

Skirling community Council Meeting Minutes

Thursday 31st March 2022

Present Andrew Clark, Judy Cameron, Esther Daborn, Isobel Hunter, Bob Hunter, Katy Miller, Robert Laird, Ross McIntyre, Sara van der Vat, Councillor Eric Small, Stuart Dickson, David Galbraith

- Viv Thompson (Blyth Bridge)
- Alison Leite (Skirling Mill)

Apologies Drummond Begg (West Linton), Dominic Ashmole (Dawyck), Ian Storie

Ian Storie intimated that due to his age and his family responsibilities he wished to stand down from the Council. His many years of service were noted with much gratitude and he was wished a fulfilling 'retirement'.

New Community Council Secretary arrangements

Isobel Hunter agreed to take minutes for this meeting to be checked by Sara van der Vat.

Andrew Clark and Robert Laird approved minutes from 27th January 2022

1. Community Speedwatch

- Update on flashing signs (ED)
Having got information from Stow CC about the supplier of a solar powered SID in order to make a Windfarm Grant application, SBC informed us that they had decided to install mains powered ones at Howes Brae. They are waiting for Scottish Power to install the supply. SBC has also agreed to supply and install a mains powered SID for the village on the green triangle by the bus stop. We appreciate this outcome. The larger signage at the village boundaries and the 'dragons teeth' on the road will be put in place once the overall speed limits are finalised in the summer. We will also purchase stickers for bins at that point.
(Action: ED to follow up)
- Speeding on Skirling Straight : Alison Leite (Skirling Mill) Alison has recently moved to the Farmhouse at Skirling Mill with 2 young children and is concerned about the speeding along the Moss. Even before the fatal accident on the 12th March she was concerned about the state of the road - potholes and missing lines – and the vulnerability of walkers on the pavement. It was agreed to approach the police and the council again about extending speed limits to Skirling Mill. The existence of a pavement and the fatal accident may allow us to make more of a case than when this was refused 5 years ago. A strongly worded letter signed by the Community Councillors to Philippa Gilhooly (SBC Transport Safety), with copies to Sgt Grainger was suggested in the first place.
(Action ED, IH, RJL, AC)
- Community Speedwatch – request from Tim Janeway.
https://communityspeedwatch.org/FRONT-v2-CSW_Online.php (Screenshot circulated). Need

more information and suggest joining up with Broughton, when previously looked at there were problems with cost and availability of training. Lamancha CC may be able to help.
(Action ED)

- Update on 'Pop up Bob' and Speed Gun (HA)
Possible that Sgt Stewart Grainger is about to order some,
(Action ED to follow up)

2. Funding

Endowment Funding - update (SV and RL)

Following on from various meetings with Tweedsmuir and Upper Tweed Community Councils, Gareth from SSE and Giles from Foundation Scotland – Robert and Sara reported that all have come to an agreement to go ahead with the endowment fund, saving up surplus Clyde Wind Farm monies for future spend. The fund is, at present, going to be called the 'Clyde Borders Investment Fund' and we will receive the final paperwork from Foundation Scotland next week. Going forward the current wind farm panel will make the decisions on how much to enter into the fund each year (starting with a suggested £50k from our current surplus of £300k). The fund is very flexible, allowing the panel to add and take out monies – although Foundation Scotland recommend a maximum withdrawal of 4% per annum to allow the fund to continue growing (on average 7-9% p.a.).

Across our funds, where circumstances demonstrate a need, we have been making an allowance for community councils to draw down money which is to be used for defined purposes, namely to 1) conduct a community survey, 2) create or update a Community Action Plan, or 3) to take on a development worker to assist with the implantation of the former.

Community Development / Action Plan Allowance – message from Gareth Shields

Given the large fund balance and relatively few applications we have seen to the Borders fund in the last five years or so, I approached the panel to see if they would be supportive of SSE making up to 10% of the annual allocation (2021's) available to each community council to undertake any of the three purposes above. I am pleased to advise that the majority were in favour of it.

Last year's allocation to the fund was £145,917, therefore I am writing to you to confirm that SSE / Clyde Wind Farm (Scotland) Ltd, would be pleased to consider any approach from the community council for a grant to undertake a community action plan, development work, or similar which fits with the purposes named above. Therefore, £14,600 is available to each of the three community councils covered by the fund.

As this is an ad-hoc allocation, and due to the nature of community action plans, we do not envisage this being an annual or regular allocation. However, where, for example, a development officer's post is to be funded for two years, then we would be happy to pay the allocation out over two years. It is also not a 'use it or lose it' amount. If, again for example, there are no plans to conduct any of the above until next year, then they money can be drawn down then instead.

(Action SV, RJI to get more detail)

Platinum Jubilee Fund – update (IH and KM) application made to Jubilee fund for hog roast, photograph and Fin Hope Band on Saturday 4th June waiting to hear if successful.

Other Funding – Bob Hunter attended a Tweeddale Placemaking meeting. All ties up with Community Plans, orphaned land and the possibility of a paid post from the Windfarm for someone to do a survey and draw up a plan

To progress the orphaned land project it was agreed to fund a land registry search from micro-grants.

(Action BH,SV)

3. Village Maintenance

An increase to £20 was agreed for flower tub adopters for this year.

(Action AC to let Joyce know, Joyce to send SV an email to send out to flower tub adopters)

New Paths – update on options to Broughton and Biggar (SV)

To look at the possibility of a Skirling to Biggar path via the old Drove Road route

(Action, ED to follow up).

General Maintenance

- Salt bins – Howes Brae filled. Many thanks to Andrew Clark for filling the salt bins
- Parking issues – carried over

Village Clean – Date April 10th 1pm, signage required, Isobel Hunter to contact council re uplift

(Action: IH, SV to send out info to residents)

BT Hut - Agreed to fund the rebuild of the wall in front of the BT Hut, hopefully through micro grants. Possibility of work being done in June this year

(Action: Andrew Clark to progress).

Orphaned Land - Bob Hunter reported that we now have a new contact at the Scottish Land Fund – Elspeth Matheson. In discussion with her and a colleague with extensive experience with ‘orphaned land’ issues several points were made

- Identifying ownership where possible is an important start (contact made with Registrars of Scotland to help)
- SLF look for an overall plan for the community and community benefit
- SLF funding will not assist with anything that is the responsibility of another statutory body (i.e. SBC Roads have responsibility for issues within 3 m of a road which covers most of any flooding problems in the village).

(Action :Bob Hunter to continue...)

Children’s playground Katy Miller reported no update

A.O.B.

- Next CC elections to be discussed at AGM in May. It was agreed to co-opt David Galbraith until May when he could stand for election.
- A vote of thanks was offered to Councillor Heather Anderson and Councillor Eric Small for their advice and support over the last 5 years.
- The meeting closed at 8.15pm

Meeting Dates in 2022:

26 May (AGM), 29 September, 24 November