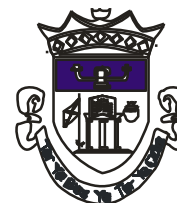

Hawick Community Council



MINUTES OF MEETING OF HAWICK COMMUNITY COUNCIL held on Monday November 10 at 6.30pm within the Lesser Town Hall, Hawick.

Present	Cameron Knox (Chair)	Kev Marsh
	Stuart Beck	John Campbell
	Braden George	Stuart Mactaggart
	Michael Robertson	
	Wilson George	Graham Ford
Attending	Councillor McAteer	Councillor Smart
	Councillor Ramage	Councillor Cox
	Councillor Marshall	

There were six members of the public in attendance.

Chair's Opening remarks – the Chair spoke of his privilege at laying a wreath along another 35 wreath bearers, on behalf of Hawick Community Council at the War Memorial, the previous day – Remembrance Sunday – although it was a wet morning it didn't dampen the public support for such a national traditional occasion, Lest We Forget.

The chairman advised that the post of treasurer continued to remain unfilled but there was a possibility that the post could be filled after the meeting.

Declarations of Interest – the secretary asked that members look to update their interests and participation in other groups to enable him to update the community council register. He agreed to send out a request to all members.

Apologies for Absence – Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf by Kyle Douglas and Ian Young and Councillor Richards -

Adoption of Minutes - of Meeting of Monday October 20, 2025, which had been circulated to members earlier. There were proposed for adoption by Braden George and seconded by Wilson George

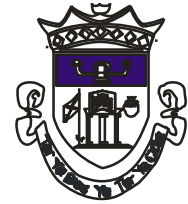
Matters arising –

shoplifting – Michael Robertson provided an update on the shoplifting Shop Watch campaign, indicating that he had generated 19 shops to sign up to the campaign, he also highlighted that some had already used the WhatsApp number. He hoped that this would be beneficial to local shops in the run up to Christmas. The chair added It he was delighted to see one of the prolific shoplifters had bene jailed for 12 months, and he thanked councillor Robertson for his endeavours.

ACTION POINT – Michael Robertson

Pop-up Policeman – the chairman advised that the community council will submit an insurance claim to Scottish Borders Council following the theft of the pop-up policeman and hopefully have him back on duty as quickly as possible. He added that it was ridiculous that it had been stolen. He reminded members that

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Stuart Beck had attached four lots of padlocks to the speed prevention Policeman, but this has not deterred the alleged thieves.

ACTION POINT – insurance claim

Active Travel Network – further to the concerns raised by member Ian Young at the October meeting regarding cars using the Santa Marina. Councillor McAteer updated the meeting that the SBC team are now looking introduce signage in the area and he had raised the matter with local Police.

Intervening Michael Robertson indicated his concerns over the traffic congestion in the North Bridge Street, Teviotdale Leisure Centre areas of town, and once again highlighted cars choosing to cut up from Mart Street towards the library. He felt it wasn't a good layout. Councillor McAteer advised on the risks anyone choosing to ignore the traffic regulations in that area took, if they were to be involved in an accident, he had spoken to representatives from the Active Travel Network but was yet to see an outcome. Requests had been made for improved signage. Stuart Beck felt the whole situation needed looked at once again. Cameron Knox reminded members that the new road system had been designed by professional engineers. Councillor Marshall gave his view as a resident who lived in the area, and he witnessed the congestion an almost daily basis. It was agreed to write to the council to raise the concerns. Councillor Cox indicated she would be meeting with Conor Price to walk the area of concern and would report back on the outcome.

ACTION POINT – Letter to council Councillor Cox to report back to Hawick Community Council

Police Scotland report – the chair advised that members had received the report the previous day and asked for questions. Stuart Mactaggart made an observation on the report that on October 28 a dog fouling ticket had been issued in Arthur Street which was a positive step forward. Michael Robertson advised he had emailed the dog warden at Scottish Borders Council around six weeks ago for posters around dog fouling. But he was still awaiting them to arrive. Councillor Marshall was concerned at the delay; he would contact the service director. Michael Robertson asked if the community council could buy similar posters, but it was agreed to hang fire to see what emerged from the local authority. Michael Robertson turned the dog fouling spotlight towards the Wulliestruthers which he felt was in poor condition due to excess dog mess, and referenced the Remembrance Day parade the previous day, when participants had to dodge dog mess. He aired his frustrations that he had been campaigning for over a year for something to be one but felt nothing was happening. Braden George reflected on the discussion on the same subject which had been held in December 2024, and he was also frustrated that nothing had since come of the ongoing antisocial issue. Councillor Smart provided an update that the progress had seen dog wardens possibly.

