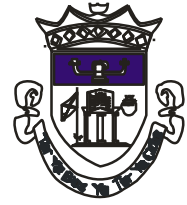

Hawick Community Council



MINUTES OF MEETING OF HAWICK COMMUNITY COUNCIL

held on Monday 9th October 2023 within the Lesser Town Hall, Hawick

Present	Cameron Knox (Chair) Jim Adams (Treasurer) Stuart Beck Wilson George Duncan Taylor	Kevin Marsh (Vice-Chair) Margaret Hogg (Treasurer) Braden George Michael Robertson Euan Welsh
Attending:	Councillor Marshall Ryan Stewart, Police Scotland	Councillor Smart Colin Hope, Future Hawick/Hawick Development Trust

There were 4 members of the public in attendance, along with Graham Ford, Hawick Paper.

- 1. Chair's Opening Remarks** – The Chair welcomed everyone to the first full meeting of the new membership of Hawick Community Council and thanked the public for their support. He went on to welcome the new members of HCC and hoped they would enjoy their time on the 'People's Council'.

He reminded everyone in attendance that the meeting would be recorded by HCC and on behalf 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 Stuart Mactaggart and Councillors McAteer and Ramage. A letter of resignation had also been received from Marion Short, previous Chair of HCC. The Secretary read out that letter in full to the meeting.

The Chair stated he was sorry to lose Marion as a member of HCC. Over the years, she had showed professionalism and had been the backbone of HCC and would be missed. He requested a thank you letter be sent to Marion for her services.

Councillor Marshall on behalf of Elected Members also expressed thanks to Marion for her contribution to the town as well.

- 4. Adoption of Minutes of Meetings of 10th July and 11th September 2023** – The previously circulated Minutes of the above meetings were approved as accurate records of the meetings - Proposed for adoption by Kevin Marsh and Seconded by Wilson George and Proposed by Duncan Taylor and Seconded by Jim Adams respectively.

5. Matters arising –

Footbridge at Pump Track – Councillor Ramage had been requested to follow-up on progress with repairs/painting of that bridge, and had reported to the Chair, in her absence at the meeting, that she would continue to chase response from SBC on these works.

Core Paths – The Chair confirmed that the Core Paths under the responsibility of HCC had now been cut the required two times and the grant from SBC had been applied for.

Former Glenmac Building, Cross Wynd – A planning application had been noted by HCC from SBC for approval of demolition of that building.

Jock Campbell queried again the trees at Havelock Bank and Councillor Marshall explained that SBC planned works had been completed, as per report from SBC he had read out at a previous HCC monthly meeting. Should further works be required, he suggested HCC should write with their concerns to SBC directly.

6. HCC Membership – Co-Option

Notice of Motions were received for the co-option of three new members to HCC as follows:

- (a) John Campbell – Proposed by Margaret Hogg and Seconded by Cameron Knox
- (b) Graeme King – Proposed by Duncan Taylor and Seconded by Andrew Matthews, and
- (c) John Wilkinson - Proposed by Braden George and Seconded by Euan Welsh.

Members agreed to the co-option of all three proposed new members, who then duly joined other HCC members at the top table for the remainder of the meeting.

7. Code of Conduct for HCC Members – The Chair advised that this and the following item related to housekeeping of HCC. He requested that HCC members declare they would abide by the terms of SBC's Code of Conduct. All members agreed and the Secretary confirmed that all had signed their acceptance of that Code.

8. Authorised Signatories – It was proposed and subsequently agreed by HCC members to substitute Marion Short with Kevin Marsh as an authorised signatory, along with the current authorised signatories – Cameron Knox, Jim Adams and Margaret Hogg.

9. Police Scotland Reports – The Chair stated that all members had been circulated copies of Police Scotland Reports for July, August and September, and had been requested to forward any questions on these reports to the Secretary. This was in favour of having a presentation by Ryan Stewart, Community Officer to provide an overview of his role, and in particular engagement with our youth and schools to the meeting.

