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Hawick Community Council



MINUTES OF MEETING OF HAWICK COMMUNITY COUNCIL

held on Monday 10th April 2023 within the Lesser Town Hall, Hawick

Present	Marion Short (Chair)	Cameron Knox (Vice-Chair)
	Jim Adams (Treasurer)	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 McAteer
	PC Douglas Lindsay	PC Fraser Mortimar

There were 12 members of the public in attendance.

- 1. Chair's Opening Remarks** – The Chair welcomed everyone to HCC's April meeting. She went on to congratulate Cath Elliott-Walker and her team for providing a wonderful Reivers Festival held late March. All events had been well attended and the Torchlight Procession and Fireworks in particular had been spectacular. She thanked the HCC members for giving of their time to help with marshalling and stewarding at this Festival.

It had long since been muted with SBC that the Reivers Festival be recognised as such and the Chair was grateful that SBC had now provided information on SBC Funding being made available for Festivals, which would be discussed later under AOCB.

The Chair thanked Philip Kerr, in attendance at the meeting, for his very informative emails on various wind farms status, which were much appreciated, particularly given all the chaos in regard to traffic management currently being experienced within the town and outlying areas associated to the Pines Burns Wind Farm.

The Chair concluded her opening remarks advising that the meeting was being recorded by Euan Welsh on behalf of the Hawick Paper and by HCC for reporting and minuting 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 Councillors Marshall, Ramage, Richards and Smart.

4. Adoption of Minutes of Meeting of 13th March 2023 – The previously circulated Minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting, Proposed for adoption by Kevin Marsh and Seconded by French Wight.

5. Matters arising –

Public Liability Insurance Premiums – The Chair confirmed following on from discussions at the previous meeting, Councillors were well aware of HCC's concerns regarding the high premium costs being levied and SBC had confirmed that discussions on this matter were ongoing with SBC'S Insurers and Legal Team in order to look at future options and perhaps even seeking alternative quotes from other insurance companies.

The Chair went on to report that following raising a similar situation for Hawick Men's Shed, Councillor Smart had raised this with SBC Officials. The good news was that the Men's Shed had now received a credit, leaving a similar premium amount to be paid in line with previous years premiums. There was no indication however how the exorbitant premium notified for 2023 had come about in the first place.

Councillor McAteer confirmed that Insurance was under consideration at Executive level and with a more co-ordinated approach. Some Councillors had stated that their Community Councils did not require any further help or extra monies and were managing fine, but interestingly that was most probably linked to differing levels of activity across community councils with some, like Hawick, being very active.

He went on to say that volunteers were worth their weight in gold and they needed to be supported, which was a message being clearly stated to the Chief Executive directly to recognise. The more that volunteers were being given, the more they needed to be properly supported.

Dog Poo – Again following on from the last HCC meeting, the Chair reported Councillor Ramage had contacted SBC to ascertain whether funding could be made available to employ a dog warden. Councillor Ramage in her update report to the meeting alluded to an email she had received from Sarah Culverwell, SBC asking if HCC would be interested in leading on a behavioural change project. This was based on an initiative some years back and designation of Newtown St Boswells as being a dog-friendly town. References were made to chalk spraying around offending mess, plastic bottles being placed on fences holding dog bags in the event that dog owners had forgotten theirs when out. That initiative was reported to have been running successfully since 2017.

The email suggested engaging school children in designing a leaflet which could then be printed and distributed within schools, to have the knock-on effect of children then educating their parents and peers to clean up after their dogs. Other initiatives could be to provide leaflets to all households, installing posters and bag dispensers around the town, and posters could signpost to nearest bins. The Chair reported she had responded to that email detailing support for education of children and more posters, however, a leaflet drop for the size of Hawick would be challenging – postage charges were prohibitive, and there was no longer the avenue of SB Connect in which an article could have been placed. Bag dispensers had previously been trialled without success due to vandalism.

SBC had identified they had a Dog Officer and there was an offer for her to attend a future HCC Meeting. Members agreed that education of children would be good initiative and agreed that an invite be extended to SBC's Dog Officer to attend a future HCC Meeting.

Councillor Cox confirmed that SBC officials were very much aware of the issues of dog fouling particularly in Hawick. Matters were ongoing at SBC to determine the possibility of securing some additional funding specifically to target this problem. No decision, as yet, had however been made on whether this funding would be put in place. She thought the concept of educating children and having them design posters had merit and would be interested to learn more on that initiative.

