Howgate Community Council

Minutes of meeting held on 19th September 2018

Present

Bruce Hobbs (chair), Graeme Young ( treasurer), Ian Quigley ( Secretary) and Ian King.

In attendance

Allanah Juchniewicz,Tommy Goldie, James Garry, Steven Beaumont, Susan Gracie.

1 Apologies

David Wilson, Jenny Westwood, Colin Bennett, Debbie McCall, Joe Wallace.

2 Minutes of meeting held on 17 May 2018.

Approved. Proposed by Bruce Hobbs, seconded Ian Quigley. It was explained that the minutes would be published on the Howgate Village Website and would normally only be emailed to Community Council members, the Liason Officer and the appropriate MDC Councillor although there may be exceptions if others have undertaken specific tasks. We will investigate posting a copy of the Minutes in the village hall and/or the notice board outside the hall.

3 Community Policing Report

Allanah had sent the wider report covering August in advance by email and this had been circulated to Council members. (It also appears in the Town Crier). There were no specific crimes of significance in the HCC Area. See section 4.2 on traffic.

4 Matters arising not covered on the Agenda.

4.1 Midlothian Local Development Plan.

Tommy had been in touch with the planning department and had arranged for a member of the planning department to be available for a meeting with a representative of HCC. It was agreed that Elizabeth Quigley, who has in the past worked in a planning department, should take up the offer. Note: Elizabeth had a very useful meeting on 21September and a note of this will be sent out.

4.2 Traffic and Speeding issues.

It had been agreed that David Wilson and Ian King would be the main points of contact with Midlothian Council on Traffic and roads issues and would work with Tommy Goldie on this.

Tommy had circulated a very helpful report in advance of the meeting and this is attached to the Minutes. In summary, there are a number of issues where response is awaited from the Roads Department and Tommy will continue to push on this.

It was observed that the road between the roundabout at Howgate and Loanstone was in a very bad state and that work on this was urgently required.

On the matter of speeding there was a discussion on whether it might be possible to have speed recording “guns” operated by members of the community. They would of course have no powers to stop traffic or any similar powers and it would simply be a matter of recording of information for onward transmission. Allanah said she would investigate whether this could be appropriate and report back.

Alannah also reported the involvement of the Midlothian Community Action Team, which is tasked with addressing community based issues, e.g vandalism , road checks etc, who are looking at traffic and speeding issues in the area. This is something which will develop.

Tommy Goldie drew attention to the section in his report on the Midlothian Traffic and Paths Group, which groups together local bodies in Midlothian to try to get priorities set for roads and paths.

4.3 New HCC Constitution.

Ian Quigley reported that the new Constitution had been approved at the AGM, that a copy had been sent to Tommy Goldie as Liaison Officer and that it had been published on the Howgate Village Website.

4.4 Midlothian Council Budget Consultation

This item is now redundant as the MC budget has been agreed. The Penicuik recycling facility and the Midlothian libraries will not close under the currently approved budget. It was noted that not all were aware, or had been made aware, that Midlothian Council were introducing a charge of £35 for brown bin collection when this resumes in 2019.

4.5 Footpath

There was no update to report.

5. Potential Closure of Howgate Kirk.

Sheena Dawe, who is the Session right, had reported that Howgate Kirk was likely to close in December 2018.

This has particular significance for the community in respect of the village hall, and the glebe of the church. It was recognised that different members of the wider community will have different priorities, e.g. for some it will be the continued existence of the glebe as it is and for others it will be having a village hall with suitable car parking.

At this early stage HCC is not aware of what the Church proposes to do with the property.

Sheena had been in touch with Tom Schofield as chairman of Howgate Village Hall Association and Ian Quigley.

It was agreed that Ian should be able to be involved with Tom and Sheena on ongoing discussions to ascertain the intentions of the various parties. A member of the public raised the suggestion of forming an appropriate body to consider a “Community Buyout”.

At this stage it was felt that the role of the Community Council should be gathering and dissemination of information and facilitating public meetings of the community as and when appropriate.

6. Standing items

6.1 Correspondence

6.1.1 DW emailed with details of Midlothian’s Health and Social Care Strategic Plan. A questionnaire is available at <https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/hsc-survey> and will be circulated to the committee and those present.

6.1.2 Rae Cahill, Danielle Rowley MP’s new constituency support manager has offered her assistance in relevant matters should we so wish. She is willing to attend our meetings if required.

6.2 Planning

Although not a member of HCC Elizabeth Quigley has agreed to keep an eye on the planning register and report on major applications. This will not include dormer windows, porches etc. or agricultural buildings. Anyone interested can check the website.

The items reported were

18/00218 Erection of 4 houses plus access road etc. adjoining Meyerling (Milkhall). This was refused.

18/00148 Conversion and extensions to former Howgate restaurant at Milkhall to form 2 houses plus the building of 5 new houses. A decision is awaited.

