

Royal Burgh of Haddington and District Community Council

Minutes of meeting 14th July 2020, 7pm (meeting held online)

1.Sederunt

Jan Wilson (Chair), Chris McEwan (Vice Chair), Fiona McEwan (Secretary), John Hamilton (Treasurer), Pat Lemmon, Paul Darling, Erica Muirhead, Morgwyn Davies, Rab Moran

In attendance

Cllr John McMillan, Cllr Craig Hoy, Cllr Shamin Akhtar, Chief Inspector Neil Mitchell, Cameron Ritchie (Courier), Anna Faulkner (minutes' secretary).

2. Apologies: Jack Worden, Jim Graham, Fiona-Frances Adam

3. Minutes of 10th March

Approval of the minutes was proposed by Fiona McEwan and seconded by Erica Muirhead

4. Matters arising

4.1 Resilience Team: Chris confirmed that the team will be standing down at the end of the month. There has been a huge reduction in calls, down to almost zero although they still have a few prescription runs. Going forward the team are not going to disappear and should the need arise they can be on hand again but would expect the support of the council also. Doug and Dionne have been a fantastic support. Pat mentioned they have put in an application with the Area Partnership for a food voucher scheme. The lending library will continue for as long as needed – they have a core of volunteers to run this.

Jan wanted to thank all the volunteers who have gone above and beyond during this crisis – it shows a tremendous community spirit. Shamin echoed this – all the help has been greatly received and appreciated.

5. Treasurers Report: Community Council Accounts, July 2020

Account balance for month

- CC BoS Account balance: £26,860.03 as of 22/6/2020 (£4,150 pending payments, £4K junction boxes + 1 cheque)
(the above balance includes the Lending library figures)
- Lending Library monies £2,369.29 as of 29/6/2020
- Events Group TSB balance: £1,952.93 as of 3/5/2020 (No activities in last 3 months, hence date showing - No cheque(s) pending)
- Held in cash-box: £193.32 as of 9/7/2020 (CC cash = £133.79, Events cash = £59.53)

Highlights

- Local Priorities (£11,750) & Administration grant (£1,202) now showing in our account.
- £2,975 grant received from Community Wellbeing Fund for Lending library now showing in our account. Note this money is to be ring fenced from CC monies (although it will be kept in the CC account for ease of administration – this is now being reported below in its own section).
- £1800 donation for Resilience group from Pat Moncrieff.
- £100 donation received from Hamish Purves for Resilience group.
- £1,000 received from ELC from Area Partnership for Resilience work.
- COVID cost to date, from CC account: £671.98.

CC BoS Account transaction highlights, since last report

- Resilience income of £4,900 to date (Public donations and ELC grants), with spend to date of £671.98
- Payment of monthly secretarial fees.
- £1800 donation for Resilience group from Pat Moncrieff after winding down of her church.
- £100 donation received from Hamish Purves for Resilience group.
- £1,000 received from ELC from Area Partnership for Resilience work.

Lending Library - £2,975 ring fenced from CC account: £605 spent to date leaving £2,369 remaining.

- £75.81 paid for software system.
- £300 cash float given to Chris for incidentals costs.
- £229.90 paid out for converting winning photo entries into jigsaws.

Events Group TSB Account transaction highlights, since last report

- <No transactions>.

Cash transaction highlights, since last report (CC: from CC cash, EC: from Events Cash)

- <nothing to report> apart from ongoing secretarial payments to Anna.

5.1 Update: John reported a healthy bank balance. £4000 still to be paid for the Christmas lights.

6. HBCP (Hadd Business Community Partnership)

6.1 Whittingham Drive: Erica said it was great news that the plans for a park and ride have been shelved, for the time being at least.

6.2 Town centre parking signs: it is appalling the lack of communication regarding the signs that were put up to stop parking in the town centre. This has caused a lot of unnecessary stress and anxiety for residents and businesses. Jan has spoken with Peter Forsyth who admitted that the council got it wrong. Marshall Greenshields has been handing out leaflets on social distancing etc and been speaking to drivers. Chris will also speak with the council re asking drivers not to park with the front of their cars over the pavement – this will allow more space for pedestrians. Pat said they were very appreciative of the speed at which councillors reacted to solve this situation and hope it doesn't happen again.