Councillor McAteer agreed that any initiative involving children would be welcomed to try to effect a cultural change in behaviours. He advised warden services was part of SBC's agreed Administration Programme, accepting that the CAT team were stretched to allow effective monitoring of issues like dog fouling. A warden service could cover a whole range of issues. The ongoing issue with parking for instance required this to be decriminalised, and a warden service could then cover those issues. Fines imposed would allow any warden position to be almost self-funding. Parking on pavements legislation would also soon come into effect and need monitoring. He fully expected that the Council would be taking warden services forward soon. The proposal would be that there would be such a service across the Borders where this was desired.

The Police were asked their views on these matters, and agreed education of children was a way forward in terms of dog fouling. Whilst the issues of dog fouling and illegal parking were given Police attention, restricted resources meant priorities were often targeted elsewhere to more serious crime.

It was noted that in Mayfield, when grass was kept cut short, there were less issues with dog fouling. Another member of the public stated that at a January HCC meeting he had raised the issue of dog fouling within the Mansfield Gardens area and had followed that up with a meeting attended by Councillor Marshall and the Housing provider. Letters were then issued to all households in that vicinity. Offending dogs had been traced to addresses and he had also reported that through SBC's website. Whilst the Police had been very proactive in responding, unfortunately the issues with dog fouling remained, and signs promised from the meeting with the housing provider had taken almost a year before being erected.

CARS – The Vice-Chair reported that the project was proceeding slower than anticipated. The proposal was to have both sides of the High Street receive a gutter clean and a buildings condition survey, paid for by the CARS scheme, completed before the Common Riding. The role of HCC would be to broadcast the initiative through the Hawick Paper. A cherry-picker would be used, and quotes for this were underway. Works would be carried out on a couple of Sundays when there would be less traffic and people.

Further updates from Councillor Ramage – There had been no further update received from Live Borders/CGI on Wi-fi for the Town Hall – a report was awaited from IT; The broken slabs at the Museum and Bandstand had again been reported. Duncan Taylor advised that FoWLP had now also contacted SBC to add support to HCC's request for these to be repaired/replaced; a reply had been received from SBC on the query raised by a businessman at last month's meeting querying why recycling waste was more expensive than general waste. The reply stated that recycling waste was cheaper than general waste. Costs depended however on bin sizes and volume presented. SBC offered to contact the businessman concerned.

Other matters which had again been forwarded on by Councillor Ramage included a sign at the museum to prevent drivers trying to exit via the Avenue at Wilton Lodge Park; removal of trees at the Dunk; stress testing for hanging baskets (which the Secretary stated she would cover in her Hawick in Bloom report later on the Agenda); and insurance premiums which she

had passed to the Chief Executive, David Robertson to investigate further and which had already been discussed earlier in the meeting.

Town Hall Lift Repair - The Secretary advised that Councillor Smart had forwarded a copy of her question submitted to SBC regarding repair of the Town Hall lift and that had been circulated to HCC members for their information. Parts remained awaited, with works scheduled towards the end of April.

SBC Grant re King's Coronation Event - The Secretary advised that an email had been received that afternoon confirming SBC would grant £500 to HCC to hold an event to celebrate the King's Coronation. That event would be held on Sunday, 7th May from 2-4pm in the Evergreen Hall. Posters would be distributed imminently to market that event.

- 6. Police Scotland Reports – March 2023** – French Wight asked about speeding within the town which appeared to be ever increasing. The police responded to say that the CAT team would like to be able to concentrate more efforts on speed checks however call demand largely dictated their priorities. The Police asked for prominent areas where the public considered speeding was of concern. The areas highlighted were Wilton Hill, Weensland Road and largely the 3 main entrances into the town. The police stated that handheld devices were probably the best way to catch speeders, however, resources to allow this were problematic. “Plastic Bob” the static police camera check used to deter speeding had high demand but was also subject to vandalism.

A number of the public attending spoke to having witnessed a blue and yellow car speeding along the High Street and in other areas. It was noted this car was frequently parked around the Wetherspoons area. The Police undertook to investigate further and welcomed that information being forthcoming to them.