Ryan introduced himself as the Schools Link and Youth Engagement Officer covering Burnfoot as well as the Selkirk area. For the last two years, this had seen his involvement in youth engagement and he had done much work, initially with Graham Hogg, Development Officer at Hawick RFC under the Cashback Scheme, and then developing on that Programme. More recently, he had been appointed Schools Link Officer and that role was to go into schools to speak with our youths and assist teachers. At night, he engaged in speaking to youths out in the community.

A funding application had been prepared, and subsequently granted by Police Scotland for a project named 'Boss It' at Burnfoot School, which ran from April to August aimed at Primary 6 to S1/S2 High School-aged youths. Other partners involved were Craig Girvan, G10 sports and Les Casson and his partner Laura Delanie, Mission Fit and their classes ran for 3 nights per week. The project also included breakfast clubs. All were with a view to breaking down

barriers with youths in the community. The events were deemed very successful and had resulted in antisocial behaviour calls being reduced significantly between April and August, due to that initiative. Special mention was also made to Catriona Stewart, Head Teacher at Burnfoot for her input.

Another initiative had also more recently been set up, named 'Operation Best' set up along with PC Ula Trochimiak, Schools Officer for Hawick with shared responsibility for Burnfoot with himself. That had been a successful day, incorporating input from Emergency Services – the Police, Fire Service, Mountain Rescue, and the Ambulance Service. Ryan had also been working with personnel from the Army involving Primary 7 pupils transitioning to 1st year at High School. He found his role to be very rewarding and would be looking to secure further funding towards continuing initiatives. That was basically his role, alongside assisting Community PCs Mortimar and Patterson with their duties when available.

Councillor Marshall commended all the work being carried out by Police Scotland alongside community groups and Emergency Services. He had certainly noted the reduction in antisocial behaviour complaints directed to him. He wished Ryan well in securing further funding.

The Chair enquired if the success of Operation Best would be rolled out to other schools in Hawick, and Ryan advised that was a possibility. Due to specific issues within Burnfoot - deprivation, levels of violence and so on, there had been greater liaison between Catriona Stewart, Head Teacher and PC Trochimiak leading to securing funding for that initiative, but he certainly hoped the initiative would be extended.

Braden asked about any plans for over the winter period and Ryan advised that there were none as such at the present time. Les Casson and his partner had extended classes beyond the funding period, and hopefully that could continue on further. Friday night classes had been especially popular with in excess of 25 kids attending, who would possibly have been along at Burnfoot shops causing antisocial behaviour. Ryan would of course be continuing on meeting youths within the community at night.

Duncan Taylor asked what funding was needed roughly for these initiatives, and Ryan advised he had received £3k Police community funding, mainly used for payment to G10 Sports & Mission Fit for their classes and to the school for the breakfast clubs.

In concluding, the Chair thanked Ryan for his presentation, and went on to praise the work of Police in Hawick and Scottish Borders for their successful drug raid recently at the former Buccleuch Hotel and taking £0.5m worth of drugs off the streets.

- 10. Treasurer's Report** – The Treasurer advised that his report would cover the last 3-month period. In July, the Opening Balance was £21,920.22, with income received during the month amounting to £756.02, made up of £41.02 bank interest, £625 deposits for Christmas Event deposits for stalls and £90 donations to Hawick in Bloom. Expenditure amounted to £5,171.88, made up of £33.99 stationery, £470 festive lighting electricity charge (in comparison to £180 the previous year), £67.89 replacement plants and fertiliser for Hawick in Bloom and Bandstand Entertainment (ring-fenced funding within Foundation Scotland account) estimated at £4,600. July's Closing Balance was accordingly £17,504.36.

During August, income received totalled £74 - £50 Christmas stallholder deposit fee and £24 donation to Hawick in Bloom. There was no expenditure in the month, resulting in a closing balance of £17,578.36.

Bringing matters up to date for September, income received was £25 for one stallholder deposit fee, with expenditure totalling £2,638.71 made up of Insurance for year 2022/23 of £839.16, Paths Maintenance £500, purchase of Hi-Viz vests £99.35 and winter plant costs of £1,200.20 both for Hawick in Bloom. The Closing Balance as at the end of September was accordingly £14,964.65.

