

Gorebridge & District Community Council

Minutes of Meeting

Tuesday 18 August 2020, 7pm, via Zoom Video Meeting

Present

- Cath McGill (CM) – *Chair*
- Neil Whyte (NW) – *Minutes*
- Trevor Taylor (TT)
- Faye Skelton (FS)
- Jason Rutter (JR)
- Janice Brown (JB)
- William Duncan (WD)
- Heather Webb-Nelson (HWN)
- Mary Davidson (MD)
- Seonaid Barker (SB)
- Mary Webb (MW)
- Cllr Jim Muirhead (JM)
- Cllr Catherine Johnstone (CJ)
- Ellen Scott (ES)
- Gillian Cousins (GC)
- Donna Mackie (part) (DM)
- Hazel Thomson (HT)
- Robert Simpson (RS)
- William Weir (WW)
- Fiona White (FW)
- Jamie Barr (JB)
- Tristian Tweedie (TTw)

Apologies:

- PC Pendreich
- PC McGuff

No	Item	Minutes
1.	Chairman's Welcome & Apologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CM opened the meeting, welcoming all to the Zoom meeting, and provided a general introduction to the Community Council (GDCC) and the Officers present for newcomers.• CM gave an explanation for the previous meeting being as long ago as 21 April as follows:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Council officers informed CM that the deadline to comment on an upcoming planning application for the Hunterfield Tavern was earlier than we realised.○ An emergency meeting was called to vote on a response from GDCC, and this coincided with the date already in the calendar.○ Since only Community Councillors are able to vote, only they were invited.○ May & June meetings cancelled due to the Covid situation, and the fact that many Community Councillors were involved with the Resilience group and other voluntary activities as a result.○ Not only working extremely long hours from home, at the same time they were trying to home school their children, or look after children who would ordinarily be at nursery.○ Others were looking after vulnerable relatives and some members were shielding.○ The Resilience effort is winding up, and as a CC we are slowly able to get back to the previous actions• CM then provided some housekeeping rules, especially in light of the online meeting. A reminder that the Chair here to facilitate, and to get through agenda. It is best if participants are on mute whenever possible, and raise hand (or wave frantically) when they wish to speak. All contributions must be made in a civil and respectful manner.

2.	Actions & Matters arising from previous meeting and Adoption of Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nothing arising not already covered later on. • Minutes proposed by FS, seconded by JB.
3.	Newbattle Abbey College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A brief introduction to the history of Newbattle Abbey College and its future plans was provided by Donna Mackie – Marketing Coordinator at the College. • DM thanked the CC for the invite – 3rd time of asking, much delayed due to Covid. • The college is known as “Midlothian Hidden Gem” – both from outsiders, and those who live locally. Not as well known as it should be. • Founded 1140 as a Cistercian monastery – it had a big role in community from the start, and a fair bit of history too: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Declaration of Arbroath drafted at Newbattle then taken to Arbroath. ○ Gifted to the people of Scotland in 1937, primarily as a college to enable people to have a second chance at education later in life. ○ College motto is <i>Sero Sed Serio</i> (Late but in Earnest). • There are two sides to the business: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ College – for adult learners. ○ Commercial – 52% of funding from here. All commercial activities go to funding the college side. • They offer free courses to encourage people to learn more, and are trying to re-ignite the second chance aspect of the college. • Really promoting Team Building aspect (Commercial side) primarily – see newbattleabbey.com for new website highlighting the facilities and activities offered. • Wanted to come along to find out anything in the Gorebridge Community that is not being promoted or available for the residents – Film Nights, etc • ES mentioned that the Study Club had spent time with the Forest Ranger: really good experience and free for them • DM mentioned that Dalkeith Arts Club doing something similar – there is 125 acres available to do something with, especially in this time of difficulty meeting indoors.