Illegal parking was also highlighted on zig zag areas particularly on the High Street and the Police again referred to resources, and that these types of illegal parking would usually only be picked up on route to another more serious crime being responded to, and again due to resources. Boy racers and loud exhausts from their cars along the High Street were also highlighted as an issue. The Police advised that would require Road Traffic involvement from Galashiels and again they were restricted in terms of their availability to respond.

Braden George queried a case where a resident had reported another driver for parking part of his vehicle on double yellow lines. The Police had then attended that person's home and issued a Parking Ticket. He disputed his awareness of this to the Policeman issuing the ticket and had been advised to challenge this. The ticket had subsequently been withdrawn. Braden's query was that the ability to challenge would result in all tickets being withdrawn. The police responded saying there had to be a right of challenge, and they had no jurisdiction on the outcome of that.

Kevin Marsh advised from 6am to 10.30am signage on the right-hand side of High Street prevented anyone from parking to allow lorries to unload. This did not deter parking however resulted in lorries parking in the middle of the road preventing traffic flow. He queried whether the Police could target the High Street at that time and ticket those offending parked vehicles. The police stated again that whilst they could aim to target Hawick High Street on a specific day for this purpose, other priorities would dictate on that day.

It was noted that Greggs had been witnessed to receive their deliveries at night and it would be beneficial if other businesses could follow that trend.

Councillor McAteer emphasised that these very problems emphasised the need to have parking decriminalised and managed by a warden service from SBC. That would allow the Police to concentrate on other more serious matters. He requested HCC's support for decriminalising parking by contacting SBC accordingly. Communities needed to push for this.

The Vice-Chair raised his concerns that the Burnfoot Community Hub had once again been broken into, and more disappointingly, it had been the Food Share Shed targeted, with food scattered in the court yard, which was a total waste. This served only to impact on those who were most in need of help with food supplies. He was glad to note that enquiries were ongoing. The Police reported that culprits, who turned out to be children, had been traced and reported, and parents spoken to. No food had thankfully perished.

The number of parking tickets, only 9 across the Borders, was considered grossly insufficient. The police referred to a ticket warden who also covered Hawick actually exceeding his peers in the number of tickets being issued. This was not only for the Borders but across the Lothians as well.

The Secretary raised her concern of a major crime of robbery on Hawick High Street where enquiries were reported as ongoing, and wondered if there was any update available on that. The Police reported that enquiries remained ongoing.

The Treasurer advised that going back to parking on zig zags, he had actually witnessed parking tickets being issued on the High Street the previous week, which was welcomed.

John Campbell enquired whether failing to indicate, particularly at roundabouts, and lack of proper lights on cars remained an offence. The Police confirmed they would physically require to witness before being able to take any action. Another issue was highlighted of drivers using mobile phones whilst driving and again the Police confirmed that action would be taken if witnessed by them. It was illegal to use any hand-held device whilst driving.

Philip Kerr, Southdean Community Council enquired if police escorts in relation to transport of abnormal loads relative to Pines Burns Wind Farm would be dealt with centrally, and this was confirmed by the Community Police attending.

A member of the public raised an issue of drivers turning right at the Waverley Offices onto Mart Street where there was clear signage highlighting no right turn. Another area where this happened was on exiting Union Street onto Bourtree Place where drivers were again seen to be turning right instead of navigating the roundabout and then onto Bourtree Place. The Police advised that again this would need to be witnessed by them for any action to be taken. It was queried whether cameras would help with this problem. Councillor McAteer advised that these issues would be short-lived as Flood Protection works would change the whole dynamics around those streets.

The Chair thanked the Police for attending, and hoped they would take away points raised.

- 7. Treasurer's Report** – The Treasurer reported an Opening Balance of £14,072.26 with little movement in the month. There had been a £500 donation received from Muirhall Energy for Hawick in Bloom Hanging Baskets, £44.87 received in bank interest and £12 expenditure for certificates relative to the Christmas Event. The Closing Balance was £14,705.13.

The Treasurer's Report was approved by Members.