Closing balances within each of HCC Accounts were as follows:

HCC1 – Closing Balance of £5,738.48 – ringfenced monies were £250 donations for First Aid Training for 6 members (3 from HCC and 3 from Burnfoot CC); Williestruther improvement works £3,230.92 (£1664.25 funded by Teviot & Liddesdale Area Partnership and £1,566.67 funded by Fallago during COVID for maintenance of pathways to encourage outdoor activities). Permission had been granted by T&L Area Partnership for £1,664.25 to be diverted for use for our Christmas Event by way of new icicle lights and a new Santa’s Grotto.

The Fallago ring-fenced monies (£1,566.67) for pathways maintenance would require further discussion by HCC members to confirm expenditure.

Public Liability Insurance for the current year (2023/24) for the sum of £725.20 had also yet to be invoiced and would require to be paid from HCC1.

Christmas Event – Closing Balance of £2,100.86 - Balances of £20 for remaining stall fees would be invoiced shortly to stallholders. Given expenses to run the Christmas Event, other fundraising would require to be considered going forward.

Hawick in Bloom – Closing Balance of £5,871.49 - £500 was ring-fenced awaiting an invoice for watering of Summer hanging baskets.

Foundation Scotland - Closing balance of £1,253.82 – from the £4,600 estimated sum paid for Bandstand Events from that account (as mentioned in July’s Report), £393.60 has been intimated to be returned and will be added to that closing balance next month. The total of £1,647.42 would be used for Audio Equipment and other Christmas Event items, as per the Distribution Plan for 2023.

Members approved the Treasurer’s Reports.

11. Public Forum & Town Issues:

- (a) 100 Steps – This was a very well used shortcut and popular path for members of the public, and the Chair requested Councillor Marshall to enquire if it were possible to have the trees and bushes overhanging these steps to be cut back to allow in more light. He considered that with the dark nights approaching fast, that was a public safety issue requiring urgent attention. Councillor Marshall undertook to progress that matter and advised he would copy HCC into his correspondence with SBC Officers.
- (b) Trinity School – pavement gutters – The Chair requested if it were possible to have weeds and grass etc removed from the pavement gutters in particular in front of the school which was unsightly and unacceptable. Councillor Smart undertook to progress on that issue and report back.

- (c) Balcary Path (from West End to Buccleuch Road) – Stuart Beck asked if it were possible for this path to be tidied of overgrown bushes and hedges. Councillor Smart agreed to take this request forward.
- (d) Painting of rugby and football posts at Wilton Lodge Park – Braden George stated he had been approached by a member of the public to enquire when these would be painted. Councillor Marshall advised that he had made such a proposal to the Small Schemes Fund and he understood that the Parks Department had undertaken to inspect all of these posts to determine which were to be painted, and which were not considered ‘fit for purpose’ and would need replacement. He would chase up on that.
- (e) Failure to honour booking of Town Hall – Marjorie McCreadie advised that the A7 Action Group had booked the Town Hall Court Room for their recent meeting and were met with locked doors and were unable to access. It had been a wet night, with important people in attendance who had travelled from far afield – Edinburgh and Glasgow – and yet again this had happened. Community Councillor Beck had made a last-minute request to the Queen’s Head to accommodate the meeting, which had thankfully been agreed however there were members in attendance who found it difficult navigating the stairs, which was not ideal. A7 members had previously been informed that the lift at the Town Hall had been repaired for use of those members less able. Marjorie advised she had emailed SBC about the booking but had not had any real satisfactory solution nor apology. Councillor Smart advised she would enquire into the matter. Councillor Marshall asked if the A7 Action Group had entered a formal complaint, to which Marjorie advised that would be done soon.
- (f) 20mph speed limit signs for Commercial Road – John Kernaghan asked as to the possibility of having these signs installed at that location. Stuart Beck advised he had attended the A7 Action Group meeting including Tommy Deans from Bear Scotland, and confirmed that matter had been raised, so that issue was in hand.
- (g) Thomson Bridge – John Kernaghan asked when that bridge would be re-opened. Works were due to be completed by the end of September after a lengthy period of closure which was deemed unacceptable. Councillor Marshall requested HCC write to Conor Price to obtain an answer, and he would also make enquiry too. The Chair confirmed Conor Price would be attending the December meeting of HCC to provide the next update on Flood Prevention works.

