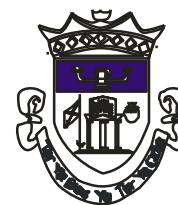

Hawick Community Council



MINUTES OF MEETING OF HAWICK COMMUNITY COUNCIL

held on Monday 8th August 2022 within the Lesser Town Hall, Hawick

Present:	Marion Short (Chair)	Cameron Knox (Vice-Chair)
	Margaret Hogg (Secretary)	John Campbell
	Braden George	Wilson George
	Keith Irving	Kevin Marsh
	Duncan Taylor	Euan Welsh
	French Wight	John Wilkinson
Attending:	Councillor Cox	Councillor Marshall
	Councillor Ramage	Councillor Richards
	Councillor Smart	Steven Renwick, SBC

There were 11 members of the public in attendance, along with Graham Ford, reporting for the Hawick Paper.

- 1. Chair's Opening Remarks** – The Chair welcomed everyone to the August meeting of HCC. There had been no July meeting. She advised it was disheartening to learn of 3 shops in Hawick closing in the space of a week. HCC and elected members were looking to invigorate the High Street, so it was of real concern to learn of these closures. Our thoughts were with those owners and their staff.

On a brighter note, it was good that there were currently several events going on within the town. There had been a live music event held the previous day at the Bandstand at Wilton Lodge Park, where a large number had attended. She thanked members of the HCC in attendance to help with that event and in particular Duncan Taylor. There would be further live music events over the following 3 Sundays with a tribute Status Quo band earmarked for Sunday coming. The following Sunday, there would also be a Health & Well-being event held at Wilton Lodge Park. Since the last meeting, it was noted that the Park had been awarded Green Status Award for the 3rd time, with part of the criteria being health & well-being, tying nicely into that event. Voting for a further national award was now ongoing, and she encouraged the people of Hawick to register their vote for Wilton Lodge Park.

A stage of the Tour of Britain would also again be starting in Hawick on Monday, 5th September. Keith Irving was the HCC representative on the group organising the stage in Hawick. So, in all, a lot of events being held, which would help promote the town well.

Finally, it was noted that works to the new greenhouse at the Walled Garden were now underway.

- 2. Declarations of Interest** – The Chair advised that if any members had a conflict of interest in any agenda items, they should please make it known at the start of the discussion.

3. **Apologies for Absence** – Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillor McAteer, Jim Adams, HCC Treasurer and Marjorie McCreadie, A7 Action Group. Councillors Marshall and Ramage intimated they had other meetings to attend later that evening and would require leaving the HCC meeting early if not concluded.
4. **Adoption of Minutes of Meeting of 13th June 2022** – The previously circulated Minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting – Proposed by Duncan Taylor and Seconded by French Wight.
5. **Matters arising** –
 - Conflicts of dates for CC meetings** – Following responses from all T&L Community Councils, the Secretary confirmed there was no conflict of meeting dates of other CCs with HCC meetings.
 - Broken slabs at Museum** – Councillor Ramage confirmed she had chased this matter up once again with SBC Officials, adding also that weeds were now growing up through broken slabs, however a response to her enquiry was still awaited. She would hopefully be able to provide an update to the next HCC meeting. Duncan Taylor added that this situation also prevailed at the Bandstand area and Councillor Ramage confirmed this area was part of her enquiry as well.
 - CCTV** – The Chair advised that CCTV sub-group members had visited Newcastleton to view their CCTV in operation and had discussed with members of their Community Council how they had gone about securing their CCTV. A list of information/documentation had now been requested from NCC, which they confirmed at the visit they would be happy to provide, to assist HCC to progress on this matter.

The matter of funding was raised as NCC had intimated they had received funding from SBC and a pre-warning to elected members that this would likely also be the case for provision of CCTV in Hawick, which would be at a much higher cost. Councillor Cox advised she would enquire further regarding funding the following evening when she would be attending a meeting of NCC.

