained and North Berwick in Bloom deserved praise for their efforts.

8 Law Advisory Group

- 8.1 The changes in flora and fauna on the Law were being studied following the introduction of Exmoor ponies on the Law. The impact was discussed at a meeting on 26 March attended by Cllr Scott. This Group, with an interest also in Traprain Law, had a broad representation, including Countryside and Leisure, Ranger, Dunspey Community Council, Scottish Natural Heritage, Historic Scotland and archaeological experts. Public footfall was also being monitored. Cllr Scott reported that new fencing had been erected and gorse had been cut to root level but not removed in order to avoid erosion. It would continue to be cut down. The Chairman commented that cutting back gorse may not be universally welcomed. Cllr H Smith noted the importance of monitoring what grows in place of the gorse. It emerged in discussion that Exmoor ponies had been chosen because they were free, looking for a home and had no commercial value. Cllr Scott advised that a further meeting would be held in September. No action was required by the Community Council, at this stage.

9 Parking Consultation

- 9.1 The Chairman confirmed that the Consultation was now on the ELC website with a closing date of 5 May. Paper copies were available in the Library, Community Centre and at the High School. The Consultation would be covered in this week's East Lothian Courier.

- 9.2 A member of the public raised concerns about the anonymity of responses as this could lead to multiple replies. While there was agreement that this was a possibility, ELC Cllr Berry noted that anonymity would help prevent any comeback on individuals.
- 9.3 The Chairman considered the aim was to obtain mainly local opinion while accepting ELC Cllr Goodfellow's argument that the views of visitors who required parking were also valid. Both ELC Cllrs Berry and Goodfellow both stressed the need to encourage as many residents as possible to get involved. A bigger sample would result in better representation of views.
- 9.4 A member of the public asked if the Consultation would be placed on the Community Council website. The Chairman confirmed that a link would be provided.
- 9.5 The lack of space for comment in the questionnaire was noted by a member of the public. Some but not all questions allowed further response. He also remarked that ELC strategy failed to make links between the impact of increased concrete areas and environmental issues, the lack of any reference to climate change and the role of public transport. Cllr Danks advised that not all parking areas would be concrete, for example, the Coos Green area would involve a reinforced grid allowing grass surfaces to grow. She drew attention to the fact that parking at the Glebe would be used by people visiting the Health Centre and Edington Hospital. In reply to a question from the public to Cllr Scott regarding additional parking at the Glebe area (which he owned), Cllr Scott acknowledged that this topic had been under discussion for some time. Cllr H Smith expressed the view that people should be encouraged to use public transport and use car parking more smartly.
- 9.6 The Chairman concluded that every effort should be made to raise awareness about the Consultation, the results of which would be considered in due course.

10 Ferrygate

- 10.1 The Chairman reported that an exhibition of the proposed new development by Miller Homes would be taking place at the Marine Hotel on 2 April from 2pm – 7.30pm. The Community Council had an interest in this proposal and members would attend. The original proposals had been turned down but an appeal was in place. She affirmed that the exhibition was a pre application consultation and that Miller Homes had not yet submitted a new planning application.
- 10.2 Cllr Hall offered to circulate details of the original plans and new information in relation to the Ferrygate proposals
- 10.3 ELC Cllr Goodfellow encouraged people to visit the exhibition as the overall area concerned was larger than in the original proposal.
- 10.4 In response to a query from Cllr H Smith regarding publicity, it was confirmed that the exhibition had been reported in the Press and Cllr Danks drew attention to a notice at the Community Centre.

11 Planning Matters

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

26 Westgate – demolition of wall and gate

26 Westgate – formation of vehicular access, hardstanding area, erection of wall and gate

An objection would be raised because the proposed changes would create a precedent as no property, apart from the Blenheim Hotel, had access to the road. There would also be a loss of street parking and there was a lack of compatibility with local housing.

Flat 2 8 Quality Street – alterations to flat and formation of hardstanding area

8 Victoria Road - increased length of flue

Following discussion regarding visibility from Quality St and the effectiveness of the new flue to reduce smoke in nearby areas, the Community Council agreed to contact the Planning Department for further information.

91 High St – part change of use from retail (class1) to café use (class 2) and repainting of shop front (retrospective).

91 High St – display of advertisement (retrospective)

66 High St – alterations to building, formation of external staircase and erection of signage

66 High St – alterations and part change of use of shop to form one flat, installation of external staircase and repainting of building

It was agreed to object as there were concerns regarding the erection of a staircase onto a public road, the need to conform internally and externally as this was a listed building and the impact on the flat opposite the proposed flat.

26 Victoria Road – siting of foldaway gazebos for a temporary period of two years

Clarification would be sought on the reasons for a two year period and the interpretation of “temporary”, as this could imply that the gazebos would be taken down each night.

28 Keppel Road – extension to house

Greymount Cottage, St Margaret’s Road – resurfacing of driveway

The Harbour – siting of storage containers for lobster hatchery operations and interpretive display purposes for a temporary period of three years.

