

**Minutes of Tweedsmuir Community Council, at Tweedsmuir
Village Hall, on Thursday, 2 November 2017 (7.30pm)**

Present: Gavin Parker (GP, chairman), Brian Bushell (BB, vice-chairman and treasurer), Paul Greaves (PG, secretary), Lesley Kirkwood (LK), Ralph Glatt (RG). Eric Small (ES, Scottish Borders Councillor) 6 members of the public.

The minutes of the council's meeting on 5 October were approved

01.11 APOLOGIES

Community councillor Lesley Mason, SBC councillors Heather Anderson and Kris Chapman and Police representative Nicola Craig

02.11 MATTERS ARISING

LK reported that a grant application had been lodged with SSE for outside casings for the council's two defibrillators. LK said that it was felt the defib already in situ - at the bothy at Dykehead - would be better positioned on an outside wall, while a casing was also needed for the new defib planned for the village hall. LK also reported that she had contacted Peebles Cycling Club to ask if it would contribute to the running costs of the defib at Dykehead..

03.11 EASTGATE THEATRE

Cathy Shepherd, community consultant at Eastgate Theatre, said the theatre was looking to its services to communities outside Peebles and was interested in discovering how it could work with the Crook Inn hub, once it was open. Duncan Davidson, chairman of the Tweedsmuir Community Company, said the company would welcome working with the theatre.

Ms Shepherd thanked the community company for its feedback on how the community would benefit from the theatre's outreach plans. This would help the theatre's Big Lottery application for a grant to pay for planned improvements. Ms Shepherd, who was given a copy of the new Tweedsmuir community plan, also appealed to residents for any suggestions regarding changes they would like to see at the theatre.

Resident Andrew Mason suggested that windfarm funding should be sought to take residents to the theatre, and Ms Shepherd added that Tweed Wheels could help in this regard by providing subsidised transport to and from Tweedsmuir.

ACTIONS:

The TCC agreed to put a link to the theatre website out on its database.

A poster of forthcoming productions at the theatre should be put up at the village crossroads.

Resident Christine Parker to distribute the Eastgate Theatre brochures with Kirk Matters.

04.11 BROADBAND

Ben Campbell, of BT, visited the meeting to explain the recent quote submitted to the council for the implementaton of fibre-to-premises superfast broadband in Tweedsmuir. The sum

quoted by BT was £449,000, nearly five times what BT had intimated would be the cost in earlier talks with the community council. BC admitted that the quote was higher than expected.

PG added that the council had been shocked given that Rural North, a fibre company based in Lancashire, had intimated that to lay cable was £5 a metre. On that basis, the council had estimated that the cost of taking fibre to Fruid, for instance, would be £15,000, but BT had quoted £68,000. To Talla, costings based on Rural North's quotation would be £22,500, compared with BT's quote of £102,000

BC said the main cost was provision of the cable - using existing duct if there is one, or cabling overhead - and that costing was all about distance from the main spine - the Moffat to Broughton road. BC said Talla was farther away from the main road than Fruid, for instance. BC then distributed maps which showed the BT plans.

GP said he was shocked that the figures had gone from a ballpark £100,000 to nearly five times that amount in the actual quote, adding that, if the TCC had known this figure two years ago, we might not have gone ahead. GP said it felt like two years had been wasted..

BB asked BC to explain the increase. BC said that, when he first came to see TCC, he was six weeks into his job and was given the ballpark figure by company representatives already dealing with the plan. These representatives, however, were not, at that stage, in receipt of the detailed planning work, and it was this that had revealed the inflated figure. BC said the sums now being mooted had been a shock to him.

BC then outlined a number of options, going forward:

The project could be done in stages - for instance, if £80,000 were the budget, how many houses would this cover?

BC pointed out that Fruid and Talla contribute largely to the cost - so the project could be remodelled without these areas.

The community could look at self dig, which had been successful in other areas of Scotland.

BC said self dig would reduce the cost considerably.

GP added that it looked like BT were pricing themselves out of the job, because it was too much hassle. BC said this was definitely not the case. It may appear that way but it is not that way, he added.

BC then went on to explain R100 - the Scottish Government policy to get superfast broadband to the five per cent of Scotland not included in the most recent rollout.. BC said tenders for R100 would be released in the next few weeks, with 30mbps offered as part of the scheme. BC pointed out that speeds of 330mbps were being offered by the scheme outlined for Tweedsmuir..

BC said he was shocked at the cost of taking superfast broadband to around 80 homes in Tweedsmuir and was worried that the government's budget of £400m to £600m for R100, split into three areas of Scotland, would not be enough. BT policy, he added, was to use as much fixed fibre as possible due to its long shelf life and the fact that it is future proof, but worried that BT may miss out on contracts as the government may be forced to offer solutions like wireless and satellite - which he did not think were suitable ways forward - due to the cash constraints.

