

Minutes of meeting of the Parish of Stow Community Council held on Monday 13th January 2014 at 7.30 pm in Stow Town Hall.

Those present: J Mackenzie (Chair), A Riddell, S Jeffries, C Hendry I Peacock, A McNeilly, T Miller, J Mushlin, Cllr B White, Cllr B Herd, Karen Paterson (BAM) and BAM Senior Construction Manager, John Williams (Heriot CC)

Apologies: D Muir, Cllr S Aitchison, Cllr J Mitchell

The BAM representatives responded to concerns from CC members. Comments were made that the number of lorries on the road has not reached the pre-Christmas level. Concern was expressed that lorries are using the Stow-Lauder road when it had been understood the Tynehead road would be used. BAM have made a conscious decision to work with the local people and Lauder-Stow is the most direct route. Skene have a wheelwasher at their end and BAM have put wheelwashers in place. There are 15-16 sweepers on the road; this is difficult in bad weather because salt is on the road. It was pointed out that the traffic lights at the site at Fountainhall are going to cause an accident. BAM put traffic control in because local people asked for it. A sensor that would let approaching cars through would help, and BAM stated that they would try to improve the traffic lights. The cleaning regime on the back road was questioned: whether there is one. BAM stated that they try not to use the back road and will address the blocking of the footpath to Fountainhall with their signs. It was raised that local people would like to promote the station at Stow with a mass walk down the track through the Bow Tunnel before the railway opens. The First Minister has also requested this. BAM are looking at what might be possible. They are building 50 km of new railway on a tight timescale. The bridge before Bowshanks Tunnel will not be in a walkable-through state, but BAM will try to facilitate something this summer. Cllr White said that there was a proposal to do a presentation about the engineering works that have been involved in this railway. BAM stated that the railway has been a huge achievement. The bridges built in the 1850's have stood up well. There is a meeting of the A7 Action Group on Friday 17th Jan at Mosspace, and the representatives from BAM were asked if BAM had been invited to attend this. Apparently not - but they meet with the police and SBC every fortnight to discuss safety aspects & issues.

John Williams (Chair of Heriot CC) circulated photomontages created by Dougie Johnstone, which show the full impact of the proposed Girthgate wind turbines on the village of Stow and its views. There are 24 turbines proposed - the 3 nearest to Stow have been slightly reduced in height. It is not possible to see all the turbines at once in one's field of vision, without moving one's head. It was suggested that people are unaware of the impact, and will be so until it is too late. It was therefore suggested that an image be printed in the newsletter. John explained that this is a Section 36 application, which goes straight to the Scottish Executive and so one cannot see who else has objected, only what has been copied to the SBC website. The Rowantree Enquiry has been sisted twice, because of Eskdalemuir. Copies of John Williams's document on behalf of Stow

CC were circulated to all members, and it was approved and fully endorsed as an excellent document.

The CC approved John Williams acting on behalf of Stow CC in drawing up an appeal regarding Allanshaws windfarm.

The amendment to the previous minutes was approved. These should read as Draft Minutes of Parish of Stow CC. The minutes of the previous meeting were proposed by A McNeilly and seconded by J Mackenzie. Jack Mackenzie was appointed Vice Chair, proposed T Miller, seconded I Peacock.

It was brought to the CC's notice that the Newsletter has not been received by all households.

In future, the Windfarm Panel is to be added as an Agenda Item.

In the last period there were 7 applicants to the windfarm funds. Fountainhall Village Hall were awarded £25,000 towards their refurbishment costs. Stow Amateur Football Club were awarded £10,000 towards refurbishment. Sound Out were awarded £2000 which will be held back until March, as they have received an award within the last year. This application is to help showcase local musicians at the summer event. No award was made to the Scottish Charities Air Ambulance. No award was made to Stow CC with respect to an application for CCTV. £1000 was awarded to Frog Life Trust - Wooplaw Woods. Stow Toddler & Music Group were awarded £517.

The dates for applications for 2014 are: 20th Jan, 14th April, 14th July and 13th October.

£52,649.79 was received in January for Year 5 of the EDF award.

Stow Newsletter: It was felt that it would be beneficial if Wendy Ball were invited to attend meetings when the Newsletter is drafted.