4.	Update on Ongoing Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coronavirus Update – Resilience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hazel Thomson <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Partnership between GCC, GCDT and GDCC ▪ Hazel did recruitment of volunteers, registered service users ▪ Ellen – Friendly Voices ▪ 156 volunteers recruited in total ▪ Over 5500 meals prepared, extra food via donations early on (where restaurant orders dried up) and these were shared with Mayfield and Easthouses ▪ Delivered 3 times a week ▪ 207 households, 358 people helped in total ▪ 545 requests for shopping & prescriptions ▪ Still people who need support, but not critical resilience now – moving to ‘Recovery’ mode and being coordinated under GCDT out of Gorebridge Beacon with some volunteers staying on to support ▪ Some individual cases identified as requiring additional support, put in touch with the relevant proper support (e.g. Council, Citizens Advice etc) ○ Ellen – Friendly Voices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 83 people registers in total ▪ 775 calls made ▪ A lot of ‘invisible people’ who didn’t necessary proactively come forward, but definitely benefited from being referred to the service ▪ A similar service continues, under different funding, as part of the Recovery effort ○ CM said the effort she saw was quite overwhelming from all the volunteers, and some extreme hours of effort. Huge thanks to Hazel for getting things setup, and the Dawn at the Beacon for the meal delivery efforts. In the initial CC Federation calls CM was worried about Gorebridge being behind: the reality was far from it, we all stepped up. CM passed on her gratitude on behalf of the CC and the community as a whole. ○ JM said he has been very proud of the response from Gorebridge. Quick to start! ○ GC praised the “unbelievable” and “phenomenal” response from the community. Gorebridge really pulled together, as she expected it would. ○ FW gave a volunteer’s perspective, and said how very grateful service users had been with all the help offered. • Spaces for People: TTROs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NW gave an overview of the erroneous delivery from Midlothian Council of the TTROs that were intended to allow parking on Main Street to be suspended in order to erect barriers to widen the pavement to help with social distancing. ○ By Monday, however, the TTROs were cancelled. ○ JM reported that they had been issued in error. There was a very short window to respond to funding from the Scottish Government, and while such a scheme was identified as a possibility the reality of the implementation was not suitable for Gorebridge (or any of the other towns identified). ○ JM also confirmed that while the TTROs allowed the Council to make changes, they did not require them to do so. Any such changes would require consultation with local businesses and a commitment was given that would happen should any similar circumstance arise in the future. • Hunterfield Tavern Change of Use: 20/00209/DPP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NW outlined the content of a letter sent 24 April to Midlothian Planning, outlining main objections as raised at the previous meeting as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Need for new takeaway, given two chip shops within 0.5 miles already ▪ Compatibility with Midlothian Health & Social Care Partnership “The Joint Needs Assessment 2019” and “Strategic Plan 2019-2022” ▪ Social and environmental (loitering, littering, parking) ▪ General precedent of retrospective application for community buildings ○ Our understanding is that the takeaway aspect was rejected by planning, but it is being escalated to the Planning Committee. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ JM said there was no agenda yet circulated for the Planning Committee ▪ CJ mentioned that the next Committee meeting is 1 September ○ There was considerable discussion around the topic of the appearance of the building. Key points noted follow:
----	--------------------------	--

- JB said he had noticed some activity at the Tavern, and went to investigate. Someone called “Paul” says he’s planning to open by October, and it was evident that work is already underway.
 - WW asked a number of questions. Why is it a restaurant? Why has the name Hunterfield Tavern been removed from signage on the building? Why are workmen working at night? Was it the Tenant or Trustees who submitted the planning application? Who is responsible for the building?
 - MW just wants building to be used; no particular disagreement with the idea of a takeaway.
 - There was a general consensus that we all want the building to be generating reliable income for the benefit of the community as a whole, particular those charities and other local groups that benefit from donations from the Arniston Improvement Trust.
 - FW highlighted that while it is encouraging that there is local interest in running the Tavern as volunteers, her experience is that running such a business is extremely tough, and the effort and hours involved to make this successful should not be underestimated – needs strong management and a reliable team.
 - Letter to Hunterfield Gothenburg Tavern Trust
 - NW reported that a letter was sent 10 July, with 15 questions around the building itself and the Trust(s) involved with it, summarising many of the questions received by the CC via email and as discussed at the previous CC meeting.
 - A response was received 17 August, with answers to each of the questions.
 - These are being reviewed, runs to over 50 pages (including constitutions, accounts).
 - Again, there was considerable discussion and heated debate around this topic:
 - TTW questioned whether the Trustees considered the income from the properties – which he stated was an average of £81 a week for the past five years – as a good return?
 - WW asked why there was no public AGM, and to see a copy of the Constitution to understand the process for Trustees to be appointed.
 - CM asked why she was not listed as a current Trustee, as she believed she had voluntarily (and temporarily) stepped back while OSCR investigated claims CM made regarding the running of the Trusts.
 - CJ gave some insight into how the Dean Tavern was run by its Trustees, highlighting similarities like the AGM not being public there either.
 - JM stated that he was not present at this meeting as a Trustee, but that he would try and answer as many questions as possible.
 - The constitution allows for the building to be used as a pub/restaurant with ancillary functions
 - The sign ‘Hunterfield Tavern’ has been gone a while now (15+ years) and it has been run as multiple businesses since.
 - The Tenant submitted the planning application.
 - An extension of the use of the building to include a takeaway as ancillary to the pub/restaurant is considered acceptable by some of the Trustees.
 - A website is being developed for the Arniston Improvement Trust and Hunterfield Gothenburg Tavern Trust which will host the constitutions and provide a form to allow local groups to submit requests for funding.
 - JM’s belief was that CM had resigned, on the basis of an email from CM which stated she no longer wished to be contacted.
 - In the meantime, JM confirmed that the Trustees are happy for the documentation provided to the CC in response to the letter to the Trust to be made available to the community.
 - **ACTION: NW to make the questions, answers and documents available publicly**
 - There was agreement that it is easy to criticise, but that making the Hunterfield Tavern building a valued part of the community once more was important and that this should be approached in a cooperative manner.
 - It was agreed that the CC would meet with the Trustees to discuss positive next steps
 - **Action: NW to work with JM and other Trustees to arrange this meeting**
- Welcome Signs