8. Public Forum & Town Issues:

- (a) Dates for Diaries – The Chair reminded everyone of the two diary dates – the King’s Coronation Event to be held on Sunday, 7th May 2023 from 2-4pm in the Evergreen Hall and the Town Clean-up to be held on Sunday, 30th April from 10am to 12 noon, starting at the Common Haugh. Volunteers for the town clean-up were welcomed.
- (b) A Way Forward for Hawick Meeting (Town Team) – The Vice-Chair advised that following on from the very successful meeting held about a month ago, the next meeting of this Group would be held on Sunday, 23rd April in Hawick Town Hall. This was a ‘Have your Say Day’. There would be 3 sessions held – 9.30am - 11.30am; 12noon – 2pm and from 3pm to 5pm. The sessions would provide a chance for everyone to have a voice on what they wanted for Hawick and anything could be discussed. The themes would focus on - what would make Hawick better to live in or visit; what needed improved; what was Hawick missing and what would be one small or big thing for the community to work on; and finally, what would be your vision for Hawick going forward for the next 20 years. The Group was run by Hawick folk, for Hawick folk, to ensure the best for Hawick and for our future, and he urged people to attend. The group was led presently by 4 individuals, but the proposal was to create a Town Team comprising representation from each of the categories of organisations within the town. The Chair of the group was Councillor McAteer.

Councillor McAteer confirmed this was a great opportunity for the public to have their say. Hawick had been recognised for Borderlands Funding, subject to their creating a town team. It was hard to believe that Hawick, the largest of the Border towns, did not have any Strategy identifying its future.

Philip Kerr advised that from a rural community such as his Southdean Community, they were watching closely how Hawick’s Town Team developed, with a view to simulating that within the rural communities.

- (c) Weed spraying – John Campbell enquired when this would commence, and hoped this would be before the Common Riding which attracted many visitors to the town. Councillor McAteer advised he would investigate this.
- (d) Fly-tipping – The Treasurer advised that the bins had now been removed from the area at B&M, with only the clothing bin remaining. It had to be hoped that rubbish would not now accumulate there again, however, that would need close monitoring.
- (e) Closure of toileting facilities – French Wight queried the decision by SBC to continue closure of toilets in Cross Wynd and at Volunteer Park. He did not consider that encouraged visitors and prevented the likes of himself walking around the park. Councillor McAteer advised that was down to costs, and the fact that these had been closed now for over 3 years. It had to be noted though that Hawick provided the most toilets across the Borders area and there were toilets available at WLP Cafe. It was noted that Peebles Community Council had undertaken to manage their public toilets themselves. He conceded however that was a big ask.
- (f) Diversion signs at Sandbed and Teviotdale Leisure Centre roundabout – French also raised that some signs were lying on the pavements but where signs had been removed, the sandbags remained in situ. These were a hazard for pedestrians and more particularly for disabled persons. Councillor McAteer confirmed that was an issue for Bear Scotland, and the Chair undertook to contact them regarding those issues.

9. Reports from Sub-Committees

- (a) A7 Action Group – John Wilkinson reported on a meeting of that Group on 27 March, which had been well attended. It had been good to see representation from the English

side, as well as from Hawick, Langholm, Selkirk etc. No real issues were raised. A talk had been given by Mr Dean, Bear Scotland regarding A7 roadworks and when these were due for completion.

Marjorie McCreadie referred to an email issued to Community Councils regarding a consultation for a proposed change to signage on behalf of the Langholm Initiative, to incorporate Langholm. The Secretary confirmed that had been circulated to HCC members for their responses, which in turn would be forwarded to Councillor Dennis Male.

- (b) CCTV – Kevin Marsh reported that a sub-group meeting had been held on 15th March, when around 30 camera locations were determined within the town centre, areas of Commercial Road, Mart Street and the Common Haugh and the 3 main entrances to the town. Taking into account crime profiles received from Police Scotland, the proposed types of cameras and their purpose were also identified and agreed.

All of that had then been marked up on a map of Hawick, and that map had been forwarded to the Police for their approval, which had subsequently been received, with the caveat that caution be exercised that CCTV would not be the be-all-and-end-all to resolving everything. Public perceptions on CCTV would require to be managed.

Cameras would be a mixture of face recognition, capture of vehicle plates and general recording and would be a mixture of hard-wired and Wi-Fi. It was noted that Selkirk now had their CCTV up-and-running, with funding provided by local traders. Hawick however had more national shops as well as empty shops which would not illicit such a response.

The next stages would be to update local Councillors on this information and seek advice on funding opportunities. The Specification would be updated and presented to tender, to allow costings to be made known.

- (c) Hawick Common Good Fund – John Campbell reported that Future Hawick's St Leonard's Park Project had been under discussion, and Councillors had requested more details including a comprehensive Plan of works before they could consider that project further.

