

Tweedsmuir Community Council

Minutes of Tweedsmuir Community Council (TCC) on Thursday 7th April 2022 (7.00pm), Tweedsmuir Village Hall and via Zoom

Present: Gavin Parker (GP, Chair), Brian Bushell (Treasurer), Debbie Cullen (Secretary), Lesley Mason (LM), Mark Cullen (MC), Ralph Glatt (RG) and 4 members of the public

01.04 WELCOME and APOLOGIES

No apologies received.

GP welcomed Dr Drummond Begg to the meeting.

02.04 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Accepted as correct.

03.04 MATTERS ARISING

- Recent emergency road closure - A701. The response from SBC was discussed.
- **Action: DC** to respond back to SCB stressing the lengthy detour required in the event of any closure of the A701 in Tweedsmuir and the importance of, wherever possible, maintaining access, at least until residents have been able to leave for work outwith the area.
- Letter to Biggar Medical Practice – **DC** informed no response has yet been received.
- Dog Education Officer – **DC** reported email sent but no response yet received.

04.04 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

None received.

05.04 TREASURERS REPORT

<https://www.tweedsmuircommunitycouncil.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Treasurers-report-April-22.pdf>

BB reported that the end of year accounts is being prepared prior to submission to SBC.

06.04.MICROGRANT APPLICATIONS

- **Support for participation in ballet** – Application to SSE Youth Bursary for £250 from Carla Kotze – **Approved**
- **Support for driving lessons** – Application to SSE Youth Bursary for £250 from Adrian Kotze – **Approved**
- **Support for driving lessons** – Application from Fergus Mason to SSE Youth Bursary for £250 from Fergus Mason – **Approved**
- **Support for diving** – Application to SSE Youth Bursary for £250 from Christian Kotze for 1 day diving course – **Not approved, GP** to feedback to applicant
Details of grants approved since the last meeting
- **Support for live music at the Tweedsmuir Rhubarb Festival** – Application to Ventient Covid 19 Grant for £500 from Debbie Cullen – **Approved**
- **Support for costs associated with Tweedsmuir Rhubarb Festival** – Application to SSE Microgrant for £250 from Tweedsmuir Garden Group – **Approved**

LM reported upon a successful grant application by the Village Hall to SSE and Ventient Funds to fund – new heating, roof and fitting of solar panels to the Village Hall.

MC reported on feedback from the recent grant application submitted to Vention to support the provision of integrated smoke alarm systems. The application was not approved but a resubmission was invited if certain issues were clarified/resolved –

- clarification of the community vs individual benefit
- eligibility criteria
- evidence of demand

Action: **MC** to revise the application, clarifying the issues raised and proposing a 'draw down' model for funding reflecting assessed demand and subject to approval of Community Councillors resubmit.

MC reported on a discussion with **LM** regarding a strategy to assess and subsequently reduce the environmental footprint of the community. Across the community there is a range of housing stock and heating sources each with their associated strengths and weaknesses with regard to both their environmental impact and their economic impact (cost) to the householder. A first step might be to apply for a grant to facilitate an independent energy performance assessment of all the properties in Tweedsmuir (who wish to participate) providing a baseline from which to identify and action areas for improvement. **LM** reported that reducing environmental impact was potentially a key theme within the soon to be commissioned Community Plan. It is hoped to commission this project within the next month.

Action: **MC** to explore the practicality and potential cost of commissioning an independent energy performance assessment of properties in the community.

GP reported on a meeting that had taken place with Skirling CC and Upper Tweed CC regarding the setting up of an Endowment Fund relating to the SSE Windfarm Fund. The Endowment Fund would allow monies to be deposited for future use but drawdown if necessary. The Council voted in favour of the establishment of the Fund.

- SBC have launched their 'Neighbourhood Support Fund. Grants are available for community projects to the value of £5,000 max £7,500. Info can be found at [Neighbourhood Support Fund | Scottish Borders Council \(scotborders.gov.uk\)](https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/Neighbourhood-Support-Fund)

07.04 POLICE REPORT

<https://www.tweedsmuircommunitycouncil.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Tweeddale-East-and-West-March-2022.docx.pdf>

08.04 SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Non present due to the Purdah ahead of forthcoming elections. However, Dr Drummond Begg in attendance, gave a brief outline of his role within his community and intention to stand for election representing the Scottish Borders Liberal Democrats at the forthcoming elections.

09.04 CROOK INN

LM reported that -

- the heating and water systems are being installed.
- work on the Wee Crook should be completed in the next month
- a number of expressions of interest have been received from parties interested in running the Wee Crook and a grant has been secured to support Tweedsmuir Community Company make the necessary arrangements
- new signage has been commissioned

Community Garden

- a range of garden machinery and equipment is due to be delivered soon
- garden furniture has been delivered and is awaiting construction
- the composter has been delivered and it is hoped to make this operational shortly
- planters constructed from old roof rafters have been filled
- weekly gardening sessions are restarting this week, 13th April 2022 7pm – 8/8.30pm

10.04 COMMUNITY UPDATE

Covered above.

11.04 CONSULTATIONS

None received.