Marjorie McCreadie advised she had attended a meeting regarding the Welcome Hosts and had been advised that once all works including Active Travel Network works by Sustrans had been completed, she understood signage would divert everyone over the Thomson Bridge, along by Teviot Medical Centre into town, to the detriment of Sandbed businesses. Sandbed businesses had paid for advertising their businesses in the Welcome Hosts Brochure and it was the case that no monies would be spent using the Thomson Bridge route. Sandbed businesses were unhappy. Councillor Smart considered that route over the Thomson Bridge would perhaps only be for cyclists but she would enquire further.

- (h) Wee Haugh – John Kernaghan referred to works ongoing at that location, and asked how much grassed area would remain following completion of works. It appeared most of the area would be tarmac. The Chair advised John to review plans on the Flood Prevention website. John Kernaghan advised there appeared to be a raised area, however, there were no steps or ramps to access that area for disabled persons. The Chair suggested that both his queries could be raised with Conor Price. Councillor Marshall suggested any questions should be raised with Conor Price prior to his December update to HCC, and hopefully Conor would bring back answers then.

12. Reports from Sub-Committees

The Chair explained that at a meeting held on 4th October 2023 of HCC members, a review of sub-groups and community partnerships had been carried out. Those proposals required ratification of all HCC members at tonight's meeting.

The sub-groups proposed, and their make-up going forward were:

Christmas Event – all HCC members

Hawick in Bloom -Margaret Hogg, Stuart Mactaggart, Michael Robertson and Graeme King
CCTV – Kevin Marsh, Cameron Knox, Jim Adams, Margaret Hogg, Braden George and Euan Welsh

Resilience – Kevin Marsh, Euan Welsh, Braden George, Stuart Beck and Jim Adams

Bandstand Events – Duncan Taylor, Euan Welsh and Jim Adams

Fundraising – Kevin Marsh, Euan Welsh, Braden George and Stuart Mactaggart

Planning – Cameron Knox, Jim Adams and Braden George

All members agreed to the above proposals.

Updates on Sub-groups

Christmas Event – at the meeting on 4th October last, an Action Plan had been discussed and tasks required to be undertaken were allotted to individual HCC members for completion.

The Chair advised that lights were anticipated to be on display again at Drumlanrig Square this year, as SBC's Property Officer had arranged for reinstatement of electricity at that location to allow this. No4 and Howegate Opticians had agreed to supply electricity for the lights from their premises, and Gibsons Insurance had also agreed for provision of electricity for the Christmas Market event on 9 December from their office. The Chair would also be in touch soon with the owners (who were from Selkirk) of the Coffin End property for supply of electricity for lights at that end.

All deposits, barring one not yet invoiced, had been paid.

Entertainers confirmed for this year were: Hawick Scout Pipe Band, Got2Dance, Sam Deans, Ellis Hodgins and The Dolly Mixtures. Confirmation was awaited from Hawick Saxhorn Band and Western End. A music licence would also be applied for this year, to allow music to be played from the start of the event through to the entertainment commencing, with a view to creating more festive atmosphere. The licence would cost £102.22. A new Santa Grotto would also be purchased from the underspend on Williestruther Improvement works agreed by Teviot & Liddesdale Area Partnership to be transferred to the Christmas Event account. Santa would also have a new chair provided by the Men's Shed.

All in all, good progress was being made on all fronts.

Hawick in Bloom – The Secretary reported that winter plants had been delivered that day and would soon be planted in all the planters and at the War Memorial. Unfortunately, vandalism was ongoing, with the Station Bridge affected but more particularly almost every weekend the 6 planters outside the Town Hall were being targeted which was disappointing.

