**DRAFT MINUTES OF MEETING OF PARISH OF STOW COMMUNITY COUNCIL HELD IN FOUNTAINHALL VILLAGE HALL ON MONDAY 1st APRIL AT 7.30PM**

Those present: A. Riddell, G. Saunders, J. MacKenzie, A.McNeilly, Cllr Mitchell, Cllr White, J. Mushlin, Cllr Aitchison, 20 members of the public.

Apologies: T. Miller, D. Muir, Cllr Herd

It was agreed to take agenda item 4 first. £27,000 is available for a community project. It was stressed that the money does not have to be spent now. It can remain. It is not the only money available to the community. There is money available in general wind farm funds for constituted groups. The Community Council also disburses grants of up to £250 at every meeting. There is no application form – a letter stating what the request is for and how much is needed is all that we want. This is open to individuals and unconstituted groups. The only requirement is that is should benefit the community. There were the following comments and ideas from members of the community:

1. This should help pensioners with methods of reducing fuel costs.

2. Stow Town Hall is so expensive – a fund for paying for the hall for public events.

3. There was the comment; how do we invest in our community?

4. Clarification was requested regarding the Quoiting Green. It was explained that with the railway coming, spaces will be used by people in Lauder and there will be parking in the streets. Concern was expressed at losing a green space. It was pointed out that the bowling green would benefit and there would be landscaping and a picnic area.

5. It was raised; should this be a landscaping project or social inclusion project? Might it be for younger people? A heritage project?

6. The community garden was mentioned. This cannot happen until the park drainage is sorted.

7. The Quoiting Green is currently in a mess as it is. It is an amenity of the village. Fencing is needed. The Old Bridge is at risk of falling down, and if it does, we will never replace it. The Old Kirk requires a big spend through Historic Scotland.

8. Fountainhall Village Hall is getting refurbished. Fountainhall needs money towards this. The Lottery have granted funds but the major application is in October and 10% of costs will be needed. Costs are as yet unknown. Estimated currently at £240,000. Could money be rolled over so the money is available when needed?

It was suggested the money should go towards existing structures in Fountainhall and Stow.

9. Youth was discussed. Something for the kids. They all like music. Sara Neil was present from Sound Out. She reported that the feedback from the questionnaire about last year’s festival was positive, and the majority view was that the festival should grow. Some of it should be free, some of it paid for and additional musicians brought in. She requested a grant of £250 from the Community Council, for hall hire and public liability insurance for workshops for kids in the afternoon with Plum, and then an evening concert. This grant was approved. She commented that more young people were coming to open mic nights and it would be good to have more workshops and professionals. It was stated that the Stow-Fountainhall wind farm allows ongoing expenses and applications for organisations can be recurrent so this could be done through the wind farm.

10. Moving about was discussed. John Wilkinson has been researching paths. The main things needed are signposts and stiles. He is wanting a booklet published which would cost £200-£300. There is planned to be a tourist information point in the Old Station House, which could hold these booklets. It was stressed that the Station House project will not be asking for any funding from the wind farm.

11. A place for kids to hang out. There is a project in North Berwick which is a bus shelter for young people, which would provide somewhere for kids to hang out outside without adult supervision.

12. Pump Track – non-dangerous circuit where bikes can go round. Could be used at the Old School.

It was agreed to hold another meeting partly about this, with 5 topics, and people go into groups according to their interest and develop the topic further. We have to think about health and safety, landowner liability and permission. Wendy Ball took the list of those present and all will be notified of the date and time of the next meeting.

One member of the public remained after this item.

The minutes of the last meeting were approved as correct. Proposed by G. Saunders, seconded by K. MacKenzie.

Old Station House – currently waiting for drawings.

Stow Park – there is progress. The Council is making an application to SEPA to do the whole Mill Lade. Cllr Aitchison will speak to the other landowners. Scottish Water are responsible for the drain parallel to the A7. In the new financial year there is money for flood prevention and there will be flood prevention measures in Stow. These need to be maintained regularly. The sand and gravel below Station Bridge needs to be removed. Sports Scotland are positive that they would not provide a pitch until they are confident that the drainage has been fixed. The Council needs to fix the drainage so that a pitch can be provided. It is the Legacy 2014 fund so there is some urgency. Sports Scotland can see that Stow needs a pitch. Ideally the whole park can be landscaped.

General Matters

A7 Safety – this is getting recognition north of Galashiels. Robert Young from SBC came to the A7 Action Group with listings and traffic flows. Heavy traffic is anticipated by the community for the railway. The wall by the Old Bridge continues to give concern. The ownership of the wall is an issue. Cllr Aitchison will ask David Richardson to come and investigate it.

Lothian and Borders Police have become Police Scotland.

BAM traffic on the back road between Fountainhall and Stow is giving concern. Traffic is frequently not slowing down going past Fountainhall school. The grass verges are being destroyed on the back road through heavy vehicles and tractors passing each other. More passing places are needed.

Councillors’ Report

There is a new consultation document regarding applications for single wind turbines. The next Eildon Area Forum is on the 1st May. The venue has not yet been confirmed. Each area forum has £20,000 to spend.

The budget for roads has been increased by £2m to just over £8m.

AOCB

Concern was expressed that there will be an area of unlit road between the new road at Fountainhall and the existing streetlights. It was suggested that the Secretary should contact Jonathan Hepton.

Concern was also expressed regarding parking in the road outside the health centre. The school has only 6 parking spaces.

**The next meeting of the Parish of Stow Community Council will be on Monday 6th May at 7.30pm in Stow Town Hall**