

**Galashiels Community Council**

**Zoom Meeting**

**Wednesday May 5th 2021**

**6.30pm**

**MINUTES**

**In Attendance**

Judith Cleghorn, Tracey Alder, Rick Kenney, Marion Romeril, Richard Romeril, Jill Forsyth, John Birnie, Gordon Richardson, Bill White, Liz Jardine

Cllr Aitchison

Cllr Anderson

Cllr Jardine

Cllr Scott

Mike Thomson- Border Telegraph

Paul Kelly – Southern Reporter

4 Members of Public

**1.Welcome and Apologies**.

Judith welcomed everyone that attended to the meeting and welcomed new member John Birnie .Eileen gave apologies.

***2.* Minutes Approval**

An accurate Minute of the Meeting 7th April via Teams was approved by Rick Kenney and Seconded by Marion Romeril.

**3. Matters Arising n/a**

**4. Police Update**

Report was sent out , no questions.

**5**. **Gala in Bloom**

A cheque for £690 was welcomed from Dalgettys, given by customers.

Sykes have donated £1000 towards planters at Channel St and Douglas Bridge and another £1000 for help to improve the roundabouts.

4 Cllrs met with John Curry Director of Assets and Infrastructure for SBC and said that the CC should be assisted to sponsor the Roundabouts. Bill White added that the Council need to be supporting these, A load of weed killer needs putting down first but we do need to see some colour on them.

Marion and her guides are in the process of getting the risk assessment done for the area by the interchange, ready for planting.

**Walking Festival**

All in report but Tracey added that the April festival was a great success eve n though there were just people from the Borders attending. We had 45 walkers over the 2 and half days.

**6. Chairs Comments and Questions**

There has been a great deal of discussion about the new school and the right place to site it.

Scottish Borders Council have advised us that their Option 3 is the preferred option; the on-line consultation that finished on 26th April was well attended and the results will be published by SBC in due course.

I think it is important for us to remember that we are not experts, and we have to trust the word of those who are. We have to believe that Scottish Borders Council and our elected members have the best interests of the townspeople of Galashiels at heart.

Round this table, we may all have differing opinions about Option 3, and I am not here to encourage you in any way – but I think it is important that we, as community councillors – give an **individual** indication as to how we feel about option 3.

So, I will ask each of you know what your opinion is – you are of course, free to abstain if you prefer to do so. Responses from the Community Council are as follows:

Rick Kenney – has been in a range of meetings and presentations since last November and therefore agrees that option 3 is the best position for Scott Park.

Tracey Alder – supports option 3, but is not particularly bothered where it is sited ,as the priorities are getting a new school for Gala and the future of the Focus Centre.

Gordon Richardson- it seems to be a done deal and for this reason will go with option 3 but SBC should never have treated us like imbeciles.

John Birnie – not knowing enough about the issue abstained from giving an answer.

Jill Forsyth – Option 3

Liz Jardine – Option 3 is the viable option. We need something g to look forward to that will lift us out of the doom and gloom. Terribly angry about the whole carry on that it has caused.

Marion Romeril – option3

Richard Romeril – option 3 – Save Scott Park campaign have not come up with another option.

Bill White – Option 3 .This is a huge opportunity for the public to get involved in, given the green space surrounding the school that will be put back, let SBC know what you would like to see.

Judith Cleghorn – Also is in favour of option3.

**7. Treasurers Update and questions**

All as in report but Eileen

**8.Secretarys update**

Tracey voiced that the residents that had recently spoken to Cllr Jardine regarding their parking are now in the process of writing letters of complaint to Eildon Housing. Cllr Jardine added that quite a few issues had come to light which he was dealing with.

**9. Vice Chairs update – Planning and Licensing.**

Rick said that the Cc were all happy with both the application from in April and one that came in yesterday. The murals on Channel House and Why Not look lovely and brighten the town.

**10. SBC Councillors Comments and questions**

**Cllr Euan Jardine –**

Read out this statement:

**STATEMENT:**

Live Borders and SBC are working in close partnership as a regional COVID recovery plan is developed, focused on restarting services, promoting health and wellbeing, supporting vulnerable people, reinvigorating the local economy, and seizing new opportunities.

Both organisations recognise how much customers, communities and visitors value our services. Our jointly agreed reopening plan acknowledges this while also taking into account a range of other current factors, which include the vital support being provided through Live Borders’ facilities and their staff for the critically important COVID-19 vaccination programme and ongoing Test and Protect measures.

We have already seen the re-opening of a number of local facilities, with more to follow soon.

However, while there are clearly grounds for optimism as the COVID situation continues to improve, we must remain cautious about what may lie ahead; ultimately, we will not reopen all services until we are absolutely confident that they will be safe for customers and staff, *and* that it does not affect the important work being carried out as part of the COVID-19 vaccination programme and Test and Protect.

**Cllr Aitchison**

Agreed that the murals and golden bollards all look great, and that Cllr Aitchison’s 12-year-old grandson even commented on the Golden Bollards.

Thanks must go out to the man that goes around picking up the rubbish in town keeping the town clear.

**Cllr Anderson** – working a lot with other areas.

Also working on underpass at Langlee and getting the area around Woodcutter cleaned up.

**Cllr Scott**

Playparks – There is funding available to upgrade parks from here to Fountainhall.

QA Is there any pay parking money available ? Cllr Aitchison- there may be some historical pp money left. There is the Community Fund available

**11. AOB**

**CC**

Rick- Wheelie Bins in Channel Street , solution is in the offing but not quite sorted yet.

John Birnie-Happy with McQueen Gdns for the new Coopersknowe development There are 3 speed limits on a road that is a mile long on the Melrose Road to Lowood- can this be resolved? Also resurfacing on Melrose Rd and footpaths. Is there a schedule for what roads are being done and when?

**Public**

Member of public voiced their opinion that the choice favoured b y the Community Council was disappointing, option 1 has been submitted 5 times but it has not been looked at. A frank discussion took place between the public and CC. Tracey voiced that the decision tonight by the Community Council in their option of choice was not made as a group, Judith asked us as individuals.

Judith finalised by saying that after listening to everyone, we need to make the best of what we have.

Cllr Jardine said this should not become toxic, people are scared to put their opinion forward, we should all be standing together.

A member of the public, Gala born and bred said option 3 is where this school should go. It is within walking distance of all the other schools, we do not need to be the same as all the other community schools.

Also, if you know any over 65s that you think could qualify for Gala local relief fund , a lot of people do not know it’s available .

Meeting ended at 19.40pm

**Date of next meeting by Zoom 2nd June 2012 6.30pm**