

# Floors, Makerstoun, Nenthorn & Smailholm Community Council

## Community Council Meeting Minutes

Smailholm Village Hall 17<sup>th</sup> January 2023

1. **Present:** Andrew Carter, Veronica Ross, Philip Green, Tony Kime, Heather Kerr, Gemma Butterfield, Tom Weatherston, Ian Malcolm, David Stark, Jane Roberts and Euan Robson
2. **Apologies:** Ian Topping, Lord Biddulph
3. **Minutes of 18<sup>th</sup> October 2022:** Approved- Proposer Veronica Ross and Seconder Ian Malcolm
4. **Matters Arising:** Grass cutting Smailholm path- Andy Carter advised that he had so far not been able to speak to Susan Grey at Scottish Borders Council and will try again with the ask being the council do a cut mid- July. Veronica Ross confirmed she had received a quote from a local firm for £300+ VAT for the second cut proposed.

5. **Finance:**

**Current Balance:** £ 2386.43.

**Recent Expenditure:** £220 on meeting minutes

**Key Points:** Philip Green confirmed there had been a reimbursement of £192 from Scottish Borders Council and that we need to continue to consider how we spend the balance.

**Key Actions:** Members to consider use of available funds.

6. **Reports:**

a) **Police Report:**

**Key Points:** Andy Carter noted that Kelso still seems to be having issues with anti-social behaviour. Tom Weatherston confirmed that the issues in Kelso continue but that in comparison to some areas relatively small numbers.

b) **SBC Councillor:**

**Key Points:** Tom Weatherston confirmed that Scottish Borders Council are in the process of agreeing their budget for 2023/24 and highlighted it is one of the most difficult faced with upcoming items such as pay rises likely to have an impact. Euan Robson whilst inflation is around 10% that council tax will not raise at this level likely raise is between 4-6%. He also highlighted that some Scottish Government commitments are not fully funded an example being Early Years which is getting £300,000 less to deliver the same service. He also made the

point that Scottish Borders Council had made savings of 40-60 million pounds over the past ten years but that the Borders is facing the pressures of an aging population, this is also a nationwide issue.

## 7. Correspondence:

**Key Points:** Tony Kime confirmed no correspondence to highlight.

**Key Actions:** Andy Carter reminded the members about Resilient Communities particularly with the current cold patch to keep an eye out for our neighbours and also that the cost occurred for running errands could be claimed back.

## 8. Roads:

### a) Gritting

**Key Points:** Andy Carter noted that following the recent spell of bad weather there doesn't seem to have been the normal level of gritting and that there had been a good few vehicle accidents. Tom Weatherston confirmed in the case of this particular spell of bad weather there had been an issue with the forecaster predicting the snow which had impacted on precautionary gritting, the council have taken this issue to with the forecaster. Veronica Ross noted that the grit bin on Eden Road in Smailholm had not been filled up.

**Key Actions:** If members are aware of any roads that have not been serviced, please can you email the details to Tom Weatherston and Euan Robson who will pick this up. Tom Weatherston confirmed he would pick up the issue with the grit bin.

### b) Potholes

**Key Points:** Andy Carter pointed out that some of the potholes in our communities are now approaching critical. It was noted that south of the village hall in Smailholm there was a pothole that seemed to be being caused by water run off from a local field this was making this stretch of the road dangerous, Tom Weatherston advised that we could write to Scottish Borders Council to report as dangerous.

**Key Actions:** Andy will compile a list of potholes and send them to Scottish Borders Council. If members notice particularly bad ones can we take pictures of these and report to Scottish Borders Council on their website, I-Phone users are able to get exact locations of their phones when taking images to support locating these. Andy Carter agreed to write to Scottish Borders Council to report the stretch in Smailholm as dangerous.

### c) Accident at Nenthorn

**Key Points:** Tony Kime noted that there had been a recent accident in Nenthorn, an email from a resident detailing was circulated to FMNSCC members, which highlighted the ongoing issue with speeding in the village, this resulted in a delivery vehicle swerving across the road into the garden wall of a residence. This is more evidence that a review of the 40pmh speed limit is warranted.

**Key Actions:** Euan Robson will report this particular to the Police Road Traffic Officers and Scottish Borders Council Road Safety Group and also enquire around the possibility of setting up a speed camera to gather further evidence. Andy Carter asked that a report be brought back to FMNSCC with what road safety group propose to do to make this stretch safer.

#### 9. **Planning:**

**Key Points:** Andy Carter advised that there had not been any new applications since our last meeting. Focus of discussion was around Smailholm Place Making Andy confirmed that there was a public meeting being held at Smailholm Village Hall on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2023 to which all 68 dwellings in the village have been invited to attend to help shape this piece of work. Focus of place making is on 14 specific areas which residents can share their ambitions, hopes and aspirations for their communities, this will then give communities a clear platform to share these with Scottish Borders Council and other funding bodies. Andy also gave an update on the continued engagement with Mellerstain estate around the community woodland ambition and that this seems to have moved forward a little by engaging around green farming.

**Key Actions:** FMNSCC to consider how we interact with Place Making and the crossovers, Andy Carter and Ian Malcolm are on the Place Making Group and will keep FMNSCC informed of key updated and progressions.

#### 10. **Economic Development & Environment:**

**Key Points:** Andy Carter asked FMNSCC members if we are aiming to get to Zero Carbon as a Community Council, meaning our carbon use would be neutral through carbon offset there is lots we could do to facilitate schemes an example being community electricity generation.

**Key Actions:** It was agreed this is something FMNSCC needs to consider and that the item will be kept on the agenda.

#### 11. **AOCB:**

##### **a) Waste Management**

**Key Points:** David Stark highlighted the confusion around what can and cannot be recycled in the blue kerbside bins. The guidance provided by Scottish Borders Council does not seem to have been updated in a number of years and things have moved on with what is able to be recycled generally, soft plastic being one example. A discussion was also held around the food waste bins and the benefit they would have on our communities.

**Key Actions:** Euan Robson confirmed there had been a recent presentation at Scottish Border Council and that he will get hold of a copy of this and circulate he will also ask if the Council Officer would be able to come along to a future FMNSCC meeting. He highlighted there maybe also scope to hold a food waste pilot in our communities and he will take this forward.

##### **b) Website**

**Key Points:** Heather Kerr noted that she was still unable to find our new website when undertaking a search on her internet search engine, this was echoed by other members.

**Key Actions:** Andy Carter agreed to pick this back up and work with Ian Topping to resolve

### **c) Ongoing Use of Owl Camara**

**Key Points:** Andy Carter confirmed he would attempt to borrow the Owl again from Scottish Borders Council for the AGM but if we are considering buying one the retail price has gone up significantly and would be the equivalent of £300 per meeting.

**Key Actions:** Andy is going to pick up a conversation with Tony Kime around this as he had previously found one for sale at a more reasonable cost, feedback to be given at the next meeting.

### **d) Bin Collections**

**Key Points:** Philip Green noted that the bin collection to his property had been erratic of late and did we know if this was an issue elsewhere, members confirmed they had not been made of any issues in their communities.

**Key Actions:** Euan Robson confirmed that Scottish Borders Council policy is that all missed bin collections must be completed within five working days, issues can be reported on the website and the bins must be left out for collection.

- 12. Date of next meeting:** The next meeting will be at 7pm on 18<sup>th</sup> April 2023, this will also be the AGM. It will be held in Smailholm Village Hall, as a blended meeting.