

MINUTES OF ESKDALEMUIR COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING 7pm 18th May 2023 at the COMMUNITY HUB

Those Present: Nick Jennings (Chairman), John Furlonger (Secretary), and Barry Young (Treasurer), Liz McQueen, Bernard Provost, Stuart Green, Archie Dryburgh (D/G)

Apologies for Absence: Beatrice Furlonger, Dennis Male (D/G Council)

Before the commencement of the normal agenda there was a presentation by Paul Adkins regarding the Shooting range at Clerkhill which is resubmitting a planning proposal to the Dumfries and Galloway Council. The presentation related to Noise, safety, visual impact, cultural considerations. The following is merely a brief Summary of some of the main points presented to the Council:

‘The Clerkhill range is narrow and the 1000m target is on the very edge of the range with potential risk to residents near to that edge.
For the 2000m ranges it is necessary to fire 70m above the target, which produces a potential hazard by adding to the risk of inaccuracy
The range supporters talk of soft surface, but ricochets can occur off items in soft surfaces posing a risk to those living close to the range.
Noise testing should assume a worst-case scenario; only medium ammunition has so far been tested. Further testing is required.
A high level of sound is inimical to the reason why many people have moved to the area and has already caused distress and concern to local residents.’
The Police take no responsibility for determining the safety of the range. Their concern is that all necessary insurance has been taken out.
It is unusual to have private properties (or public footpaths) in such close proximity to a range where poor shooting could lead to risks to people or property’.

The Chairman thanked Paul on behalf of the Council for his presentation, which will be of considerable interest to Archie Dryburgh representing the D/G Council.

Minutes of Previous Meeting: These were read and approved with a recommendation that we should record our thanks to Darren Burns for his presentation regarding the Over Cassock range at the previous meeting.

Matters arise: These will be dealt with as items on the Agenda.

Correspondence: There has been no Police report.
Concern was expressed that road closure signs sometimes appear when the reason for the closure has no impact on the local situation. Archie Dryburgh will ask the

Road authorities to be more specific in their signing in the future so that local activity is not disrupted.

Resilience Planning: Rachel Knox will continue to serve as Resilience Project Manager with funding from the Community Council through the Hub. Rachel is anxious to contact the new residents in the area, and is also concerned to get First Aid Training under way.

Planning Notices and Updates on the Ranges: No date has yet been arranged for the Over Cassock hearing.

The so called 'wild life ponds at Clerkhill' are in fact Duck Ponds for the breeding of birds for shooting. Several local objections have been raised to the ambiguity of their situation and their having been built without Planning permission. They will be considered as part of the Major Development application.

Davington Schoolhouse has voiced concerns regarding their broadband. The new mast has been approved and it will most likely be in operation within a year.

Website Update: It's now pretty much ready to go. It is suggested that to mark its opening there should be some form of competition with a prize of a £50 voucher for the Hub. This will be advertised through a flier. The website should be the means of keeping the Community informed of local events and local issues. It should also give us an opportunity to promote the Community Council and try to involve those who are new to Eskdalemuir with the possibility of their taking an active part on the Council. Stuart suggested that there could be occasional 'Surgeries' when members of the Council could be available to discuss issues that people wished to draw to their attention, and which could then be passed on to the D/G Council or to our MSP and MP

Succession Planning: We need to plan for the future with the intention to pass on the positions of authority. There would need to be a period of transition, so a strategy for recruitment is required in order to encourage new residents to take an interest. It was suggested that Rachel should be co-opted onto the Council in order that she should be fully acquainted with all the affairs of the Community, and to assist in the carrying out her responsibilities with Resilience.

Community Benefit Company Update - Local projects, training and Education

Bursaries: - There is two categories of funding available to us. There is the £5000 from that is for small local projects separate from the Crossdykes funding. This is available for applications from within the Community according to criteria, which can be publicised on the Website, which could also be the channel for applications. The Crossdykes funding is considerably larger. Stuart suggested a Generator, which could be plugged in and used within the hub, and might also, generate income by being hired out. It was however pointed out that power cuts were less frequent than hitherto and the generator might be standing idle for long periods. The larger funding would be available for applications for training and education, which could lead on, to obtaining employment or in some other way enhancing the prospects of the applicant.

The criteria for these applications would be put on the Website to be considered by the Community Council. Anybody in the Council area can apply.

A.O.B: Potholes. Archie was asked to raise the matter of the poor state of the B723 with the D/G Council. There was a relevant meeting of the D/G Council in the near future.

Date of Next Meeting: 7pm on July 20th

The meeting was closed