7. Knox Academy Update – no update avail

8. Blooming Haddington – update from Rab

8.1 Hanging Baskets/planters: all completed plus borders planted out

8.2 Vandalism: a few areas of the town have been subjected to vandalism – this has been rectified

8.3 Volunteers: volunteers have been going out every 2nd Sunday and Wed tidying up the town and trying to catch up with work that was stalled due to the virus.

Rab thanked all the volunteers and the council for all their support and for the temporary use of the lock-up for storage.

9. Councillors Corner

9.1 Shop in Traprain Terrace: Shamin is aware of the concerns regarding these premises – has become a dumping ground – she has passed this on for action. Community Warden has been in touch with the family who own this – Shamin will chase this up.

9.2 Seggarsdean Park: team out this week working on the park.

9.3 John McMillan update (email):

Anti-social behaviour and incidents...

I asked on 22nd June for a new Problem Solving Partnership(PSP) to be set up, and asked Chief Inspector Mitchell to attend a meeting later that day with traders. Below is the extract from that meeting... The PSP has met once, and will meet later this week. Other incidents have been reported and investigated. CI Mitchell and I walked the High St and Market St last Wednesday and noted a few issues and action was taken immediately on some and plans made to tackle others.

Chief Inspector Mitchell made it very clear that residents should report all incidents and that his officers are would react and be proactive . He asked that we keep things in perspective, but reinforced the need to report incidents promptly and clearly.

He praised the cooperation with the Council and wardens, and pointed out that 73 calls had been received over the last 90 days (less than one a day). 13 calls had referred to the Town Centre , so not regarded as a 'hot spot'. Community Officers were responding to issues, patrolling etc and using stop and search powers where appropriate.

There had been two significant incidents in the last weekend– 12 arrests, but pointed out that 2/3 households/ groups causing problems. A known group of youths loitering and causing ASB problems. He and Community Officers would be leafleting town centre, and carrying out social media campaigns and having meetings with ELC staff, alongside work in schools with voluntary organisations and PSYV to raise awareness and I hope we will work alongside all these efforts. I particularly noted the comment that 'ELC was outstanding , and Council was leading the way' compared with other authorities on partnering, and of course room for improvement .

CI Mitchell pointed out that with prompt reporting, and good evidence from reported incidents , he could have a warrant in 4 weeks to investigate, hence the need to report promptly and clearly.

Thank you to Kenny Black, Callum and colleagues, and to CI Mitchell and his officers for all their support.

Licensing

The Licensing Board met last week and The Green was granted an occasional licence to use its car park as a beer garden. Other premises have been allowed to extend their outdoor space under the delegated powers which exist already to allow this kind of temporary license. Because there were objections to the Green's application, a Board was convened. Other applications for eg Pavement use and extending into gardens or car parks would be handled by officers as normal, unless objections are made.

Planning

There have been two Planning Committees since lockdown. A house on a farm in the ward, refused. Letham Mains application may come to future Committee in the next two months.

Spaces for People

Project still seeking feedback to promote the town centre with safe access and widening of pavements to encourage people to visit safely, and prevent the spread of the virus whilst using the town centre and are doing this in other towns. Shamin has detailed feedback from officers for tonight. You will have seen the Press Release on Whitingehame Drive issued this morning by Councillor Hampshire.

Resilience

So much positive feedback on this effort led by Chris and others, and for OCK and all other volunteers. I have attached an email from Cait McCorry to SPoCS and an extract from an email below from Sharon Saunders, Head of Communities on the Council's thanks for all the efforts and how ELC proposes to engage with the ending of some volunteering...Thanks to all for doing so much.

Diann and Doug are, as you know, very actively involved in the operation of the local resilience efforts and are strongly connected with Chris et al on the ongoing response locally.

Because the Council is still operating under Emergency Planning Response measures, with our Business Continuity Plans all invoked, we don't have an 'end date' by which we can ask Resilience Groups to stand down. A date will come in time, when the Business Continuity Plan is stood down, with the Chief Executive carrying the authority to make that decision in due course. Right now, we remain in active Response mode.

