

**Innerleithen and District Community Council
Minutes of Meeting held 6th September 2021 via Zoom**

1. Those present: Cllr Stuart Bell, George Brown, Jim Calder (Treasurer), Jackie Couchman (Minutes Secretary), Daniel Davis Wood, Marshall Douglas (Chairman), Cllr Shona Haslam, Alex Iszatt (ITV Reporter), Allan Johnston, Paul McGreal (Enduro World Series), Hilary Scott (Press), Cllr Robin Tatler, Andy Weir (joined around 7.45pm), Colin Williams

Three members of the public were present.

Absent: Gordon Daly (Secretary),

Marshall Douglas welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Enduro World Series (EWS) 27th September to 3rd October 2021: Marshall welcomed Paul McGreal, a member of the EWS organising group, to the meeting. Paul gave an update of the latest changes and headlines in the build up to the forthcoming events and took questions arising.

Paul emphasised the fact that this is a “world cup” level event, part of a world series (this is the final event in that series), involving some of the best riders in the world, attracting wide media and spectator attention.

- ✓ **Wednesday 29th September 2021** will be the first “active day” of the event.
- ✓ **Sunday 3rd October 2021** will be the last, and biggest, “active day” of the event. This is when the professionals, around 300, ride.

Location: the decision has been taken to move the event slightly further out of town, based in the three fields along the road from behind the Uplift cabin.

Field 1: this will be where the Finish Line and the Festival Village will be sited. This will include trade team exhibitions and pits, registration area, spectator area, catering facilities and a beer tent.

Field 2: this will be for parking (the riders get this included as part of their entry fee). There will be a very basic area for campervans (no intention to compete with local, established, provision).

Shuttle bus: a service will be run between event sites, including a stop on Innerleithen High Street to facilitate visitors patronising local businesses. It is envisaged that the Tweed Valley Railway Path will be used extensively during this period and traffic volumes are likely to be high.



Traffic management: there will just be one minimal road closure on the back road to Walkerburn from behind the Red Bull car park for a few metres towards Walkerburn consistent with other mountain biking events. Other mitigating actions include temporarily extending the 20mph limits north (towards the golf club) and south (just beyond the festival village limits) on the B709 and making them “no wait” zones (ie with traffic cones). Person-controlled traffic lights are planned at the intersection between Traquair Road/Hall Street and the Peebles Road/High Street. Signage asking people not to ride on the pavements is planned, along with roving bike ambassadors to help/encourage/signpost where needed.

Local Business engagement: this event offers enormous opportunities for businesses to capitalise on the potential and the organising group have distributed business packs throughout the local business community to help foster this mindset.

Paul was at pains to point out that the organising team were acutely aware of local concerns and had gone to great lengths to address and mitigate them at every stage of the planning process. The recent town hall meeting, whilst not attracting a huge audience, had given an opportunity for questions to be submitted in advance and worries to be made known. Overall, the intention was to operate with a light touch, striking a balance between acknowledging the significance of the event on a global stage and avoiding annoying or inconveniencing the local population. Paul is confident that the planning of this event has been robust and that it will be held again over the coming years.

Marshall Douglas, on behalf of the Community Council, wished the team all the best in their endeavours.

Paul left the meeting at this point.

3. Public forum:

3.1 Light pollution in Caerlee Mill: two residents of the new Caerlee Mill housing development described a serious problem with the current state of the street lighting within the development. The light is so strong it penetrates blackout blinds and makes rooms, facing the street, unusable for sleeping. They had a meeting scheduled with Environmental Health, Craig Wilson, later that evening, but had found the developer to be unhelpful and, latterly, unresponsive. Their perception is that there is an overprovision of street lighting at the front of their properties. Cllr Stuart Bell felt that Environmental Health was the correct approach to get a measure of the problem. He also explained that adopted roads came under SBC’s lighting team and that solutions to these problems could usually be found. Cllr Shona Haslam has been working with the residents on this issue and her understanding is that there is a widespread shortage of lamppost reflectors and that Whitburn, the developers, have found a solution as a stop-gap. She offered to check the current status with Whitburn and to check the lighting design (Alex Young, SBC).

ACTION: Cllr Shona Haslam to co-ordinate an early resolution with all interested parties.