12.04 QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE

- **DC** reported that the grant application to SBC's Jubilee Fund to fund a commemorative bench, fruit trees and a Jubilee Orchard Interpretation Board had been successful, monies should be received in the next few weeks.
- Plans are progressing for the Tweedsmuir Rhubarb Festival to be held on Sunday 5th June 2-5pm
- It was agreed that along with many other communities a bonfire would be lit on the evening of Thursday 2nd June on the Crook site.

13.04 LITTER PICK

The annual litter pick will take place on Sunday 24th April. Anyone able to help, please meet at the Crook at 12pm. Tea and cake will be available at the Village Hall on completion.

15.04 FORTHCOMING EVENTS

- Gardening and Easter Eggs at the Crook, 1pm – 3.30pm.
- Tweedsmuir Talks – Writer, Robin Chriton - Merlin & Mungo – Fact/Fiction? Friday 22nd April 2022 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall & via Zoom
- Community Film Night – Saturday 30th April 2022 at 7.30pm – Blade Runner. Bring your own refreshments and snacks to share
- Tour series - Wednesday 4th May 2022 Tour series – May impact on travel plans. <https://www.tweedsmuircommunitycouncil.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Info-re-Bike-Tour-series.pdf>
- Ride the sun – Saturday 25th June 2022 – riders likely to stop at Crook site at midnight

16.04 A.O.B

- Ability Borders - Ability Borders started its Community Connectors Project to help those wishing to use a care alarm service but who had no-one who could act as their first responders. They are now seeking volunteers, across all areas of the Scottish Borders, who would be happy to offer their help to someone in their local community who needs a point of contact for their care alarm provider. <https://www.tweedsmuircommunitycouncil.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Ability-Borders-Community-Connectors-Project-Leaflet.pdf>

- Forestry access. **GP** reported having received notification from residents about forestry access being obstructed by locked gates and in addition grease had been put across the top of the gates, with only a short area being accessible for walkers to climb over to access the forestry path. Kevin Dempster (**KD**), on behalf of Hearthstanes reported that this had been necessary due to repeated damage to gates which had resulted in sheep being able to gain access to the forest. This is particularly dangerous for sheep during lambing. KD reported that the installation of new gates was planned for May and these arrangements would remain in place until then.

The view was expressed by several members of the committee and residents at the meeting that the use of grease was disproportionate and unnecessary. It was also noted that grease could potentially damage wildlife and cause a slip hazard. TCC stressed the importance of working with Hearthstanes to work together to facilitate responsible forestry access and offered to publicise the damage being sustained. Although there is no evidence as to who (locals or visitors) is responsible for the vandalism of gates etc.

KD and **RG** however, reiterated that these measures were necessary to protect property and livestock and would not agree to remove the grease at this time. The TCC therefore moved to involve SBC Access officer for advice and to mediate on this issue.

Subsequent to the meeting **RG** informed TCC members that on Friday 8th March grease would be removed from the top rail of the 2 padlocked gates and stockboards mounted to prevent scaling of the gates other than at the hinge end.

The Community Council would like to highlight the importance of adhering to the key principles of the Scottish Outdoor Access Code (SOAC). These are:

- Respect the interests of others
- Care of the environment
- Take responsibility for your own actions

Closing gates once a person has passed through or by the individual climbing over the hinge end of the gate or wooden boards on either side, as per the SOAC is very important, particularly at this time of year. Failure to do so, causes livestock, especially during lambing & calving, to scatter and consequently abort, mis-mother and potentially starve to death.

Furthermore, climbing over gates on the opposite end to the hinges or over wire fences will damage property, which again will cause animals to scatter.

Hearthstanes have reported to Police Scotland the numerous incidences, between November 2021 and March 2022, when gates and wooden fence boards around Tweedsmuir have been broken.

The numerous numbers of these cases probably excludes the possibility that the damage was accidental, especially since the material was new, suggesting the gates and fences were probably deliberately vandalised.

Recently, there has also been an instance of tipping at the Crossroads. On this occasion, it was tree roots and large rocks but there is the potential for other fly tipping.

RG reported there is no indication of who is responsible but anyone who observes any suspicious behaviour, damage or tipping should report it to the police on 101. Any other concerns should be reported to **RG** on 07557332348.

Photos of recent damage and tipping are attached.

- Tree thinning work along the sides of Cockiland Hill will start on Monday 11th April and continue for several weeks. Appropriate advice signage will shortly be posted.

The next meeting and AGM of Tweedsmuir Community Council will take place on Thursday 12th May 2022 (7.00pm) Tweedsmuir Village Hall & Via Zoom

Any potential agenda items can be forwarded to –
Tweedsmuirsecretary@outlook.com

WWW.TWEEDSMUIRCOMMUNITYCOUNCIL.ORG.UK CONTACT: TWEEDSMUIRSECRETARY@OUTLOOK.COM

Chair: Gavin Parker Treasurer: Brian Bushell Secretary: Debbie Cullen

Other Councillors: Lesley Mason; Mark Cullen; Ralph Glatt;

Resilient Communities contact Lesley Kirkwood