This has to be set alongside the voluntary status of the Community Council Resilience Groups, and any group could choose to stand down at any time. We have been very blessed in EL in having 20 local Community Council Resilience Groups able to respond to this emergency. Many other areas across Scotland don't have this community engagement and commitment; East Lothian has a very special and highly valued community resilience that other areas covet.

Some Resilience Groups have decided that they will take the ending, or pausing, of the Shielding Programme as their catalyst for standing down their local groups i.e. 31 July 2020 (tbc by FM imminently, I understand), and already have plans in place for this.

We are working with those Groups to help ensure appropriate 'winding down' planning and passing on of any local people support issues to existing community groups or relevant Council Services, such as social work - particularly where there are no family/friends/neighbour supports available to a vulnerable person. The Haddington Group has been offered a meeting with the Connected Communities and Health & Social Care teams to review their local set up asap. Many other Resilience Groups have now had these meetings and have found them to be very helpful.

Economic Development

Some highlights-

£16million paid to over 1500 companies in Business Support Grants. Attempts to contact all eligible contractors and continued work with those who have fallen through the gaps.

Advice on opening and ELC's campaign to 'Stay safe, Support local and Love East Lothian' backed by Visit Scotland and Scottish Enterprise and DWP, Skills Development Scotland and Chamber of Commerce and Federation of Small businesses among others. Weekly meetings on Town Centre Recovery and Tourism (Joanna Gibson and Paul Kinnoch from Haddington invited). Also Sub Groups on Employability and the Rural Economy. Posters available, and social media campaign and Press work. Funds to be made available for Town and cluster area to promote local economy (c £6,000) and good to see the My Haddington brochure being sent out through OCK. ELC bidding for other funds. 370 people checked into the Farmers' Market on Saturday.

Other issues

I am on 827000 and can also be contacted through Carol Grandison on 827010.

Lots of local issues dealt with – homelessness, Mitchell’s Close, paths, bins and drains, parks and potholes; housing, traffic lights, lighting, fairground opening rules, building warrants, planning and licensing. Business Gateway Board

9.4 Maitlandfield Hotel: John Hamilton asked whether the hotel will survive through this current crisis – they were ineligible for any of the grants available. Pat said they are currently working on plans.

9.5 Blooming Haddington: Craig thanked BH for all their hard work – although their team of volunteers is currently depleted they have been out and about keeping the town tidy.

9.6 Amenities team: John McM also thanked the teams of council officers who have been busy behind the scenes keeping all the public amenities running (roads, opening the public toilets, schools, farmers market etc)

9.7 Brown wheelie bins: Jan asked why they are only collecting monthly. Craig said staffing and resource problems forced this decision. This is a temporary situation – Craig will report back any update on this.

9.8 New business in town: Chris said the news that an ice-cream parlour is on the cards for the old Greggs site is extremely encouraging. Knox are going to run a competition to name it.

9.9 New working group: Jan and Shamin have had talks about setting up a group called ‘friends of Haddington play parks’. This would concentrate on the maintenance and upgrading of the play parks in the town. Funding possibly through the Area Partnership. Shamin said groups in Ormiston and Pencaitland have been very successful and she is happy to support this venture.

9.10 Airbnb: Chris asked what the councils’ view was on this. Their neighbours have let out their house and some of the other neighbours are unhappy with this. Craig said it had become a big issue in Edinburgh and councils are trying to bring in regulations. Chris and Fiona are not objecting to this but just hoped that those coming into the area are aware of and follow local guidelines. Craig suggested we should not be discouraging tourism to the area but understands their concerns and that we rely on people being responsible. There is a bill coming out for consideration which would require householders to have planning permission and licences – local government could be given local jurisdiction.

10. Police Questions (CI Neil Mitchell)

CAPP priorities

1. Parking in the areas around the Haddington primary schools during the prohibition times.
2. Youth issues within Neilson Park.
3. Anti-Social Behaviour in and around Ross’s Close, Haddington

Next meeting: date to be confirmed

10.1 Overview:

Charlie Duncan will be moving on to another position from the end of August – we wish him well.

Many ASB complaints have been made through elected members – Neil asked that’s these complaints come straight to the police so officers can be sent out to investigate. A mobile number is going to be provided which will connect directly to community officers – this will bypass the need to call 101

PSP – this has been resurrected as of beginning of July to tackle the ASB and disorder in the town. This is mainly set around a number of properties in the town centre. Working with ELC, ASB wardens and councillors to tackle this. Neil met with John McMillan for a walk around the town centre, spoke with residents and business owners to get a feel for the problems – have had positive feedback.

