

Royal Burgh of North Berwick Community Council

Minutes of the 463rd Public Meeting held at 19.30 on Tuesday 06 January 2015

in The Fire Station, Station Road, North Berwick.

Present: Cllr S Sinclair Chairman

Cllr K Smith Secretary

Cllrs M Baker, E Danks, D Kellock, L Hall, P Hamilton, W Macnair, D Ritchie, H Smith, I Watson

In attendance: ELC Cllr D Berry, J Goodfellow, PC Cameron Tait, PC Charlie Duncan, local Press, Mrs A Turgoose, members of the public.

1 Apologies: Cllr J Scott, ELC Cllr T Day.

2 Minutes of the Meeting held on 2nd December 2014.

The adoption of the Minutes was proposed by Cllr W Macnair and seconded by Cllr D Kellock.

3 Matters Arising.

3.1 Access to East Lothian Tourism Strategy

(3.1) The Chairman reported that she had received a copy of the Tourism Strategy.

3.2 Communication Strategy

(3.3) The Community Council website issues had been resolved and the site was live. However, the Chairman had been alerted to a potential virus which was being investigated.

3.3 Begging on the High Street

(12.5) Cllr Kellock indicated that the licence issues regarding the "Big Issue" Seller appeared to have been resolved.

4 Police Report.

4.1 PC Tait introduced PC Charlie Duncan in his role as Community Beat Officer, replacing PC Colin Banks. PC Duncan would act as the point of contact for any community matters in the North Berwick Coastal Ward as PC Tait was on restricted duties following an assault while on duty.

4.2 There were 88 calls to the Police in the month.

WARD PRIORITIES:

1] Road Safety:

A vehicle was stopped by police on Lochbridge Road. The driver was found to be disqualified and had no insurance. The vehicle was confiscated and the driver reported to the Procurator Fiscal.

A vehicle was parked improperly and rolled back, striking the elderly driver who sustained minor injuries. She was conveyed to the ERI for treatment.

Following several parking complaints over the last month (parking, obstruction), a number of tickets were issued.

2] Anti-Social Behaviour:

A male was observed in a shop in North Berwick with what appeared to be a handgun down the back of his trousers. Officers identified the male through enquiries and executed a firearms warrant at a North Berwick address. A ball bearing gun was found within and the male was reported to the Procurator Fiscal for offences in relation to this. PC Tait advised that ball bearing guns look realistic and would result in bruising to the body.

Two fixed penalty notices were issued for shouting and swearing and urinating in a public place.

A male was charged with a racial breach of the peace in relation to a police officer having been racially abused.

3] Substance Misuse:

A warrant was executed at an address in Lochbridge Road where a cannabis cultivation was found. A male was reported to the Procurator Fiscal.

4] Theft:

A vehicle drove off without paying for fuel from Tesco.

Various parcels and their contents were stolen from a rear garden in Lochbridge Road. Members of the public are advised not to leave items which would be of interest to thieves in insecure places.

4.3 CAPP priorities for North Berwick: Two areas were highlighted for the Coastal Area.

- Dundas Road: Boy Racers/ Litter/ Speeding around the streets in the area (Parking in Loco (NISA) car park/ Dundas Road)

Police to monitor and deal with any offenders/ offences

- Law Road/ Clifford Road junction: (Vehicles "skipping" red lights).

No offences had been noted during the month.

Date of the next CAPP meeting: Wednesday 28 January 2015 at 19.30 in the Council Chambers, Quality Street. Feedback to: NorthBerwickCoastalCPT@Scotland.pnn.police.uk or Charlie.Duncan@Scotland.pnn.police.uk

4.4 Begging on the High Street.

PC Tait reported that Police had received calls about begging on the High Street. He confirmed that begging in itself was not an offence. If beggars were causing an obstruction they had to be given an opportunity to move. Sellers of the "Big Issue" required a licence and he was aware that some sellers who had returned to the town were operating without licences. Operating without a licence could constitute fraud. Cllr Kellock questioned if beggars were genuinely in need or being coerced. PC Tait acknowledged that coercion/ exploitation was a relatively new phenomenon but that the Police recorded details and

would follow up if they had concerns. In some cases, referral to Social Work or partner agencies was appropriated. Cllr Danks noted that begging while acting as a Big Issue seller could raise questions about the reputation of the organisation.

