

Ettrick & Yarrow Community Council

Minutes of Meeting held on Monday 7th August 2023 St Marys Hall, Cappercleuch

Present: Kirsty Irving (KI) (Secretary), Alison Renwick (AR)(Chair), Jane Telfer (JT), Elizabeth Williamson (BW), Karen O'Brien-Barret (KO), David Currie (DC)(Vice Chair), John Davidson (JD)
Councillor Elaine Thornton-Nicol (ET-N), Councillor Caroline Cochrane (CC), Councillor Leigh Douglas (LD) and 18 member of the public
Andrew Dixon from RDS Forestry (AD)

Before the meeting started Community Councillors introduced themselves to those present and AR asked when member of public speaking if they could also introduce themselves if comfortable to do so.

1. Apologies: Miranda Alcock (MA) (Treasurer), John Wildish (JW), Paul Scott (PS),

2. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 5th June 2023 were proposed as accurate by KO and seconded by JT.

3. Matters arising (Not on agenda)

The point was raised that tractors appear to be going off the roads and making trenches at the road side making it dangerous if cars go off. JD explained tractor drivers were not doing this on purpose but were making way for other vehicles on the road. Members of the public are urged to highlight specific areas to the Council **Action: ET-N to request road edge condition survey, both valleys.**

4. Police Report

No police presence which was disappointing given the issues being experience around St Marys Loch area. **Action: KI to contact PC John Murray to encourage a police presence at meetings.**

5. Councillors Reports

CC – Live Borders review, public consultation. **Action: KI to share**

LD – Paths consultation. <https://scotborders.citizenspace.com/economic-development-emergency-planning-and-communications/shared-access-network-2023/> **Action: KI to share**

E T-N – In response to correspondence re potentially dangerous trees overhanging Ettrick road, BT have been informed and are contacting landowners who will have a set time to action.

6. Financial Report

KI delivered the financial report submitted by MA who could not attend the meeting:

- Bank balance of £14,330.48 as at 1st August 2023
- Wind Farm expenditure:
 - £1320 granted to Ettrick Sports Club to allow application for Petanque Piste
 - £4,816.50 granted to Yarrowford Hall for roof repairs

- £1,290.00 new batteries and electrodes for defibrillators in both valleys
- Langhope Rig Community Benefit Fund
 - MA has now come off this panel (time served) and has now been replaced by JW representing the Community Council
 - The balance of funds available at the end of June 2023 was £68,565.66. In the last 15 months, a total of £116,378 has been paid out in grants.
 - There were four grant applications discussed at the meeting. The applicants will receive notification within the next couple of weeks.
 - The closing date for the next round of grant applications will be 5th January 2024, for consideration at the March meeting of the panel.

7. New Woodland Creations

Todrig – Public consultation

Annelshope –

Nether Phawhope – AR Welcomed Andrew Dixon from RDS Forestry to the meeting.

AD gave a brief outline of guidelines provided by Scottish Forestry that are in place so as to avoid blanket planting of trees whereby there must be species diversities such as broad leaves, mixed conifers and alternative species. Detailed survey work has been undertaken. Out of 257ha, 56% not being planted, hill top to be left clear.

Local stakeholders have been consulted. KO requested AD have a meeting on site with residents to discuss issues.

Concern was raised over the ornithology of the site, Curlews are prevalent in March but survey suggests otherwise.

Concern also raised over the archaeological survey, with specific reference to the Over Kirkhope stone which is now in Edinburgh. The exact location of where it was found is not clear but suggestion made that archeologists should be onsite when planting / surveying to avoid damage to important archeological site.

JD raised concerns re wildlife, affects on ground nesting birds. Also the affect on loss of farmland, employment in the area.

Very strong feelings raised over destruction of Ettrick Valley.

AR asked if further consultation with locals / stakeholders, AD suggested an open further meeting in Boston Hall to discuss plans. Plan then has to be submitted to Scottish Forestry. AD encouraged anyone with an objection to lodge these with Scottish Forestry (southscotland.cons@forestry.gov.scot)

Use of forestry in the area will be included in SBC community plan with further work to be done. Further meeting will be arranged through E&Y Community Council.

