

Ettrick & Yarrow Community Council

Minutes of Meeting held on Monday 3rd April 2023 Yarrow Feus Hall, 7pm

Present: Alison Renwick (AR) (Chair), Miranda Alcock (MA) (Treasurer), David Currie (DC) (Vice-chair), Kirsty Irving (KI) (Secretary), Jane Telfer (JT), John Davidson (JD), Paul Scott (PS), Karen O'Brien-Barrett, Elizabeth Williamson (EW), John Wildish (JW)
Cllr Elaine Thornton-Nicol (ET-N), Cllr Caroline Cochrane (CC), Cllr Leagh Douglas (LD) and approx. 25 members of the public.

Before the meeting started AR stated the agenda had changed slightly with Item no. 11. St Mary's Loch Toilets / Camping to be discussed after the Financial report.

1. Apologies: Fiona Hewson (FH), PC John Murray for Police Scotland.

2. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 6th February 2023 were proposed as accurate by PS and seconded by JD.

3. Matters arising (Not on agenda)

Item 3 - PS and MA not managed to meet up yet re the setting up of a website for the Community Council, background work is ongoing, will report back in June. **Action: MA and PS**
Item 15 – MA had been in touch with the Cappercleuch resident with ref. to being reimbursed but this is not required.

A member of the public interjected at this time and asked if the Community Council Members could identify themselves for the benefit of the public. This was actioned.

4. Police Report

No police present. AR stated there had been two issues to report in March, the theft of wildlife observation kit from Bowhill and ongoing fly tipping issues along the A708. CC stated asked if anyone is employing gardeners to make sure waste is disposed of correctly and also asked if everyone could be vigilant.

5. Councillors Reports

ET-N – still waiting on SEPA to come back re Ettrick flooding, engaged with Emma Harper MSP
CC – Placemaking meeting report now out, follow up meeting will be held in May. Asked for help identifying community groups in valleys. Either through email or FB Council Page.

LD – Stated the James Hogg Poetry Trail held in Ettrickbridge was a success and urged everyone to get one of the books. Books are available at Waterwheel Café.

6. Financial Report

- MA reported bank balance remains unchanged at £12,866.43 on 31st March 2023
- MA had investigated the potential of opening a savings account, keen to have this in place by then end of the financial year. **Action: MA to report back in June**

- With the change of office bearers agreed, the signatories on the bank account have now been changed but has been held up online . **Action: MA to take forward**
- MA asked if any Community Councillors had any expenses to claim to please submit asap
- Member of the public asked how much of the £12,866.43 was reserved funding? MA explained the majority was from Langhope Rig Wind Farm Community Benefit fund
 - Some monies set aside for replacing defibrillator batteries in the valleys
 - Microgrants, anything up to £500 available via a simple application
 - Rest is available for open bidding
 - Guidance if anyone is interested can be obtained from any of the Community Councillors.

7. St Marys Loch – Toilets / Camping

AR explained the issue of people camping on the green (which should only be used as a picnic site), and the mess that is left behind, also with added issue of the future of the public toilets. ET-N stated SBC has had an agreement with Wemyss and March Estate that SBC would maintain the toilets, SBC now want to end this agreement and hand the upkeep of the toilets to the Estate.

AR read out a statement from the Estate re camping, which reiterated other business owners concerns re camping on the Green and welcome constructive discussion and help to resolve this issue but also recognise there is a need for a campsite in the area. All businesses in the area along with the Estate need to communicate to try to resolve this issue. **Action: All business social media pages to publicise that camping without permission is not allowed. To engage with Community Action Team.**

The Estate has **not** yet agreed to take over the upkeep of the toilets as are put off by the difficulties and hassles of managing this facility which regularly gets vandalised. Representatives from the Estate & local businesses were present at the meeting.

Action: LD & ET-N to push back to the Council & find out when proposed end to agreement planned.

Action: Estate representatives to explore possibility of a barrier at entrance to green to discourage campers.

CC stated campsite in Selkirk has now reopened.

8. Community Benefit Funds

Langhope Rig: Fund A: £86k – Education & Training Fund agreed to fund driving lessons up to max £500, applicants must have passed theory test. Also, up to £500 available for laptops. Can apply anytime for everyone in the Valleys. <https://www.foundationscotland.org.uk/langhope-rig-education-and-training>

New representative will be required to sit on this panel. **Action: MA to publicise**

Fund B: **Action: Take forward to next meeting**

Teviothead (Muirhall): AR explained 12 Community Councils will be impacted by this project. Group to be formed devolved from Community Councils to avoid conflict.

Newcastleton & District Community Trust to initially take this forward

Member of the Public asked if E & Y CC have a Community Action Plan: **Action: CC will investigate**

CC stated Selkirk Placemaking included the Valleys (TD7)

9. Wind Farm Update

- **Brown Rig** – Members of the public raised concerns following the Public meeting held with SSE Renewables. Extremely disappointed that SSE could not provide answers to questions raised at the meeting and also did not provide a map of where turbines would be situated. **Action: KI to draft a response to SSE from Community Council reflecting public views.**
Action: E & Y CC to look further into communication methods (Survey /website/mail drop/digital notice board))
Action: KI: Representative from Scottish Government to be asked to come to discuss process of planning?
Action: Seek guidance from other Community Councils (SBCCN)
- **Scawd Law – Community Benefit Fund (E & Y CC asked to join a meeting on 27th April)**
To agree a mechanism on how to distribute the community benefit fund. Will report back at next meeting

10. Oliver Forrest Wind Farm

E & YCC asked if Statkraft could postpone their attendance at this meeting.

Main point they were going to make was that this windfarm would have no visual impact on Ettrick & Yarrow valleys.

11. Kings Coronation available

Grant available of £500 to each Community Council

E&YCC have applied for this – please get in touch if you wish to use these funds for a free community event

12. Tour of The Borders

New route for this year has been agreed, with a break of 2 years after.

Council have approached the Community Council if after this year they could hold the event again as are struggling to find a new route. This was rejected.

13. Update from EYCDC

10-year anniversary coming up – celebration!

Kirkhope steading – business units still available to let.

Newsletter to be produced, to encourage new membership.

14. Planning Applications

No planning applications had been received.

15. Community Council Vacancy

AR confirmed with JW that he would abide by the Community Council code of conduct

AR explained we have had a number of applications for the current vacancy therefore would postpone filling the vacancy until the AGM.

16. Correspondence

UCI World Cycling Championship 6th – 12th August 2023

Community Cycling Scheme Fund available -

https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20076/community_grants_and_funding/1272/community_cycling_fund

17. AOCB

Report of dangerous trees overhanging road in Ettrick Valley was dealt with swiftly – thanks go to Councillors for their help.

18. Dates of future meetings

Monday 5th June 2023, Boston Hall, 7pm (AGM)

DRAFT