Hawick Common Riding Committee had also requested funding for additional toilets at Hawick Moor and that funding request had been granted.

- (d) Hawick in Bloom – Following up on letters issued to all shops and businesses on the High Street for financial support to reinstate the hanging baskets, the Secretary reported that at least 34 had responded favourably and invoices had now been issued. Disappointingly, the national businesses on our High Street, with the exclusion of Costa, had not responded positively – the Hawick public were asked to support their businesses but unfortunately they in turn had failed to support the community in that initiative. A handful of responses remained awaited.

A one-off cost for 50 new reservoir hanging baskets had been met from Foundation Scotland Community Benefits Fund, and a donation had also been received from Muirhall Energy of £500. Plant costs would be covered by financial support from the local shops and businesses. A contractor had agreed to watering and feeding of the hanging baskets and negotiations on costs for that service were ongoing.

It was hoped the hanging baskets would be in place during May to October.

A meeting had been held with Alex Young, who had confirmed as the hanging baskets were not cross-street, no stress testing was required by SBC. Public Liability Insurance was however necessary in the event of any incidents.

Plants for the planters would be delivered the week after the Common Riding. All planters would require to be repainted prior to that, and members were asked their views on having planters painted in the same colours as the bollards. There were no objections to that proceeding. It may also be that at a later date brackets for the hanging baskets could also be painted blue and gold.

- (e) Wind Farms – The Vice-Chair stated that traffic management and upheaval as a result of road works etc to accommodate travel of proposed Pines Burns Wind Farm turbines had to say the least been shambolic along with utter devastation to road works and landscapes. Issues had now transpired in Selkirk and it was anticipated Newtown St Boswells would also be impacted soon too.

To date there had been nothing forthcoming with regard to Community Benefits as compensation for inconveniences caused to communities affected, and despite numerous requests for meetings with the Contractor, Developer and Investors, these had fallen on deaf ears. An email had been issued by Philip Kerr to the Chief Executive of Scottish Borders Council and he, in turn, had taken on board to arrange such a meeting with the Developer hopefully within the next two weeks.

That led the Vice-Chair on to the Teviot Wind Farm, which included 69 turbines and was on a much larger scale than Pines Burns. It had been hoped in respect of Teviot Wind Farm their turbines would be taken through forestry tracks to Teviothead and across the road there, straight onto site. However, the latest information was that would not now happen and the proposed route could be through Hawick once again. Those turbines would be the same height as the Selkirk mast and possibly the biggest in Scotland, so that could be another real problem for Hawick residents. That route however would require approval from the Scottish Government and Scottish Borders Council.

Presently though, concentration was towards Pines Burns, who had intimated travel would be during our Common Riding festivities being one of the busiest times of our year, which was not good.

Philip Kerr stated there were 4 different Wind Farm developments on the go at the present time.

Pines Burns were applying for an extra 4 turbines with increased heights and concurred that community benefits required to be confirmed. Originally community benefits should have translated to £166k a year over 30 years but had now reduced to £87k. As for traffic chaos, due to issues for a resident on the Kirkton road, that road would be closed for 5 weeks, which would mean a lot of people not coming to Hawick as a result. Buses, deliveries and other services like Royal Mail, would also be impacted and residents were not impressed. That was not surprising given that they had been impacted by the closure of the Earlside Road, which had been envisaged to be closed for 2 months and had ended up being closed for 3 months.

It was noted that after Morrisons experiencing a loss of c.£25k daily due to traffic chaos there, the Project Manager had now stepped aside and someone else was now in charge. That new Manager had supposedly been trying to get in touch with David Robertson,

SBC's CEO to arrange a post-easter meeting when as many of the Community Councils affected should be in attendance as well as EnergieKontor, A E Yates, the Planning Committee and SBC's CEO to ensure such traffic chaos going forward was avoided.

Teviot Wind Farm - It was noted SBC's Landscape Officer had intimated that 33 of the 62 turbines be removed. That would be considered Philip thought at the August Planning Meeting.

Millmoor Wind Farm – Philip reported that was also shambolic. That was for 13 turbines, up to 230m high and he had not seen such a poor application in a long time, with a number of anomalies contained.

Borders Wind Farm – That was a proposed 90 turbines wind farm spread across 3 sites, potentially scoping this month and covering Wauchope East, Wauchope West and Newcastleton.

