

**Biggar Community Council**  
**Minutes of the meeting held at 7:00pm on 20/1/20**  
**in Biggar Library Meeting Room**

**Present:**

**Community Council**

Jerry Sumpster (Chair), Jan Currie (Secretary), Gil Dunn (Treasurer), Thelma Ingram, Jimmy Ritchie, Laura Shirley, Janet Moxley, Lesley Craise (Minute Taker)  
Al Stewart (Cornet's Club) – Associate Member

**Ex Officio**

Cllr Ian McAllan, Cllr Alex Allison

**5 members of the public**

**1. Apologies**

No apologies were received.

**2. Chair's Opening Remarks**

Jerry welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**3. Minutes of Last Meeting**

Thelma asked that, on page 2 the minute regarding Police Scotland's advice about phoning 101 or 999 be amended as she felt the minute did not accurately reflect what was said by Police Scotland. The phrase "and to phone 101 or 999 where it is felt that an individual is in personal danger, or a break in (or similar) is underway" was amended to read "and to phone 101 or 999 where it is felt that an individual is in personal danger or a suspicious incident is underway".

With this amendment, adoption of the minutes was proposed by Jerry and seconded by Jimmy.

**3.1 Matters Arising**

No matters arising were raised.

**3.2 Actions Table Update**

Most tasks were complete. Updates were:

- Janet is hoping a meeting with neighbouring community councils can take place in March, date and venue to be confirmed.
- Thelma has contacted an appropriate person in SLC re resilience planning
- Enquiries about any SLC accessibility fund available to support people with disabilities participating in community councils drew a blank. However, Jerry

### **3.2 Actions Table Update (cont.)**

has contacted the Equalities Department of SLC who are advising that, as a first step, Thelma should look at ability.net. Further steps, such as a home based assessment of needs would then be a possibility. Jerry urged Thelma to cash the cheque she had received for the additional expenditure on ink necessary because of her visual impairment, because an uncashed cheque at Year End would cause problems for our Business Account Top Up claim. Thelma agreed to cash the cheque on the condition that the CC writes to Alison Bell, SLC stating that we feel an accessibility fund for Community Councillors should be in place. After debate, it was agreed that Jerry/Gil would write a letter and Thelma agreed to cash the cheque.

- The development at Loanindale has been named “Biggar Arts”. The organisation will have a stall at the community fair.
- Cllr McAllan has written to SPT and the Traffic Commissioner regarding the poor quality of the 101/102 bus service. A response is being prepared.
- There has been no response from SLC about how they would respond to the situation where Greenhills were unable to safely staff the nursing home in the event of an emergency in which roads were blocked and staff could not travel to work.
- The High School Himalayan Trip group from the High School have agreed to do the catering at the Community Fair.
- The Local Electricity bill is no longer relevant as it failed to proceed at Westminster because of the General Election.

### **4. Police Report**

Police Scotland had sent Jan a report outlining crimes and incidents in the Biggar area between 17/12/19 and 13/01/20, which she read out. A summary follows:

- Theft of mobile phone from Crown, High Street -ongoing enquiries
- Racist incident. Two offenders detected
- Theft of purse and cash Langvout Square –enquires ongoing
- Theft by house breaking Covenanters Way - enquires ongoing
- Theft by shoplifting BP Coulter Road - enquires ongoing
- Common Assault Elphinstone – enquires ongoing
- In relation to previous housebreakings (Brownlies and BP) enquires are still ongoing.

The report alerted us to the fact that the two officers we have been liaising with will be based in Carlisle rather than Lanark over the next few months due to refurbishment taking place at the Lanark Police Office.



## **7. Treasurers Report (cont.)**

Gil highlighted that, partly due to having made two payments for bonfire insurance in this financial year, there could be a cash flow problem at the start of the next financial year because SLC do not reimburse the business account until June. She stressed that we need to raise money to meet ongoing expenses like newsletter costs and hall hire.

## **8. Hogmanay Celebrations Update**

Alastair reported that the Bonfire had gone well. Everyone concurred. It is estimated between three and five thousand people attended and there are some good photographs. The cornets have had a debriefing meeting and intend to address the issue of the torch procession getting split up on the way up the High Street next year. SLC have not yet been in touch with the cornets to arrange a review.

## **9. Specific matters brought to meeting by public**

There were none.

## **10. SLC Councillors Reports**

### A702 Safety Issues

Cllr McAllan is waiting to hear from Amey.

### Clydesdale Close

Cllr McAllan clarified that the council is unable to paint the archway. It was suggested that property owners are responsible, and we should write to Walker Carpets.

### Local Base for Police

Cllr McAllan confirmed that the Police Authority are still looking for a base in Biggar. Cllr McAllan was asked who owned the disused police station, he replied the Scottish Police Authority.

### Lighting for steps and path at Campsies

Cllr Allison stated that he had been wondering if Biggar's Common Good Fund might be a source of funding to improve the lighting here. Jimmy stated that he is still discussing this issue with Amey. Questions were raised about ongoing maintenance costs if the Common Good Fund provided capital funding, and we were interested in getting more information about the Common Good Fund. Jimmy will continue to liaise with Amey, and we will make enquiries about how much is in the Common Good Fund.

Cllr Allison will wait for Amey's reply before he makes any approach to the fund.

## **11. Agenda Items**

### **11.1 Chair's 2020 "Call to Action"**

#### **11.1.1 Update BCC members contact details**

All members to check their contact details and update Gil if needed. These will be included on the website and in the next newsletter. In addition, there will be an internal contact list.

