

Draft minutes of meeting of Parish of Stow Community Council held in Stow Town Hall on Monday 2nd March 2020 at 7.30pm

Those present: C.Hendry (chair), T.Millar, A.Riddell, J. MacKenzie, S.Jeffrey, J.Mushlin, A.McNeilly, Cllr Scott, Cllr Aitchison, Cllr Anderson, P. Porter, K. Bissett, W.Lofthouse

K.Bissett proposed a scheme for Stow where small verges do not get routinely cut and are planted with wild flowers. Areas proposed are the slope by the playpark, area by the bowling green on Station Road, area going towards the graveyard, Bishop Palace graveyard. These areas could be left as wilderness. People could plant flowers that grow in their gardens. Another possibility is to harrow and sprinkle seeds. It was finally agreed to put in plugs in one area. The grass between the bowling green and Station Road would be first. This would be for one year and, if successful, develop more areas. Green Stow are very interested in the idea. The Community Council stated that it could be publicised as under the auspices of the Community Council. Cllr Aitchison stated that SBC support schemes like this and will cut at the back end of the year. He stressed that this is for environmental reasons and not to save money.

Redundant Trees – Cllr Anderson stated that a person has been found who will finish the tree trunks in the park to a standard which is acceptable. It can be done for a microgrant. It can be done within 2 weeks from start to finish. The trunks will need to be moved to the position where they will finally be. There will need to be exact details about where the new trees will be planted to determine the positioning of the trunks. There would be continuity if the trunks were planted between the child playpark and the gym equipment.

The Horticultural Society will receive a laptop from the Community Hub equipment. This is under discussion at the moment. The community council will pay for the software they need.

Drains – A man came to unblock the Craigend Road drains and left them blocked. Hill Terrace drains block up immediately. The Lauder Hill drains are a disgrace.

The C11 (the back road) is in a totally unacceptable state. When the A7 is closed due to an accident, the road is used as a diversion and is not suitable for the amount of traffic then. Wutherstone Dip is a danger zone. Drains were not correctly connected when the new water pipe was installed in Fountainhall. The road is an ice rink when the temperature is low. Puddles form on the C11 that are so deep that the spray when cars pass through leads to nil visibility. Cones are urgently needed on the C11. The road is collapsing and a car might fall into the Gala Water.

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

Police Report. This was noted. It would be good if there were details as to what applies to the Stow/Fountainhall area.

It was raised that Stow Town Hall was booked for defibrillator training for Killochryett residents. A professional trainer was delivering the training. The Hall was locked up with no one from Live Borders to open up and put on heating. Access was obtained via the Community Council but, if the Community Council are expected to open the Hall, they should be notified. The minimum that should be expected from a let is the presence of staff and heating. The Community Council do not intend to pay for the let.

Members were also informed that the Pensioners have booked the Hall for the Christmas Party this year and booked entertainment. For the second time they have been informed that the Hall has been double booked.

It was suggested that , if the Stow Community took over management of Stow Town Hall, things might run more smoothly. The Focus Centre and Langlee Centre have their own Management Committees. It was felt that this is not practicable to do in Stow.

The walking leaflet for the Heritage Walk is almost complete. The template for this will be bought and used for other walks. The next walk to be produced will be going past the Station to Ludgate Bridge.

Gala Walking Club are proposing to have a walk from Galashiels to Stow and back in the walking festival in April.

It is proposed to take part in the 2022 and 2023 Walking Festival. There will be more local Stow walks then.

At a meeting to plan the construction of the Station House, notices to stop parking in the surgery car park were promised. They are not in place yet and there have been problems with people parking all day at the Health Centre. The alternative car parking, which was meant to be in place from the start , has not been started yet.

Bill Jamieson is continuing to chase up Scotrail for the trains stopping in Stow every 30 minutes. The problem seems to be congestion at Portobello Junction which also serves Crosscountry trains. A few extra trains might be put on next Summer. A train which is not scheduled to stop at Stow will stop at Stow if the previous stopping train was cancelled. More seats have been put on the trains , but often at the wrong time of day. The Railway has been open for 5 years.

Stow Town Hall has dry rot. SBC have drawn up a programme to deal with this.

The Wall at the Bridge – Cllr Aitchison has protocols for Foundation Scotland

An application has been put in to the Windfarm for speed signs for Stow. SBC are now considering a third sign. It is a matter for N.Hodgson, who negotiates with SBC .

Logging lorries are going on the pavement at the top of the Railway Bridge in Stow and are damaging it. Double yellow lines are needed at the top end but it is unlikely that they will be policed. Artic lorries to farms are also having difficulty at the top of the Railway Bridge.

The latest report on the History of Stow book was presented to the Community Council. It was decided that the commission for the book designer should be put out to tender. It is essential to buy an ISBN for the book.

The grant from SBC for work on the path in Stow has been received.

The Low Carbon Coop have folded and donated £80.70 to Stow Community Council. This has been put into the fund created by public donation by A.Riddell for work in the Old Kirkyard.

A microgrant of £248 was awarded to Fountainhall Village Hall to help with repainting the original timber panelling.

Councillors Reports

Councillor Scott stated that a meeting has taken place and Live Borders are producing a work plan so progress is happening regarding Stow Town Hall. It was commented that the Pensioner's coffee morning is taking place in a fortnight.

There is a rota in place for drains and Stow is on it.

Car parking could be on the Quoiting Green. It was noted that plans are in existence for this.

Cllr Aitchison

Stow Pump track

There is still a concern regarding drainage and permission is needed from SEPA, Flood Prevention and Planning.

Money is available from a fund set up by SBC for celebrations of VE Day and VJ Day.

The wall at Burnhouse has been inspected and it is secure. The water is the responsibility of the farmer. The importance of the wall for the A7 is recognised and the Roads Engineer will keep an eye on it.

There is a 4.84% increase of Council Tax in the Budget. This will eventually go on capital sums for Galashiels, Hawick and Peebles Secondary schools . There will also be 2 new Care Homes. One in Central Borders and one in Hawick. Until the capital sums have been borrowed, the increase will be spent on road repairs. Then it will go on capital projects. There are 2 CAT teams. That is the community policing teams funded by SBC. Cllr Aitchison is looking for any ideas for the teams in the valleys. They will respond in our area, as they do in the rest of the Borders but any ideas for special initiatives in our area would be welcomed. If anyone sees anything suspicious, it should be reported. Contact a councillor if there is a difficulty in reporting it.

Cllr Anderson

A white line was put on the Earlston Road. Consultation with local residents would have been beneficial. It is not suitable. The line was put in the wrong place. It is also shorter than the previous line.

Stowed Out is scheduled to take place on 15th August. It is a one day festival. The emphasis is on local bands and the spoken word. It will be a more family based event, with more for children. A security fence will go up.

Planning –

David Peacock – Alteratons to dwellinghouse, 45 Earlston Rd, Stow

Hudson Homes – Erection of 16 no dwelling houses with associated infrastructure, services, Land East of Stagehall Farmhouse, Stow.

A.McNeilly volunteered to be the Community Council representative at the meetings with the Architects regarding the Station House. The Secretary will find out the dates of the meetings.

The next meeting of Parish of Stow Community Council on April 6th 2020 in Fountainhall Village Hall at 7.30pm has been cancelled.

The next proposed meeting is on Monday May 4th 2020 in Stow Town Hall at 7.30pm. However this depends on the current situation at the time. An agenda for the next meeting will be posted closer to the time.

Meanwhile if anyone has matters which need to be urgently taken up by the Community Council, please contact the Secretary, Jenny Mushlin, tel: 01578 760297. Email: jjmushlin@gmail.com