Accordingly, we could expect various different announcements coming from SBC.

Philip concluded that it was imperative to conclude on community benefits now, albeit these wind farms would not happen for a further 10 years and ensure these were index-linked from the date of any signed agreement and not waiting for the 10 years for development.

The Chair thanked Philip again for his invaluable input into these wind farms.

Councillor McAteer was scathing on these large Companies only concerns being to make profit. He commented that it was vital that any Traffic Management Plan in place had to be made available. What had prevailed (for Pines Burns) was far beyond acceptable and SBC needed to be seen to be better supporting Communities and Community Councils in regard to this. There appeared to be no co-ordination of works being carried out on our roads and resulting in 5 or 6 different things happening without these being properly co-ordinated. That was not acceptable.

10. Updates from Community Partners

- (a) Foundation Scotland – The Chair reported that part of the Distribution Plan had been submitted for Hawick in Bloom plants and hanging baskets and a new supply of litter pickers. The remaining part required confirmation of costs for audio equipment and bandstand events, which were awaited.
- (b) Future Hawick (FH) - Duncan Taylor highlighted the Discover Hawick App and requested feedback from users on this to Graeme Webb.
- (c) SBCCN – It was noted that Wilson George had tendered his resignation as Chair of SBCCN. The Treasurer reported that the next meeting of that group would be held in May 2023 (date to be confirmed) on zoom and he had taken on the post of Treasurer now for SBCCN. It was thought that the Vice-Chair may ultimately take on the role as Chair. They had under review to progress on the review of the Scheme for Community Councils which had been ongoing for some considerable time.

Philip Kerr referred to the role of volunteers in the community and an interesting study titled 'Burnt Out Britain' by Think Tank 'Onwards', which was about volunteering and lack of time that people had. Councils seemed to think that volunteers had more and more time whereas that study had clearly showed the opposite and that there was less and less

time available. The levels of volunteering were reducing at a time when we were being asked to do more and more. He advised the study was a worthwhile read.

11. Planning Issues

The Vice-Chair advised that as a Community Council, HCC were sent 2 planning applications by Scottish Borders Council. The applicant was SBHA for two development sites – one at Bothwell Court, Mayfield and the other at Ramsay Road, West End. It had been felt by the group of 3 members on the Planning Group that these were potentially contentious applications, and that the remaining HCC members should view these and provide their observations too.

The applications related to developments of garages to houses. The garages at Bothwell Court would be developed to 3 prefabricated bungalows (manufactured off-site) and 6 at Ramsay Road. Members observations were welcomed to forward to SBC. It should be noted that observations were being asked for and not objections.

Cameron gave his comments that the mono construction roofs of the proposed developments were totally different to the existing traditional concrete tiled roofs within Mayfield and Ramsay Road. The houses would be manufactured elsewhere, bolted together and clad externally which was again out-with traditional building methods used within the two schemes. Finally, he also considered given the amount of empty housing stock within the town, he would have expected those be converted back to life by local tradesmen to bring that housing stock up to standard. The houses would be for senior/elderly and disabled people.

French asked if prefabricated meant sub-standard houses. Cameron advised that this meant these were manufactured off-site but were not sub-standard. Braden asked if these were then chalet-type houses, and he was advised that observation could be made.

Kevin observed that these were all 1 bed roomed flats and it was his consideration that Eildon and other housing providers had previously determined that 1-beds in Hawick were not required and 1 beds in Eastfield Road had been demolished and some sold off to a private developer. £22m had been spent on Stonefield with some 1 beds being demolished for family housing and converted to 2 bed flats, yet now they were looking to build 1 beds again.

Wilson George advised he was against the Mayfield development which did not work for him due to lack of room to accommodate.

The Chair confirmed that there was a small planning group of HCC members to feed comments to SBC on any planning applications and there would be varying opinions raised on these two developments. There were residents impacted and who were present at the meeting and she offered the opportunity for those persons to provide their comments.

Evelyn Jackson read out her comments, and these were subsequently circulated to HCC members for their consideration.

Duncan Taylor stated he welcomed input provided by the Mayfield residents attending, however, asked whether it would also be possible for someone from SBHA to provide information on the rationale behind these developments.

It was noted that objections from residents required to be submitted to Planning by 14th April, however, observations from HCC were by the later date of 21st April.