Councillor Marshall stated he would be surprised if any of Hawick's elected members did not support this CCTV initiative, which he considered was essential given the increase in crime numbers and yet less visibility of Police on our streets.

Cameron Knox, Vice-Chair reiterated the effectiveness of the wireless CCTV in Newcastleton, and their ability to easily add further cameras in future if required. It was proposed that a digital system would be the way forward for Hawick, with a central hub in place for monitoring purposes, but this would indeed be costly.

Williestruther final improvement works – The Chair thanked Councillors for agreeing to the funding through T&L Partnership Fund for the additional gravel requirements. French Wight confirmed that several hundred metres of edging had now been laid and that 40 ton of gravel was now in situ in the car park. Weather permitting this work should be completed soon to conclude the improvement works.

Painting of Bollards – The Chair thanked the Hawick Paper for their publicising HCC's survey on the painting of bollards the previous Friday. Surveys could be completed online, or by completing the form contained within the Hawick Paper and depositing in a box held at the Salvation Army shop on the High Street. There were also blank survey forms available for completion by those in attendance at the meeting.

A member of the public enquired if it were possible to have an additional option to include blue and yellow bollards around the Horse area as well as at the Monument at the Tower, and another suggested for the Town Hall too, however the Chair explained that providing more options would lead to dilution of a clear decision. It had been considered that to have blue and yellow at all 3 of these areas, would not really leave many green bollards within the High Street. This was why the third option was to leave the Tower area which had already been painted, with the option to vote all blue & yellow if it were thought that these other suggested areas should also be in those colours.

Weeds around the town

The Chair confirmed this was an ongoing issue for the town and reported that weeds were even growing under the Halberdiers' bench at the front of the Town Hall. This did not bode well, especially at this time of many visitors to the town. It was noted that weed spraying was being carried out in some areas.

Councillor Marshall said he had been advised of staff shortages due to holidays and ongoing Covid, presenting real challenges on SBC's Neighbourhood Services. He encouraged nevertheless that where problems were found that these were reported, so that they were then registered and placed onto their schedule for completion. It would take time for completion, but Neighbourhood Services would get there eventually. Councillors were requested to continue their efforts to resolve this ongoing issue.

Provision of Hawick Care Village – The Chair referred to ongoing consultations on this – drop-in sessions and online consultation during July - and wondered if anyone could provide any update in terms of feedback received.

Steven Renwick advised that the feedback would be reviewed by the Council's SB Cares Team with a view to their refining and preparing an outline Business Case. He referred to November the previous year, when a report had been submitted to Council on the two proposed Care Homes – one in Tweedbank and one in Hawick. In respect of Hawick, more development work had been required and an outline Business Case was to be presented later in this year, which work was in hand.

Councillor Cox referred to a Health & Wellbeing meeting she had recently attended where it had been stated that the outline Business Case for the Care Home in Hawick as well as the full Business Case for Tweedbank would be presented to the Council by the end of September 2022. It had also been stated that there would be up to 60 beds in each area, with some for rehab and the whole place would be dementia friendly.

Wilson George enquired when works would commence in Tweedbank and sought clarification on the split of proposed budget. Steven responded stating that the full Business Case would be presented in September for approval before any works could commence in Tweedbank. That Business Case and the outline Business Case would determine the allocation of the budgeted £22m costs.

Duncan Taylor enquired if population would dictate the size of each Care Home, but Steven Renwick advised this would be based on demand as outlined within the respective Business Cases.

Use of remaining Commemorative Coins from the Queens Jubilee Event – The Chair advised that the remaining coins from the Queens Jubilee Party were handed out to the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd places in finals of the Vertish Hill Sports held in June.

Request for bunting to be left up as mark of respect to Ukraine – It was noted that the bunting would remain in situ until after the forthcoming Tour of Britain stage through the town. Duncan Taylor expressed his thanks to those involved in this decision.

Lack of Service provision to bikers attending Beanscene – The Secretary confirmed she had reported this matter to Live Borders after a complaint reported at the last HCC meeting by John Campbell. A response had now been received stating that the bikers had not been turned away but as the kitchen had been closed, had been offered hot or cold drinks and cakes. It was normal practice to close the kitchen prior to the closure of the building itself, to allow time for cleaning down. The bikers had made no complaint.