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There wasn't enough time to cover this in the meeting; JM will follow-up with a written report to be circulated afterwards.
5.	New Issues Raised by Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Update on the plan for Stobhill Depot & knock-on impact to Stobhill Masterplan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There wasn't enough time to cover this in the meeting; JM will follow-up with a written report to be circulated afterwards. ● Update on land at Newbyres Crescent – possibility of car parking? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There wasn't enough time to cover this in the meeting; JM will follow-up with a written report to be circulated afterwards. ● Speeding on Barleyknowe Road – need a member of CC to contribute to Midlothian Traffic Roads and Paths (MTRaP) group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Next meeting: Monday, 24 August, 5.00 – 6.00 pm (Zoom) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ JB will attend, along with CM ▪ Action: NW to send on call details ○ JB raised – again – the ongoing issues with Barleyknowe Road. Problems with bus stop not having adequate space for all the children using the school bus, speeding issues, and no advanced warning of the controlled crossing heading north-to-south. All issues that have been raised before, and all that remain unaddressed. ● Spokes – Dalkeith group application to Spaces for People <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Robert Simpson gave some background: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recently members of the Spokes Dalkeith group met with Cllr John Hackett and the Eskbank and Newbattle CC to explore possible developments. ▪ As a result Spokes Dalkeith are compiling a list of low-cost, high-impact, shovel-ready changes which could be made to encourage walking and cycling in the area as soon as funding becomes available. ○ RS proposes that we extend this plan to the area of Gorebridge southwards, and invite local Councillors to join in. ○ Midlothian & severe risk of choking itself – so many new houses brings lots of traffic, and already conflicts with Active Travel which will only get worse ○ RS already has suggestions for improvements to footpaths and cycleways, but would like to open a discussion of other possibilities. ○ CM mentioned Gorebridge & District Environmental Group (GADEG) is the ideal contact to discuss the Circular Walk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Action: CM to put RS in touch with GADEG ○ HT has email from Scotrail on small piece of land by the 'hole in the wall' at the Station. Originally was going to be properly tarmacked as part of the Station building regeneration, but that whole project is cancelled. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Action: NW to liaise with HT to get email and identify next steps ○ NW mentioned part of the MTRaP work above is to update the "Midlothian Active Travel Strategy map" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CC being asked to review their local sections of the map to provide feedback. Deadline is 28 August. ▪ Action: NW to include JS in call details for MTRaP

6.	Major Planning Applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redheugh West: 20/00446/PAC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 550 houses, next to existing site (Redheugh East) with 700 ○ Online public consultation live Thursday 27th August, 4pm – 7pm ○ Feedback deadline: Thursday 17th September ○ Will begin spreading the news via Facebook tomorrow. If you know people without access to online let me know – can arrange hard copies to be sent. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Action: NW to start to publicise this PAC ○ ES mentioned her understanding that part of the planning on the Redheugh East site next door (with rail halt) meant that the half-hourly services to Gorebridge would stop at alternate stations (i.e. Redheugh at existing Gorebridge stations), effectively meaning an hourly service for both. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Action: NW to pursue this to find out more • Land at Stobs Farm: 20/00128/PAC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Huge area, but as yet no indication of proposed use ○ Public consultation was delayed due to Covid: now tentatively 'September' • A new planning page has been launched on the CC website to track the ongoing major developments: https://communitycouncilgorebridge.weebly.com/planning.html • CM has been tasked with Development Contributions Group (sub-group of Midlothian Federation of Community Councils) to bring relevant people together to improve the community input on how such developer contributions should be spent
7.	Police Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As circulated.
8.	Community Council Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No updates; agenda item skipped for time reasons.
9.	Project Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train Station Adopters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ CM mentioned that both she and Craig have been shortlisted for ScotRail in the Community Awards 2020 as part of their work with the planters at the station. ○ A lot of clapping hands and celebrations seen on the Zoom video screens – well done!
10.	Councillor Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No updates; agenda item skipped for time reasons.
11.	Any Other Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Resilience Planning – session being run now by Midlothian Council to help us draw up a formal resilience plan. Pandemics, floods, major incidents etc. Catherine Duns offers to run another session just for us if we need one. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Action: NW to circulate example plan from Rosewell as received, and place a fuller discussion on next agenda • To be pushed to next meeting – parking on pavement, Lady Brae Place. Turning circle obstructed, and bin lorry struggling to collect waste

Meeting closed by CM at 9.30pm.