CCTV – The Vice-Chair advised on a paper presented to SBC on 28th September and as a result of which Councillor Ramage had communicated with him, given Hawick's vested interest in a new CCTV system. As a result, a meeting would be held with HCC members along with SBC's CEO David Robertson, other SBC Officers and Councillors McAteer and Ramage on 23rd October. HCC would present its proposals for CCTV in Hawick, its consultations with Police

Scotland and other bodies to arrive at the proposed Scheme. It was hoped that Hawick CCTV would be accepted as a pilot to take forward for other Border towns. Councillor Marshall advised that there had been much discussion when the paper had been presented to SBC members, particularly around funding, as some of the Border towns had already purchased their own CCTV systems, nevertheless Hawick were well ahead of the remaining towns with their proposed CCTV system. He looked forward to the meeting referred to by the Vice-Chair towards the end of the month, which would hopefully give a clear steer for going forward.

The Vice-Chair advised that there were a number of key differences in Hawick's proposal following discussions with Stuart Ward of Police Scotland, to that proposed in SBC's paper. Bandstand Event – Duncan Taylor advised of 6 bandstand events having been held over the summer. Unfortunately, the weather for the first event had been atrocious for the Hawick Scout Pipe Band and Drumlanrig Country Dancing Group. Their performances had nevertheless been well accepted by the public attending. Weather had improved for the events following, albeit not as good as in the previous year. No events had required however to be cancelled.

Expenditure for all 6 events amounted to a total of £4,206.40 funded from Langhope Rig Wind Farm monies. £1,806.40 of that total expenditure had been for printing, audio engineers, adverts and a further £1,000 on local artists. The total local expenditure had accordingly been £2,806.40 (equating to 67% of total expenditure, which was much higher than the previous year). All events had been well supported and were considered to be good for health and well-being with being out in the fresh air. There had been a real buzz around the Park and everyone appeared to enjoy the performances. New artists had also enjoyed the venue and were keen to return, and other activities like Cycling Without Age, dog walkers, etc added to the atmosphere. He hoped that the Bandstand Events would continue again next year subject to funding and proposed 6 events as a suitable number. In concluding he thanked HCC members, and Keith Johnstone who always did much work under the radar, for their support. The Vice-Chair also thanked Duncan for all his work and concurred that the events had indeed been very enjoyable. The Chair was hopeful of HCC being able to assist with future funding. Resilience – The Vice-Chair reiterated that HCC membership of a Resilience Sub-group had been agreed. It had been hoped that the existing Resilience Co-ordinator Gordon Short would continue in that role, however, the earlier resignation letter had not indicated that to be the case. The structure would require to be revisited and in the interim, contact details at SBC Emergency Planning had been provided. A training event had been notified as taking place on 1st November for some HCC members to attend. Volunteers would need to be clarified for the different tasks to be undertaken by the Resilience Group. There had recently been two missing persons incidents locally, and had the Hawick Resilience Group been pro-active, they would have been involved with these along with Mountain Rescue. Sadly that was not the case.

Marjorie McCreadie advised she was a member of the Resilience Group co-ordinated by Gordon Short and enquired if that would be ongoing. The Vice-Chair confirmed that HCC would need to take stock presently, to clarify volunteers, working relationships with for example the Flood Group and so on. It was not a case that SBC Emergency Planning would always be responsible for actioning the Resilience Group but that it could self-immobilise for such things as clearing snow etc. Stock of equipment would also need clarified. Marjorie confirmed she had a Resilience Hi-Viz coat in her possession. Graham Ford offered to provide assistance with determining volunteers or seeking additional. The Vice-Chair advised that once training had been provided, and other matters clarified as mentioned, HCC would be in a better position to proactively meet community resilience needs. Progress would need urgent

attention, however, as winter months were fast approaching raising the likelihood of requirements for assistance from the Resilience Team.

Other Representative Groups

The Chair proposed the other groups within the town requiring HCC representation, along with members to represent HCC on those groups, were:

A7 Action Group - Stuart Beck and Stuart Mactaggart

Hawick Common Good – Graeme King

Hawick Common Riding Committee – Braden George

Wind Farms - Cameron Knox and Wilson George

Hawick Reivers – Margaret Hogg

Teviot & Liddesdale Area Partnership – all HCC Members were eligible to attend meetings, with the Chair & Vice-Chair speaking on behalf of HCC; HCC Members to consider funding applications were agreed - Pot A applications – Cameron Knox, Euan Welsh along with Alistair Cook and George Turnbull (public members); Pot B – Cameron Knox and Kevin Marsh.