It had also been raised regarding their tidying up of the frontage of Beanscene, to which they had responded stating there was paintwork in need of attention at the base of the stonework which they would attend to. They had recently had the front area pavements around their building to past the glass gallery entrance, power-washed to tidy and clean the frontage. There was a roller blind housing in need of similar treatment which they would organise for washing along with the copper facings below. They went on to say that many of the sills in the flats above were in poor repair and the facing of the harled frontage would benefit from repainting however this work was the responsibility of the owner(s) and out with their control.

Request to consider moving the Bus Stop at Iceland – Councillor Marshall stated he had met with representatives of SBC and Border Buses on site, and had now received their formal response, which he agreed to copy to HCC members. Whilst it had been recognised that inconvenience was being caused to traffic flow when a bus was stopped at this bus stop, this was exacerbated with Commercial Road currently being one-way, 2 light-controlled crossings and the traffic island, particularly at peak times. Upgrading the old zebra crossing to a puffin crossing was known would also likely increase vehicle queues and sometimes pressing of call buttons unnecessarily did not help with knock-on effects. National policy was to provide safer places to cross, giving pedestrians and bus users priority even if that meant delays to motorists.

Schoolchildren would return to school mid-August and Commercial Road was scheduled to reopen in October, and there was an undertaking by SBC to further monitor the location into the Spring 2023 to determine any need to further consider removal of the crossing or bus stop etc. There was a further commitment to review of the Albert Road/Wilton Path/Princes Street in Spring once drivers had adjusted to Commercial Road reopening and the one-way system in Princes Street becoming a permanent feature. This review could only be done once 'normal' traffic flows were reinstated.

Councillor Ramage stated that articulated lorries off loading at Iceland did not help the cause either.

- 6. Guest Speaker – Presentation by Steven Renwick on Proposals for new Hawick High School** – The Chair welcomed Steven Renwick to present on proposals for the new Hawick High School. Steven, in turn, thanked HCC for their invite to discuss these proposals and he intended the presentation to be via a mixture of videos, presentation boards around the room to view, as well as a model of the school and its immediate surroundings.

In 2017 following on from local elections, the new administration recognised plans to deliver on new build and replacements for 5 of the 9 secondary schools within the area. Council Officers were then tasked to provide a report on how replacements or upgrades to the remaining 4 schools could be delivered. In November 2018 a report was taken to the Council with individualised Strategic Plans and showing how these last 4 schools could be upgraded/replaced. The focus was on Galashiels, Hawick taking second priority followed by Selkirk and then Peebles.

At that time, there were a range of different locations identified for Hawick High School and further work was required to allow a clear decision on location to be made.

In November 2019 there had been a fire at Peebles High School, resulting in priority for that school being brought forward. Planning permissions were granted for Peebles in July and hopefully planning approval for Galashiels will be gained in September.

Nevertheless, works continued with Hawick High School to determine a site and last September, following consideration of several suggested locations, preference was to stay with the current one and to build a new school there. Challenges with the current location meant a need for further study work on heritage, flooding and for a 12-week planning consultation process which was ongoing at the present time. A variety of consultations were taking place, and a website prepared to allow that.

Following key planning, further design works would take place with the intention of a full planning application to allow procurement and construction to proceed. The last board on display provided a timeline, with the aim of completion being in 2027.

In conjunction with the young learners at the school, two videos made were then shown to those in attendance – firstly showing the externals with landscaping options and then internal proposals and layout for the new school. Videos could be viewed using the following link:

<https://www.eyesiteview.co.uk/sbc/hawick/pan-consultation/explore.pano?id=1>

Following on from the first video, questions were then raised as follows:

Q: Where would the students be placed when all the building works were taking place?