ACTION POINT – Councillor Marshall to contact the service director.

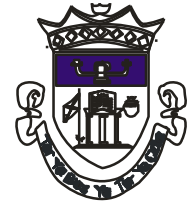
Cash Access UK –

Introducing the guest speaker for the evening Gemma Machie, regional manager for Cash Access UK, the chairman reminded the meeting that Hawick, the largest town in the Scottish Borders was likely to have no bank, which he felt was both disappointing and disgraceful.

The presentation was unable to go ahead with visual displays due to the inability to connect with the town hall (Live Borders) Wi-Fi system.

Gemma gave an introduction, as the regional manager for Cash Access UK, concerning the east side of Scotland from far south as Kirkcudbright and north of Edinburgh. She provided details regarding the plan to

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introduce a banking hub to Hawick before the last bank (Bank of Scotland) is set to close next year. Her role was to raise awareness of the role of a banking hub and showcase what facilities would be available.

Gemma was clear that Hawick needed a banking hub and an external ATM to provide out of hours cash for people, a community event had already been held and attracted between 45-50 people. Feedback from the day was around an ATM, which would be managed by the banks supporting the banking hub. Members learned that Cash Access UK are a not-for-profit company which was created from a decreasing population of banks across the UK, to enable people to access banking services on a daily basis. When the last bank in a town is set to close their doors, they can't close their doors until an assessment is completed, and a full banking hub solution is put in place.

Gemma reassured the meeting that there would be a banking hub set up in some form before the Bank of Scotland closed its doors, they would work with existing customers of the Bank of Scotland to help with the transition. She advised the process to open the hub had begun already and they had been in talks with the Hawick Development Trust and the elected member. They had been looking at possible properties within Hawick, and their properties acquisition team had visited the town the previous week to explore property options. News was expected within the coming 3-4 weeks on what properties were to be explored and pursued.

There are 190 banking hubs operating across the UK some were temporary. But she was confident that there would be a permanent hub opened in Hawick. The hubs are owned and run by Cash Access UK as a middle body, and they would then bring in the Post Office and ten member banks to operate under one roof. One building with all the different suppliers operating under one roof.

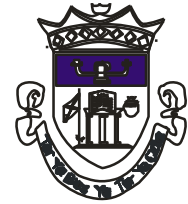
The reason for the programme to be run by the Post Office is because they are currently the only provider within the UK to have the software to tap into every single banking system. Post Office as a partner would solely run the counter aspect of the hub which would be open five days per week – Monday to Friday – 9am to 5pm. There would also be a face-to-face banking provision which would include a soundproof visitors room. This is where a community banker would be present every day for more complex bank transactions. These would be different community bankers from different banking representatives. Gemma provided the experiences of the Jedburgh hub as an example. A recruitment process for a postmaster would be part of the banking hub establishing process.

A member of the public asked if there were any plans for Saturday opening. Ms Machie advised this wasn't normal practice. But there was location in other parts of the UK where pilot options were being explored, and possible later opening hours throughout the week.

Stuart Beck asked who would own the building, Cash Access UK would own the building and lease them to the banking hubs. Michael Robertson felt it was the way forward for banking. Councillor Stuart Marshall thanked Gemma for attending, he felt the initiative was giving townsfolk hope, and it wasn't all doom and gloom. Gemma advised that area where banking hubs had been opened, had seen an increased footfall, with customers no longer travelling to, and spending money in neighbouring towns. The chairman felt Hawick would no longer be losing one bank but effectively gaining five if they all came on board to support the banking hub.

Councillor Clair Ramage spoke of her visits to the Jedburgh hub, which had been opened since August 2024, and to a permanent home in November 2024. It was currently supported by three major banks.

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Bryan Bell from the Hawick Development Trust spoke of a lot of privately owned shops in Hawick, and asked if Hawick Community Council would get behind the HDT and there drive to purchase a desired building and lease it to Cash Access UK, to allow the rent to come through the HDT which then means it would be filtered back into projects within the town. The chairman agreed wholeheartedly.

Councillor Annette Smart spoke about representing Newcastleton and the distance she had to travel and support, Gemma agreed she could organise a community advice event for the village.