8. Ettrick Valley Flooding

JD has been in touch with Duncan Morrison at SBC

Initial suggestion is that a raised river bank at Thirlestane would help but there is lack of funding at the moment – **Action ET-N to investigate**

Another option to be considered is to raise the road?

Removal of trees is fuelling the problem as drainage is work is undertaken.

DC has been in touch with John Lamont MP re dredging who is keen to take this up with SEPA and is awaiting response. **Action: DC to follow up**

9. 20mph – Additional measures

Barbara Harrison reported on a consultation specific to Ettrickbridge Village as serious concerns have been raised around the speed of vehicles travelling through the village and the majority of residents agreed to the suggestions in the table below.

A number of residents within the Hopehouse area of Ettrick have requested 20mph speed limit in and around the area. **Action: KI to submit these requests to SBC by end August**

Measure	Yes/No	Location(s)
20mph Stickers for Wheelie Bins	Yes	
20mph repeater roundel signs: within existing speed limit	Yes	Hopehouse, Ettrick
20mph roundels: painted on road	Yes	Hopehouse, Ettrick
Dragons Teeth: only on main approaches to settlement	Yes	Ettrickbridge
Advisory Cycle Lanes		
3/2/1 countdown signs on approach to settlement: only on main approaches to settlement	Yes	Hopehouse, Ettrick Ettrickbridge Village
Speed Indicator Electronic Sign: where there area concentration of pedestrians	Yes	Hopehouse, Ettrick Ettrickbridge Village - only at top end of village at pub verge
Gateway formalising: only on main approach to settlement to create clear entry point	Yes	Hopehouse, Ettrick Ettrickbridge Village – again only at the top end of the village

10. Defibrillators (AEDs)

BW has undertaken the task to review all the defibrillators in both valleys.

11 units in the valleys, only 3 have new style cabinets, the rest will need replaced @ approx. £300.

Currently supplies are ordered through Scottish Hart, however this is an extremely slow process, looking into ordering them direct.

ET-N suggested the cabinets / batteries could be refurbished. Action BW to provide details.

11. St Mary Loch - Camping

Situation has improved with regards to camping on the green however problem has now moved to the east end of the loch where no toilets or facilities are available.

This is Council owned land, therefore Council responsibility.

Suggestion made for possible remote management control, to be investigated further.

Public toilets at St Marys Loch are in need of repairs and maintenance but issue still remains as to who is responsible for this as toilets are council owned but are situated on private land. **Action: KI/AR to contact the Council**

12. Update from EYCDC

EYCDC has objected to the forestry planting plan at Annelshope and also at Todrig. Will be putting in an objection to Nether Phawhope on the basis that it is the last open hillside on that side of the valley amongst other things.

13. Community Action Plan

Community Council is working with EYCDC. Timescale for possible public consultation is Autumn.

It was agreed this was important as last consultation was over 10 years ago and there is potential in both valleys.

14. E Y CC Website

Work is ongoing, shortlist of three companies which are being asked to quote to put together a website. Action PS/JW

15. Planning Applications

No applications received.

16. Correspondence

SBC – Community conversations – Open meeting to discuss what matters to you within your community. 30th August Selkirk High School, 4 – 7pm. **Action: KI to circulate details.**

Brown Rig Wind Farm – Email received by Rachel Hamilton MSP from SSE Renewables (Head of Onshore Stakeholder Engagement) read out by AR.

Action: AR will contact Rachel Hamilton MSP to discuss how to take this further with a view to a specific meeting.

17. AOCB

Question raised re previous suggestion to hold a luncheon for “pensioners” at Christmas, AR responded that this has been put on hold for this year.

Dates of future meetings

Monday 2nd October 2023, Kirkhope Parish Hall, 7pm

Monday 4th December 2023, Yarrowford Village Hall, 7pm

Monday 5th February 2024, Kirkhope Parish Hall, 7pm

Monday 1st April 2024, Yarrow Feus Hall, 7pm

Monday 3rd June 2024, Boston Memorial Hall, 7pm (AGM)