A: Part of the presentation to the Council, showed ability to compress up the existing school with a very modest demolition of the social and music blocks, recognising that the school had capacity for 1300 students, with the actual roll numbers nearer 900, to allow for this compression. So following demolition works, pupils could remain in their existing class with very little disruption during their academic time at school.

Q: What would happen to the existing façade?

A: Proposals showed the existing building being taken down once the new building had been opened up. Discussions had taken place with SEPA on the challenges that posed, being so close to the river and risk of flooding. No other buildings would be put back, with the preferred options to hard and soft landscape only.

Q: Was the main building not a listed building?

A: No, none of the buildings were listed but the school was on the edge of a conservation area and consent would be required from planning for demolition.

Q: Where would parking be when the new build was up but other buildings still in situ?

A: Thought would need to be given to parking in the Common Haugh with some alterations made. They had successfully managed alternative parking arrangements during other construction works elsewhere.

Q: Going forward, was it estimated that the student numbers would go up or otherwise?

A: The school would be built for a projected 900 pupils' roll, and it was not forecast that would move above that number on a short to medium term projection.

Q: Whilst the school building was not listed, nevertheless it was part of Hawick's history, and would any parts, for instance the bell tower and the stones be used elsewhere, perhaps within the student plaza?

A: The primary focus previously considered had been on trying to retain some of the heritage elements and civic presence of these buildings, and Board 7 identified the range of options looked at. Difficulties identified were that young learners would be going in and making different moves as those alterations were being made to the existing building and the level of disruption was not considered appropriate. It was therefore determined to concentrate with the new build proposal. The status of the buildings was nevertheless recognised, and Council Officers hoped to work with the Hawick Community where possible to recognise or reflect and use the stones in a public setting and in a way to provide back a bit of this heritage.

Q: It was assumed the building would be eco-friendly, take account of recycling, solar panels and so on?

A: Yes, in terms of maximising environmental impact, one of the benefits of a new build would allow the best use of the best technology and modern materials to make the build as sustainable as possible, and as low energy consumption as possible.

Q: Were there contingencies built in for costs, which might escalate?

A: The project was budgeted at £48m, which costs would be continually reviewed over the journey to site start and once at that stage, prices would be locked in. There was awareness however of current high inflation rates, and costs would need careful monitoring.

Q: Had consideration been given to outdoor education storage facilities?

A: Not at the present time as there was still a journey to go before that sort of detail would be formalised. They were looking with the Architect at the concept - the location, which was now fixed, the height, which was a 4-storey development, faculty terms etc and they had yet to have discussions on sports, wellbeing and outdoor education and storage facilities and such like related to that. This would be picked up as things progressed over the next couple of years.

Q: When the social studies area was demolished, where would the dining hall be located?

A: It would be compressed into the existing school however an exact location had not yet been determined and would have to be worked on to identify how those lost spaces could be provided for elsewhere. Details would be made known before reaching the demolition stage of the buildings affected.

Q: With all the light and glass proposed and open plan spaces, how were these conducive to learning. Whilst it looked modern, was this best for learning or a step too far?

A: Steven advised he was tasked with developing a technical project and his brief was not as

an educationalist but within his brief, which had been successfully delivered in Jedburgh and will be used for Peebles, there were a variety of teaching spaces. Conventional classes would be present in Hawick with breakout and collaborative spaces available and where individual learning could take place. Teaching was not nowadays all about just conventional classes with a teacher, but a variety and different blend of teaching spaces which would be developed across the secondary sector and onto further education and universities.

Q: There was a worry expressed by a member of the public having children at and having been to the High School, regarding compressing students further in what she considered was an already tight squeeze for space. She recognised that the school was not fit for purpose in terms of repairs needed, but there was concern how compressing students into a smaller space would affect their learning.

A: The design was based on a 900-pupil capacity and had plenty of spare space due to the current roll numbers being well below that figure, and they would liaise with the school around the areas to be reworked and remodelled to allow that compression. This would ensure that the Council could continue to provide for education during that period. Existing buildings would be maintained as far as possible to ensure they were fit for purpose during that year but bearing in mind spend, when they would ultimately be demolished.