5 Planning Matters

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

21 Westgate EH39 4AE: Demolition of building.

21 Westgate St EH39 4AE: Erection of 4 flats and associated works.

A number of residents were present for the discussions. Cllr Hall set out the NBCC objections to both the demolition and the proposed building. The Local Plan advised that all new developments should be designed to enhance architectural or historical culture but Cllr Hall believed that the proposed building would fail on both counts and would constitute cramped infill. The existing structure was the recipient of an architectural award so there is significant architectural interest in the building. The two and a half storey block of flats was contrary to the character of the town and would also obstruct the views of Marine Lodge and overlook Bank Street houses, seriously impacting both on privacy and light. There were implications for traffic and proposed parking was inadequate. Cllr Hall noted that, while the East Lothian Local Plan advised that environmental impact of new buildings must not be obvious, the proposal would have a massive impact and change the nature of that part of town which was part residential, part business. On a separate point, she believed that North Berwick needed to increase its business base not reduce it. Cllrs Danks and Watson strongly supported this point. In response to a question from Cllr Baker, Cllr Hall confirmed that the current building was not listed. NBCC would submit objections to the proposal to demolish the building and the erection of the flats.

A Planning Consultant who would be raising objections on behalf of two residents from Bank Street and one from St Andrew's Street set out his arguments. He was supported by the views of other members of the public, one of whom informed the meeting that Scottish Civic Trust, who had made the original architectural award for the existing building, had submitted an objection to its demolition. A resident highlighted the existence of a Facebook campaign but it was suggested that some of the content could be considered defamatory. ELC Cllr Goodfellow stated that ELC had not made a comment or decision on this application while ELC Cllr Berry set out the position that Scottish Planning Law assumes approval and all options have to be considered in a relatively positive light. Objections needed to be on material planning grounds. One resident commented on difficulties which had resulted in a wall being demolished by traffic. Cllr Berry advised that road access points were not usually considered to be major factors but if there were safety issues, these should be raised. Cllr Danks suggested that the resident contact ELC Transportation as there were no reports of accidents to the public in that area.

ELC Cllr Berry indicated that those objecting to the proposals could be represented at the Planning Meeting which was held on the first Tuesday of the month.

Haddington Road land at Mains Farm: Formation of a construction access for a temporary period of up to 9 years. No objection was raised.

Grange Road Mains Farm: Formation of a shared footway/ cycleway and erection of fencing. No objection was raised.

27c Balfour Street Road EH39 4JY: Alterations to flat. No objection was raised.

4 Glenburn Road EH39 4DH: Extension to house. No objection was raised.

Tesco Stores Ltd Tantallon Road EH39 5NF: Variation of condition 5 of planning permission 05/00928/FUL to allow for deliveries between the hours of 06.00 to 23.00 on Mondays to Saturdays inclusive and erection of acoustic panels on service yard fence.

It was clarified that the current delivery time starts at 07.00. Heavy vehicles would create extra noise before and after entering the premises which would have an impact on Horse Crook and some Rhodes Park and Ben Sayers Park properties.

A resident from Horse Crook raised concerns about the installation of the acoustic panels which would further reduce natural light, effectively cutting light in the lower flat, garden and drying areas. Objections had been raised. Residents in Rhodes Park had already been in contact with Cllr Kellock about the increased traffic in the early morning and indicated that they would be submitting objections to the proposals. ELC Cllr Berry suggested that multiple complaints would have a greater effect.

NBCC considered the proposed changes were a step too far and would lodge objections.

3 West End Place EH39 4AJ: Erection of fencing and gate (part retrospective). No objection was raised.

10 Cromwell Road EH39 4LZ: Extension to flat, formation of hardstanding area and erection of wall. No objection was raised.

24 Lime Grove EH39 5NH: Erection of shed and fence and formation of hardstanding areas. No objection was raised.

18 Glasclune Gardens EH39 4RB: Alterations to house. No objection was raised.

6 **Resilient Communities Plan**

- 6.1 Cllr Ritchie was due to attend a planning meeting on 8th January 2015 in the Community Centre to which all interested parties would be invited. She would report back at a future Community Council meeting. Cllr Ritchie had identified the need for current mailing lists/contact details to be updated.

The Chairman noted the existence of Resilience Plans from other areas which could prove useful as a starting point.