Braden George asked about any potential added costs for users, Gemma reassured that there would be no charges. Graham Ford spoke about the business concern with the current arrangement of handling large sums of cash and taking that to existing Post Offices which were included within shops. The security concerns around these practices were of paramount concerns within that community.

As the presentation came to a close the chairman felt more positive than he had felt when he had heard the bank was closing, and he was delighted at the banking hub proposal. Councillor Watson McAteer felt reassured. What had been described was something that was genuinely needed, and it could solve a fundamental problem.

Treasurer's Report – vice-chairman presented the treasurer's report which had previously been circulated in the absence of a treasurer.

Town issues –

Save Hawick fire service – the chairman drew members attention to the placard, and pinpointed the QR code attached, he encouraged anyone to scan the code and send emails to the relevant, MP's, MPs and fire chiefs and Scottish Fire and Rescue. This was seen as the last push before the future of the building at Wilton Hill would be revealed in December.

Dangerous trees – Stuart Beck asked if there had been any feedback around the dangerous trees adjacent to the ATN within Wilton Lodge Park. Councillor Annette Smart advised that the trees had been looked at but no specific work had been confirmed. Keith Johnson, from the Town Team, was scheduled to be meeting with representatives from the Scottish Borders Council parks department the following day, and he offered to raise the matter with them.

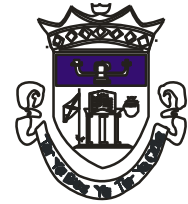
ACTION POINT – Keith Johnson to approach parks department.

Pigeon mess – Donnie McLeod speaking from the public gallery, aired his frustrations at the level of mess resulting from pigeons above the buildings at the Office Bar, Tower Knowe. He asked if he was allowed to move the mess from the path attached to the side of the buildings, onto the main pavement at the Tower Knowe. He was using water to clean the pavement; he was advised there could be consequences if someone slipped. Both Braden George and Jock Campbell advised they had been told previously about such practices and advised against it.

Cleaning scheduled – Councillor Watson McAteer advised he was awaiting delivery of the Scottish Borders Council cleaning schedule for the streets and pavement in and around the High Street, which would be fed to members. This was on the back of concerns over the apparent mess of pavements, and the area around the homecoming monument at the Tower Knowe.

High school catering – Stuart Beck raised apparent community concerns over the catering trailer which is currently being used while the school is going through the demolition process. From reports on social media

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Stuart raised about there not being enough space for children to eat when conditions were wet, and also around hot meals. Councillor Watson McAteer shared the concerns which he had also seen on social media. Parents and pupils had been made fully aware of the plans which had been well documented, and that a lot of comments had been very supportive of what the school was doing. Graham Ford had spoken directly to catering staff following the social media comments, many of the concerns were Borders-wide, the policy at the school was apparently to keep pupils within the school grounds at break times, but pupils would go into town at lunch. The catering staff were comfortable with how things were progressing. Stuart Mactaggart asked when the new high school was scheduled to be completed. Councillor Watson McAteer advised the advertised date was end of 2027.

Defibrillators – Michael Robertson spoke of the need for a clear understanding of where all the defibrillators were in the town, and how to access them. There was no apparent list, and that it wasn't simply a case of going to the defibrillator machine and accessing it, there was a need to go through the Scottish Ambulance Service. The community council had been speaking about plans for a year, and he asked for a clear progress to be made. Councillor Annette Smart explained at the moment there wasn't a list but there was a mobile phone app through the British Heart Foundation. Michael Robertson spoke of the person on the street not knowing where all the defibrillators are, and how to access if someone collapsed. He pressed for a community list to be made available and placed in prominent places. Councillor Stuart Marshall backed the idea; he appealed for everyone who had a stake in a defibrillator machine to supply that information so they could be signposted. Councillor Annette Smart also suggested adding any list to the Discover Hawick website.

The chairman agreed that hard copies of such a list could also be displayed at prominent places across the town, including the town hall noticeboard, and local primary schools. Kevin Marsh, as head of the resilience subgroup advised that in an emergency the first stage would always be to dial 999, the Scottish Ambulance Service would direct you to the closest defibrillator which they have codes. There was a problem with some machine which were housed within buildings, and only accessible during opening times. There was a need for defibrillators across the town to be added to the list. He agreed that the resilience group would take this forward as a task.