Q: The Home Economics Department was proposed for demolition, and it was queried whether other kitchens would be installed elsewhere in the school.

A: Yes, there was no intention not to continue to teach Home Economics or other social studies, and other parts of the school would be repurposed to allow for continuity of education during that period.

Q: The Volunteer Park was an integral part of this development. Does the upgrade to the changing facilities at the Volunteer come into the plan?

A: Not at the present time as this was a plan to replace the existing school. Steven had been asked to have extended consultation with those bodies who used the Volunteer Park to revisit their thinking for improvements of the Stand and generally what could be done.

Q: Would that run in tandem with the school?

A: He would make that decision following feedback from that extended consultation. Currently there was no allowance in the capital plan.

It was noted that alternative funding assistance could be available, but that funding was time-limited, and it was hoped not to lose that facility for funding to improve the changing facilities which would ultimately benefit the school. Steven recognised that, but the school would be a modern, fit-for-purpose school with a games' halls, gymnasium, changing facilities, fitness suite, dance studio and a range of other new features. Young learners would continue to make use of the 2G and 3G pitches but not facilities within the Stand itself.

Q: With the new build and demolition work ongoing, would noise not be an issue for teaching?

A: Noise would need to be considered and there would likely be some disruption. They would try to ensure that construction processes were undertaken as quickly and efficiently as possible. That had been done successfully with other school projects and would be done at Peebles.

Q: Given £90m expenditure on Flood Protection for the town, should SBC be worried about flooding of the school?

A: The flood protection scheme being built now only provided for a 1:75-year statistical return on a flood event happening. Planning Policy required that significant buildings, such as a secondary school, be given a much higher level of protection and SEPA guidelines of a 1:1000-year statistical return for a flood event needed to be applied. It had been proposed to lift the new building on to a plinth to provide that additional level of protection.

Q: This was a new build school and would be energy efficient, but would there be any renewable energy plans incorporated?

A: These would be considered at the next stages as they headed towards the planning application. Feedback from the pre-planning process with the school would take the design onto the next level of detail and would consider sustainable construction, energy reduction in terms of consumption, and develop on techniques to ensure the building was wind and watertight with other environmental things like ventilation also considered. They would also look at their Emergency Climate Change Agenda and consider alternative means from gas heating to electric based and electricity generation where they could.

Q: Councillor Smart had spoken to Conor Price, Flood Protection to discuss points of access should the Archimedean Screw go ahead, and he confirmed that these were already inbuilt into their project plan. If that Screw does go ahead, would it fit into this plan?

A: It could be fitted in and could be built into the design process as this was developed.

Q: There was talk about the library being in the school as well?

A: It would be a school library – there were no plans to move the public library from North Bridge Street.

The second video was then shown to the audience attending which concentrated on the internal plans for the school.

Following the video, Steven advised that this had incorporated reports from the school received as part of the planning process, and it was expected that consultation for full planning permission would be similar. The Boards on display would be redesigned to take account of that further consultation and he was happy to leave the Boards for people to look at following the meeting. Any other questions could be fed through the Community Council.

The Chair thanked Steven for his presentation.

- 7. Police Scotland Reports** – June and July reports had been cascaded to HCC members for their review, and the Chair reminded members of a survey link contained in the July report which she encouraged members to complete.

The Chair commented on the £1m drug haul near Hawick, and commended detection work in securing that. She went on to say that the reports were Borders-wide, and it would be more helpful for reading purposes if data could be concentrated to Hawick & Denholm and Hawick & Hermitage.

It was also noted that the statistical tables were now missing from the new report format, which did not allow comparisons of data and therefore help to identify if any issues were escalating or otherwise.

It was also disappointing to note that only 20 parking tickets were issued across various Borders towns throughout June particularly given the ongoing issues with parking in Hawick High Street alone.

