

Heriot Community Council

Minutes of meeting, Wednesday 30th Oct 2019.

Present: H. Brinkworth, F. Connelly, S.Sharp, G. Whittaker, J. Williams (Chair), Cllr. Scott

4 members of the public.

Apologies: Cllr. Aitchison, Cllr. Anderson

1. Minutes of the previous meeting: These were agreed without modification.
2. Police report. No report, but nothing of note anyway.
3. Planning applications: There were no new planning applications
4.
 - a. Area Partnerships. HB and JW had separately attended two meetings of the area partnership but HB reported that there were not enough attendees for a satisfactory meeting. JW reported fewer than 13 members of the public and around the same number of SBC staff. Ideas on the integration of SBC and the area partnerships were discussed, but with little effect. Heriot will persevere, but the groups seems largely irrelevant to us.
 - b. The first report of the working group on Community Councils future is being published, but there is little in it. However, it will be important to review its progress.
 - c. There was possible interest in car share/community transport schemes, which may become relevant to Heriot, but with nothing tangible so far.
5.
 - a. Heriot Playpark. GW reported that the playpark was essentially an unusable bog due to a chronic drainage issue. The SBC flood prevention team had been brought in to review the situation and to provide advice for remediation. The team had reported that, while drains had been installed some 30 years ago, there was no map of the installation, no details of what work was done and therefore little point in attempting to repair it. The recommendation was that new drainage be installed. GW had asked the team to devise a suitable scheme and to provide estimated costs for the work. The approach that the CC will take to deal with this will depend on the size of that estimated costs. The question was raised as to whether it wouldn't simply be better to abandon the existing playpark and develop a new one, but the potential damage to neighbouring properties (one wall of the old curling hut having already collapsed) means that the work needs to be carried out anyway. The issue

of the playpark location would be dealt with later but would, in any case, require suitable alternative land to be provided.

- b. Millennium bench. It was agreed that the bench was unusable and, at a quoted £1000 to repair (effectively to completely rebuild), not worth retaining in its existing form. It was agreed that a simpler, more standard, bench would be placed at the existing location, facing away from the road. Following a suggestion from the floor, it was further agreed that a second bench should be installed at Sandyknowe for local residents and passing cyclists to enjoy the view. SS to contact SBC roads department for advice and permissions in the siting of the second bench. *[It was agreed in email correspondence after the meeting to include the repair of the telephone box in this project and to make a single application to SBC's Community Grant scheme for the requisite funding.]*
- c. Heriot churchyard gravestones. We have one expensive quote in hand, SS agreed to chase up further quotes from SBC approved contractors. A complaint had been received about the leaves in the churchyard not being cleaned up. SBC are known to perform maintenance every 2-3 weeks, and the CC didn't believe it reasonable to expect the leaves to be cleaned up during the Autumn when further leaf-fall rapidly makes any cleaning redundant.

6. Windfarms.

- a. Heriot website has been updated to provide more detailed information about existing and proposed windfarms and windfarm applications.
- b. Gilston Hill. Updates are not appearing so we are still waiting to view any responses. A further round of submissions may be possible, depending on the content of the current round of responses. There is currently no timescale for a decision to be made.
- c. Wull Muir. SS recused herself from the CC discussion at this point for this topic. This application has very recently been updated with revised positions for the turbines and the inclusion of a residential amenity assessment. Initial responses to the revisions were that, while the views from Midlothian may have improved slightly, the views from the Heriot area had substantially worsened. Furthermore, at a recent meeting with Energiekontor, the CC had been told that the 130m turbines were increasingly difficult to obtain and that the development would probably not take place until 2023/4, increasing the probability that taller turbines would be used, probably via a Section 42 application. In view of the large amount of complex data that was to be discussed, the CC agreed to meet again to discuss this revision in more detail.

7. Broadband.

- a. BT's FTTP installation had been reported to have achieved 147Mbps at Crookston, but its installation around the village was very patchy with no information available about progress.
- b. Borders Online (formerly Heriot Community Broadband) is thriving.

8. Community funds

- a. An application had been received for £200 for badminton equipment for a start-up badminton club. The CC had offered £250 to purchase the equipment and to assist with hall rental fees in the initial period, which had been accepted. The badminton club will meet weekly from the 4th November.
- b. The Macfie Hall had been awarded £100k by the Toddleburn-Carcant community fund panel, and also £100k from the Dun Law Trust for improvements to the Macfie Hall. These were the largest awards made by either body – the Dun Law Trust in particular was impressed by the thought that had gone into the proposal and the presentation by Dougie, Felix and Kate.

9. Falahill Water

- a. In a textbook example of perfect timing, Kenny Dagleish (Falahill) entered the meeting to announce that the Falahill properties were receiving mains water as of half an hour ago. Kenny was thanked for letting the meeting know and the CC recorded its thanks to Cllrs Aitchison and Scott for their tireless work in getting this resolved.

10. AOB

- a. Dates for 2020 meetings – these will be broadly in line with those from the current year, with detailed dates to be decided later [*post-meeting, the CC was informed that work on the Macfie Hall will take place from January, requiring alternative venues to be found*]
- b. Decision-making by the CC. Following a question by SS, a prolonged discussion ensued about how the CC makes its decisions with reference to the community, whether and how an officer could be replaced, and whether and how a CC member could be removed. Cllr Scott agreed to follow this up with SBC but made the point that, as with area councillors, it is ultimately up to people to contact their elected representatives to voice their opinions and that, if they don't, they can't complain.
- c. The CC formally agreed to the SBC guidelines on "Following the Public Pound".
- d. The bonfire would be held this coming weekend (2nd November).
- e. The Hall work would start in January – if anyone in the community has space to accommodate some large items during this period, please contact a member of the Hall Committee.

The meeting finished at 20:26

Provisional dates of meetings in 2019:
(all at 7:00pm in the Macfie Hall)

December 4th