ACTION POINT- Kevin Marsh to progress defibrillator list

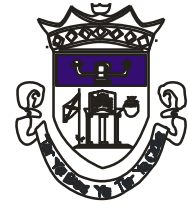
subcommittees –

the chairman updated the meeting on representatives to the various subgroups within the town following a recent community council private meeting. The list is as follows.

Christmas event – all council members; Hawick in Bloom – Wilson George; Resilience Group – all council members with Kevin Marsh as coordinator, and deputy coordinators Ian Young, Michael Robertson and Braden George; Fundraising – all council; planning – Ian Young, Wilson George and Cameron Knox. Members of representative groups: A7 Action group – Stuart Mactaggart and Stuart Beck; Renewable development – Stuart Mactaggart and Cameron Knox; Common-Riding Committee – Kevin Marsh; Hawick Reivers – Kyle Douglas; Hawick Common Good Fund – Graham Ford.

The chairman advised that they had left out CCTV, despite plans for their CCTV project having developed to a shovel ready stage. But the roll out of the SBC system meant that the Hawick Community Council system may need to be halted, due to lack of Scottish Borders Council support. This had been a project which had been ongoing for several years but was now unclear. Braden George asked if it should be shelved or seek advice

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from the elected members. Councillor Watson McAteer agreed that Scottish Borders Council had committed to their own project. The ambitious Hawick Community Council he felt was unlikely to be funded by the local authority.

Councillor Clair Ramage expressed her frustrations, she had worked alongside Kevin Marsh and Cameron Knox, to add new CCTV cameras to other hotspots within the town, over and above the 16 existing locations. Councillor Stuart Marshall asked if the community council had ever costed or applied for funding. Kevin March explained funding was previously difficult to obtain while the Scottish Borders Council project was being developed. Michael Robertson felt the community council wasn't going to get any further forward. Braden George suggested approaching senior Police chiefs and senior Scottish Borders Council officials to establish if there was any possibility of extra funding going forward. Councillor Watson McAteer suggested bringing them to a future community council meeting to explain plans for the CCTV and how it would support the Hawick community.

ACTION POINT – Council officials to be invited to a future community council meeting.

Christmas event –

the chairman advised that 21 stallholders had been booked for the event, against 32 the previous year, a further social media push would be made. Entertainment was progressing for a full afternoon's entertainment. Hawick Youth Rugby would attend in the morning, and members of the Hawick Reivers at 7am to help put up the gazebos, any other volunteers would be made welcome. Michael Robertson had approached Weatherspoon's as a collection point for selection box donations; and the manager at Morrison's. Previous attempts at them donating selection boxes had failed.

Christmas Lights – work to erect them was ongoing, the group of community council members.

Correspondence – there was none.

Any Other Competent Business –

St. Mary's steps – a member of the public raised her concerns over the dangerous condition of the steps due to the number of fallen leaves. Michael Robertson agreed to investigate the matter the following day.

ACTION POINT – Michael Robertson to investigate.

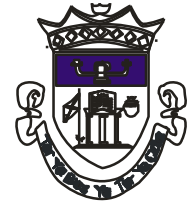
Wulliestruthers board walk – Michael Robertson advised the need to repair some of the loose steps on the walkway, and there was a section which could be added to. The chairman advised that money was available through the Fallago wind farm donations and this would be progressed.

ACTION POINT- Michal Robertson to take photos, to be sent to the Criminal Justice Team, to undertake the work, which they have carried out previously.

A7 roadworks – Councillor Watson McAteer advised of plans to undertake roadworks on the A7 near to the high school for ten days, and a mast at the tennis courts was going ahead. November 14 for ten nights.

Wellfield trees – Councillor Stuart Marshall provided an update on plans to bring down dangerous trees round the Wellfield Bank area. A tree felling licence had been applied for and granted, the trees would be brought down before February, due to bird nesting rules and regulations, and would be replaced by Rowan trees.

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Common Haugh charges – Councillor Watson McAteer informed the meeting, that he and his colleagues had all received emails around alleged parking charges for the Common Haugh. He looked to clear up the apparent misunderstanding. He was clear there were no parking charges, and there were no plans for parking charges. But there were charges that had been introduced, a £5 charge, for the sluice machine.

Date of next meeting – the next meeting of Hawick Community Council was set for Monday, December 8 at 6.30pm, 2025 in the committee room of Hawick Town Hall.