7a South Hamilton Road – alterations, extensions to flat, erection of shed, formation of hardstanding area, steps and gate

Harmony Cottage, 7a Forth St – replacement windows (retrospective)

4 Glasclune Court – replacement windows

32 Victoria Road – installation of external stairway and handrails

12 Reports from Groups and Societies

12.1 **CAPP:** Cllr Bryson reported that he had been present at the last CAPP meeting.

He had also attended a discussion in Haddington regarding building materials which were suitable in conservation areas.

- 12.2 **North Berwick in Bloom:** The Chairman, as Secretary of In Bloom, drew attention to the new seat on Quality St, which North Berwick in Bloom had commissioned. Planters in the area would be painted black as part of a refurbishment exercise.

She expressed appreciation for the efforts of Law Residents who had assumed responsibility for the bed/ planting at the NISA premises on Lochbridge Road. A sign had been put in place to acknowledge their input which was much appreciated by North Berwick in Bloom.

Cllr Kellock praised Rosie Oberlander, Chair of North Berwick in Bloom, for her excellent presentation at a recent Probus meeting. He had been surprised at the small number of In Bloom volunteers, given the range and quality of work they undertake.

- 12.3 **New Bin on Quality St:** ELC Cllr Goodfellow queried the location of the new bin. The Chairman confirmed that the expectation had been that the bin would be placed outside North Berwick Fry and not on the opposite side of the street as was the case. Use of the bin, which could absorb eight times the amount of rubbish of a traditional bin, would be monitored and it would be moved to the seafront later in the year.

ELC Cllr Berry added that the bin outside NISA on Lochbridge Road would be reinstated.

- 12.4 **Coastal Communities Museum:** Cllr Watson reported that, on average, the “Winter Feast” which would be continuing until 1 June had attracted 49 visitors each day during the Saturday and Sunday opening. The next exhibition, focussing on World War 1, would open on 1 July.

- 12.5 **Arts Centre** – Cllr Watson was delighted to report that funding had been obtained from the Lottery and Common Good Fund to undertake a feasibility study.

- 12.6 **Environment Trust:** Cllr H Smith had attended the AGM which had included a talk on the Exmoor ponies.

13 Correspondence

13.1 Reactive Speed Signs

The Secretary reported on the opportunity to change the location of the reactive speed signs. Following discussion, it was agreed that the East Road sign should continue in its present location where it was considered useful in slowing down traffic. It was recommended that the sign on Dirleton Avenue should be moved to Tantallon Road.

14 Any other competent business

14.1 Roadside Banners

Concerns regarding these banners had been raised with ELC Cllr Berry. The Chairman advised that the Community Council had already discussed this matter and had highlighted safety issues among others but, in response to a query from ELC Cllr Goodfellow, confirmed that it had not written to express the concerns. The Chairman agreed that the Secretary would write to request removal of the banners which could be reinstated to support specific local events. Cllr Watson noted the high cost of the banners.

14.2 Yacht Club

The Secretary enquired about the source for posters to replace old defibrillation posters on display at the Yacht Club. ELC Cllr Goodfellow advised that the posters were originally funded by Friends of the Edington Hospital. He offered to check out the replacement/ updating process.

14.3 North Berwick Fire Station

Cllr Watson reported that the North Berwick Fire Service team recently failed to attend an incident at the Harbour. The fire engine had come from East Linton, after a delay of 20 minutes. He questioned why the local station had not been staffed and whether the Harbour was an isolated incident. The alarm monitoring station had confirmed that the Fire Station was closed. This was a serious matter, given the number of elderly residents and residential establishments in North Berwick, plus a fireworks factory.

Cllr Bryson was aware of another similar situation when, again, the East Linton fire engine had attended.

ELC Cllr Goodfellow informed the meeting that ELC no longer had any involvement with the Fire Service. Responsibility had been centralised and now rested with the Scottish Government. He offered to raise the matter with the Community Safety Group.

The Chairman confirmed that she would take up this serious matter with the appropriate government agency.

14.4 Disabled Parking Bays

Cllr Bryson reported that he had been approached by two residents who had asked if the parking spaces in front of the Police Station could be designated as disabled parking bays as no specific spaces were allocated on the High St.

Cllr Berry confirmed that the spaces under discussion were not regulated and agreed that the question of disabled parking spaces was an ongoing issue. However, there were several areas of the High St where people with a Blue Badge could park without restriction.

It was agreed that Cllr Bryson would raise the matter at a CAPP Meeting

14.5 Anchor Green

Cllr H Smith and some members of the public raised concerns regarding the number and type of attractions on Anchor Green which were considered to detract from the natural beauty and heritage of the area. Cllr Danks was aware of concerns regarding the number of signs but acknowledged that the area was used by tourists who needed information. ELC Cllr Berry confirmed that amusements required a licence, not planning permission. The Chairman agreed to investigate the situation, in particular any plans for further expansion on Anchor Green.

15 Date of next Meeting:

The next meeting would take place on Tuesday 6th May at 19.30 at the Fire Station, Station Road.