

Melrose and District Community Council

Minutes of Meeting 19 April 2023

1. Attendance and Apologies:

Attendance: Community Council: Mary Douglas, Willie Kerr, Bruce Wilson, Martin Baird, Jane Bell, Bruce Jackson, Lorna Paterson, Michael Sherlock
SBC Councillors: John Paton Day, David Parker, Jenny Linehan
Visitors: Sarah Milne, Melrose Primary School, Anne Henderson, Val Millar, Simon Burt, NHS Borders, Allan Dawson and Jim Shepherd Melrose Rugby Club

Apologies; Simon Harris, Douglas Stewart, Lynda Wilks

2. Police Report, PC Porter was not present, there were no comments on the police report. There was comment on the perceived infrequency of police patrols in the town.
3. Simon Burt, General Manager Mental Health and Learning Disability Services, NHS Borders, gave an update on Millar House. Millar House will provide housing support for people with mental health issues. NHS Borders has a contract with Cargon which provides this support. There are 9 bungalows with 9 separate tenancies and the house has 4 tenancies.
Residents will have 24 hour support for supported living. The first tenants moved in in March, all tenants should be in residence by the end of May.
The tenants are people with mental health problems living in the community rather than those with drug and alcohol problems.
4. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising. The minutes of the March Meeting were agreed as an accurate account.

Matters arising: Councillor Parker has applied to the William Hill Trust on behalf of the Community Council for a grant to cover the costs of electricity in the square.

Funding for a Coronation Celebration had not been applied for, the suggestion of trees was specified as not an appropriate use of the funds, no further suggestions had been made. Willie Kerr has spoken to the pipe band who are willing to play in the square on 6 May, timing to be arranged, Councillors will ascertain if a late application can be made to the fund to pay the band.

5. Melrose Primary School Playground plans. Sarah Milne explained the proposed plans for development of the playground at Melrose Primary School. Fundraising is underway and a landscape architect has drawn up plans.

The clearance of old equipment is an issue, Councillor Parker recommended that Craig Blackie at the Council be contacted, and that a range of funds for the project might be available.

The school is used by the whole community, sometimes damage happens, the outdoor nursery in the playground is a popular meeting place for groups of young people who leave rubbish. Teenagers had been invited to join the meetings to discuss the playground and what facilities they would like but had not attended.

6. Melrose Sevens: Jim Sheperd and Allan Dawson from MRC joined the meeting. It was felt that communication with residents before the sevens had been poor and a lot of bad feeling resulted. Parking permits for residents had not been given out in time, the disco which was very loud, went on until 1 a.m., with no information on the website about finishing times. Residents of St Mary's Road had been unable to leave their homes and had to call the police.

More integrated communication at an early stage would be appreciated. It was suggested that the final could be earlier so other events could finish earlier.

SAG will come to a Community Council meeting early next year to show what is proposed for next year's sevens.

7. Planning Applications: There have been objections to plans to build a house in Aldie Crescent, Darnick, these have been passed on to SBC. Jenny Linehan, John Paton Day and Mary Douglas had attended a meeting about the future of Lowood House organised by Greener Melrose. A community hub was proposed, there was concern about the prospect of demolition. Councillor Parker said that a decision on the future of the house was not imminent there would be plenty of opportunity for future discussion before a decision was made.
8. Community Council Organisation and Admin. This will be discussed at the next meeting. Simon has indicated he will give up his role as secretary. A long term solution is required.
9. AOB. Val Millar raised the issue of 2 men who are often very drunk who sit in the Wynd and make abusive comments, at people passing by, the police are aware of the men. Many people know avoid using the Wynd. The seats in the Wynd are in a state of disrepair particularly the one attached to the fruit shop. It was agreed that the seats will be removed.

A handrail is required down Boat Brae and the style at the Cauld which is in regular use, is in very poor condition.

At the Waverley Castle hotel there is a black bag over one of the road signs that has been there for some time.

The sign by the road on the way to Tweedbank for a now defunct car wash will be removed.

The website was visited 193 times in March, all meetings are listed there.

The lamppost on Waverley Road is still dark.

Graham Barker asked that the well used path from the top end of Claymires to Deanroad be swept and the edges defined.

10. Questions from the floor: there were no questions.

Date and time of next meeting; Due to a diary clash Gattonside Village Hall is no longer available. The next meeting will be on 17 May at 7.30 in the Ormiston Rooms