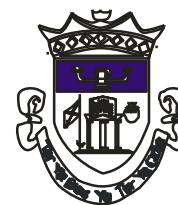

Hawick Community Council



MINUTES OF MEETING OF HAWICK COMMUNITY COUNCIL

held on Monday 14th November 2022 within the Lesser Town Hall, Hawick

Present	Marion Short (Chair) Jim Adams (Treasurer) John Campbell Wilson George Duncan Taylor John Wilkinson	Cameron Knox (Vice-Chair) Margaret Hogg (Secretary) Braden George Kevin Marsh Euan Welsh
Attending:	Councillor McAteer PC Sean Wright PC Fraser Mortimar Emily Gibson, HHS	Councillor Ramage PC Douglas Lindsay Ross Sharp-Dent, SBC Craig Oliver, HHS

There were 7 members of the public in attendance. Graham Ford was also in attendance on behalf of the Hawick Paper.

- 1. Chair's Opening Remarks** – The Chair thanked everyone for coming along. She was heartened to see the Police in attendance to speak to the reports submitted, as well as Ross Sharp-Dent from SBC as guest speaker on Waste Management.

She remarked on the excellent turnout for Remembrance Sunday, both on the parade and at Wilton Lodge Park. It had been a very poignant event with an excellent service from Captain Caroline Brophy-Parkin of the Salvation Army, and thanks went to the organisers of that event.

As was identified at the last meeting regarding the lack of proper equipment available for presentations and clear hearing of speakers, discussions were ongoing for a projector and roving microphone. Any difficulties for anyone hearing tonight, should be immediately highlighted and it may be that speakers would require standing to allow everyone to hear.

It was noted that the meeting would be recorded by HCC and Graham Ford of the Hawick Paper for minuting and reporting purposes.

- 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 HCC Member French Wight and Councillors Cox, Marshall, and Smart.

4. **Adoption of Minutes of Meeting of 10th October 2022** – The previously circulated Minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting – Proposed by Braden George and Seconded by Duncan Taylor.
5. **Matters arising** – The Chair sought an update from Councillor Ramage on the following matters:
- Gate to WLP Play Park** – it was noted that this gate had not yet been repaired.
- Double Yellow Lines at the entrance to WLP at the Avenue** – it was noted that these would be reinstated but again had not been as yet.
- Copper pipes around the sluice** – it was confirmed this lagging would be carried out but had not yet been so.
- Councillor Ramage undertook to chase up again on these outstanding matters.
- James Thomson Bridge – graffiti on sculpture** – Noted that this graffiti had now been eradicated thanks to local Painter & Decorator, Lindsay Nichol.
- Lack of equipment (projector and screen and roving microphone) availability for HCC presentations and lack of Wi-Fi availability in Lesser Town Hall** – Councillor Ramage confirmed she had enquired on these issues, however, Live Borders did not consider it was their responsibility to provide. She would however continue discussions with SBC.
- Public Toilets at Common Haugh** – Councillor Ramage advised that since reporting to SBC, there had been a fire in these toilets, and there would therefore require to be other repair works carried out before thorough cleaning.
- Motorhomes area – bins** – Marjorie McCreadie confirmed 2 extra normal-sized bins were in place. There was a much larger bin situated behind the motorhome area which was unused. This had now been brought into operation. One of the bins had a metal bar on it and litter sign and this appeared to prevent proper opening of the bin, which was asked to be looked at. Councillor Ramage stated that a double bin had been promised and suggested that she and Marjorie McCreadie arrange a site visit to ensure this issue was brought to conclusion. Marjorie advised that there would be a campervan rally between Christmas and the New Year, and it would be good to have this matter concluded for then.
6. **Police Scotland Reports for September & October 2022** – The Chair welcomed PCs Sean Wright, Douglas Lindsay and Fraser Mortimar and commenced discussions by asking them if there were any particular issues from their viewpoint causing them concerns within our areas.

PC Lindsay advised that they had been dealing with a lot of different crimes and incidents during the period including Domestic Abuse, Mental Health, Medical and social issues but there was no particular type of crime or incidents to give any real cause for concern. This time of year, until clocks changed in March, rural crime and theft of farm equipment and vehicles tended to rise, and people had to be extra vigilant. They would be targeting over the Festive Season drink drivers who might consider taking liberties.

PC Mortimar advised that general mischievous behaviour at weekends was always prevalent due to use of alcohol, but Hawick was no different to any other Border town.

The Chair asked about staffing resources and if these were of any concern. PC Lindsay confirmed that staffing was always an issue particularly now with the budget and likely resource cuts as a result. There had been golden years previously (where Police were more visible), however they had to work with what resources they had.

The Chair raised the matter of cyclists and e-scooters and highlighted an issue she had encountered with an e-scooter being managed badly, in coming on and off a road in the Stirches area, and the look of indignation from that driver when she had overtaken.

