

# MINUTES OF MELROSE & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING 7.30PM WEDNESDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2024, ORMISTON ROOMS

## 1. Welcome, Attendance, Apologies, Declarations of Interest

**Present:** Bruce Jackson (Chair) (CC), Willie Kerr (CC), Jane Bell (CC), David Parker (SBC), Bruce Wilson (CC), Simon Harris (CC), Dougal Stewart (CC), Martin Baird (CC), Lorna Paterson (CC), Jenny Linehan (SBC), John Paton-Day (SBC).

**In Attendance:** Ian Porter (Police Scotland), Allan Dawson (Melrose 7s Committee), Abi Smith (Melrose 7s Committee), S Hamilton, David & Lynda MacNamara, Jane Davis, Catherine Bauer, Val Miller.

1.

**Apologies:** Mary Douglas (CC), Mike Sherlock (CC).

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

## 2. Police Report

IP had circulated the report prior to the meeting, and welcomed any questions.

- He reported on the national campaign to tackle 'romance' scams, which particularly affected older and vulnerable members of the population, and 'sextortion' scams affecting, in particular, younger males. Advice was available on the police website.
- The egg-throwing issue was being dealt with, as was the ongoing problems with home-grown drugs.
- JB raised the ongoing issue of cars racing up the bypass and cutting through Gattonside. A cutout 'policeman' had been put up but subsequently removed a short time later so that it wouldn't be stolen. It was confirmed that any 'hard' measures such as 20 mile an hour signs or sleeping policemen had to go through the Council. IP said that all issues had to be prioritised and inevitably some would be nudged further down the list.

## 3. Melrose 7s Update – Allan Dawson and Abi Smith

There was nothing significant to report. The SAG meeting next week would finalise road closures etc. The work to create a crossing at the school was now underway. BJ was concerned about the noise levels last year, and questioned the measures being taken to do soundchecks. DS raised the point that it was important that the appropriate SBC team attended the sound checks for the evening event to monitor the sound levels properly. JL took a note to ensure this. BJ requested that the relevant SBC Team keep his concerns about last year on record. AD and AS confirmed that they would comply with SBC approved sounds levels, as they had last year, and reiterated that no formal complaints were received in 2023 regarding the volume of noise.

**Action: JL / AD / AS**

The 7s committee would continue to update the M&DCC at future meetings.

#### 4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting, and Matters Arising

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

- The lights on the chain bridge were almost done.
- The lights at Monkswood were now working.
- Large vehicles on The Loan were still an issue, but DP said that the correct signage was in place and little more could be done.
- The phone box in Newstead had been bought by M&DCC for £1, and would be maintained by the local community. The one in Darnick was in the process of being purchased by the CC.
- Repairs at the Rhymers Stone were agreed to be too expensive for the time being.
- The Pelican crossing at the school were underway and should be completed by Friday 26<sup>th</sup> February.
- Jane Davies updated the meeting on the progress with coordinating the local Traders, and 60 letters had been delivered locally. They were keen to work with all relevant bodies, including Scotland Starts Here (part of the South of Scotland Destination Alliance) to increase footfall, and an Easter Egg hunt was being organised for the Easter holidays. The lack of a tourist information centre was discussed, and it was agreed that better signage and tourist information would be welcomed. BJ suggested that there could be some coordination with Abbotsford. It was confirmed that this initiative would include local businesses, not just shops, and the Melrose Shopping Facebook page would be reactivated. Charging traders around £20 for membership was discussed. Jane and Val would keep the committee updated.

BW said that the noticeboard at the Rugby Club could be used to advertise events etc, but the lock was broken. BW would repair the lock with funds from the CC via DS.

Action: BW/DS

- BJ confirmed that there were no recent planning applications.
- The Book Bug was back up and running.
- The state of the bus shelter at Ravenswood would be looked into by JL.

Action: JL

- Val Miller raised the issue of the drains overflowing with rainwater from the downpipes on to the pavements outside the Trimontium Museum, and DP confirmed that this was the responsibility of the building owners. If it was deemed a nuisance, it should be reported to Live Borders.

#### 5. The Wall at West Grove

BJ was in contact with both property owners. There was the possibility of changing the lineage of the road, ie extending the pavement (making the white line thicker). It was noted that Crawfords Builders was in administration, and the contact was now Rural Developments Ireland Ltd.

DS confirmed that the wall as it currently existed had planning permission, and met the criteria for cyclists etc. BJ thought the pavement needed to be moved outwards, and DS voiced his misgivings about the wall's positioning and design.

#### 6. Developments at Lowood Estate

DP reported that the road going into the Estate was almost complete, and the next stage would be the processing of the planning applications for the care home. It was confirmed that the care home was a Council project. No decision had been made on demolishing Lowood House.

## 7. Antisocial Behaviour at the Ship

Lynda MacNamara reported that she had been in contact with Environmental Health and the Licensing Office, and had received a visit from the Ship's owners. The antisocial behaviour of some pub goers at leaving time was causing considerable distress to Mr and Mrs MacNamara, who said that their garden was often used as a urinal, and that drugs were consumed outside their house, and the Police did not seem willing or able to respond. IP said that he would highlight the issue with his colleagues. He reiterated that while it was feasible to film the activity if it was affecting their property, they should be cautious about filming in a public place.

MB had received a letter from the Ship's owners, which he read to the Committee. It said that they were aware of the increased noise levels of the music etc and that this was due to a new DJ they were using (but would no longer be used). A sign had been erected outside the pub urging respect for local residents. The MacNamaras had received the owner's mobile number, and a compensatory voucher.

## 8. AOCB

- **Benches:** SH distributed a list of local benches. It was agreed that many of them were fairly scruffy and ininviting looking, and DS confirmed that there were funds in the carp parking fund that could be used for refurbishing the benches concerned. He would submit a cost to the Council.

Action: DS

On the suggestion of SH, it was also agreed to look at the benches in the other villages and add them to the list.

Action: DS (Darnick)/JB (Gattonside)

**BW** suggested that Hayley Wilson be contacted as she was looking for projects for community service people etc. He agreed to contact her and invite her to the March meeting for a main agenda item.

Action:BW

- JB raised the issue of Monkwood Road in Gattonside, and DP confirmed that because it was not adopted, there were no markings, and that the priority signs on the hill into village could not be altered.
- JB raised the issue of items (memorial flowers, padlocks) attached to the chain bridge. JL felt that if they were not causing damage there wasn't much harm in it. MB had had contact with the family concerned with the placement of the flowers, and they had asked if a memorial bench could be placed there. DP and JL agreed to this in principle, and asked MB to put the family in touch with them.

Action: MB/DP/JL

**9. Questions from the Floor**

- Lynda MacNamara raised the issue of rubbish in the small car park near their property. Val Miller also mentioned that the signpost in the Nutwood car park had fallen down in one of the recent storms. DP agreed to raise both matters with the Council. **Action: DP**
- DP confirmed that the CCTV review was currently being scoped.
- MB was concerned that the fact that there was a defibrillator in Burt's wasn't widely known, and that some sort of signage around the town would be helpful.

The meeting concluded at 8.45pm.

Date of next meeting: 20 March 2024, Ormiston Rooms, Melrose.

DRAFT