

Cockburnspath and Cove Community Council Meeting
Wednesday 8th October 2025 at 7pm
in Cockburnspath Village Hall

Minutes

- 1 Apologies and Attendance:** P Hood (Chair), H Brewerton (minutes), J Fairbairn, M Given, A Blackwell, Cllr J Anderson, 2 MOPs. **Apologies:** C. Tempest, R Hicks, Rev. S Fletcher, S Hay, S Hope
- 2 Signing of Constitution and Code of Conduct:** Forwarded until the next month as not all members present. It was noted that a revised handbook, Code of Conduct and Constitution will be made available soon from Scottish Borders Council (SBC).
- 3 Conflicts of Interest and Additions to Agenda:** No conflicts of interest noted. P Hood noted that there will be a funding application coming from the Village Hall soon regarding remedial work on the thought to be 200yr old pear tree in the Village Hall grounds. Discussions took place. No application has been received as yet. **Addition by MOP – group activities funding.**
- 4 Minutes of Previous Meeting:** Approved
- 5 Police Report:** August report received. Traffic offence was noted in the village.
- 6 Matters Arising:**
 - 6.1 Discussion of areas of responsibility by Community Council (Facebook, WhatsApp, Website, newsletter, green grants, confirmation of areas etc). Forward to next month.
 - 6.2 Cockburnspath and Cove Place Planning - follow up to Community Action Plan: P Hood explained that she has been in contact with SBC regarding Place Planning. She has made them aware that the CC would like to use their own consultants and format rather than use the consultants that SBC use and is still awaiting confirmation from them with regards to this. Cllr J Anderson noted that it is only the format that needs approved from SBC and any consultant can be used.
 - 6.3 Gala Report: P Hood gave a brief update. An official report will be given in due course from the organisers.
 - 6.4 Treasurer update: Official report will be given in due course. Discussions took place around funds available. P Hood noted that the funding panel for the new off shore windfarm money (NNG) will join with the Greencoat Drone Hill funding panel. Discussions took place around the size of the funding panel. It will consist of one CC member and one member of the public from each area.
 - 6.5 Nursery /School update: A Blackwell updated. SBC currently have a working group to develop a policy for mothballing nurseries. This consists of a selection of officers from SBC, Cllrs and some parent representatives. They met a week ago where a draft policy was shared around the mothballing of nurseries in SBC. This draft policy was concerning as they are trying to introduce a fixed threshold for numbers of enrolment each year. It states that if you have less than 10 pupils, they will carry out an appraisal for mothballing. This is over 60% of our capacity. This will increase the number of rural nurseries to be targeted for mothballing annually, decreasing the number of nurseries across the region. A Blackwell has raised legal concerns to the working group and had no response. Cllr C Hamilton is looking in to this. The policy also states that parents can use their hours within private nurseries and child minders as well as local authority nurseries but the reality is that there are only the local authority nurseries available in the area for child care, there are only 12 child minders registered in the region, which will mean a lack of provision for childcare if local authority nurseries are closed. A Blackwell asked for the CC to support the representatives of the various nurseries involved in this policy to add their name to a statement to be sent to SBC. The CC agreed in principle once they have reviewed the

statement. **Action: A Blackwell to send this out to CC members for review when it is ready.** With regards to compositing, it is too early to say what effect this will have on the children's education but at the moment parents say it seems to be working on a day-to-day basis. Discussions took place. Cllr J Anderson expressed concern about schools and nurseries in the region and is raising a formal complaint within SBC. More discussions took place around the fact that SBC is trying to cut their Estate by 10% and if this was related in any way to the mothballing exercise. The question was raised; is this why rural nurseries and schools are being targeted? Cllr J Anderson agreed to raise an investigation into this and arrange for certain documents to be made public. On a positive note, the Cockburnspath nursery is having an open day on 7th November, for parents of children turning 3 yrs old in the surrounding area.