3.2 Electricity – continuing power cuts: Allan Johnston (formerly a Community Councillor) had established a new dialogue with SP Energy Networks (Alastair Douglas, Project Engineer) in the light of the current spate of short, but disruptive, power outages. He outlined the history of our electricity supply which came either from Yair Bridge, a long run with lots of spurs running off it or from the Peebles direction. Previous disruptions had led to the main supply being switched from one direction to the other and had led to periods of stability. Our 22kV supply, state-of-the-art at the time of installation was now well past its sell-by date. The current standard is 33kV. Surge protectors may be helpful as a first line of defence for potentially vulnerable electrical equipment.

SP Energy Networks had outlined upgrade plans at a full and frank meeting with Community Councillors a couple of years ago but it would seem that plans may have changed along with anticipated budget allocations. It was hoped to arrange a similar meeting to bring expectations up-to-date and understand what is being done to specifically address the current recurring problems which are particularly acute given the current emphasis on working from home. Cllr Robin Tatler confirmed that this has also been raised by Walkerburn Community Council and it was agreed that they (contact Lesley Thornton) would be invited to any discussions.

In the meantime, everyone is encouraged to report outages they experience by telephoning SP Energy Networks directly on 105 or 0800 092 9290. The more statistical information they have, the better.

ACTION: Jackie Couchman to liaise with Allan Johnston to arrange a meeting with SP Energy Networks.

4. Minutes of last meeting and approval: the minutes were proposed by George Brown, seconded by Daniel Davis Wood.

5. Notification of items of AOCB: no matters to be taken later on.

6. Matters arising from previous minutes:

The need for a proper rubbish bin at the Red Bull car park: Cllr Tatler had been in contact with Forestry Enterprise Scotland to put them in touch with SBC to set up a trade waste uplift contract.

Morningside lighting/parking/access: Cllr Robin Tatler confirmed that an appropriate, solar, lighting solution for the path running on from Morningside has now been found and once the local householder is in agreement a small scheme project can be raised in order to fund it, although there may be other technical challenges to the implementation of the identified solution. He also confirmed that Neil Pringle was to pursue clearing the foliage and checking the falling material from the deteriorating wall along this path.

ACTION: Cllr Robin Tatler to progress this with the local householder before following through on funding and implementation.

Footbridge between Princes Street and Leithen Mills: Cllr Robin Tatler confirmed that the pedestrian bridge, in spite of signage to the contrary, was still being used by horses. This has been deemed weakened and not suitable for horses to cross at present. Neil and the Neighbourhoods team are looking to strengthen the bridge as a possibility so it's on the list to be looked at.

Road to Caerlee Mast: Cllr Robin Tatler reported that Neighbourhood Services are in touch with the owners and that they are being reminded of their responsibilities.

ACTION: Cllr Robin Tatler to progress with Neil Pringle/owners.

Victoria Park Play Area: Cllr Robin Tatler confirmed that the report has been received today and that a substantial piece of work, costing a five-figure sum, was needed to remedy it; not just drainage, but also resurfacing. Jackie stressed that it was the main playpark in Innerleithen and it would need to be addressed.

ACTION: Cllr Robin Tatler to seek clearance to share the report with the Community Council.

Wild camping: Cllr Robin Tatler confirmed that this has been raised with Sergeant Granger and that it is on the Community Action Team's watch list.

Speeding on Leithen Road: in the absence of statistical information showing accidents on Leithen Road the authorities are not willing or able to put in speed monitoring equipment as requested. The possibility of a "pop-up Bob" was the only measure offered.

ACTION: Cllr Robin Tatler to feed back that the best position to trial a "pop-up Bob" was north of Kirklands.

7. Camper vans parking in Victoria Park: George Brown reported that there had been a particular instance, three weeks ago, of a blatant disregard of the "No Overnight Camping" rule in Victoria Park. An organised group had set up camp from Thursday to Monday, blocking a significant portion of the car park, ranging from 4 to 13 people throughout the period. They brought a firepit and created a disturbance with barking dogs and loud music through until 1.15am. They had been spoken to, but felt they had a right to be there and occupy the space in contravention of the nearby sign. The police were called, but no action was taken. Cllr Shona Haslam reminded everyone that there were specific provisions for travellers and it would be worth establishing why no action was taken.

ACTION: Cllr Robin Tatler to raise with SBC Roads Department, Sergeant Granger and the Community Action Team.

8. Cold calling initiative: Marshall confirmed that Gordon is in the process of arranging a meeting with the police about this. His understanding is that there are funds and notices available.

ACTION: Gordon to progress this and report back.