Stow Community Trust have the draft of a tender document for a development plan for the Stow-Fountainhall area. There will be an application to the Windfarm Fund for this, in April, with match funding sought. The CC agreed to approve this.

The kitchen in Stow Town Hall has problems with the hot water urn leaking; the heater cabinet has disappeared; the cooker is inadequate; there are no milk pans in the kitchen; the door to the kitchen in the passageway is still locked (this is also a fire door so this has a safety issue). When the kitchen was refurbished the industrial cooker was scaled down to a domestic cooker, and it has always been inadequate. Cllr Herd will look into this.

The white lines on the road came up yet again. This will be raised at the A7 Action Group meeting.

Mark Douglas has suggested that the CC do a a mock-up of railings around the Old Bridge.

Cllr White is on the Admin. Budget Working Group. The Planning Committee are also on the local Review Body. There are no changes to the Licensing Board.

B Cllr Herd has as his main concern the state of retaining walls at kerbsides.

Cllr Aitchison submitted a report in his absence: the state of the Fountainhall to Stow road has been brought to the attention of Craig Blackie at SBC, in particular, the massive holes which need urgent attention. The holes on the Stow to Lauder road have been reported to SBC.

Lights: the various lights which are out have been reported to SBC. New lights have been installed along the north end of the village. Work to remove light standards from the former rights of way will be progressed in the next few months. The Park drainage plan has now been agreed. There has been a meeting at the Park between SEPA and SBC and the plans have been approved with slight 'tweaks'. The next step is to appoint a Contractor and hope for suitable weather.

The CC have received a letter from Tommy McCall, Secretary of Stow Amateur Football Club, raising concerns regarding the planned drainage works, and stating that he would be willing to attend a meeting concerning the Park and surrounding area. The Secretary will forward this letter to Cllr Aithchison for his attention.

Capital Plan:

- 1 The drainage on the Lauder Rd is to be improved sometime over the next three months
2. The A7 at Burnhouse Mains - the wall opposite the layby is to receive attention.
3. The A7/High St in Galashiels is to be resurfaced in the next couple of months.
4. The Graveyard: The western entrance is going to have the tarmac lifted.

The difficulty of parking in Galashiels was raised. Cllr White will mention it at the A7 Action Group on Friday 17th Jan at Moss Paul. Jack Mackenzie & A McNeilly will attend this. They will suggest Stow as a venue for the next meeting.

The CC has responded to the consultation regarding a ban on alcohol in public places, saying that Stow & Fountainhall CC do not consider it necessary to make a change to the laws.

There have been difficulties regarding members receiving Minutes & Agendas by email. The Chair & Secretary will look at setting up a new system.

Old Station House: this is progressing.

Community Resilience: there have been 20 replies in Stow. 3 wanted help. There has been no big incident in Stow to prompt resilience being seen as a priority. Fountainhall has new members. There was a long power cut recently. Fountainhall has a good system in place. Jan 30th, in the evening, there will be a meeting at Galashiels Academy to discuss the asymmetric school week. C Hendry will attend this.

Correspondence:

Sound Out Microgrant request – for 6 sessions’ songwriting workshop for children aged 10-18 to be followed by an open mic night. A grant of £229.50 was approved.

Ciara Wilson – Stow Community Microgrant Allowance for 2014 (SSE)

SBC Proposed Local Development Plan

Clare Malster: Customer Forum – Strategic Review of Water Charges 2015-21

Clare Malster – New CC Officer Liaison Position

Clare Malster – Consultation on Fire & Rescue Service Local Plan

Tweed Forum: Gala Water Area Evening Event

Ian Aikman: re Electronic Planning Consultation. The CC agreed to request retaining all correspondence as hard copies.

Airvolution: Proposal for wind turbines at Muircleugh Farm

Christine Grahame - Free Microchipping event, in conjunction with the Dogs' Trust.

The Christmas trees were ringfenced from playgroup funds. This year £35 was spent in Fountainhall and £45 in Stow. It was agreed that the Stow lights be extended. The Secretary will contact Jean Robertson and apply for a grant to replace the old lights with LED ones

The next CC meeting will be held on Monday February 3rd at 7.30 pm in Stow Town Hall. All members of the public are welcome.