- 6.6 Mercat Cross update: A letter has been drafted to send to the Dunglass Estate with new information uncovered by A Blackwell into the ownership of the Mercat Cross. Discussions took place around the wording of the letter. P Hood noted that she would contact a solicitor regarding the actual wording of the letter. **Action: P Hood to liaise with A Blackwell to review the letter again.** Further discussions took place regarding the community asset transfer scheme which is designed more for buildings than monuments and therefore may not be relevant to the Mercat Cross. **Action: A Blackwell will look into this further. MOP to ask for an updated quotation for the works required to the cross.** Speculative discussions took place around the estate's response to the letter. **Action: A Blackwell to find out if funding is available for covering legal fees.**
- 6.7 Group Activities funding: Both MOPs in attendance raised their concerns around the email sent out by S Hope to all activity groups previously funding by the Wellness Grant. The email implied that funding will be provided until the end of December and suggested that the groups would need to think of ways of self-funding. The MOPs noted that they had thought it had been agreed that the groups would be invited to attend a meeting to come together to discuss all of this. They also highlighted that the communication around this has been very poor. They highlighted that there is a need for these activities in the community and it is mostly volunteers bringing these groups together and that the logistics of cash handling etc is difficult. They highlighted that we are a small community, and it is not viable to run these classes without the funding and therefore will have a knock-on effect to the lack of use of the Village Hall. A Blackwell agreed that the activities don't cost a lot of money, that they are good community activities, we should be supporting them and encouraging more activities to come along rather than removing support. MOP followed on by saying that a lot of these groups did not exist before the Wellness grant and they would likely be lost if funding was withdrawn. P Hood stated the issue initially was due to a lack of knowledge of what funding the CC has available. Discussions took place. A Blackwell suggested a pause in the discussion until we have the costs of running these groups and how much available funding we have. P Hood agreed to discuss with S Hope the next steps which should include a meeting with all the groups, to determine the costs involved. MOP highlighted that the costs of the groups is around £7000/year and therefore does not see the request for funding as unreasonable. More discussions took place. It was agreed there will be a meeting and discussions took place as to who would participate in the meeting.

7 Funding applications

7.1 Various Green Funding Applications

7.1.1 List of conditions for website - forward to next month ref point 6.1

7.2 Edinburgh Geological Society Cycle Track Leaflets funding application: They have requested funding for half the cost of the leaflets and are asking for £300. All agreed

7.3 Edinburgh Geological Society Village Hall booking funding application towards the cost of the hall over the weekend and have asked for £400. All agreed.

- 7.4 Defibrillator pad Funding: Replacement pads for all the defibrillators. The total cost for the pads equals £187.20. A question was raised around quality of cheaper ones. Cllr J Anderson stated that they have been tried and tested by another CC and they are up to the specification. All agreed.
- 7.5 Richmond Hope Funding Response a thank you was sent to the CC for their funding.
- 7.6 Playpark funding update: The CC have received an email to say they will receive £1500 back and they now wish to know if this should come back to the CC or if they can use it to improve the access to the playparks. Discussions took place. The CC agreed that improving access to the play park is a good idea, but that they would like to see plans and costs involved around this. It was agreed to reply, asking for the money to be returned to the CC, and asking for a funding application to be sent in for the access improvements.

8 Planning

- 8.1 Crystal Rig 1 Repower: Fred Olsen Renewables Ltd. Not discussed.
- 8.2 25/00378FUL - Kinegar Quarry cement batching plant application. M Given noted that the opening hours have been confirmed as 7am to 7pm Mon to Fri and 8am to midday on Saturday. The application is still pending but is not shown on the portal anymore. Discussions took place.
- 8.3 Bleaching Green Caravans: At the last meeting an MOP living near the area was very concerned about the caravans and that the people living there are refusing to leave. The MOP was asked by the CC to make notes on all activities on the land. SBC state they cannot evict as they don't know the ownership of the land. Cllr J Anderson agreed to follow up on this with SBC.

9 Correspondence:

- 10 SBC Councillor feedback:** Cllr J Anderson said he was working with the education department and the moving of Eyemouth Primary as the plan has been changed completely. P Hood asked Cllr J Anderson about historical planning for houses in the area and how these developers could be encouraged to go ahead with their plans. Discussions took place around services for these houses, specifically drainage and sewage works. **Action: P Hood to send names of developers to Cll J Anderson for him to contact for further discussion.**
- 11 Community Councillor feedback;** A Blackwell noted that a new family have moved to the village and have expressed an interest in joining the CC. It was agreed that A Blackwell should invite them along to the next meeting. A Blackwell asked about the previously discussed potential for doing sustainable community research involving the school and community. P Hood suggested that this might be combined with the CAP/Place plan but she believes that Rev S Fletcher was looking into some research companies for the sustainability research. There is no update on this as yet. To be added to the agenda for next month. It was noted that the 365 buses will terminate at Dunbar from 20th October.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting of Cockburnspath and Cove Community Council will be held on Wednesday 12th November at 7pm in Cockburnspath Village Hall. Members of the public are welcome and encouraged to attend.