PC Lindsay advised that e-scooters were a grey area. These needed to be insured but were unable to be so and were not covered by the Road Traffic Act. Anyone incurring any erratic use of e-scooters should take as much detail as possible of the user, and report that to the Police. They had successfully identified culprits previously reported to them for causing mayhem from details of clothing worn etc.

The Chair advised of another incident with a cyclist who had been cycling on the pavement and had then come off the pavement at the Office Bar area and had almost hit an elderly couple crossing over the road there. The Chair had shouted Oh My God in exasperation and had then been subjected to verbal abuse as a result from that cyclist.

PC Lindsay confirmed that would be considered as anti-social behaviour and again requested that these types of reckless incidents are reported to them, with any details of what the cyclist looked like or clothing worn to help identification.

PC Mortimar confirmed there was no legislation in place for e-scooters, and they were having to review other legislation to use but until proper legislation was in place, the actions they could take were unfortunately limited.

John Campbell raised the issue with car parking at the bottom of the Howegate and people parking there for more than the permitted time limit. PC Lindsay advised that their resources did not allow for logging of cars and returning half an hour later to see if they had exceeded time limits.

John Campbell asked about securing a Traffic Warden and PC Lindsay confirmed that this would be the way forward but would need parking to be decriminalised to allow this. Councillor McAteer confirmed that the Hawick Councillors were pursuing for parking to be decriminalised. The Police had absolute responsibility for parking at the present time, but it was Councillors' ambition to have parking decriminalised and to have Traffic Wardens put in place. That would be a matter for the Council to decide on.

Wilson George asked if new CCTV proposed for Hawick could be used for the purpose of securing those parking offenders. PC Mortimar advised that would need to be tested in Court for a definitive answer on that being successful or otherwise. PC Lindsay confirmed that CCTV would however be useful for corroborating any crimes, assaults etc.

The Chair confirmed that a sub-group for new CCTV had been set up and asked if the Police were able to provide any background information on the existing CCTV e.g., location of cameras and coverage and any manuals they had in their possession. HCC would also be grateful for Police representation on the sub-group to provide their views.

Councillor McAteer advised that the Council were looking at Digitisation of Town Centres in the Borders and to recreate CCTV. Hopefully this would help communities to expand not just on CCTV but the whole aspect of digitisation. It was up to the Council to help address some of the issues raised with the Police tonight as well.

Marjorie McCreadie advised it was her understanding that new legislation would be brought in during 2023 regarding parking on pavements. This was supposed to happen in 2019. Councillor McAteer advised that enforcement of that would lie with the Council and not the Police and that was the probable cause for the delay in its introduction.

The Vice-Chair stated that the Police had touched on having a seasonal Drink-driving/drug driving campaign and asked whether that would mean increased patrols during that campaign as well as more beat cop patrols on our High Streets not only in Hawick but Borders-wide.

PC Lindsay confirmed that certainly on Friday and Saturday nights there would be that increased presence, but they operated by call demand. Whilst they wanted to do more, it was again about having resources and they could not guarantee increased foot patrols.

Regarding drug-enforcement Cameron commented on successful drug raids having been carried out (6 in Hawick the previous week) and monies seized, and stated it was a feather in Scottish Borders cap that the Police were working well on crime enforcement in the town.

PC Lindsay responded saying he was grateful to the people of Hawick for passing on various intelligence to the Police to allow these criminals to be taken to task. The public were their eyes and ears on the ground.

The Treasurer asked about double yellow line parking and whether the Police monitored this. PC Lindsay advised that the CAT team did so when resources allowed. Jim advised of a near incident when reversing out of his driveway with a vehicle parked on double yellow lines. He concurred that parking on pavements was also a real problem which needed to be resolved.

The Secretary raised that antisocial behaviour reported in October appeared to be concentrated largely within the Burnfoot area and asked if this was of concern to the Police. PC Lindsay advised that Sergeant Granger had arranged for some drop-in surgeries to be held in Burnfoot following a rise in antisocial behaviour in that area. This was with a view to finding out any ringleaders and some had since been successfully identified and dealt with. He hoped that this behaviour would now quieten.

Braden George reminded that antisocial behaviour hot spots should be identified when looking at camera locations and coverage for new CCTV proposed. He also queried whether more could be done in terms of education within schools from the Police on antisocial behaviour.

PC Mortimar confirmed that there were link Officers in place – PC Joe Swindel located within the High School and PC Ryan Stewart, Youth Liaison Officer who had pupils involved in army pursuits, as well as linking in and talking with other youth groups. Some were considered to be on the edge of criminality and this work had certainly helped break that cycle. PC Lindsay confirmed that the Police carried out a lot of early intervention work.

Marjorie McCreadie asked the Police to help her locate Inspector Neil Quin, Roads Policing, in her role as Secretary of the A7 Action Group as emails to him were unanswered. Officers agreed to try to help.

7. Guest Speaker – Ross Sharp-Dent, Waste & Passenger Transport Manager, SBC on Waste Management

Ross Sharp-Dent thanked HCC for their invite and referred to areas advised by the Secretary to cover and hoped that his presentation would do so and answer any previous questions that HCC had.