Councillor Smart advised she had spoken to a couple of Community Officers and asked why they did not attend Community Council meetings. The response was that this was due to shift patterns however if meetings were within their shifts, they would attend. They had advised that parking more than 30 minutes on the High Street was a criminal offence. The reason that parking tickets were not being issued was due to lack of resources and ability to record car numbers and then to return half an hour later to check on these. It was suggested that SBC could look to decriminalising parking on the High Street, where parking ticket proceeds would then go to SBC and not into national coffers.

Euan Welsh suggested that installation of new CCTV could perhaps be used for this monitoring in future.

It was agreed that a traffic warden would be good. A traffic warden had been witnessed in the Civic Space recently and it was queried who was responsible for him. It was stated that there was an SBC Traffic Warden who operated in O'Connell Street, Cross Wynd and the Civic Space only.

- 8. Treasurer's Report** – In the absence of the Treasurer, the Secretary outlined his reports for June and July 2022. The Opening Balance was £27,487.44. The Community Council Grant from SBC had been received for £1,780, with other income from donations taken at the Queen's Jubilee Party, donation to Hawick in Bloom and advance payments from Xmas Market stallholders. Expenditure in the month related to the Queen's Jubilee Party, ringfenced money paid of £4,600 for the Bandstand events in August and some plants for Hawick in Bloom.

The Opening Balance in July was £24,486.03. A grant of £2,916.25 from the T&L Partnership Fund had been received for final works at Williestruther, and £450 grant from SBC for Core Paths maintenance and further advance payments from Xmas Market stallholders. There were minor expenses for travel to Newcastleton to see their CCTV in operation and for paint and feed for Hawick in Bloom. The Closing Balance as at the end of July was £27,831.86.

A member of the public asked if the £4,600 provided for Bandstand events covered one year. It was explained that this money was awarded from our Foundation Scotland allocation some years before, and had been ringfenced until now in HCC's accounts, but was indeed to cover the costs of the Bandstand events for one year only.

Members approved the Treasurer's Reports presented.

9. Public Forum & Town Issues

- (a) Keith Irving raised the banking at Weensland Road and asked why the grass had been sprayed and killed which looked terrible. Duncan Taylor reminded everyone that the area had previously been raised with complaints of long grass, so at least following spraying it looked tidier.

The Secretary commented that this spraying may have been done, as it had been muted some time ago that Future Hawick wished to assume responsibility for this area and seed with wildflowers. Derick Tait stated he understood it had indeed been sprayed in

anticipation that the Green Team would then rotavate the banking with a view to planting wildflower seeding in late September early October.

- (b) The Chair commented on two areas of grass - one at Iceland and the triangular area at Lidl which were vastly overgrown. The Iceland grass had now been cut but the Chair queried when the grass at Lidl would be attended to. There was confusion as to whether this had now been attended to and Councillor Richards undertook to check and, if not, to enquire when this would be done and report back.
- (c) Keith Irving advised that the two water fountains at Wilton Lodge Park were not working. He enquired as to the progress with Scottish Water to install water for filling water bottles. The Chair undertook to chase up on this matter with Scottish Water.
- (d) Cameron Knox stated the Flood Protection was coming on leaps and bounds however, problems remained with the Slitrig especially at Crowbyres. He had noted on Facebook that Langholm had been given permission by SEPA to remove gravel from the bed of the Esk. SEPA had refused permission previously to remove gravel from the Teviot, and he requested if Councillors could take forward with SEPA to see if gravel could be removed from the Crowbyres area to help with flood protection there.

Councillor Smart advised that works were ongoing at Crowbyres however she was not aware if dredging was in their plans to be carried out. She agreed to contact those concerned to determine.

- (e) Euan Welsh raised an issue highlighted to him, asking why campervans were being encouraged to visit the Common Haugh when there was failure to empty the bucket day after day which was overflowing at the top end of the Haugh where campervans were parked. It had also been asked why there was a padlock bar on to prevent easy access. According to Cleansing staff spoken to, they had stated this bucket was not their responsibility to empty, so the query was whose responsibility it then was, as the bucket needed more regular emptying?

