

Ettrick & Yarrow Community Council

Minutes of Meeting held on Monday 7th October 2024 in Kirkhope Parish Hall, Ettrickbridge

Present: Kirsty Irving (KI) (Secretary), Alison Renwick (AR) (Chair), Miranda Alcock (MA) (Treasurer), Jane Telfer (JT), Paul Scott (PS), Elizabeth Williamson (EW), Councillor Leah Douglas (LD), Councillor Caroline Cochrane (CC) and 25 members of the public

1. Apologies

Karen O'Brien-Barret (KO), Jonathon Rowley (JR), John Wildish (JW) (Vice-Chair), John Davidson (JD), Councillor Elaine Thornton-Nicol (ET-N)

2. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting held on Monday 5th August 2024 were proposed by JT and seconded by AR.

3. Matters arising (Not on agenda)

AR advised that the meeting with Muirhall Energy re Teviot Wind farm had been postponed, a new date for the meeting is to be arranged.

4. Police Report

No police report received. **Action: CC to engage with Police Scotland to ensure this report is available. Also, KI to contact Police Scotland for reports**

5. Councillors Reports

CC – Selkirk and Valley Place Plan, consultants now in place – draft plan will be out later in the year and feedback will be sought again on this.

SBC Bin collections – SBC now have an online tool for information on bin collections

<https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/bins-rubbish-recycling/waste-recycling-app>

Selkirk News – Next edition will be November, any events to be advertised to let

CC advised she is now on the board of Live Borders.

Selkirk Christmas lights switch on is 7th December with Christmas market.

LD – Community Conversations, look out for consultations will become available, responses will feed into Council priorities for budget planning

6. Financial Report

MA delivered the financial report and provided copies:

Bank balance at 3rd October 2024 was £12,837.74

No income received in the last two months, but the SBC Support Grant for Community Councils has been applied for and should arrive in the next few weeks

Most of the costs of paths maintenance should be refunded through the SBC Paths Maintenance Grant

Two new external defibrillator cabinets are required, which will be funded through the wind farm.

7. SP Energy Networks – Proposed Cross Border Connection

SPEN could not attend this meeting, but another public meeting with SPEN officials has been arranged for Monday 21 October, at 7.00pm in Kirkhope Hall.

There was a wide-ranging discussion on SPEN's proposed route for the construction of a 400kV overhead power line running from the Gala North substation to the Teviot substation. This runs through a large area of the Ettrick and Yarrow Community Council area. The main points made during the discussion are detailed in an attachment to this minute. The following action points were agreed:

The deadline for responses is 28th October, which does not give adequate time to collect comprehensive and robust evidence to submit to SPEN in relation to the proposals, especially for other interested organisations (eg Historic Scotland) to submit relevant information.

Action: EYCC to formally request an extension to the consultation time.

Political support – our local MP, John Lamont, is very interested in this project and has requested people contact him with their concerns.

Action: EYCC to copy John Lamont, and other local politicians, in to any communication the community council has with SPEN.

It was suggested that a local group be established, independent of the EYCC, to coordinate opposition to SPEN's proposals.

Action: EYCC to collect contact details of people present who would be interested in contributing to such a group, and set up first meeting.

It was suggested that EYCC should engage directly with the Scottish Government Energy Minister to further the case for objecting to the pylons. This could maybe be done with other community councils affected by the pylon construction proposals.

Action: EYCC to explore this approach further.

EYCC should work with other community councils directly affected by these proposals. It would be helpful if SBC could facilitate a meeting with all relevant community councils, at least initially.

Action: EYCC to ask SBC to set up an initial meeting with all relevant community councils to discuss the SPEN proposals

It's important that the SPEN representatives who are attending the meeting on 21st October are senior enough to be able to answer some of the key questions.

Action: EYCC to contact SPEN prior to the meeting with this request.

EYCC agreed to send some specific questions to SPEN, including those detailed in the attached addendum, prior to the meeting on 21st October. People should email EYCC with any additional questions for SPEN that arise after this meeting.

Action: EYCC to send questions for discussion on 21st October to SPEN.

If anyone is aware of any specific groups who should be invited to the meeting on 21st, then to let Kirsty Irving, EYCC Secretary know. Will also invite John Lamont.

Action: EYCC to send out invitations to meeting on 21st October.

EYCC to investigate the possibility of being able to have the meeting on 21st available on line.

Action: PS to work with JW to enable that.

8. Etrick Flooding

Some construction work has been done, and SBC are putting in piles at the entrance to Gamescleuch, and this work still has to be completed. This will reduce the incidence of flooding to maybe 5-6 days a year, which would be an improvement, but not prevent it completely. JD has suggested we wait and see how effective this preventative work is, before taking any further action.

9. Update from EYCDC

Most of the news from EYCDC was reported in the recent newsletter, which is available free of charge. Anyone interested in receiving a copy should contact EYCDC directly. The monthly newsletter is a very welcome addition to improving communication in the valleys and publicising what's happening, Some concern was expressed about the length.

10. EYCC Website

This is now up and running, and JW has been trained on adding information. It was agreed it would be useful to have a dedicated page to the SPEN developments.

Action: JW and PS to action that

11. Planning Applications

There were no planning applications to consider.

12. Correspondence

EYCC has received a complaint from someone who tried to get access to the hill at Cacrabank and found it was padlocked. Vicky Davidson reported that the manager had assured EYCDC that it wouldn't be padlocked.

Action: EYCC to write to the manager of the land.

13. AOCB

MA raised a concern that had been reported to her about the septic tank in the sports field at Ettrickbridge, Apparently there isn't much in it when Scottish Water come to empty it.

Action: EYCC to write to Scottish Water asking them to investigate this.

The trees overhanging the junction at the Gordon Arms are getting overgrown, and the sign keeps blowing over

Action: E-TN to investigate

There is a dangerous puddle just on the corner as you come into Ettrickbridge from Selkirk.

Action: E-TN to investigate

Dates of future meetings, all at 7pm;

Monday 2nd December 2024, Yarrowford Hall

Monday 3rd February 2025, Kirkhope Parish Hall

Monday 7th April 2025, Yarrow Feus Hall

Monday 2nd June 2025, St Marys Hall, Cappercleuch (AGM & Meeting to follow)