He referred to his first slide which asked what Waste Management Services entailed, stating this was much more than kerbside uplift of household rubbish. He listed these other responsibilities as a Trade Waste service, Bulky Uplift service, Education and Awareness within schools and other community groups like HCC, Recycling Centres, Re-Use Cabins, 70 Recycling sites across the Borders, 4 Transfer Stations, a number of Recycling & Treatment Contracts and 3 Closed Landfill sites, which still required to be managed.

SBC had a statutory duty for waste collection services for general waste, recycling and for food. They operated out of 3 depots at Easter Langlee, Hawick and Eshiels (near Peebles). Over 6 towns across the Borders, including Hawick, SBC had a weekly food collection and fortnightly collection for General Waste and Recycling. They did not collect over all areas within the Borders due to funding constraints. They were looking at potential costs however to extend that service to all areas. Around 4.4 million household waste collections were undertaken each year. Of that 0.1% of collections had been missed in 2021/2022. That percentage had unfortunately been rising in 2022 as a result of more home working during Covid which had continued on, and more parking and inability for large waste collection vehicles being able to access tight streets. In addition, they had experienced a higher number of vehicle breakdowns, and 9 new vehicles were in the pipeline. Previous reference to new potential legislation coming in to prevent vehicles being parked on pavements would only serve to increase issues in navigating tight streets, as those vehicles would then take more room on roads.

Turning to Performance, in 2021 it was noted that 54.8% of waste collected (around 50 tons per annum) was recycled which compared very favourably against the national average of 42.7%. SBC was the highest performing rural Council in Scotland and the 4th highest Council over the 32 Local Authorities in Scotland for recycling performance. They had a bit to go however to achieve the National target for 2020 of 60% and for 70% by 2025 and would need to make changes to current practices. The graph within the slide referred to showed in red SBC's performance over the years. There had been a complete jump in recycling performance between 2018 and 2019 due to the closure of their landfill sites. They built a new Waste Transfer Station in Galashiels and upgraded those in Hawick and Eshiels. SBC now sent its waste collected to a company in Lanark where materials were pre-treated and sorted to extract as much recycling as possible. The remainder of waste then went to a waste plant for heating to create a synthetic gas, which gas was then burned to create steam and that steam generated a turbine to create electricity to feed back into the National Grid.

Landfill performance – SBCs landfill sites were closed in 2019 with the Council investing £5.5m to build the Transfer Station in Galashiels and upgrade Stations in Hawick and Eshiels. That change served to reduce the amount of landfill from just over 60% to 0.3%. The National average for landfill was 27% and SBC was the highest performing Council in terms of waste being sent to landfill. SBC was also well ahead of the Scotland target to reduce landfill to 5% by 2025 and were already well ahead of that target now.

In terms of Carbon Impact, the blue bar graphs showed tons of CO² equivalent to waste managed in the Borders and again it was evident from that slide of the drop off between 2018 and 2019 predominantly as a result of closure of the landfill sites and the new contract mentioned earlier. Whilst performance saw an increase in 2021, that was thought to be as a direct result of the tonnage of waste managed significantly increasing. That waste was not generated by the Council but by households and thought to be linked to Covid and a drop off in waste produced, with households holding onto waste when recycling centres were closed. SBC had seen that backlog of materials coming back to their facilities on recycling centres re-opening. Whilst SBC were performing well it was nevertheless recognised they still had a way to go.

General Waste Composition – It was noted SBC had carried out a study at the end of November last year. This had involved SBC gathering a load of general waste bins across the Borders which were then examined. The waste was then separated out into the various types - general, recycling and food. This exercise showed that 19% of that waste could have gone into recycling bins, 32% to food waste, and 25% to a community recycling centre. So, in effect, of the total of all waste, 76% could have been recycled through the Council's pre-existing services or in other words only 24% of that waste should have been in the general waste bins collected.

It appeared from that study that households were unclear on what should go into their bins and needed more clarification. That was not down to a lack of effort on SBC's part, who had issued a variety of leaflets, placed information on their website, had articles in their newsletters and so on to help educate households on that matter. Manufacturers packaging did not help explain clearly either on disposal. Nevertheless, it remained a challenge for the Council to try to change customer behaviours.

It was noted that there were a number of key legislative and policy drivers coming down the line which were pushing SBC to achieve more recycling, re-use more and minimise waste. Scotland's Zero Waste Plan had been brought out in 2010 where the recycling targets had been derived from. This was not legislative but guidance. Also, there was the Climate Emergency and Climate Change Act. Waste was a very big carbon emitter and to achieve climate goals of net zero emissions by 2025, changes to the way waste was managed were essential to become more sustainable.

The Scottish Government's Scotland's Circular Economy Bill, which was currently under consultation, encouraged standardising of waste collections and to separately collect garden waste and referred to collection of textiles as well. At the present time, feedback on consultation was awaited.

There was also the Household Recycling Charter which SBC had signed up to in 2016. That was about standardising recycling services across Scotland. Generally, this was about getting more high-quality materials because if these were of low quality they were generally harder to recycle.