9. Scawd Law Wind Farm update: Colin outlined the events being run in Walkerburn this week by Fred Olsen Renewables (as outlined in the leaflet distributed to all local households) and demonstrated the online exhibition accessible at <https://3dwtech.co.uk/dashboard/fred-olsen/scawd-law/exhibition/>. The "Welcome" banner is particularly helpful as an overview of the proposed sites of ten turbines together with the hiking and biking trails incorporated in the development. Should you wish to discuss this further, or if you have a question, there are a number of ways you can get in touch with those concerned:

- ✓ Telephone: 07435 763 900 to set up a discussion
- ✓ Online: communities@fredolsen.co.uk
- ✓ Either of the two means of contact above can be used to request additional information on a memory stick.

Colin explained that this was the informal consultation phase of the report (with the formal phase to follow later on) and a good time to raise any concerns.

10. Police report: August report received and appended to these minutes for information. No matters were raised.

11 SBC Councillor's reports:

Cllr Shona Haslam:

Consultation on the new Peebles High School: it is hoped that this will be a face to face event in the Burgh Hall, covid restrictions allowing. It will be advertised in the next few weeks and active participation was encouraged.

Scam: there is a persuasive covid passport scam doing the rounds and everyone was reminded to stay vigilant.

Cllr Robin Tatler:

Area Partnership Meeting: took place on 24th August. Place Planning programme was on the agenda amongst other items. The next meeting is to be held on 2nd November and members were encouraged to attend.

Build Back Better Borders Recovery Fund: there is still funding available to be applied for and applications were actively encouraged.

Neighbourhood Services Team: are really overworked at present and dealings with them or expectations from them should be tempered with this knowledge.

Cllr Stuart Bell:

Scams: thanked Jackie for passing on information on scams via social media.

Dog ownership strategy review: it was felt that Innerleithen has hit on a strong and relevant approach to tackle the issue. Actions to be taken as a result of the review:

- ✓ Trading Standards are to be asked to work with registered social landlords to deliver responsible dog owner training issues
- ✓ Review the collection and disposal of dog waste
- ✓ Improve communication with communities by providing a short presentation to Community Councils and Area Partnerships on the issues
- ✓ Consider how best to raise the issue of responsible dog ownership with children via schools to lay down sound foundations for the future
- ✓ SBC is going to consider the provision of biodegradable dog bags from a third party

Stuart felt that Innerleithen had a top-class approach to the issue.

Marshall thanked Jackie for tackling this tough project and running with it.

12. Planning Report: applications circulated for comment:

21/01131/FUL | Change of use of existing retail premises at ground floor level to form tap room retail, visitor experience with on site micro-brewery | 4 Traquair Road Innerleithen Scottish Borders EH44 6PD. Responses from members had been favourable to this development and the Community Council had responded to the planning department supporting the application.

21/01422/FUL | Demolition of steading and farmhouse and erection of two dwellinghouses | Land At Haughhead Farm And Steading Building Innerleithen Scottish Borders

Daniel raised the point of clarification needed over rights of way. The application paperwork didn't make clear how pre-existing rights of way would sit with the redevelopment scheme.

ACTION: Daniel to raise concerns about existing right of way routes.

Application heard at Committee this morning. All nine councillors voted in favour:

21/00382/FUL | Erection of 4 no timber glamping pods with associated pathways and lighting | Land South Of Glenormiston Coach House Innerleithen Scottish Borders

13. Anti-dog fouling campaign: Jackie confirmed that an additional 2,000 bags were ordered for SBC on 29th July 2021. There is a need to review where we are and where we aim to take this project against the backdrop of covid restrictions (curtailing fundraising opportunities and school engagement). It was noted that this should be discussed at length in the near future. Cllr Stuart Bell recommended getting in touch with Bethany Lloyd who gave an excellent presentation to the scrutiny committee on the subject.

14. Correspondence: no specific correspondence to note.

15. Thanks and Congratulations:

- ✓ St Ronan's Border Games Committee were commended for running an excellent Virtual Games Week under such restricted circumstances.
- ✓ Euro World Series organising group were thanked for their efforts in engaging with and responding to local concerns
- ✓ Thank you for the generosity of those offering donations to the newly arrived Afghan refugees already in The Borders. The needs of those already here, and yet to come, haven't been defined yet, but for those wishing to donate items, Home Basics or other charity shops are the best distribution channels to use.

15. AOCB: No items were considered under this heading.

Meeting closed at 8.47pm.

Date of next Meeting:

- ✓ Monday 4th October 2021 at 7.15pm via Zoom

Meetings are held on the first Monday of each month, except August, starting at 7.15pm in Innerleithen's Council Chamber unless otherwise agreed. ***Currently meetings are being held via Zoom.***

Chairman.....

Date