Chris asked what measures had been put in place to monitor licenced premises once the ban in drinking indoors is lifted. Additional officers are out and about – they have visited all the licenced premises and are impressed with all the measures being put in place.

John McMillan thanked Neil and concurred that they are very impressed with all the measures the licensees are putting in place to provide a safe environment for their customers. Jan also thanked the police and the wardens for keeping the town safe as did Erica – will be great to have a direct link to the community officers via mobile.

Pat asked how many wardens are on shift at any one time – John wasn’t sure but will find out.

11. Planning Applications

11.1 Tyne Close: the CC had made comment on this proposal (regarding the height and material to be used). Pat was questioning the speed of the turn around and were the CC informed of the re-submitted application. Chris asked if our objections were therefore carried over. Paul will check his emails. Jan pointed out that we need to keep on top of the planning applications and it would be good idea if Paul circulated any information to the Secretary who can send this to all the members.

11.2 Online Poll/voting for new CC member: Chris had the results of the recent online poll to elect 2 new members to the CC. The results will be published on the FB site (only those who were successful will be disclosed due to confidentiality issues). Fiona McE will invite the successful candidates to the next CC meeting.

12. Correspondence – all sent to members via email

13. Haddington Community Development Trust

13.1 Update: Jack Worden the CC representative not present at this meeting. We are still no further forward and Chris suggested we need clarification – there is a lot of money sitting out there and we are getting no information what so ever. Pat said they have a very good website and we need to take stock and make sure this does not go to waste. We need a similar group for the town going forward and make sure the money is put to good use.

14. Events Group

14.1 Nothing to report

15. Area Partnership (AP) – any updates are sent out to Fiona and Paul

16. AOCB

16.1 East Lothian Community Hospital: it has been agreed as a tribute to ELCH that we continue to fundraise for a clock for the main entrance to the hospital. Lots of different groups are currently working on this. Thanks to Pat for arranging this.

16.2 Funding from developers: Jan has spoken with Shamin regarding this. She wondered if they wrote to the Scottish Government to ask if CC's could be given access to some of the 'Planning Gain' money coming from developers. The CC can access certain grants that ELC don't have access to – the money to be used for the benefit of the town. Pat agreed it would be good to have more of a say how this money is used by the councils.

16.3 Thanks: Chris thanked Jan, Fiona and Pat for helping him with the resilience group – couldn't have done it without them. Jan in turn thanked Chris for all his work over the past 4 months, which included making masks, all the admin stuff and also still doing his day job ! Huge thanks to all involved.

Date of next Meeting: Tuesday 11th August 2020 in **Council Chambers, Town House** at 7.00pm.

It was discussed and members agreed that as we had missed April and May meetings that we would continue to meet throughout the summer months (ie July and Aug). Due to social distancing these meetings will probably take place online and not in the Town House

Outstanding Matters Arising from previous minutes

2017

14/2 Roads issues: pole in pavement, Pencaitland Rd, diversion signs, dumped cones etc
Athelstaneford: speeding signs, signage at cemetery

11/4 Lights out on Nungate Bridge

13/6 Ball Alley – pole sticking up
Tyne Walkway – flooding(behind St Mary's)

10/10

Traders licence – concession available

12/12 Station Court – disrepair of the road

2018

Feb Wynd by Leisure Time - ?signage
Road by car park – Nungate Bridge
Mill Wynd – tree stump at corner -? Removal

March Whittingham Drive
Unlit bollard at PO/Gateside development
Traffic lights at Ideal Garage junction – sequencing

May Hardgate – parking spaces
Victoria Terrace – double lines on pavements

June Dog bin at golf course

2019

June Sunken drain at Tesco entrance
Nov Sandbags

Transportation Dept. -Pot Holes and Broken Slabs throughout the Town & Athelstaneford

Pot Holes: Ideal Garage junction, Stevenson, West Road surfaces, Whittingham Drive, Sidegate, Monkmain Road

Uneven Pavements: High Street, Market Street, Court Street. St. Anne's Place, Mitchells Close (11/1/11)