It was stated that residents had forwarded a Petition to SBHA with in excess of 1000 signatures however that had not even been acknowledged. SBHA had been incapable of even placing the right plan with the right development when submitting their planning applications which did not bode well.

It was suggested to residents that they may wish to respond to Planning to the effect that they had not been provided with all the answers to their questions by SBHA, e.g., on the matter of trees, parking spaces etc, to enable objections to then be forwarded, and to seek an extension to the timeline of 14th April for such. It was confirmed that residents were indeed seeking an extension to the submission date.

The Secretary advised that a report from a Darren Loftus (Mayfield resident) had also been received by HCC that day and circulated to HCC members. The content of that would also be considered.

Kevin Marsh highlighted a concern of HCC in terminology used by SBC on planning applications and what HCC's role was, as it was constantly being asked for observations and could not provide objections or concerns. The Planning Regulations however stated that as a statutory consultee, HCC could object if there were strong public feeling.

Councillor McAteer advised that he would investigate with SBC Planning what the role of HCC was regarding planning applications, and the differences in terminology being used and any reasons for that.

The Chair thanked the residents for their input and advised that HCC would respond with their observations on construction and would add support that residents be permitted an extension to allow full consideration of objections. The thanks were reciprocated by the Mayfield residents, who stated they would appreciate it if comments from HCC could be forwarded to SBC Planning by their deadline date of 14th April. That could assist in their request for an extension to that date.

- 12. Correspondence** – The Secretary advised of an email received from a happy campervanner who had complimented the free parking and great facilities available at the Common Haugh which they had used recently. They had enjoyed their overnight stay in Hawick and had contributed c.£300 to the local economy. They looked forward to returning to the area later in the year.

Marjorie McCreadie welcomed that favourable comment and went on to advise that the receipted spend by campervanners within the Common Haugh for the Reivers weekend had had been £4,931. That was great for the local economy. Enquiries were already being made for their return next year.

On an unfortunate note, there had been a Private Campervan Rally booking made for the campervan space with SBC for that weekend, which had turned out to be shambolic. Fees were returned by SBC to compensate for everything that had gone wrong, for instance, there had been no official hand-over of the site to the Rally and no signage. The organiser had incurred dogs abuse from other campervanners, who were not part of the rally, when denying them access and asking them to park elsewhere in the Haugh. It had been a real shame that

this had happened, and that contact with SBC the week prior to the event, had gone unanswered.

The Chair concurred that lack of reply from SBC was not new, and that recent correspondence on waste collection with SBC officials showed their lack of knowledge of there being free parking at the Common Haugh.

Marjorie went on to advise of a group called CAMpRA, who promoted Aires which were sites which had toilet facilities, access to fresh water and facilities for disposal of black water waste and which Hawick had. A Director of that organisation had contacted her advising he would be visiting Hawick the following weekend and Marjorie had arranged to meet. He had posted that he and one or two others would be visiting Hawick and had asked if anyone else wished to join them. The post had promoted Hawick's assets greatly.

Councillor McAteer requested full details be provided by Marjorie to him to allow the problems encountered to be investigated. Hawick Common Good he considered were responsible. Spaces had been doubled from 8 to 16 because it was well known that bringing campervanners into town had real benefits. There was a formal agreement in place between the Common Good and SBC, with precedence being set for example with the Showmen's Guild for shows at the Common Riding. Councillor McAteer said he needed to understand what the issues were so that these could be resolved and not repeated. It appeared that engagement between the parties had failed for whatever reason, however that could be resolved he was sure.

- 13. AOCB –** The Chair advised that Councillor Cox had forwarded information regarding a new fund to support and develop small festivals and grants which SBC had launched. Applications were now open for awards between £2k and £5k. One such organisation which may benefit from this funding would be the Reivers Festival and that information had been forwarded to them for their information.

Councillor McAteer advised that fund had been set up to recognise events such as the Reivers Festival and the benefits these bring to local communities. This fund had been set up to support these events financially.

John Campbell asked if it were possible to determine when the tree surgeon would be cutting back trees at Havelock Bank. Councillors to investigate.

- 14. Date of next meeting -** The next HCC meeting would be its AGM to be held on Monday, 8th May 2023 starting at the earlier time of 6.00pm and immediately followed by the May Meeting, within the Lesser Town Hall.