GP concluded by saying TCC would like to keep in touch with BT and that the aim was still to get FTTP to each premise. He urged BC to break down the quote as much as possible to enable the CC to consider all the options, GP also urged BT to quicken its response, which BC promised to do.

GP thanked BC for his attendance.

ACTIONS

BC promised to break down the quote as much as possible and come up with various options - how many homes could be supplied for a certain amount, for example.

He would look at self dig as an option, and not just Fruid and Talla, but the entire project. (BC said that, with self dig, BT was still responsible for the maintenance of the laid cable). BC added that one idea for R100 was to bring the fibre to the village and residents to then pay for the connection to each household. A community self-dig operation, funded by windfarm funds, could form part of this idea..

BC would also look at remodelling the project without certain areas, and added that the TCC should also talk with other companies regarding the superfast implementation.

05.11 CROSSROADS DEVELOPMENT

GP reported that a sub-committee to take this project forward had now been established and would be meeting soon.

06.11 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

PG said there were no applications to consider but noted that the council was still awaiting a decision from the Scottish Government on the Whitelaw Brae windfarm proposals.

07.11 MICROGRANT APPLICATIONS

None.

08.11 COMMUNITY PLAN

GP said the brochures had now been printed and would be distributed to every household in the Tweedsmuir Community Council area.

ACTION:

BB to distribute with invitations to the Tweedsmuir Christmas party.

09.11 POLICE REPORT

Rural Thefts

There were no incidents reported in your area. However another report of theft of sheep has been received at Moffat. No reports in this area.

Speeding/road traffic

29/10/2017 – A report was received regarding 2 vehicles that collided near to Mossfennan Farm, Tweedsmuir, no injury, damage to vehicle only.

29/10/2017 A report was received regarding a motor bike collision, near to Fingland Farm, Tweedsmuir, the motor cyclist sustained a significant leg

injury.

Indiscriminate Parking

10/10/2017 – A report was received regarding a possible abandoned vehicle, between 07/10/2017 - 10/10/2017 near Glenbreck, Tweedsmuir, the keeper was contacted safe and well, they were camping in the area.

25/10/2017 - A report was received regarding a possible abandoned vehicle, between near Stanhope, Tweedsmuir. Contact was made with the keeper, who had broken down.

10.11 TREASURER'S REPORT

Since the Treasurer's report produced for the September meeting there has been no further expenditure or income to date. However, following a successful application for a grant by the Tweedsmuir Community Council to the Community and Renewable Energy Scheme (CARES) for £9,950 to fund the Tweedsmuir Community Action Plan which has recently been printed for distribution to all residents and interested parties, there will be a spate of expenditure to cover the cost of its production once payment of the grant has been received from CARES. There is an overspend of £28 but this will be covered from community council general funds.

Details of expenditure are as follows:-

a) Preparation cost of contractor – STAR Development Group.....	£8,550
b) Action Plan Design cost - Sophie Roxburgh.....	£ 400
c) Printing cost of report – Caledonian colour printers.....	£ 433
d) Hire of Tweedsmuir village hall.....	£110
e) Tweedsmuir Community Company – reimbursement for event launching the report....	£ 595
Total.....	£9,978

11.11 SBC COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

ES said that bids for grants from the first round of the new Localities Bid Fund had to be in by 1 December. A total of £30,000 was available in this round.

The SBC councillor also reported that the A701 Action Group had still to be established, with councillors in talks with the SBC roads department, who wanted to extend the remit of the group to other roads. ES suggested that the community council should prepare a report on its stretch of the A701. Councillors agreed to this, and also expressed the view that the action group should be kept to the A701 and not expanded.

ACTION:

The community council to prepare a report as suggested by ES.

12. 11 CROOK INN

Duncan Davidson, chairman of the Tweedsmuir Community Company, reported that the project, Connecting the Tweed - in which the Crook Inn would have been part - had been refused funding by the Big Lottery's Heritage Fund.

Mr Davidson said architectes had appointed by prepare plans for a new cafe, bunkhouse and camping at the Crook Inn site, with a planning application scheduled for the end of February.

13.11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Flooding on Talla Road: PG reported that since the erection of a new EE mast, the road was subject to significant flooding, with the suspicion that workmen had damaged the draining pipes alongside the road during construction. RG added that he had reported the flooding to EE two months ago, but had received no reply.

ACTION:

To report the flooding to Scottish Borders Council

The next meeting will be at Tweedsmuir Village Hall on 7 December (7.30pm).