7 **Area Partnership**

- 7.1 The Secretary had received and circulated a Newsletter to Community Council members. The next meeting, on Tuesday 27th January, would concentrate on the Main Issues Report. Any issues to be raised at the meeting should be forwarded to Cllr Danks, Hall, H Smith, Watson or the Chairman, as appropriate.

8 **Street Naming**

- 8.1 The Secretary had received a communication from ELC in response to the NBCC suggestion that streets adjoining Moffat Place in the CALA development also contained a Moffat reference. NBCC was advised that this practice would constitute difficulties for mail deliveries. Unique names were required to form the name bank. The name Russell had been forwarded as an alternative. The Chairman invited Cllrs to forward additional suggestions to the Secretary for discussion. She was aware that Rotary had submitted "Rotary Road" which ELC considered a worthy cause and was happy to include. Cllr Macnair considered it appropriate to include those who had been recognised for their community commitment while Cllr Ritchie believed there was merit in approaching this strategically, for example including people who had made contributions in specific areas, for example, Education and Health. The Chairman invited Cllrs to forward names to the Secretary for future discussion.

9 **Main Issues Report (MIR)**

- 9.1 All Cllrs had read the report which contained both North Berwick specific issues and matters with broader implications. Following discussion, it was agreed that Cllrs circulate their responses to the questions contained within the MIR. A composite NBCC reply would be agreed at the January midmonth meeting. Cllr Ritchie believed that not all aspects of the MIR were controversial. ELC Cllr Berry drew attention to the absence of reference to infrastructure and Cllr Baker noted that there could be alternatives to the proposed housing sites within the MIR. He suggested that there was scope to extend the current site at Mains Farm should this be required in the future. ELC Cllr Berry said that there was a question as to whether affordable housing should be clustered or dispersed across the area.

10 **Reports from Groups and Societies**

- 10.1 **Kirk Ports:** Cllr Kellock reported significant progress. Discussions were ongoing with the Environment Trust and ELC regarding lease agreements while Historic Scotland had indicated that they were ready to accept an application for a grant.
- 10.2 **The Law:** Cllr Macnair reported that he had met with Stan da Prato and Duncan Priddle to discuss removal of whin from the Law. It had been agreed to stop removal as birds and flowers had been affected. Photographs from the 1960's showed that it was older whin that had been removed. The seven ponies were doing well but graze selectively. More animals are needed and sheep may be introduced on a seasonal basis.
- 10.3 **Environment Trust:** Cllr H Smith reported that residents from Bank Street had attended an Environment Trust meeting, regarding the proposed development at 21 Westgate.
- 10.4 **Wheelchairs on the beach:** Cllr Ritchie would be attending a meeting in the near future. The Chairman was pleased to note that the campaign was receiving positive local support.

11 **Correspondence**

- 11.1 **RELBUS:** The Secretary had received notification of a meeting to be held on 28 January in the Town House Haddington at 7pm.
- 11.2 **Total Warrior event:** The Secretary had been alerted by David Gaffney to a website regarding the event planned to take place on 12/13 September at Balgone Estate. He expressed his wish to work with local stakeholders to ensure a successful two day event. 6000 participants could be anticipated over the two days with 75% on Saturday and 25% on Sunday.

Participants would have different starting times during the day. Use of train would be encouraged with 2500 cars expected over the weekend. Access and transport issues were discussed. ELC Cllr Berry reported that the ELC was putting the bus network out to tender with new arrangements in place for the summer. Proposals aimed to increase integration of buses and trains and there could be a bus from North Berwick to the Royal Infirmary Edinburgh.

11.3 **Gullane Post Office:** The Secretary had received notification that Gullane Post Office was moving to 2 Stanley Road.

11.4 **Rotary Signage:** In 2017 North Berwick Rotary will celebrate 50 years of Chartership. Rotary would like to be included on signage at the entry to the town and would raise funds for the sign. It was suggested that Rotary could replace one Fairtrade Notice which is duplicated. In response to Cllr Kellock's query if this would be a temporary fixture, it was suggested that it was likely to be permanent. Cllr Watson queried if Rotary would assume responsibility for maintenance of the signage.

12 **Any other competent business**

12.1 **Resignation of Cllr L Hall:** Cllrs Hall indicated her intention to retire during 2015. Consequently, a Cllr would be required to deal with planning matters.

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 3rd February 2015 at 19.30.