



The Royal Burgh of Selkirk and District Community Council

Chair	Andy Murray	44 Hillside Terrace, Selkirk TD7 4ND	01750 21008
Vice-chair	Alistair Pattullo	12, Victoria Crescent, Selkirk, TD7 5DE	01750 721697
Minutes Secretary	Kirsty Lovatt	15, Ladylands Terrace, Selkirk TD7 4BB	
Treasurer	Judith Thompson	12 Victoria Crescent, Selkirk TD7 5DE	01750 721697

Minutes of the Royal Burgh of Selkirk and District Community Council Meeting held on Monday 11th December 2023.

1. Present – Community Councillors: Andy Murray (Chair), Alistair Pattullo (Vice Chair/Secretary), Kirsty Lovatt (Minutes Secretary), Judith Thompson (Treasurer), Sue Bremner (Assistant Treasurer), Ed Strang Steel, Alisdair Lockhart, and Ieuan Chamberlain.

Also present – SBC Councillors Caroline Cochrane, Elaine Thornton-Nicol, Leigh Douglas; 5 members of the public.

2. Chair's Introduction – AM congratulated Selkirk High School for winning the national Cultivation Street Garden competition, as well as the Rotary Club & Scott's Selkirk for a successful 'Celebrate Selkirk' event on 25th November.

Other recent events included a late-night shopping initiative for selected High Street shops organised by the Peony Rose on December 7th, and on the same night new wine bar/restaurant Tibbie's opened in the former Courthouse Café premises.

Future events include the Silver Band Christmas Concert on December 16th, and the panto on 28th/29th December. The relaunched Selkirk Session at the Cricket Club will now be in January, the original date having been rescheduled due to illness.

3. Apologies/Declarations of Interest – Apologies were received from Ian King, Grant Kinghorn, and David Playfair.

4. Approval of the minutes – Approved by JT and seconded by AP.

5. Matters arising from the meeting of the SCC held on Tuesday 14th November 2023 and not covered elsewhere – none.

6. Community Police Report – not yet received.

7. Planning Matters – none to report. (Ian King is away until January).

8. Councillor Caroline Cochrane Proposal for Community Awards

Spirit of Selkirk Awards 2024 - Draft Proposal postponed till January

Action: CC

9. Open Forum – No matters were raised.

10. SBC Proposed Changes to Community Council Constitution

In 2019, SBC started to review the Terms of Reference for the 69 (2 are in abeyance) Community Councils in the Scottish Borders. The process was interrupted by Covid and re-started in January 2023. They have now sent to all Community Councils a pack of reference documents, including Training Handbook, Code of Practice, Documentation Retention Schedule, and changes to the 'Scheme for Community Councils' under the Local Government Act 1994.

As part of the consultation process, SBC requested feedback on whether Community Council might wish to amend their geographical area responsibility. Due to the importance of the 3 Brethren to Selkirk, AM proposed that the SCC area of responsibility be extended slightly, to include one more of the fences bounding the 3 Brethren area, purely to ease decision of upkeep and repair. The proposal was agreed.

AM proposed that the Council consider reducing membership from 12 to 10, given that not one of the 25 Borders Councils able to maintain membership of 12 has publicly confirmed that it does so, and that a lower membership would enable more effective co-option of (non-voting) members with specific skills. The proposal was not agreed.

[NB: it was an indicative vote only, on a suggestion prompted by SBC. If it had been passed, AM would have advised SBC Democratic Services. In addition, an Extraordinary Meeting, or inclusion at the AGM would have had to happen, with appropriate notice, and a vote of approval, as well as subsequent approval by SBC, according to the Constitution].

The document with proposed SBC Constitutional changes were sent to all Community Councillors, and some of the contentious content was discussed.

Proposals and amendments were as follows:

1.3 Community Councils are a type of community participation body as defined in the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. They have the authority to participate in the Community Planning process to produce Local Outcome Improvement Plans; make participation requests to a public service authority to permit them to participate in an outcome improvement process; to make asset transfer requests to a relevant authority; and to be notified of the local authority's intention to dispose of, or change the use of, any Common Good property.

It was agreed that the last sentence should be deleted, since it implies SBC's ownership of, and right to dispose of, Common Good property.

2.2 In carrying out their activities, Community Councils must at all times adhere to the law, the terms of this Scheme, and the Community Councillors' Code of Conduct. Community Councils complement the role of the local authority ~~although they are not part of local government.~~

It was agreed that the last sentence should be deleted, since Community Councils were set up by, are funded by, and (by this document) regulated by SBC, so arguably are indeed part of local government.

4.2 A Community Council has a duty under statute to represent the views of its local area. It should reflect the broad spectrum of opinion and interests of all sections of its community. The views of the community should take precedence over the views of individual Community Councillors. A Community Council will ensure that an equal opportunity is given to all people within the community to put forward their views and opinions and shall recognise the diversity of an area. As and when considered necessary,

a Community Council is encouraged to carry out a survey or hold a local event to gain the views of its community on any number of local matters,

including the identification of those issues or priorities of most importance to the community.

