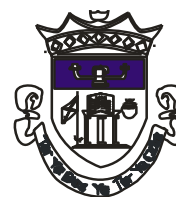

Hawick Community Council



MINUTES OF MEETING OF HAWICK COMMUNITY COUNCIL held on Monday, June 8, 2026, at 6.30pm within the Town Hall, Hawick.

Present Cameron Knox (chair)

Kev Marsh

Graham Ford

Stuart Bech

Nikki Finnigan

Michael Robertson

Wilson George

Stuart Mactaggart

Jock Campbell

Attending

Councillor McAteer

Councillor Ramage

There were 14 members of the public in attendance

Opening remarks – The chairman welcomed everybody and congratulated the Big Eight and Provost Clair Ramage for the way the whole event was carried out, and the choice of Chief Guest. The chairman also welcomed the good news that an anonymous donor had helped save St. Mary's Kirk and plans were now moving forward at pace.

Declaration of interest - the chairman reminded members of their obligation to declare any conflict of interest ahead of discussions during the meeting. This was noted.

Apologies for Absence- Apologies had been received from Kyle Douglas and Ian Young and Councillors Smart and Marshall

Adoption of Minutes - of Meeting of Monday May 11, 2026, which had been circulated to members earlier. There were proposed for adoption by Wilson George and seconded by Stuart Mactaggart.

Matters arising –

Teviotdale Leisure Centre – a discussion had been held between Kyle Douglas and Graham Ford around the planned letter to Live Borders, it had been agreed to give the new chief executive the time to bed in new plans that she had revealed. This was noted by all.

Farmers Market – It was noted that a meeting was scheduled to take place on Wednesday June 10, at 6.30pm to discuss the plans.

Obtrusive telegraph pole – Councillor McAteer provided an update on the matter, it was deemed legally positioned, despite his vociferous response to the company that cited it. The update was noted.

Park benches – Stuart Beck had scheduled a meeting with members of the Criminal Justice Team for Wednesday, June 10 to discuss the plans to recycle benches within the park. He asked for £1000 to be ringfenced to kick the project off. It was wholeheartedly approved. The secretary asked if there was any scope for match funding.

ACTION POINT once the plans had been drawn up match funding would be sought.

SoSE Business Centre – Councillor McAteer advised that SoSE had informed him that they were working on a public open day at the Buccleuch campus to provide more information, an invite would be included for the community council.

Defib machines – Mick Robertson updated members on work to create a schedule for defib machines. he had spoken with Graeme King, and they would work together to establish a list.

Police Scotland report- The chairman welcomed new chief inspector David O'Rourke and officer Fraser Mortimer to the meeting. Mr O'Rourke provided a short synopsis of his 25-year Police career within the Scottish Borders and described it as an absolute privilege to be offered the role of area commander. During a questions session, Mick Robertson asked about his views on the current scourge of shoplifting. The chief inspector advised this was a hot topic with the Scottish Government at the moment, so much so that the Scottish Borders had just been awarded £15.000 to tackle incidents. The area solvency figures stood at 87% which he believed were as good as anywhere in the country. He also revealed there were currently 12 live ASBOs on repeat offenders.

The chairman asked about parking outside schools, and at that point colleagues if they were in favour of a community council parking campaign, which was unanimously agreed. The chief inspector spoke of his experiences in Midlothian where no parking zones had been introduced during school times. Councillor McAteer also felt that SBC were likely to back a potential community council led campaign.

Treasurer's Report – This was presented by vice-chairman Kevin Marsh.

Public Forum and Town Issues –

Flood scheme -

The chairman welcomed Flood Protection Scheme manager Conor Price for what was likely to be his penultimate visit as the creation of the £106 million multi-phase project was coming to a conclusion in late September.

Mr Price highlighted various areas within the town where final works were taking place, including defects and snagging. These included the Wee Haugh, the flood panels to the rear of B&M Bargains, a section of the wall below Orrock Halls.

The chairman praised Conor and his team for the work that had been achieved, questions were also raised around town signage which was coming through the Town Team/ Hornshole Greenway this summer. Questions were also raised around the ongoing lack of signage advising motorists not to turn towards the library from Mart Street. Mr Price agreed for a site visit at this location.

