**Royal Burgh of North Berwick Community Council**

**Minutes of Meeting held at 19.30 on**

**Tuesday 4th October 2022**

**in the Community Centre, Law Road**

**Present:**  Judy Lockhart-Hunter (Chairman), Kathryn Smith (Secretary), Christiane Maher (Treasurer), Peter Hamilton, Bill Macnair, Ian Watson, Mairi Benson (via zoom), Jacq Cottrell

**Also present:** ELC Cllrs Jeremy Findlay & Liz Allan, Gregor Millar (local press), Doug Haig, Richard Paton and Jim Goodfellow

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| **Agenda item** | **Discussion** | **Action** |
| **1 Welcome** | The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming all to the second in person meeting of the Community Council. |  |
| **2 Apologies** | Cllrs Gordon Moodie & George Johnstone and ELC Cllr Carol McFarlane |  |
| **3 Previous Minutes** | Adoption of the Minutes of the meeting held on 6th September, which had been circulated previously, was proposed by Cllr Hamilton and seconded by Cllr Macnair. |  |
| **4 Matters Arising** | 4.1 ***5.2*** ***Old North Berwick sign:*** The undergrowth around the Tantallon Road sign had been cleared. Quotes were still to be obtained for the refurbishment of all the old signs.  4.2 ***6.2 Casual vacancies:*** Three applications had been received for two vacancies. Interviews by zoom had been arranged for 13th October. |  |
| **5 Pumpkin Patch Nursery** | 5.1 Richard Paton, a representative of the group of affected parents, gave a background update on the situation arising from the withdrawal of 1,140 hours of funding for the Pumpkin Patch Nursery in North Berwick.  5.2 NBCC had written to ELC 4 times since the issue was made public to try to gain more information on key points such as the reason for the closure; why it could not be reviewed again within 12 months; what provision could be implemented in the town for children aged 3 to 5 so that they had access to funded childcare which met the hours required for working families.  5.3 As satisfactory answers had not been received a member of the Education Department had been asked to attend this meeting to discuss further but had refused.  5.4 The decision to remove funding meant that only one nursery on the outskirts of North Berwick provided childcare to suit the hours of working parents but it had a 20 month+ waiting list. Law Nursery was able to provide 2 days of childcare and every other Friday. However, the length of the days was not suitable for parents working 9am-5pm in Edinburgh. ELC had said they would look into extending their hours to provide earlier starts. However, they could not facilitate later finishes to accommodate the train times for those working in Edinburgh until 5pm.  ELC had suggested that parents send children to Law Nursery on some days and Pumpkin Patch on the others. It was not clear why they still recommended that children should attend Pumpkin Patch when there was concern over standards.  5.5 It was understood that the Care Commission Report on Pumpkin Patch received very good scores. The Report also raised conflictions with ELC's way of handling this situation.  5.6 Aside from COVID and the closure of the Edington, the Community Council had not seen the level of correspondence received on any one topic for years.  5.7 The parents of current Pumpkin Patch children had set up a Parent Council which was pushing ELC for information on why and how the decision to remove funding had been reached and what they were to do.  5.8 Mr Paton explained that without the funding, parents would pay around £750 per month extra for their childcare which would mean he would have to leave his job to look after his child. He was not the only parent in that situation. A survey by the Parent Council of affected parents provided a clear picture of the worrying place in which the parents found themselves.  5.9 The Parent Council had advised the Community Council that whilst "discussions are ongoing between ELC, Bright Stars and representatives of the nursery's parents”, the Pumpkin Patch parents were considering legal action in the form of a Judicial Review if a satisfactory resolution with ELC could not be reached. Prior to taking any formal legal action, the parents might seek Counsel’s Opinion regarding the prospects of success with a Judicial Review. As this decision from ELC would affect not only current nursery children but also the wider North Berwick community (due to the significant impact it would have on the already limited availability of suitable funded hours in the town) they were seeking support from the Community Council for a contribution towards the cost of the legal opinion which was expected to be around £6,000.  5.10 As the Community Council considered that the situation represented a childcare emergency in the town due to the lack of availability of 1,140 hours funding suitable for working parents, after a majority vote, it was agreed to contribute £2,000 from the balance of the Community Council’s Emergency Resilience Fund to support the cause if required. This would leave over half of the Emergency Resilience Fund which might be required to support the current cost-of-living crisis. It was hoped that ELC would start answering the questions from both the Community Council and the concerned parents, and that they would put into place a workable solution quickly to prevent any legal costs being incurred. |  |
| **6 Police Report** | 6.1 This month’s short police report, which had been circulated beforehand, was taken as read.  6.2 The Secretary had spoken with PC Natalie Dalziel who would be the new community police officer.  6.3 A room in the Community Centre had been provisionally booked for the first CAPP meeting on Wednesday 19th October. |  |