Wilson George stated he had visited earlier that day, and the bucket was still overflowing. He queried why this bucket was also a normal sized one when it needed to cater for rubbish from 20+ campervans.

French Wight advised that bins within lay-bys were also frequently overflowing and were not being emptied.

Councillors were tasked to make enquiries on this to resolve.

- (f) French Wight had received a request from residents in Beaconsfield Terrace about trying to have speed bumps installed in this street to slow down traffic. Councillors were tasked to take this matter forward also.
- (g) John Campbell reported on a jeep with a trailer with a bed mattress in it, allegedly being turned away from the Recycling Centre. It was considered this behaviour only added to the issue of fly-tipping. Information on where the general and trade waste goes, where white goods go, how much is made on white goods etc was required. The Chair suggested that Ross Sharp-Dent be invited to a future HCC meeting to answer all such type of questions. He had been invited previously however at that time this could only be online, however with Steven Renwick attending in person tonight, that may be an option worth pursuing now.

Councillor Richards commented that Covid regulations were still in play at SBC to protect their staff and whilst Councillors were pushing for things to return to normal, these

regulations were still very much in place, and staff would perhaps be unable to assist with unloading of that trailer on that occasion.

- (h) The Chair advised that Elected Members along with Community Councils and other statutory consultees, had been given an update on the 20mph traffic restriction in Scottish Borders, and as part of the legal process to make 20mph permanent across the settlements, they required to ask for comments (not objections) from the statutory consultees, including the Police, Fire, Ambulance and Community Councils to be sent to SBC by 31st August. She stated the National Strategy for 20mph aimed to expand the 20mph limit across Scotland to ensure all built up areas had a safer speed limit by 2025.

A member of the public enquired why there was no flashing light system coming from the A7 south into Hawick. Duncan Taylor recalled that HCC was asked for their opinion on where these should be placed but rather than change those in situ, it would be best to enquire for one to be added at that location.

It was noted that Wales also had the 20mph speed limit under consideration there. It was likely this would be nationally before long. It had been trialled in East Lothian before the Borders and Edinburgh before that, so it was not just the Borders in isolation.

- (i) The Chair advised of an invite to HCC to meet with researchers from the BBC programme 'My Kind of Town' where presenter Ian Hamilton and his guide dog Major visited Scottish towns to explore their past, present, and future. Hawick had been chosen to be part of this programme, and she along with the Secretary would meet with the BBC representatives the following day to guide them on all that was good about Hawick. Derick Tait, Future Hawick, confirmed he would also be meeting with these representatives to give his thoughts. Escape Youth Services would also be involved in speaking with these representatives.
- (j) Wooden stairs on Waverley Walk up to Waverley Terrace – one of the stairs was highlighted as needing attention, and signs stating the stairs were closed were being ignored. A joiner who was part of the public audience undertook to have this repaired.
- (k) Victoria Bridge – it was noted that this was a year late in reopening. It was difficult to trust what Flood Protection Group were stating therefore, that the whole project would be completed before the end of next year. Duncan Taylor suggested that Conor Price be invited to provide an update to a future HCC meeting again. Duncan had been in contact with Yvonne Gilfillan regarding works in Millport and found her to be very helpful. Her view was that if works were behind, it was best to be upfront with the public on this, and so it would be good to have both Conor and Yvonne at another HCC meeting to allow them that vehicle to update the public.

Braden George suggested that this could be held as a Special Meeting out with the HCC, and this would be given consideration.

- (l) A member of the public asked if it would be possible when taking down some of the bridges in the flood protection project if one of these could be used to replace Langlands Bridge at the Bandstand, which was in poor condition. The Chair stated that suggestion could be put to Conor Price when he attended a future HCC meeting.

10. Reports from sub-committees

- (a) A7 Action Group – In the absence of Marjorie McCreddie, the Secretary reported on her behalf that the next meeting of this group was scheduled for Friday, 16th September and would be an AGM followed by a general meeting. The meeting would be in Hawick, but the time and venue had still to be confirmed. Calling papers would however be issued 21 days prior to this meeting with that information contained.

