

Gorebridge Community Council

Minutes of Meeting

Tuesday 21 April 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)

Apologies:

- Seonaid Barker (SB)
- Brian Paterson (BP)
- Mary Davidson (MD)

No	Item	Minutes
1.	Chairman's Welcome & Apologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CM welcomed the council members to this strange meeting• CM explained the agenda has been shortened to focus on the imminent matters at hand• Apologies as noted above
2.	Actions & Matters arising from previous meeting and Adoption of Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No update and no actions pending.• February minutes proposed by CM, seconded by TT.
3.	Coronavirus Response Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CM gave an update on the Gorebridge Resilience Response.• The Community Council, Gorebridge Community Development Trust (GCDT) and Gorebridge Community Cares (GCC) formed an umbrella organisation to coordinate the resilience response to the pandemic.• Over 100 volunteers across Gorebridge came forward, and were distributed across four zones in our area to support vulnerable, shielding or isolated households with picking up shopping or prescriptions, as well as supporting the delivery of emergency food parcels.• GCDT, from the Beacon, have started a meal delivery service three days a week, preparing food that has been donated from supermarkets and then topped up with fresh ingredients.• GCC has started a Friendly Voices phone service, offering phone calls from a team of volunteers to people who have requested contact.• Midlothian Council provided £10,000 in funding to Gorebridge Community Council to help support the effort, which has duly been assigned to the Resilience group.• The Community Council also received funding on behalf of Moorfoot, who were not quite ready to accept their funding directly – though that has now been resolved and they are accounting for that themselves.• The Community Council praised the efforts of all involved.• It was noted that there was concern over the amount of people going around seems to be creeping back up again after a very promising start.

4.	Issues Raised by Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Planning application 20/00209/DPP (Hunterfield Tavern) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A retrospective planning application has been made for changes to the Hunterfield Tavern building to accommodate a take-away, which would affect the external appearance of the building as well as the internal layout ○ NW asked for a summary of the building's history. ○ CM replied that the building was originally donated to the community by the Arniston Coal Company, to be run according to the Gothenburg principles (similar to the Dean Tavern in Newtongrange). ○ Up until the mid-1980s it was still running as a bar to these principles, but there were issues with the finances. ○ A constitution and Trust was created to keep it going, and the building then leased out to the highest bidder. ○ Recently, there have been alterations made to the exterior of the building in advance of the planning application above having been submitted, much less approved. ○ NW reported that the Community Council had received over a dozen emails from members of the community asking what was happening with the building, and why it looks the way it currently does. ○ The Community Council debated the application, and the feedback from the community received, and made the following comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It was felt that the Gorebridge area is already adequately served by takeaways already – indeed, there are already two fish and chip takeaways within half a mile of the Hunterfield Tavern. ▪ It was felt that Midlothian Council's own stated policies to promote healthy eating don't seem to be advanced by establishing another takeaway. ▪ Concern was raised around the potential environmental impact of the business – in particular parking concerns, litter and anti-social behaviour. ▪ Noted that the application specifically mentioned the intent of running the takeaway only as a part of the main seated restaurant, while the takeaway operation had previously run for several years without the restaurant being open. ▪ Additionally, that the premises had previously been operated without the appropriate licenses or certifications necessary. ▪ That the planning application is clear that it is retrospective, and that there is a dangerous precedent to be set if it is granted given the amount of damage done to the fabric of the building already. ○ Overall, the Community Council agreed to submit an objection to the planning application. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Action: NW to draft and send an objection to Midlothian Council. ● Questions to Hunterfield Tavern Gothenburg Trust <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NW reported that a number of the concerns raised regarding the planning application specifically addressed the Hunterfield Tavern Gothenburg Trust. ○ While some of the comments received were very direct, there was a common theme of lack of transparency from the Trust on how decisions are made and who they are accountable to. ○ CM stated that her understanding was that the Trust are accountable to 'the beneficiaries' – namely the community to whom the building was gifted to in the first place. ○ The Community Council will write to the Hunterfield Tavern Gothenburg Trust to raise some of the questions from the community feedback, and offer to act as a point contact for future community feedback to help the Trust identify and interface to the community more easily <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Action: NW to draft and send an initial letter to the Trust
5.	Any Other Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● None

Meeting closed by CM at 8.20pm.