Scotland's Deposit Return Scheme – it was noted that from next year, bottles, cans would incur a 20p charge when purchased, and then when taken back to vending machines, the 20p would be refunded. This was a Scottish Government initiative. There would remain a duty on Councils to return those from kerbside collections.

UK Extended Producer Responsibility Review (2023) was about having organisations creating products and designing these by making use of recycled rather than raw materials. There would be a taxation system put in place with higher tax levels for use of raw materials and lower for use of recycled materials. Monies from taxation would go to Councils to allow them to introduce new services, such as textile collection mentioned above.

Legislation had been delayed due to Covid and SBC would not change any services until that legislation had been finalised. This would save changes that then do not become legislative.

What happens to your Waste? That was a question often asked and it was noted that this used to go to Landfill sites (now closed), with circa 70% of waste going to landfill. 2019 was the last time landfill sites were used. Within community recycling centres there were different bays for different types of materials. Waste collected then went to one of three SBC Waste Transfer Stations where it was bulked up to minimise haulage, emissions, and the impact on the environment (circa 50,000 tonnes of waste per annum). A further 3,500 tonnes of waste was also collected as commercial waste.

There were a number of Waste Recycling and Treatment Contracts in place with the biggest being for Residual Waste (42,000 tonnes per annum). Materials were entered and as much of the recycling materials taken out from the general waste as was possible, it was then treated to create a fuel which in turn was heated to generate electricity. There was also a Kerbside Recycling Contract (10,000 tonnes per annum) with a company based in Northern Ireland and for which they now gained an income, and a Food Waste Contract for 1,200 tonnes of food waste per annum. The total cost of those 3 contracts was £5m per annum and ranged in length from 1 to 10 years.

A video could not be shown at the meeting but could be accessed using the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kyHE904BQRY&t=4s>

The video showed waste bags being placed into a hopper, through a shredder and split open, materials going through various picking lines and the various processes to treat the general waste. Again, as much recycling was taken out, but this was of low quality in comparison to that recycled within household recycling bins, but this was a second chance to capture as much recycling as possible and which had not been put into recycling bins but into general waste. The video then showed the creation of the fuel.

A further video was shown on how Kerbside Recycling was processed, splitting into constituent parts to be turned back into cans etc. A copy of the Presentation Slides can be made available upon request - Email: Hawickcc@gmail.com

Many people considered recycling to be a waste of time as they were unsure of where that recycling ended up. The answer was that SBC did its best, within the contracts undertaken, to ensure that this was properly handled, and tracked its end destination. A slide was shown on where recycled materials went and this information would hopefully in course be placed on SBC's website and updated regularly so that people could evidence where recycling was going. The information was provided monthly by SBCs contractors and required by law for SEPA, and they produced national recycling figures from that information.

Community Benefit – a School Resource Pack had been developed through Levensat in Lanark under community benefit and trialled at 8 primary schools. This was a pack used by

teachers to educate children on recycling for early learning of that subject. From early next year, this School Resource Pack would be rolled out to all the primary schools.

Finally, information was on SBC's website as well as on Scottish Government website where on selecting Scottish Borders, information could be found on what materials should go into what bin, including food waste.

Finally, SBC were trialling for one year a "Recollect" App which gave various information on e.g., collection dates for various waste, and updates on changes to these over holiday periods, and well as ability to search on various materials to provide information and options as to which bins should be used for disposal. That App would be launched in due course.

Questions were then invited from the audience.

Fly tipping – Braden George queried if fly tipping was getting worse or did SBC have this under control?

Ross Sharp Dent advised that fly tipping was not under his remit but fell to Street Cleansing. Fly tipping was monitored by a system called Fly Catcher and he had not witnessed this as being of major concern and showing any significant increase. If the fly tipping was on Council land then SBC would deal with it, however if it was on private land the landowner would require dealing with it. Obviously landowners take exception to this, as they did not deposit there. The difficulty was in trying to catch the culprits and SEPA became involved if it was on private land.

The Chair asked as a result of not using landfill sites, which was better for the environment, how many Treatment Centres were now in place across the UK. That number was not known but there were many. SBC's arrangement was slightly different from other Local Authority areas. It was not standard that all would have the level of front-end processes that SBC had in place to take out recyclables. Their specification wanted to minimise what was going to landfill and what was going to energy from waste. This was primarily low-level quality recycling and that was why SBC's aim was to have more recycling collected from households to reduce low quality recycling at that second stage.

Regarding the high £5m cost for contracts to have waste treatment, was that cost effective against landfill? Or were these higher costs offset by the other benefits, e.g., assisting with climate control and carbon emissions.