- (b) Christmas Event – A meeting had been held with Alan Smith, electrician, with a view to progressing on new Christmas lights, and socket requirements.
- (c) Hawick Common Good – The next meeting would be held on 16th August 2022.
- (d) Hawick in Bloom – The Secretary reported the summer planting both at the War Memorial and the planters had been completed, and all were looking great. An additional planter box had been received from SBC and planted at the Civic Space and the planter at the side of Borders Textiles was now planted with chilli plants. Unfortunately, the biggest of those plants bearing fruit, had been uprooted by vandals and had to be replaced.

The group was looking at trialling 6 of the big planters with some sustainable plants in winter thereby reducing the number of bedding plants but which would still be planted to add colour. Costs were being sought at the present time. A coffee morning was planned for Saturday, 24th September to fundraise for the Group's plans and activities. Finally, thanks were expressed to Isobel Scott, a volunteer member of Hawick in Bloom over several years and a real stalwart who had resigned on health grounds but whose expertise had been invaluable to the group.

The Chair added a plea for further volunteers to add to the current 16 in place. Contact should be made by email to Hawickcc@gmail.com She added that there still appeared to be the perception that SBC was responsible for the planters and War Memorial, but this was not the case and came under the umbrella of HCC. Funds were also tight.

The Vice-Chair stated that Melrose had a group of 30 volunteers and in Galashiels, the Ex-Braw Lads & Lasses were responsible for Bank Street Gardens, with funding supplied by Energise Gala.

- (e) Wind Farms – French Wight stated he had attended a public meeting in Teviothead the previous Monday night, which had been well attended. Things were getting very complicated however what did become evident was that the traffic management was not part of the actual planning application, and yet this could have a huge impact on Hawick with the number of abnormal loads going through the town. He urged that people should attend at the Muirhall Energy Office at North Bridge Street to review the plans. Traffic management would impact heavily on the people of Hawick if it were determined to come that route.

11. Updates from Community Partners

- (a) Foundation Scotland – Nothing to update.
- (b) Williestruther – As addressed earlier in the meeting.
- (c) Scottish Borders Community Council Network – Wilson George advised that there would be a meeting of SBCCN on 18th August 2022. Other HCC members had been advised of this and could stand as a member of HCC or for their own personal interest.
- (d) Resilience – A meeting would be held at SBC HQ in Newtown St Boswells at the end of August. This was for a post-pandemic discussion. The Chair would be attending.

12. Planning Issues – There were no major planning issues for consideration.

13. Correspondence –

- (a) The Secretary advised that Alan Wear, HCC member had entered his resignation and she read the contents of Alan's letter, which was noted and accepted. Until September 2023 when all members would be up for election, it was not possible to add to membership of HCC, as the quota of 3 co-opted members had been reached.

(b) The Secretary also advised of a thank you post card received from Hawick Belles for assisting with their Queen's Jubilee celebrations by way of providing a gazebo, tables, and chairs. The Chair stated it was good to see this equipment being used by other community groups, as this equipment was for community use, albeit with a proviso that any damage was repaired or recompensed by those sharing.

14. A.O.C.B –

Following the Circus having been to Hawick at the Common Haugh, a member of the public advised of stakes having been put in at the Common Haugh resulting in holes now being required to be tarred over. He wondered if it would be possible to consider the area above the 2G pitch to have a dropped kerb installed as a possible venue for other big events.

Keith Irving stated that plans relative to the Active Travel Network showed proposals for that area and it would be prudent to speak with the Flood Protection Group on this.

A further suggestion was also made for Bus Shelters either side of the road in that same area. There were currently bus stops but no shelters. Two bus shelters were allegedly spare and lying in Galashiels, which if accurate would only mean use of Small Schemes money to have erected. Councillors were tasked to enquire further into this matter. Duncan Taylor suggested caution be exercised to ensure best use of these shelters if they were available.

15. Date of Next Meeting –The next meeting of HCC would be held on Monday, 12th September 2022 at 6.30pm in the Lesser Town Hall.