ACTION POINT- site visit to be arranged

Sandbed Hawick Market Banner – the chairman raised concerns on behalf of the community over a new giant advertising that had appeared outside the shop, which was described as completely out of place for a conservation area. Councillor McAteer advised that SBC were aware and action was already underway.

Freedom of the town – Stuart Beck asked for an update on this. Councillor Ramage advised that the idea of a Freedom of the Scottish Borders had been taken forward by council officials and was being worked on, and a report was expected imminently.

Provost Common-Riding invites – Mick Robertson enquired if Sir Chay Blyth had been forgotten about when invites had been sent for official Common-Riding events. Councillor Ramage advised that invitations had been sent out, and she had received a reply from Sir Chay to say he couldn't make it.

SFRS cuts – A full discussion was held around the cuts which had emerged and were to be rubberstamped on June 22. Councillor McAteer advised he had already written to fire service senior officials about their decision. Chairman Knox felt the scale of attendance at the public meeting, and volume of signatures on the petition, had simply been ignored. Concerns were also raised around the Center Parcs build and the cover needed for such a new and sizeable addition to the local landscape. It was made clear that Hawick was still the biggest manufacturing town in the Scottish Borders and the decision was ultimately putting jobs and lives at risk. It was agreed to invite surrounding community councils to send their thought, before the secretary would send a letter to the SFRS.

ACTION POINT – letter to be sent by secretary

Town Christmas Tree- The chairman had received an email from SBC confirming that due to budget constraints, Hawick would no longer be provided with a Christmas tree along with around 13 other town across the region. He pledged that the community council would ensure the town would have a tree, and hopefully more impressive than previous years. Councillor McAteer also advised that elected members were aware of the disharmony from the decision and they were working in the background to ensure the town would have a tree each year going forward.

Public response from SBC – Anne Adams raised her frustrations over the length of time she had waited to receive a response around a vermin issue which had been reported to the local authority in April, without a reply. Councillor McAteer agreed to take up the issue.

ACTION POINT – Councillor McAteer

Sub-group reports –

Hawick in Bloom- Kevin Marsh read out a report from the convenor he had received prior to the meeting. The chairman praised all the volunteers for all their work in recent weeks.

Bandstand events – the chairman advised that Duncan Taylor was progressing plans for this year's event.

Resilience Group – no report

Fund raising – meeting on June 10

Planning- a retrospective planning application had been received regarding a bookshop at the Well, which had been open for two weeks.

Mick Robertson asked around the progress on McDonalds, Councillor McAteer was confident that things were progressing well, and that the fast-food giants were not unduly worried about the delay.

Community partners –

Hawick Development Trust – The chairman of the trust presented an update and was delighted to announce that they had donated £1000 to four HHS pupils to enable them to gain a training certificate helping them enhance their job prospects. Muirhall Energy had donated extra funds to put a complete ten pupils through. This was applauded by members. It was also agreed to write to Stacey Grieve from the high school to invite to provide a presentation to a future community council meeting.

ACTION POINT- Stacey to be invited to a future meeting.

Foundation Scotland – no report

A7 Action Group – meeting scheduled for June 25

Hawick Common Good – meeting scheduled for June 17

Common-Riding Committee – Kevin Marsh applauded all the work that had been undertaken by the committee to achieve another successful event, which was echoed by provost Clair Ramage.

Reivers – no report

Correspondence – there was nothing to report

AOCB –

Bottle banks – Stuart Beck highlighted concerns over overflowing bottle banks, and that the issue may intensify during the forthcoming Fringe Festival. Councillor Ramage indicated they had been advised of vehicle issues. Councillor McAteer questioned why people still left bottles even when the bottle banks were overflowing. Jim Adams raised awareness, that many people were unaware that there were receptacles to the rear of each station, which many people simply didn't know.

Community Council working group – Kevin Marsh advised that the review had been concluded. At the June 10 meeting, members would answer a series of questions as part of the process. This had been a ten-month project.

Tell us about your place – the chairman advised on an email he had received from the Council; they were in the early stages of agreeing their next local development plan. They want to hear from residents. Councillor McAteer encouraged people to participate in this important process.

Date of next meeting – the date was set for Monday, July 13, starting at 6.30pm within the lesser town hall.