

GAVINTON, FOGO & POLWARTH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting held at Gavinton Village Hall Monday 16 July 2012

1. Present were John Marjoribanks (JM) (Chairman), Janet O'Kane (JOK) (Secretary), Peter Gibbens (PG) (Treasurer), Ellen Curran (EC), Margaret Bishop (MB), Cllr Frances Renton (FR), Cllr John Greenwell (JG). Apologies were received from Kerry Renton and Cllr Donald Moffat.
2. Minutes of the meeting of 26 March 2012 were agreed and signed.
3. Matters arising:
 - Tree planting: PG reported that David Seed has obtained a tree for Polwarth and planted it. Plaques are now required for this and for Fogo. JM reported on the poor condition of the western-most cherry tree at Gavinton Kirk, ravaged by canker. He suggested that both trees be replaced with another type of tree so that the canker won't spread, like an acer. FR is doubtful if SBC will take down a seemingly healthy tree, even to ensure a matching pair, but she will discuss this with Simon Wilkinson.
 - Grit bins: FR has got Gavinton back on the SBC list to have grit bins but it is not known yet how many. MB stressed that one is especially needed at the top of Red Brae, as the bus stop is at the bottom of it and it gets very icy during the winter.
4. Planning applications: JM circulated the latest report. JOK asked what happens if conditions of an application are not acted upon. JM will investigate some specific examples of this. In the light of JM now being Chairman, a volunteer is sought to take over his planning role.
5. Treasurer's report: the CC currently has a balance of £509 in the bank, with an SBC grant of £630 to come. The trees, plaques and work to the football nets are still to be paid for.
6. Pot-holes, South St, Gavinton: JM wrote to D Silcock on this matter on 28th June. JG had meeting with D Silcock about it too, and was assured that all the potholes will be done. However, temporary filling does not last and a proper job, like that done on Main Street a few years ago, is needed. FR and JG said this would have to be in next year's budget, but there was still no guarantee as so little is budgeted for Berwickshire's roads.
7. Walking access at Caldra: JOK reported that the previous owner of Caldra House had verbally abused walkers and put up signs to keep people off her land. However, the new owner is happy for walkers to exercise their 'right to roam'. There followed a discussion about the rain once again washing away the path down to Fogo Footbridge. FR will discuss the matter with SBC's Access Officer re the CC fundraising to make the repairs, which will cost about £5,000.
8. A letter has been received from a Gavinton resident asking the CC to investigate various issues. JOK will write a formal response.
 - Conservation of energy by reducing or turning off street lighting in Gavinton. SBC has examined this possibility Borders-wide and FR will send JOK a copy of the report. The lights are on timers but cannot be dimmed. Many residents would be unhappy about this on grounds of security.
 - Gavinton to become a No Cold Callers Allowed area. This has already been discussed by the CC and it was agreed to invite the co-ordinator the scheme to speak at the September meeting.
 - The state of the roads. Dealt with in point 6 above.
9. JM told the CC about a visit to Langton graveyard by Cockburn descendants who contacted us after seeing the Gavinton.net website. Given the popularity of researching one's ancestors these days it was agreed that the website should carry more information about this, and JOK will liaise with John Robertson. JM is also trying to contact another member of the Cockburn family who lives in the Champagne region of France.
10. Recruitment of CC members:
 - JM has drafted a letter inviting residents to participate in the October elections, to be distributed across the GF&P area, by hand in the main settlements, by post for outlying areas. CC members are asked to email their comments on the letter to him asap. FR and JG agreed to email JOK with contact details of where an up-to-date electoral roll can be obtained.

- SBC plans to change the CC Scheme in order to remove CC sub-areas, but until then we cannot do this, despite interest having been shown by some Polwarth residents to join the CC.
11. Keep Berwickshire Tidy Campaign: G, F & P in joint second place. JM said that this is a reflection on how well our area is looked after by its residents. He will attend the awards ceremony on our behalf.
12. Correspondence received:
- SBC: Maintenance grants for local community paths
 - Kelso Horticultural Society summer exhibition: Sunday 26 August
 - SBC: CC Insurance. JOK to send SBC details of updated cover required.
 - Scottish Borders Elder Voice
 - SBC: Draft Community Resilience Guidance – invitation to comment. The CC has already agreed we should probably produce our own plan, and JM will follow up.
 - SBC: Consultation on proposed Community Empowerment & Renewal Bill. JM to read and report back to CC.
 - Voluntary Action Fund (VAF): Community grants available
 - Swan Youth Trust: Invitation to apply for funds
 - Safer Borders newsletter
 - Energy Saving Trust: free insulation scheme – concerns over doorstep callers
 - SBC: Views needed for public transport study. Members were encouraged to respond to this study by going to www.scotborders.gov.uk/transport and completing a questionnaire or requesting a paper copy by contacting SBC's Passenger Transport team on 01835 826751. It was also agreed that this should be mentioned on the Gavinton.net website to bring it to residents' attention.
13. AOCB
- JM suggested that the CC could speed up getting information out to the community by circulating and approving minutes within 2 weeks of a meeting. JOK to check with Clare Malster that there are no reasons why this cannot be done.
 - There were sheep roaming in the Gavinton allotments recently. JM will speak to the owner.
 - There has been a reduction in the dog poo problem but sometimes bags are filled and carelessly discarded. More signs have been requested, also copy of warden's regular report.
 - A resolution was passed to change one signatory for the CC's RBS bank account from MB to JM.
- Dates of future meetings in 2012 (all at 7pm in Gavinton Village Hall unless otherwise stated):
- 10th September
 - 22nd October
 - 3rd December

Janet O'Kane, Minutes Secretary