| **7 Planning matters** | 7.1 The September planning applications were led by Cllr Maher.  7.2 The following new applications had been viewed beforehand and, following a brief discussion, no comments were made –  ***3 Victoria Road*** – alterations & extension to house  ***Seaholm, 14 Westerdunes Park*** – repainting parts of house & garage  ***2 Bramerton Court, 27 Dirle*ton *Avenue*** – replacement windows  ***17A East Road*** – replacement glazing in windows  ***23 St Andrew Street*** – alterations to house (part retro)  ***9 Eeles Mount*** – extension to house  ***Flat 2, Eastfield Court, Marine Parade*** – replacement windows  ***5 Rhodes Holdings*** – extension to house  ***Balgone Farm*** – alterations, change of use of agricultural land/storage containers to form cafe (class 3) with outdoor seating area and associated works (part retro)  ***48 Gilbert Avenue*** – extension to house  *Note – Notice of Review of the planning application re 12 Westgate would be held at 2.00 pm on 6th October.*  7.3 Decisions since last meeting –  ***21C Balfour Street –*** replacement windows – **granted**  ***51 Westgate –*** replacement windows – granted  ***Glenorchy House, 15 Glenorchy Road –*** alterations and extension to house - **granted**  ***10 Warrender Court –*** extension to house – **granted**  ***13B Melbourne Road –*** installation of roof windows – **granted**  ***25 Quality Street –*** replacement windows – **granted**  ***24A St Andrew Street –*** renewal of planning permission 19/00324/P – alterations, extension and change of use of workshop to 1 house and associated works – **granted**  ***8 Westbay Road –*** demolition of gates - **granted**  ***8 Westbay Road –*** alterations, extension to house, widening of vehicular access, erection of gates, shed, formation of hard standing, planters, installation of balustrading as changes to scheme of development of planning permission 21/01501/P – **granted**  ***I Milton Lodge, Strathearn Road –*** alterations to house – **granted**  ***15A Melbourne Road –*** extension to building and erection of metal railings – **refused** because the extension was too modern  ***1 Quadrant –*** replacement windows – **granted**  ***26 Forth Street –*** erection of awning – **granted**  ***60A Forth Street –*** replacement hardstanding area including raised levels of part of new surfaces, repositioning of steps (retro) – **granted**  ***The Harbour Wall, Victoria Road –*** installation of mural – **granted**  ***Walled Garden, South of Windygates, 5 West Windygates Road –*** erection of 1 house and associated works – **granted** with 16 conditions mainly relating to tree preservation, road safety & protection of Windygates |  |
| **8 Treasurer’s Report** | 8.1 The Treasurer confirmed that the following payments had been made during the last month - £13 to Scottish Power for the store; and £14.39 x 2 for Zoom. |  |
| **9 Area Partnership/ Spaces for People** | 9.1 The next meeting of the Area Partnership would be in November.  9.2 The High Street consultation involving on-line, public and stakeholder events had now closed. The responses were being collated and would then be reviewed.  9.3 A parking consultation was due to start at the end of last month but had been delayed slightly. It would run for 6 weeks and would be widely advertised. The proposal was to have different levels of parking charges for the town centre including The Haugh which should deter camper vans. It was hoped to report by February/March.  9.4 Following the approval of the permanent 20 mph speed limits by the ELC Cabinet on 8th March, the legislative process and amendments to the permanent signage were now under way. |  |
| **10 Edington Cottage Hospital** | 10.1 Fiona Wilson, the new chief officer of NHS Lothian, Fiona Wilson, the new chief officer of NHS Lothian, would be giving an update at the next mid month business meeting.  10.2 Murray Duncanson was stepping down as Chairman of the Friends of the Edington and David Robertson would be taking over in the interim. He was thanked for his efforts as a decade long member of the Friends who had worked closely with the Community Council throughout the Save the Edington campaign.  10.3 A film was being made for social media to further publicise the cause |  |
| **11 Re-provisioning Group** | 11.1 There had been no meeting to update. |  |
| **12 Christmas Lights** | 12.1 Cllr Watson confirmed that, for a variety of reasons, the Christmas Lights sub-committee had decided reluctantly that they would not be organising a major in-person switch-on ceremony but would have a virtual one instead. This would take place on Saturday 26th November. |  |
| **13 Remembrance Day** | 13.1 Remembrance Sunday would be 13th November.  13.2 The service would be held in Abbey Church at 10.30 am  13.3 The Secretary would proceed with the preparations including ordering the wreaths, inviting the participants and completing the necessary paperwork for ELC. She hoped that Cllr Johnstone would be head steward again. |  |
| **14 Annual General Meeting** | 14.1 It was agreed that the Annual General Meeting would be held before the next monthly meeting on 1st November |  |
| **15**  **Correspondence** | The following correspondence had been received –  15.1 E-mail from a resident complaining about parking for residents in Westgate. He was referred to the parking consultation which was about to take place. |  |
| **16 Any other competent business** | 16.1 ***Bigbelly Bins:*** Sustaining North Berwick needed to raise £29,790 for 6 bins and associated costs. £5,750 had been pledged by St Andrew Blackadder Church to date and NBCC agreed to donate £1,500.    16.2 ***North Berwick Environment & Heritage Trust:***  (a) It was confirmed that Tetiana Hurn had agreed to put her mural on the east gable at the corner of Quality and High Streets so as not to interfere with the town projections.  (b) The Trust had asked about holding another market fete at the harbour similar to the Jubilee event. The Chairman agreed to meet to discuss further as the Harbour Trust was also interested in holding one. |  |
| **18 Date of Next Meeting** | The date of the next meeting would be on Tuesday 1st November 2022 at 7.30 pm and would be preceeded by the AGM at 7.15 pm. |  |