It was agreed that landfill costs were cheap in comparison, and initially no Authorities wanted to move away from that, however the UK Government introduced landfill tax in the mid-90s and that gradually ramped up costs of landfill over the years to circa £80 per ton. Current costs for pre-treating waste were £120-130 per ton. Initially it had cost SBC much more for treatment of its waste as opposed to landfill costs, however, those costs were now coming closer together. This would hopefully force and encourage others towards behavioural change. SBC was also driven to be one of the leaders to pre-treating waste, as although the Scottish Borders covered a wide area, in terms of tonnage of waste collected (50,000 tonnes per annum) bigger authorities had much more waste. SBC did not want those larger authorities to take priority over them especially when legislative change in 2025 would see further restrictions on landfill.

The question was then asked if it could be possible in future that garden waste collection in the Scottish Borders could be reinstated. The response was that this was withdrawn to create financial savings. The Scottish Government had stated they would carry out a consultation, and consider feedback on that next year, so it was not yet known what would come out of that consultation. If SBC were to reintroduce that service then it would require to have funding awarded to do so. Most of Scottish Government funding previously awarded had been capital but it was revenue funding that would be required, which was tight in all Councils. If the introduction of garden waste collection were to cost for example £1m, then that whole funding would need to be provided by the Scottish Government to cover. Without funding, it would unlikely be manageable. Ross conceded though that garden waste collection was an easy way to increase recycling performance further, as it was of heavy weight. Garden waste collection was not a statutory duty, with many Councils charging households for that service.

Recycling Bags – Wilson George advised of a difficulty he had in obtaining recycling bags to recycle his household waste. Currently there were only 4 bins (with another 2 being provided soon) to cater for 26 households. Food bins were not provided at all. Ross advised he would discuss that with the recycling team for their response. Bins provided were determined on capacity required per household or scheme and he considered to then require providing recycling bins would not be cost effective. Bags were removed back in 2010 due to associated costs. Food bins should have been provided, as food waste was the biggest carbon emitter so from a food sustainability perspective, these should be provided. Getting households to use food bins was another matter.

White goods – Jock Campbell asked where these went. There would be a lot of copper within some of those materials of value. It was noted that fridges and freezers generally went to a company in Perth, with other types of white goods being dispersed to various other companies or taken to scrap yards and processed from there. Electrical items were taken from SBC free of charge, as part of a scheme operated across the UK. If SBC had to deal with white goods themselves, then there would be a heavy cost to them. Stripping out of copper or other materials would not be cost effective for SBC.

The matter of charging for trade waste collection was then queried. The response was that it would cost SBC for disposal of c.£70-80, with haulage and other operating costs on top. That waste was now forwarded and went through the processing as other waste collected, as shown earlier.

Kevin Marsh queried whether the current booking system for vans/trailers was worthwhile. It was noted that when the Community Recycling Centres re-opened following Covid, the expectancy was for increased demand for disposals, and that happened. The booking system was then introduced for large vehicles and trailers, and it had been effective. The one thing that slowed flow of traffic through the recycling centres, were the large vehicles and trailers containing large amounts of materials to offload. By having 5 or 6 slots available to book those vehicles, had helped that flow. Ross conceded that the initial booking system had not been great as the public could not book slots quickly, so they were trying to move to a more live system and were awaiting Council approval to go ahead with this.

It was suggested that booking online was not available to everyone, however, it was noted that telephone contact could be made for bookings. On most days, on analysis by SBC, there were spare slots available. This appeared not to be the experience for some users. SBC did experience that on many occasions, those turning up with vans and/or trailers were not

householders and that caused problems. In having bookings, that could be tracked more closely. Contractors required to pay for disposal of their waste. In not paying, a bigger burden was then placed on households. Contractors required to ensure those disposal costs were incorporated within their costs to customers.

Overall, SBC acknowledged a more robust booking system was required to make bookings more user-friendly.

Duncan Taylor commented that on every occasion he had used the Recycling Centres in Hawick and Kelso staff there had been very helpful. Ross thanked Duncan for his comment and advised he would feed that back to those staff. A member of the public endorsed Duncan's comments having had similar good experiences at Hawick Recycling Centre himself.

That member of the public then went onto say that much had been talked about regarding the front-end process, and sorting and transportation but questioned where for example the cans and cardboard he recycled ended up and what happened to food waste?

Ross advised once recycling was turned into a product, it was no longer deemed waste and went into the global recycling market. If there was a manufacturing base in the UK, he imagined most of that would be kept locally to avoid transportation costs for example. The paper waste would most likely go into one of the paper mills in Scotland and would have another life as recycled paper. Food Waste went to a company and through their processing facility and in the absence of oxygen was then heated and a material produced to use as compost for the land. Many people wanted to know where their recycling materials ended up and that was an area SBC would like to furnish in more detail, as having that information could encourage more people to recycle. Some recycling would undoubtedly go abroad, for instance to China as that was where a lot of our purchases were made. Waste was moving from a Linear process - made it, used it, and put it to landfill - to a more circular process of - made it, re-used it, and recycled it – so as to keep reusing it and not losing anything from that system. To allow that circular process there would need to be more manufacture bases available. Ross advised he would attempt to have further information in future made available on how recycling ended up.