It was agreed to add: *'In order to be able to reflect and interact with the views of the Community, Community Councillors should be readily contactable with reasonable support, by fellow Councillors and members of the public, and shall not make themselves unreasonably or impracticably uncontactable by restricting means of communication, eg by refusing to use email when available and practical.'*

6.1 A casual vacancy shall be deemed to arise in any of the following circumstances:

a) on the day when a member ceases to be entered in the Electoral Roll for the area covered by the Community Council;

b) on the expiry of a period of six calendar months during which a member of a Community Council has failed to attend a meeting of that Community Council without notification of absence, or of any Committee or other body constituted by such Community Council, unless leave of absence has been granted or other reason accepted by that Community Council;

It was agreed to add: *'or if a member has submitted their resignation, and a letter of confirmation has been sent to the member by the Chair, accepting such resignation.'*

12.1

c) Frequency of holding meetings, of which there shall be at least three in any twelve month period, to be convened at intervals of not more than 6 months, including provision for an Annual General Meeting, which shall be held not later than 60 days after the end of the Community Council's financial year, which shall run from April to March;

Selkirk Community Council's AGM is customarily held in the third week of June, in order to be after the Common Riding, which in 2024 will be 77 days after April 1. It was agreed that the interval should be changed to 80 days.

11. Reports from SBC Councillors:

Caroline Cochrane –

The Town Team meeting of 29th November 2023 had to be postponed because of adverse weather conditions. New meeting will be scheduled for January (probably the 3rd week).

Action: CC

CC announced that the Fleece has a new tenant – opening details to be announced in future.

Elaine Thornton-Nicol

Leagh Douglas –

The SBC Budget is being worked on, and a public consultation is live, on the SBC website. LD to circulate the link to all members, who were encouraged to contribute. AM commented that SBC consultations are frequently written in such a way to obscure simple choices, which is a barrier to effective feedback.

Tracker of Works

Market Place bus stop now cleaned. Now requires sanding of rust and repainting, plus varnishing of benches. **Action: E T-N**

A member of the public had contacted the Council re: works required on the Bannerfield pedestrian bridge, the 110 Stairs, and certain gravestones, although these requests were well known to SBC Councillors. **Action: CC, E T-N, LD**

12. Treasurer's Report – Judith Thompson presented

Community Council
£2,814.76 in account
Outgoings - £179.20 for or additional insurance; £30 secretarial services.

Blooming Selkirk £1,682.70 in account

Brighter Selkirk
£2,824.19 in account. Outgoings: donation to the 2nd Rugby Team of £100.

Selkirk Hill Mgt Group
£9,037.12 in account. Awaiting £450 from Local Community Paths Maintenance fund.

JT is still pursuing a 3rd Signatory for the Community Council bank account.

13. Reports from sub-groups –

Selkirk Hill Mgt Group -

LD began by paying tribute to John Rathie and the many years of service he had contributed toward the SHMG. Gordon Edgar has resigned with immediate effect which now leads to concerns over the future of the group. Possibility of an extra-ordinary meeting being held was discussed but it was decided to hold a meeting on the first Wednesday in February instead.

Blooming Selkirk/Brighter Selkirk –

Christmas lights went up on 18th November 2023 – awaiting Live Borders for illumination. Market Place Christmas tree up – SBC have installed lights, which are active. AP reported that he is waiting on a final quote for replacement planters. There should be a total of 4 planters when repairs are completed.

COPS –

SB to contact ESS for possible free bulbs **SB/ESS**
Compost for planting delayed. Planning planting in the Cross Keys space and wild flower beds. Still requesting volunteers for Cross Keys planting. COPS have approval to plant trees on The Green. SB mentioned that the steps to the Green are in need of repair.

Common Good Fund Working Group –

Last meeting 29th November. Future of the Courthouse Cafe has been decided and Tibbie's opened on 7th December.

IK – still to follow up Town Arms pub replacement windows. **Action: IK**

Victoria Park Action Group –

Live Borders review has been completed and a meeting will be held 15th December to go through the transition plan.

PR Committee

Meeting to be held re: January edition of newsletter. Proposal to print more copies this time, including distribution to care homes. **Action: AM/GK/DP**

13. Reports from other community organisations and outside bodies – Selkirk Response / Resilience Team

AP/AM still to have meeting re: Selkirk Resilience Plan and storing essential support items.

Plattling Twinning Group –

AP – no further news

Selkirk Future

As per report from Caroline Cochrane.

SBCCN –

Action: AP/AM

Action: AM/CC

AL reported that the Constitution was still being worked on and will be distributed to all CC's when completed. **Action: AL**

A7 Action Group –

Consultation now complete. Extraordinary General Meeting on 21 Dec at Future Hawick offices, 7pm. AM to attend in place of Ian King. (IK away till Jan). **Action: AM**

Selkirk Regeneration –

Board meeting was held 08 Dec. Grant for repairs to 1 Tower Street unsuccessful – other grant to be pursued. Test render replacement to be carried out in Spring, when weather is more suitable. More funds/plans required for storage of e-bikes. A suggestion to store e-bikes in the Cross Keys space was discussed and it was agreed not to support it.

IK will do a survey of all business properties in the High Street / Market Place to provide data for future actions. **Action: IK**

14. AOCB –

AM announced that John Hawkins is now no longer a member of the Community Council, having not attended 6 meetings without prior apologies. A resignation was tendered verbally in July, and the Chair confirmed in writing. However, as per the current Constitution, it was necessary to wait 6 months, in the absence of a formal resignation letter to the Secretary.

MoP raised the issue of the lack of bus transport service to and from Selkirk / Tweedbank Station / Borders General Hospital / Melrose. LD mentioned that much data is available on public transport use, and there is a 5-year SBC plan which includes a commitment to

expanding services. This is also an issue that can be commented on in public feedback for the SBC budget, as above.

AL praised Scottish Power for their efficient response to a recent power cut.

There being no further business, the Chair thanked all for their participation. Meeting was closed at 8:33pm.

Next meeting will be held Monday 8th January 2024 in the Cruickshank Room, Victoria Halls, Selkirk at 7.00pm.