

Draft minutes of meeting of Parish of Stow Community Council held on Monday 3rd June at 7.30pm in Stow Town Hall

Those present : J.MacKenzie (chair), C. Hendry, A.Riddell, S.Jeffrey, A.McNeilly, T.Millar, J. Mushlin, Cllr Scott, Cllr Aitchison, Cllr Anderson , Deborah Matthewson

Guest Speaker : Olly Robertson, Area Manager, Live Borders

Apologies: I.Peacock, N. Hodgson, R.Murphy

It was raised that L. Anderson, SBC has promised that the outside of the Hall will be improved. There will be a roofer on site to discuss repairs. The Windows and vegetation will also receive attention.

However it was noted that the prewinter check has not been done and Olly Robertson was informed that maintenance has not been done. At the Pensioners' Christmas Party, water was pouring into the disabled toilet.

The question was raised as to what role Live Borders has.

Live Borders is a management company which provides a member of staff , raises property issues with SBC and endeavours to effectively manage lets of the Hall.

Investment is needed into the property. It needs a coat of paint.

Olly Robertson stated that they are looking into how the Hall could generate extra usage. One possibility is providing office space in Stow Town Hall. Soft play was another idea but there is not likely to be demand for it.

The opinion was expressed that the Council are letting the Hall go to rack and ruin. When the Hall was given kitchen equipment, it was second hand. There were no kitchen facilities the week before the Pensioners' Christmas Party.

The Hall needs to be affordable. The Pipe Band used to use the whole Hall. It has become unaffordable and they now use the Church Hall. Many groups cannot afford the rentals at all and existing users are often having to rely on windfarm subsidies to be able to pay the rent.

Olly Robertson explained that Stow Town Hall is in the same band as Innerleithen because they are the same size. It was pointed out that Stow is a much smaller community than Innerleithen and charging needs to be more flexible.

Utility costs are barely covered by rentals. Insulation is badly needed, which would reduce these costs, but this would be the responsibility of SBC, not Live Borders.

Reduction in caretaker hours have been possible. Key user groups are now key holders.

As a community, we need to make suggestions for further usage of the Town Hall. A survey was suggested, as was a development worker.

It was suggested that the cash flow and projected spend for Stow Town Hall for 2 years would be useful. There is no proper picture of what is needed. Olly Robertson agreed to share the accounts and stated that Stow Town Hall ran at a loss last year.

It was commented that if a committee runs the Hall, it could be better. In the past there was a committee which ran it. There is so little consultation with the community that no one knew about

the nursery which rented the Hall until it actually happened. There needs to be three way communication between SBC, Live Borders and the community

There does need to be consultation , run by Live Borders, as to what the community wants. There is definite demand for a community gym from young people. Olly Robertson suggested that if the community comes up with 6 options, there could be a public meeting to determine what should be done.

It was pointed out that there is a public access defibrillator at the Town Hall. When the power goes off, it trips a switch in the caretaker's office, which is locked so that it is impossible to switch the defibrillator on again, which puts it out of action if needed.

Ollie Robertson was thanked for attending the meeting and left the meeting.

Debbie Matthewson, Headteacher, Stow Primary School - talked about the video 'Land of Dreams' which the pupils have produced.

The school has been shortlisted for the Better Energy Award. Two of the projects have won regional awards – 'Rap ', which is the work of Primary 7 and 'Recycled Cow' produced by primary 1. Fourteen of the pupils will go to the national awards in London.

However this is a success of the whole school, who promote sustainability.

Ms Matthewson is hoping to take the children, who are not going to London, to Edinburgh Zoo. There are 65 children at £8 per child. She was enquiring whether the community council could help with the cost

T. Millar stated that the matter was brought up at the recent Windfarm Panel meeting and it was agreed that the panel can fast track this and £850 will be given by EDF to the Community Council for this. The Secretary will be sent essential, very limited, paperwork to complete .

The Land of Dreams video has not been submitted to the Better Energy award and can acknowledge the generosity of EDF.

The Community Council can underwrite the cost whilst the EDF grant comes through and also award a £300 microgrant.