It was asked if all the various components from electrical goods within recycling centres were stripped out and reused – remote controls, hairdryers etc. Ross referred to the Waste Electrical & Electronic Equipment Regulations (WEEER) where basically all manufacturers paid into that system to allow Councils to provide the collection service and they then arranged for uplift. Small electrical items went through a grinding down system with the aim of pulling out the metals and plastics. They were not so much reused as the original item but for instance any copper found would be sent off to be reused and recycled into other products containing copper elements. Once materials were separated into different component parts then that Company's brokers would sell off to other companies for reuse.

Councillor McAteer advised that the biggest single complaint received by him, and his fellow Councillors, related to people not recycling properly, manifesting in blue bins containing wrong waste then not being uplifted by the binmen as a result. What was the solution to stop that issue perpetuating? Ross concurred that issue was frustrating. Most householders were recycling efficiently with a small minority causing real issues, and making places feel unkept.

There was currently Scottish Government consultation ongoing with the Local Authorities which asked if they thought they needed more powers to enforce recycling and waste management. Whilst of course that was the case, and down south there was an ability to give out Fixed Penalty Notices, that did not apply to Scotland. SBC had to go through the Sheriff Court who could fine up to £100 but evidence was required, the Council would need to be assured it would win any case, the Procurator Fiscal may not allow the case to proceed and all in all, that was a very long-drawn-out system which was not effective and provided little power to Local Authorities. Hopefully in time legislation would become stronger and meantime other legislation was being looked at for any assistance in pursuing offenders.

The Chair thanked Ross for his presentation and whilst more education might assist, households needed to assume more responsibility. Whilst current recycling performance was above national targets, it was clear from the presentation to achieve forthcoming national targets would require further household buy-in and a review of SBC's current waste collection practices.

The audience provided a round of applause for Ross' presentation.

8. Hawick High School Update – An apology was made for the long wait for the pupils to provide their update.

Emily reported there were a number of events happening within the High School. Craig advised of Assemblies having been held with the various Houses within the school, educating everyone on the history of remembrance and how this was celebrated in Hawick. On Remembrance Sunday (the previous day), Craig stated he had laid wreaths at both Stobs organised by the Hawick Archaeological Society and at Wilton Lodge Park on behalf of the High School. He had found this to be humbling and a great honour and experience.

He went on to report of the school's first Prize-giving Ceremony since Covid, which had been very successful. Fundraising events had also been held with a duck race raising c.£500 and a coffee morning which had raised a further £230.

Emily confirmed that other fundraising events were in the pipeline with the Social Committee's Entertainment Evening and other events for the school's charity - the Borders Green Team. They were also fundraising for a new defibrillator following on from all the CPR training held within the school. There were also 14 Senior Trainees, including herself, who had received that trainee award to train on, along with 16 staff members. CPR training had been very successful and had inspired a number of pupils to look to a career as paramedics.

The Senior Hockey Team had competed in the Scottish Aspire Cup in Edinburgh recently and had reached the final but unfortunately lost 2-1 on penalties. Other Senior Pupils had also been involved in the town's Place-Making consultations and were currently doing surveys within the school for pupils' ideas on what was needed within the town to retain its young people or to encourage youngsters back who had already left.

The Chair thanked the pupils for their update and then asked if it would be possible for any senior pupils to assist with the transporting of equipment from the Town Hall and Future Hawick to the Salvation Army Hall on Friday, 2nd December. Then anyone available on Saturday, 3rd December would also be appreciated to erect and dismantle the gazebos along

with Hawick Youth Rugby. Emily and Craig advised they would feedback and seek volunteers.

- 9. Treasurer's Report – September & October 2022** – The Treasurer reported an opening balance of £25,587.95 with income of £2,565.56 from an anonymous donation to, and proceeds from a coffee morning held by, Hawick in Bloom, and one expense of £17.10 resulting in a Closing Balance of £28,136.41. Of that closing balance c.£17,500 was ring-fenced primarily for payment of Williestruther improvement works still not invoiced and for Christmas Lights expenditure from the Foundation Scotland Fund. Annual Insurance costs were an ongoing concern and there was a need in his view to have the Annual Community Council Grant of £1,780 increased.

The Chair reported that she would remind SBC's Clare Malster of an outstanding meeting to be held with her in relation to insurance payable by HCC, as costs of insurance cover were increasing year on year, with one particular bone of contention being the requirement to insure resilience equipment.

Councillor McAteer advised that insurance did not feature as part of the Scheme for Community Councils which was currently under review. It was his view that a formal request required to be made by HCCs to the Council regarding that matter. The Chair advised that she had raised this issue previously with Councillor David Parker who had agreed to take the matter forward, as he considered HCC should not require paying for insurance cover for resilience equipment.

Wilson George as Chair of the Scottish Borders Community Councils Network (SBCCN) agreed to have this raised through that Group, with a view to a formal request being made on behalf of all 69 Borders Community Councils regarding insurance liabilities.

10. Public Forum & Town Issues:

The Chair advised that a member of the public had kindly donated a Christmas tree for use by HCC at the Dovemount roundabout. SBC had agreed to cut down and transport the tree to that location and Bear Scotland had agreed to provide assistance with its installation there, and these gestures were much appreciated.