HCC members agreed on all of the above proposals.

A7 Action Group – Stuart Beck reported a meeting had been held on Friday 6th October with Tommy Deans from Bear Scotland in attendance to provide his update. A survey on the 40mph speed limit at Parkdaill would be carried out throughout November/December and a consultation would be held on additional road markings for 20mph speed limit areas.

It had previously been raised about HCC providing some funding to the A7 Action Group. They were having difficulty sourcing funding for a secretary, which did not meet the criteria set out for many funds. The Chair advised that request would require further consideration by HCC members. Finally, Stuart Beck advised that the next meeting of the A7 Action Group would be held in Langholm on 12th January 2024.

13. Updates from Community Partners

- (a) Future Hawick/Hawick Development Trust – Colin Hope, Chair reported that their change of name was underway to the Hawick Development Trust and their Constitution was also under review to provide further powers.

They had recently held a Strategy Day to target 3 different areas of work and he would touch briefly on those.

Condition of Hawick High Street – they had held a productive meeting with SBC's Cleansing Department and were looking at different methods of keeping the High Street clean. Different street sweepers had been discussed, however it had been agreed that the High Street required a deep clean prior to any street sweepers being deployed. An area to trial had been identified, and they would be meeting again with SBC to agree a daily maintenance regime. They had queried with SBC why the standards on the High Street had been allowed to fall so low and had been advised that had been due to staffing issues due to absences for ill health since September last year.

Future Hawick had also re-engaged with CARS, to see what could be done visually with the look of the High Street, as well as The Midsteeple Quarter - Dumfries' equivalent to Future Hawick - who had made massive inroads into improvements of their High Street and

bringing that back to a decent standard. It was planned to have a public consultation meeting once proposals for our High Street had been gathered to see what might be achieved.

Tourism – Colin reported that there was no Tourism Body as such for Hawick and Future Hawick hoped to establish that. They planned for a public meeting in the next few months to determine visitor requirements. That meeting would include shopkeepers, hoteliers, publicans and others, bringing everyone together for their views on how to drive visitor numbers up for Hawick. That would be a long-term project but nevertheless of high importance. A Guest Speaker may be included and that meeting proposed for early next year.

Future Hawick were also engaging with South of Scotland Destination Alliance (SSDA) an organisation set up to sell Borders towns on the tourism aspect.

St Leonard's Park Project – That project had hit 'a bump in the road' but they were still in discussions with the new Group set up, with a view to progressing on that project as well.

Colin went on to advise that the Welcome Hosts initiative was now finished for the season. It had been another successful year and a full report on that initiative would be presented to their next meeting.

The Chair thanked Colin for his report and advised that with regard to the Midsteeple Quarter in Dumfries they, unlike Hawick, had £20m made available to them under the levelling-up scheme. With regard to CARS, the Chair advised he represented on that group along with Jess Burrows and Sarah Altrock and a meeting was indeed proposed for the end of the month. The gutter cleaning project, successful in Jedburgh, would also be discussed at the following month's meeting, when it was proposed a Jedburgh Councillor would be in attendance to advise on how they had administered their project.

(b) Foundation Scotland – Nothing new to report.

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

15. Correspondence – The Secretary advised of a Thank You card having been received from Burnfoot Community School for loan of HCC gazebos for their recent successful event.

16. AOCB – Michael Robertson advised on an article in the Hawick Paper the previous week relating to Hawick Common Riding Committee (HCRC) celebrating 100 years of the Hut. Michael requested that HCC's representative Braden George raise at the next meeting of HCRC a suggestion for better disabled access to be made available. He referred to an incident previously where a wheelchair and occupant had required to be physically lifted into the hut which was not appropriate.

The Vice-Chair advised that Office-bearers had also had under discussion a new role within HCC for a Digital Communications Officer to deal with Facebook, Social Media and so on. He proposed Euan Welsh for that role. The Secretary enquired whether that could include a review of the website periodically to ensure that was up to date.

17. Date of next meeting – The next monthly meeting of HCC would be held on Monday, 13th November 2023 within the Lesser Town Hall, Hawick starting at 6.30pm.