Ms Matthewson left the meeting.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved. Proposed: S. Jeffrey Seconded: J. MacKenzie

There was a fatal crash near Fountainhall, which was a matter of concern for all present.

There are not road signs at Craigend Road.

Members were happy with the proposed colours for the new noticeboard. It was agreed that further noticeboards, eg regarding historic sites in Stow do not necessarily have to be the same colours.

S.Jeffrey and A.McNeilly met with SEPA . The Cockholm comes out in a field with the banking giving way. It was explained that permits for stone under the water cost £141 and above the water costs £600. Tree planting was suggested. Gravel can be removed at a distance of 30m at the bridge at the station. Towards St Mary's Well it is possible to get a large stone at the bottom and natural netting into the side. This will also cost £141. There needs to be a different form for each section. The licence needs to be applied for between May and August. It was felt that the next step is to consult the Council Engineer.

The preservation of the road needs to be addressed. Stones were removed and were back within six months. Cllr Aitchison will take this matter up with Flood Prevention.

Members commended A.Riddell regarding his cutting the grass in the cemetery.

The grasscutting in Cockholm Crescent has just been done by SBHA.

A report is awaited from the Roads Department regarding the crash barrier at Torquhan.

Potholes on the Lauder Road have been filled and also two on Townfoot. However it was noted that only the largest were selected.

There was a meeting with Council officials at the Layby. The proposal is to reduce the wall and have a railing with a stile. A suggestion was made by Craig Blackie to remove the existing fence and replace it with a completely new fence. There are small schemes and the Council wants to do the job quickly. There are 2 options. A completely new fence or strip the old fence and add a new fence to it. A decorative fence, not a crash barrier. There will be bollards to stop lorries from using the layby. It was agreed that T.Millar will make the final decision about this.

The question of access to the Bridge was raised and who has responsibility for the Bridge. EDF are willing to help restore the bridge but it would be capped at £10,000, if SBC could part fund it.

The drains in Stow need cleaned out, and potholes filled in.

The twenties sign is flashing continuously again.

It is noticeable that traffic from the north is speeding through the village.

Some benches could be moved to the edge of the quiting green.

The Old Station House at Fountainhall has become derelict and is covered in graffiti. Cllr Aitchison will follow this up.

Treasurer's Report

£957 has been received from SSE , leaving the balance of funds from SSE at £1493.58

£2959.38 has been received from EDF leaving the balance of funds at £4268.09

There has been no communication from Clare Malster regarding the funding for the community council.

Windfarms

SSE funding available to Stow in May - £15733.85

EDF funding available to Stow in May – 67830.65

There have been 4 applications to the windfarm in June, so the amount has been reduced.

Councillors Reports

Cllr Aitchison

Sandy will organise a walk by St Mary's Well with Erica Niven, Walks Officer, SBC to determine accessibility.

A representative for Eildon Area has come forward for the Community Council Review.

Online voting. The deadline for the postal vote has been extended.

Cllr Anderson has taken part in a SBHA walkabout . A Rural Transport Conference is taking place on Friday 28th June.

Cllr Scott attended a SCOTRAIL public meeting organised by John Lamont.

Correspondence –

A letter was received from Jenny Wilkinson

AOCB

The decision regarding provision of public toilets has been long delayed. It was agreed to ask Jason Hedley to attend either the August or September meeting for a preliminary discussion regarding the situation and what alternatives there might be. Cllr Aitchison will invite him on behalf of the community council.

The next meeting will be on July 1st at 7.30pm in FOUNTAINHALL VILLAGE HALL.

AGENDA

- 1 APOLOGIES
- 2 MINUTES & MATTERS ARISING
- 3 POLICE REPORT
- 4 COMMUNITY SPEED WATCH
- 5 GENERAL MATTERS
- 6 TREASURERS REPORT
- 7 COUNCILLORS REPORTS
- 8 CORRESPONDENCE
- 9 PLANNING
- 10 AOCB

ALL WELCOME

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE MEETING IS TAKING PLACE IN FOUNTAINHALL