In discussions with Bear Scotland, it had been noted that resurfacing works at the Dovemount roundabout would be carried out in Spring 2023. They had also now completed pruning and clearing of vegetation works on 2 sides of the roundabout under their responsibility. Feedback from nearby residents had been very favourable. The Chair had corresponded with SBC, who were responsible for the maintenance of the shrubbery on the other 2 sides, to determine when these works would be attended to.

The Chair also reported on correspondence received on 4th November from Scottish Water regarding HCC's request some time ago for a Top-up Tap for Hawick. They had apologised for the delay in responding but had earmarked to review the status of that request the following week, with a view to then providing a more detailed response. Hopefully that response would be favourable. Councillor McAteer confirmed that he had initially received a negative response from Scottish Water, however, it was good that they were now reconsidering that.

The Chair advised that she had also attended the Borderlands Place-Making Workshop previously referred to by the High School pupils. The aim of that workshop had been to

consider how to make places better for communities, businesses, and services in the Scottish Borders. It looked at opportunities, activities, and investment for places and at community wealth, climate change and communities' wellbeing. The workshop had been deemed successful. Councillor Ramage agreed the workshop had indeed been successful and feedback on outcomes was awaited. The Chair stated she would discuss with SBC's Jenni Craig the possibility of further HCC members being permitted to join this group.

The Treasurer reported that it had been necessary for a member of the public to attend Wilton Lodge Park early on the morning of Remembrance Sunday to ensure that all dog poo had been uplifted for the Parade. That was an ongoing problem and a sad state of affairs that this work had been necessary.

11. Reports from Sub-Committees

- (a) A7 Action Group – John Wilkinson reported a meeting of this group had been held in September, when the new committee and office-bearers had been set. There had been discussion on Muirhall Energy and its Teviot Wind Farm, and a meeting had also been held with them in October. John had learned from discussions held at that meeting regarding the impact of the wind farm on Teviothead residents with the actual heights of turbine blades ranging from 180 to 240m and their visibility on the A7 route. The potential transportation routes of the turbines had also been under discussion, and he raised his concerns regarding the possible impact of transportation through Hawick. It was noted also that new roads to accommodate transportation would require to be built, and there was also an issue that some new roads required, lay on land belonging to Selkirk Common Good, which previously Muirhall had been unaware of.

The next meeting of the A7 Action Group would be held on Friday, 25th November in Langholm. John advised he may be unable to attend that meeting. Marjorie McCreadie confirmed that Calling Papers had been issued and there would be a speaker, Dr Jeffrey Martin, about traffic movement. It was essential for a good turnout and the Chair agreed to email other HCC members to seek their availability to attend should John and Jock, the HCC named representatives, be unable to attend.

Duncan Taylor enquired if the representation on the A7 Action Group still included SBC and MSP and MP representatives, and Marjorie confirmed Councillor Ramage represented from SBC and all 6 MSPs had been invited as well as Christine Grahame MSP. Duncan asked if this also included any other representatives, given the A7 was cross-border, however it was noted that Carlisle had been invited and had showed no interest.

- (b) Christmas Event – The Chair referred to her earlier in the meeting seeking HHS volunteers' assistance on the day, and she extended this request to elected members. Regarding entertainment, there were now 8 Acts confirmed. Catford Investments normally supplied electricity for the stage and lighting, but that firm had now moved to the Tower and had subsequently agreed to provide electricity for the tree located there. The owner of the Coffin End premises had declined to provide electricity and McLaughlin & Harvey had now kindly agreed to do so on the event day for the stage entertainment. Supply of electricity for lighting however remained an issue to be sorted otherwise there would be no Christmas lights from the Baptist Church around the Coffin End and back to the Baptist Church. An appeal would be made again to the owner of the Coffin End building. All other tasks relative to this event were well in hand.
- (c) Hawick Common Good Fund – Nothing further to report. The next meeting of this group would be held on Tuesday, 22nd November.

- (d) Hawick in Bloom – It was noted that winter plants were in the majority now planted. Due to there being a lot of heavy rain recently, plants had taken a battering but would hopefully resurrect and last over the winter period to springtime.
- (e) Wind Farms – In the absence of French Wight, the Vice-Chair reported that French had attended discussions with Muirhall Energy regarding Community Benefits, and these would be discussed again further at another meeting. As alluded to earlier regarding Teviot Wind Farm, the height of the largest turbines would be the same as the mast at the top of Ashkirk. If Teviot did go ahead, that could mean multiple journeys right through Hawick but the main preferred route was through forestry to Bowanhill across to the A7 and onto the compound at Teviothead. That transport route was however not as yet decided upon.

Pines Burns was now under construction, and the Earlside road was currently closed in sections to improve culverts, to allow easier transporting of turbines for that project. Around 4000 transport journeys would be required for construction there.