18/00131 Subdivision of and extensions to Templevale Howgate to form 2 additional dwelling houses together with ancillary works. This was granted.

6.3 HCC Funds

Graeme reported that the rent due for the use of the hall had been paid but that he was awaiting a receipt to exhibit to the auditor.

It is necessary to apply for annual running cost funds. Bruce agreed to initiate this.

7 AOCB

It was confirmed that meetings would be held on the fourth Wednesday of the month to fit in with the meeting dates of the federation of community councils.

8 Date of next meeting

Wednesday 24th October 2018. Ian Q tendered his apologies for that date.

**Officer Actions report for Howgate Community Council meeting September 2018**

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| **Background Information** | **Action Requested from Officer** | **Response** | **Further Action or Comments** |
| Pomathorn Road centre markings have been refreshed but only to the top of the hill from around the area of the old castle. The remainder down to Peebles Road still needs done.  The carriageway from the roundabout to Loanstone is in a terrible state with motorists having to cross the centre line in both directions to avoid the potholes and depressions.  Thanks to David Sharp we now have electronic speed signs to north and south of the village. Rumble strips have been strategically placed before the speed limit signs to north and south entrances.  We felt that well lit arch placed at the northern village entrance and an arch placed at the southern village entrance would create a feeling of enclosure which would be likely to encourage drivers to see they were entering a village and slow down. Red entrance markings may or may not have a similar effect.  Peebles traffic has room to undertake on the inside of a driver making the crossing to the 701 Moffat Road and the turning car blocks the uphill view. Peebles traffic has room to undertake on the inside of a driver making the crossing to the 701 Moffat Road and the turning car blocks the uphill view.  The diagonal nature of the cross roads is dangerous because drivers from Howgate can miss seeing vehicles speeding from Penicuik. (Bad angle and signs causing partially obscured view. | Contact Roads Dept to ask the following:  1) Are the Council aware of this situation and do they plan to resolve it?  2) Are there plans to undertake carriageway resurfacing works in Howgate, particularly from the roundabout to Loanstone?  3) Please let us know the results of speed measurements and when the red entrance markings will be done.  4) Please find out if speed bumps/camera can be deployed at Howgate to ensure calm traffic.  NB Rosewell has a 20 limit and speed bumps.  5) Could the Leadburn crossroads ‘Give Way’ bars be narrowed to ensure a single lane?  6) Would it be possible to make the junction itself right angled by bringing the ‘GIVE WAY’ box for traffic coming from Howgate parallel to the road coming from Penicuik? | **Update from Douglas Glynn, Roads Dept:**  **22 August 2018**  Lining is still outstanding however we are going to have to return to Pomathorn Road to try and resolve drainage issue. This will require a closure so it is my intention to carry out the lining at the same time.  **Update from Douglas Glynn,**  **22 August 2018**  Patching work will still be undertaken this financial year. I will provide details once I am in a position to.  Information has been requested from Roads Dept on items 3, 4, 5 and 6 of the action requests column. NO UPDATE FROM ROADS DEPT.  NO UPDATE FROM ROADS DEPT.  NO UPDATE FROM ROADS DEPT.  NO UPDATE FROM ROADS DEPT | Currently, as we have no confirmation date from on this, we must keep it live until resolved.  NB. The current Council financial year runs until 31/3/19. Again, we will keep this action live. |
| **Midlothian Local Dev Plan:**  The elements relevant to HCC are:  Pomathorn Mill Penicuik, with indicative capacity of 50 houses but with key considerations being access and prominence of site  Wellington school, with indicative capacity of 50-60 houses but with key considerations being access restrictions though with potential to incorporate adjacent land (RD2 - Wellington) to assist in overcoming these. | It was agreed that HCC would collate the responses already made by them and send these to TG in his capacity as liaison officer so that he can put these points to the reporter. | Information received on 4/9. I followed this up with the office of the new MLC Chief Exec highlighting the length of time elapsed and the frustration felt by HCC members due to lack (even) of communication on the matter. I was advised that of those circulated/ named on the letter that Peter Arnsdorf was the contact to make. Alasdair Mathers then forwarded the letter to Peter and followed it up days later. We are still awaiting a reply, although Alasdair has been out of the office since late last week, so may have received one. | Keep live- follow up the enquiry via Alasdair regularly until a satisfactory conclusion is achieved. |

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| **Additional:**  The Midlothian Roads, Traffic and Paths group (MTRAP) have decided to go down the route of making a participation request to Midlothian Council to engage and assist in setting priorities for roads, paths and underfoot surfaces. Representatives met with Director John Blair on 24th of August and will report back to the Federation in September (19th of September) and then discuss the next steps. If unsatisfied a formal Participation Request will be made, which the Council must respond to within 30 days either to accept, or if rejecting, must give clear reasons (which can then be appealed). The next MTRAP meeting is on Tuesday 25th of September in Penicuik Town Hall at 7.15pm. |