

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STOW & FOUNTAINHALL COMMUNITY COUNCIL AT FOUNTAINHALL VILLAGE HALL ON 7th APRIL 2014

Present: D Muir, J Mushlin, A McNeilly, J MacKenzie, S Jeffries, A Riddell, T Miller, Cllr B White

Apologies: S Aitchison, I Peacock, C Hendry, PC A McNair

Belinda Glennan presented a request for a sum from the Microgrant Fund to pay for a visit from a Brazilian Amazonian Indian to Stow school, to be open to the wider community, on 23rd May. Thanks to her daughter Molly who has been inspired by what she has learnt about the Amazon rainforest at school this year, and who organised a sponsored run in aid of Survival International (a charity that supports efforts to protect the endangered rainforest and its tribes), Nixiwaka Yawanawa will visit the school for a talk, slide show and Q&A session. The request for the fee to facilitate this visit was granted (£250), with the money required for Nixiwaka's travel expenses to be raised by the school/parent council. Exact time of talk to be confirmed at a later date (see website, and posters). Belinda will bring him from Edinburgh and take him back.

Matters Arising from last meeting:

The Minutes were proposed by S Jeffries, seconded by A McNeilly

The matter of the locked door of the Fire Escape off the main hall in the Town Hall was raised by D Muir with the Fire Dept: Euan Wilson, the senior officer there, assured her that this door was definitely allowed to be used as a fire escape so long as the furniture stored behind it is moved elsewhere in the hall. The CC must take it up with the caretaker if they want to move the tables stored there.

Police Report

No Comments

Windfarm Panel

The next deadline for applications is 14th April.

The last round saw 2 successful applications: Stow Sports, 3 yrs' worth of costs for erecting/taking down bunting, Xmas lights etc etc, £3,510; and Stow Primary School, outdoor learning Yurt, £4,000.

Old Station House

At a meeting between A McNeilly, B Jamieson & Russell Clark of Network Rail, it was confirmed that the right hand half of the Station House would be used to house 8-10 maintenance workers, while the left hand half could be for the Community; no final decisions concerning the community building will be in place, however, until March 2015; at the moment the plans are in abeyance, but

Network Rail & Scotrail are definitely in support of our initiative. A lease needs to be worked out, and the exact details of the use of it. Possibilities include a railway museum & exhibition, as well as somewhere for travellers/visitors to purchase refreshments, although this needs to be looked at with the Cloudhouse.

Licensing Byelaws: 4 out of 67 CC's responded to the consultation. A 4 week formal consultation now follows.

Stow Park; a meeting took place on 3rd April to discuss the programme of works; at present the Park is too wet to start work - which, once it starts will take 12-15 days. If the contractor cannot start before 19th May, the work will be delayed until after Stow Sports.

Planning

Aggregate Industries UK Ltd - application for opening up cement works at Hazelbank Quarry. No objections.

SBC objected unanimously to Girthgate windfarm, which will very probably go to appeal. The Secretary has been approached by Windprospect, who are behind the proposed Longpark extension; this is in the consultation period until May 19th. The CC did not feel it would gain anything by having Windprospect come and talk to them about this. Rowantree is still pending decision.

General Matters

At the same meeting with Russell Clarke Alan & Bill Jamieson raised the possibility of an organised walk along the railway track before it opens. The answer to this is a definite No (for health & safety reasons).

Mr Clarke also told Alan & Bill that the lorries reportedly speeding along the Fountainhall straight (currently there is a temporary 30mph speed limit there) are not necessarily working for Network Rail, and might therefore be quarry lorries.

AOCB

The bend by Torsonce is extremely dangerous - the non skid surface being in such a poor state that even slow moving cars are pushed over to the wrong side of the road, and some manhole covers have had new surfacing surrounding them, while others haven't.

The road surface on the bend south of Heriot is also in a very bad state. Cllr White took note of both these.

At the A7 Action Group meeting last Friday the matter of re-trunking the A7 was brought up and favourably received by the Group. Cllr White mentioned this again - it being something that the CC have wanted for a long time. The railway lorries are not entirely to blame for the poor state of the road surface - it was extremely bad before the works started. The large transport lorries for the supermarkets etc use the A7 not merely because it is a shorter route than the

A68, but because the bridge between the BGH and the roundabout is too low for the very high ones.

The CC expressed frustration at David Richardson's (SBC's 'Asset Manager') statement from the A7 Action Group meeting, in which he states that the re-painting of white lines along our section of the A7 will possibly not be carried out in '14-'15 - and also, in which he declares that the sanctioning of local communities paying for their own speed indicator signs is not SBC's policy.

A rational debate needs to take place as to where the roads budget money needs to be spent: every part of the Borders wants it for their roads, and there is simply not enough to go around, however much the Councillors acknowledge that the A7 is the busiest road in the Borders, while not up to the standard required for its current use.

Fountainhall bend: pedestrians crossing the road can't see the oncoming traffic; sign or mirror required.

Any complaints/queries about the railway works, including complaints about individual vehicles etc, call 0845 604 4146; this is the Borders Railway Project helpline. Email is info@bordersrailway.co.uk. The person in charge is Craig Bowman (he confirmed this number and this email address to D Muir when she 'phoned him on Tue 8th April).

Microgrants

The sum of money from Foundation Scotland (the EDF money) has not yet been received despite fact that it is expected in February. D Muir will ask Tom Black about this.

The 2nd tranche of money for the Newsletter has arrived.

£250 awarded to Stow Parent Council for the Amazon rainforest talk mentioned above; £195 awarded to Stow Pipe Band for putting on a fundraising ceilidh, to raise money for new uniforms for the pipe band members.

A Riddell asked if the CC could advance £122.40 to pay for concrete for the Auld Kirk. Granted

Correspondence

1. Martin Wanless - Consultation on Proposed Local Development Plan, acknowledging the Secretary's response to this
2. Keith Nairn, Library Services: Mobile library van will be visiting Stow every 3rd Monday & Fountainhall every 3rd Tuesday. The 3 stopping places in Stow will be the top of Killochyett, Townfoot - and the bottom of Craighend Rd, ie halfway between the two, in order to allow those with reduced mobility to get to it to choose their own books. The proposal for holding a coffee morning in the Town Hall to coincide with the van's visit to Town foot was dismissed owing to the cost of hiring the hall for this.
3. Connections - the Borders Railway newsletter
4. Aggregate Industries - literature concerning their proposed concrete batching plant
5. Clare Malster - Communities update from Home Energy Scotland
6. Clare Malster - Police Scotland Year 1 update
7. Longpark Windfarm Extension project update

8. Encompass: self-directed support
9. Harestanes Countryside Visitor centre advertising flyer
10. Clare Malster - Home Energy Scotland - benefits check follow-ups
11. Safer Borders
12. NHS Borders Clinical Strategy Consultation
13. IAM Advanced Driving Training for under 26's; see website
14. Free financial advice for carers
15. Invitation for new members to join the P3 Patient Participation Virtual Network
16. Spring Clean Scotland 2014; see website
17. Queen's Baton Relay

The AGM will take place at the July meeting (7th July) - which will start at 7pm