

Draft Minutes of Parish of Stow Community Council held on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> November 2021 at 7pm in Stow Town Hall.

Those present: S.Jeffrey, C.Hendry, A. McNeilly, G.Stewart, J. Mushlin, T. Millar, Cllr Aitchison

Apologies : Cllr Scott, Cllr Anderson

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved . Proposed : S. Jeffrey.  
Seconded: A. McNeilly

The police report was noted.

Planters : G. Stewart will put an appeal on the website for volunteers to maintain the planters . S. Jeffrey has photos which he will include with a short article for the newsletter. The need for volunteers will be put on Facebook and on the Swap It site run by Wendy Ross. If volunteers are still needed after this. J. Mushlin will approach the Volunteer Centre.

General Matters

G. Stewart has found out the cost of a coat of arms for Stow

A petition needs to be lodged with the Lyon Court at a cost of £450

A shield costs £3750

A crest costs £4575

Figures cost £5705

The cost of registering heraldic art is £4000

All agreed that this cost is far too expensive and there would be no justification for this amount.

George Wood designed a mug for the Stow Sports Centenary.

It was agreed that G. Stewart would organise a competition for people of all ages to design a sign for Stow which could be used by both the Community Council and the wider village.

There needs to be a sign at the entrance to the village : “Welcome to Stow of Wedale”. The signs in Stow are completely inadequate.

Walks – The next walk leaflet is to be printed. N. Miller has installed 3 kissing gates and will chop down gorse. Signs and roundels need to be put out.

The fifth walk will be down by the river. The walk at Watherstone Forest has been printed.

Book Launch – There have been three book launches of the book: ‘An elephant crossed the valley: Wedale Valley through the ages’. It is on sale at Stow Post Office and is proving popular.

Dog Bins – A dog bin is needed at the entrance to Still Haugh, at Old Stage Road, Fountainhall. More dog bins are also needed at Stow Park. Cllr Aitchison will look into this.

The trees that were planted by the railway line at Fountainhall need their ‘sleeves’ removed. This is preventing them from growing normally. Cllr Aitchison stated that this is a problem in other areas and he will see if anything can be done.

The speed signs in Stow have been rotated. The one at the North end is very good for reminding people to reduce speed but is now facing the wrong direction and should be spun back. The middle sign can be spun in either direction but is currently being obscured by vegetation which needs cut back. The first sign going north is flashing too late. Cllr Aitchison will speak to Philippa Gilhooley about getting the signs rotated back.

Officially the speeds in both Stow and Lauder are reduced. However, the Community Council would like to see the actual data. The speed signs are capped at 28mph, so it is impossible to tell the speed of any vehicles going faster than that speed.

The Community Council would like to see 20mph roundels on the lamp posts going through Stow. Councillor Aitchison will ask for them.

It was noticed that overtaking is worse with the 20mph speed limit and concern was raised for young families at the North end of Stow cycling to and from school.

The noticeboard is in place. However, someone is trying to lever it open. A. McNeilly will put a notice in the noticeboard asking people to leave notices at the post office and he will take the notices in. It was agreed to give a microgrant for the erection of the noticeboard and all the additional costs.

There was a notice in the Southern Reporter stating that Stow toilets were open and would remain open until December. This was completely inaccurate. The toilets have never been opened. In fact, a microgrant of £284 was paid for toilets when the Tour of Britain came through Stow, as it is completely unacceptable to have events in the village with no access to public toilets. If there is not the money to open both public toilets, one should be opened and be a unisex toilet.

The Secretary will write to John Currie, Service Director, Assets and Infrastructure about the situation regarding Stow public toilets. There is no statutory obligation to provide public toilets but there should be a moral obligation. There have been complaints about human waste. This is a public health issue.

It was noted that, despite being booked, Stow Town Hall had not been opened by Live Borders, there was no Caretaker present and the heating had not been switched on. Cllr Aitchison will contact Live Borders.

Border Buses have recently made a statement that they are very short of bus drivers. There are new bus drivers waiting to start but DVLA are so slow that their licenses cannot be processed. Bus drivers have also been receiving letters from the Dept of Transport suggesting that they should become HGV lorry drivers. The Secretary will write to John Lamont expressing our concern, both at the delay at DVLA and at the Dept of Transport trying to persuade bus drivers to become HGV drivers when bus drivers are in short supply and provide an essential public service. Border Buses stressed that their existing drivers are doing many extra hours to deliver the present bus service.

The criteria for microgrants were discussed. It was agreed that the Secretary would email to all community councillors an article for the newsletter for approval. The main criteria is that the microgrant is for community benefit. There are limited funds and groups(both constituted and unconstituted) are limited to 2 applications each year. Microgrants cannot be given for individual benefit, but the Community Council has separate funds to alleviate hardship experienced by individuals or families. However, individuals can apply for events that will benefit the whole community. All applications should be submitted to the Secretary and are considered at each Community Council meeting by the whole Community Council. The amount should be stated and details itemised for any microgrant. £300 is the maximum amount for a microgrant. Feedback afterwards is required. Microgrants cannot be retrospective. Microgrants can be given for running costs and the Community Council are particularly keen to help groups who are struggling financially post covid. Groups who need to come more frequently are recommended to plan the amount needed for one or two years and apply for a grant from the Windfarm Panel. The Community Council may help unconstituted groups with this.

A microgrant of £250 was agreed for Fountainhall WI to cover ongoing costs.

It was regretted that a microgrant could not be given for an event following COP26 owing to Stow Community Trust having recently received more than one microgrant and the necessity to ensure that sufficient funds are kept for requests by all groups in the area. There is a fixed sum given to the Community Council each year by the wind farms and we have to ensure that it does not run out during the year and that it is available to all groups in the area.

Currently there are £3257.90 in EDF funds for microgrants and £827.04 in SSE funds.

Major work is needed on the Collection Bridge. It is in danger of deteriorating.

The newsletter costs have increased from £350 per issue to £395 per issue through layout now being included in printing costs. It was suggested that the Secretary should apply for the next tranche of funding by the January deadline, to be considered at the March meeting of the Windfarm Panel.

The wreath has been bought for the Stow War Memorial. A. McNeilly will lay it on Remembrance Sunday.

The Stow of Wedale website is among many other Stow websites in different parts of Britain on Google and is not the first one to be found. Other organisations in Stow have their own website. It was suggested that if all local Stow websites joined together under the domain name stow.scot, Stow of Wedale would have a much higher presence. The Secretary is to ask Stow Community Trust for their thoughts on this. Each organisation would oversee their own page.

It was agreed that Community Council meeting in January would be on the second Monday of the month. The Secretary will draw up a list of proposed dates to be discussed at the December meeting.

The next meeting will be on Monday December 6<sup>th</sup> at 7pm in Stow Town Hall

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES
2. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING
3. POLICE REPORT
4. PATHS
5. GENERAL MATTERS
6. TREASURER'S REPORT
7. COUNCILLORS' REPORTS
8. PLANNING
9. CORRESPONDENCE
10. DATES OF MEETINGS IN 2022
11. AOCB

ALL WELCOME