- (f) The Chair advised last month of a sub-group for CCTV and confirmed that another meeting had taken place the previous week. Kevin Marsh and the Vice-Chair would lead on this project, as they had the knowledge and experience of dealing with CCTV in their respective day-to-day or previous jobs.

Kevin advised that the last meeting followed on from a visit to Newcastleton CC to view their CCTV in July last. The sub-group were working on various strategies at the present time and trying to collate as much information as possible on the current CCTV system in Hawick – specifically where the current cameras were located, the coverage they provided, and how the system generally worked.

A number of emails had been received late that day by the Secretary and passed on to Kevin and Cameron for their reading. These included camera specifications from Newcastleton, and these specifications would be reviewed to see if any could be deployed to cameras for Hawick. There were 16 cameras in Newcastleton but there would require to be significantly more in Hawick. Police involvement would be required to help determine hot spots of crime, antisocial behaviour and so on, to ensure cameras were placed to best effect.

The Vice-Chair confirmed that CCTV would be a major project financially too. Newcastleton had successfully managed to secure finance for theirs, and Selkirk had last week received planning permissions from SBC and were ready to proceed with theirs, so it was now Hawick's turn. CCTV would not happen overnight, but the major challenge would be in securing funding to cover all costs involved.

A member of the public asked where funding would be sourced and the Vice-Chair advised that possible avenues were through crowdfunding, and via SBC and other available grants. CCTV for Newcastleton cost c.£34k and it was thought that for Hawick this would be c.£100k and possibly more.

The Chair advised that the sub-group members were very enthusiastic and keen to progress with this project.

Councillor McAteer advised that papers had been published for the next Council meeting to be held the following week and those included a paper outlining SBC's ambitions and plans for the next 5 years. Under Crime Prevention, Community Safety and

Empowerment & Vibrant Communities, it was stated very clearly about SBC working with their IT partners to introduce town centre WiFi, to allow for the introduction of secure wireless CCTV systems in their town centres as part of their ongoing strategy to be a smarter rural region. CCTV was what was needed for this town and if that paper were agreed, that might significantly change the route to funding for Hawick's CCTV project and help move things on more quickly.

Kevin went on to say that the technical side of preparing a draft specification and even getting pre-tender documentation back, could take just 2 months. It was the funding that would be the challenging part.

Councillor McAteer suggested that Hawick could volunteer to SBC to act as a pilot town for CCTV, as a means of their achieving their plans (if the paper was approved by them as mentioned above).

The Chair concluded stating that a lot of work by the sub-group had already taken place in researching and attempting to locate various documentation, as well as learning from the knowledge and expertise of both the Vice-Chair and Kevin Marsh. CCTV was very much needed in the town and the group were happy to continue their efforts to secure that.

12. Updates from Community Partners

- (a) No report received from Future Hawick
- (b) Foundation Scotland – all funding for 2022/23 was being utilised for purchasing of new Christmas lights.
- (c) SBCCN – The next meeting of the Network would be held in January 2023.

13. Planning Issues – There were no major planning issues to report.

14. Correspondence – The Secretary advised that a lovely card had been received from the Cornet and his Lass thanking HCC for the kind gifts presented to them at the Exiles Night during the Common Riding.

15. AOCB – Duncan Taylor advised that he had been invited and represented HCC at a recent meeting of Friends of Wilton Lodge Park (FoWLP) to report to them on the summer bandstand events. FoWLP members stated they had been very happy with how these events had gone and stated they would like to work with HCC for future events.

Coincidentally that day an email had been received by Keith Johnson, Chair of FoWLP from a Carol Cooke, Greenspace Manager, SBC, stating that as part of the Green Flag Board Assessment Recommendations for Wilton Lodge Park the various stakeholders – SBC, Live Borders, FoWLP, the Café Owner and HCC, needed to communicate and co-ordinate events to maximise opportunities and participation. The Green Flag people were very keen therefore that there be more use made of Wilton Lodge Park over the summer months. There would be another meeting held at 10am on 6th December at the Museum. Should Duncan be unable to attend, it would be hoped another HCC member could attend to represent. Wilson George offered to attend.

Duncan wished to declare an interest due to his involvement in Live Music Hawick and their providing the music for the bandstand events.

Councillor Ramage highlighted the next meeting of the Teviot & Liddesdale Partnership to be held the following Wednesday at 6pm within Hawick High School. Items on the Agenda included Place-making and the outcomes of the Place-making workshop recently held, the Schools Nurture Policy, and the Coast-to-Coast Cycle Route planned. She encouraged everyone to attend.

Councillor McAteer advised that the 50-year twinning of Hawick and Bailleul was next year, and it was likely there would be a Carnival between the 18th & 25th February 2023 in Bailleul. Publicity regarding that would soon be started as he was sure that many people from Hawick would be interested in attending. An event to reciprocate might be held in Hawick later in 2023. A member of the public advised he attended the very first trip to Bailleul in 1971 and he confirmed that the Carnival would be well worth attending.

- 16. Date of next meeting** - The next HCC meeting would be held on Monday, 12th December 2022 at 6.30pm within the Lesser Town Hall.