#### **11.1.2 Division of Labour**

Jerry outlined the CC's current areas of involvement and suggested that people opt for different areas of involvement, rather than everyone being involved in everything, in the interests of more efficient ways of working. These areas of interest and involvement could then be publicised on the website and via newsletters so that members of the public know who the most appropriate person is to contact if they are interested in an issue. This was felt to be a good idea. Jerry will contact people to clarify their interests.

#### **11.1.3 Communication**

Jerry wanted to check that everyone's communication needs were being met. Lesley reminded people that one of Thelma's needs was for everything, including emails, to be in size 14 font. Also necessary sometimes is to extract text from the body of emails and produce a format Thelma can use. Neither of these things is difficult and Lesley stated that she has been doing her best to meet these needs. Thelma asked that anything of length should be supplied in ways that enable her to easily print them including emails in size 14 font. Word documents work best. She thanked Lesley for her assistance. SLC emails are particularly bad and Jan will write to SLC to see if anything can be done about that. Jimmy is back "online" and no longer needs paper copies. The provision of phone numbers for everyone for internal use should improve communication.

### **11.2 Grants/Microgrants**

Jerry updated the new members of the public attending about the grants administered by Biggar CC.

#### **11.2.1 Glenkerie Microgrant Application from BCC**

In the context of this application we discussed whether it might be possible to use one of our 12 free lets per year to hire the Municipal Hall for a community occasion and pay for one of the library lets. This would save money. Jan will write to Elizabeth Harrison at SLC to see if this is possible.

The grant application, for £191.60, for the costs of hall hire and printing for the Community Fair, was unanimously approved.

### **11.3 Proposal for BCC Community Grant Application**

Jerry proposed that we should apply for a Community Grant to cover the costs of newsletters and printing costs for visually impaired CC members. Our need to be able to meet ongoing costs for the activities we are planning was highlighted again. For instance, the Community Action Plan process will need a budget. Jerry reported that he had financial pledges from two businesses to help with newsletter printing costs and hall hire. It was agreed that newsletter sponsorship would be good, but we should give as many businesses as possible the chance to do this. The exact mechanism for this is to be confirmed.

We agreed to make an application for a Community Grant to cover the costs of quarterly newsletters but not to include the amount for printing costs for visually impaired members. Cllr Allison advised that we should wait until the next financial year before applying and we agreed to do this. As we will now be waiting until the new financial year to make this application it was suggested that members considered other exceptional CC costs (for example Hall Hire costs associated with Local Action Planning) that we could add to our application.

We agreed to publicise the availability of microgrants again.

### **11.4 Newsletters**

Gil presented a draft newsletter and asked for comments and additions to the draft. £85 to print the leaflets was approved.

### **11.5 Update on Community Fair/Citizen of the Year**

£74 was approved to print the Citizen of the Year leaflet which had been circulated for comments.

### **11.6 Update on Community Action Planning**

Lesley reported that the working group is still working on a timeline. Another meeting is needed to finalise the role of stakeholders e.g. at what point to involve different stakeholders. A meeting will be arranged soon.

### **11.7 Continued poor service on 101/102 bus route**

There has been continued poor service, with 41 buses being cancelled or late since the beginning of December. Janet has a spreadsheet which details this and other issues e.g. comfort. Janet proposed asking the Traffic Commissioner for a meeting and informed us that the Traffic Commissioner held a Public Inquiry in December into the mechanical reliability of the Stagecoach West of Scotland fleet in general, not specifically the 101/2 service, although this was mentioned as a service with low reliability. The Traffic Commissioner felt that no action against Stagecoach was warranted. The CC are aware that Aileen Campbell is currently involved in discussions about the 101/102 bus service and will find out what she is taking any action. Thelma undertook to speak to Aileen Campbell.

### **11.7 Continued poor service on 101/102 bus route (cont.)**

Janet suggested also contacting Claudia Beamish and the CC agreed that she should do this. SPT should be copied in on any correspondence.

### **12. AOCB**

- a) Jimmy raised the possibility of an additional defibrillator in the High Street. The feeling of the meeting was that we are adequately served. Jimmy reported that the salt bin in South Back Road had been delivered and filled. He enquired about the whereabouts of flags that used to hang in the High Street. Laura had asked SLC about these several years ago, to no avail.
- b) Janet highlighted that SLC is currently carrying out a consultation concerning Common Good Funds. We have publicised this information, and Janet suggested that we consider responding as a CC. The deadline for the consultation is 31<sup>st</sup> January.
- c) Thelma enquired if the leaks in the Municipal Hall were being dealt with. Cllr McAllan reported that major work is needed, and this has gone out to tender. The SLC Cllrs also stated that the tarmac outside the Municipal would be resurfaced.
- d) Laura asked about repairs to Biggar Mill Road. Cllr Allison will report on this in due course, and on repairs to the junction between Station Road and the High Street.
- e) Cllr Allison reminded us that nominations for community awards should be made to any councillor by 7<sup>th</sup> February.
- f) Ranald McGregor from Biggar men's shed had asked Jerry about coming to a community council meeting. We discussed whether it might be better to visit the Men's Shed. Jerry will meet with him to clarify what he is looking for.

**Date of Next Meeting 17<sup>th</sup> February 2020 in the Library Meeting Room**

**ACTIONS TABLE 20/01/20**

Arrange meeting with other CCs	<b>Janet Moxley Ongoing</b>
Make enquiries re designating Park Place as an emergency route and the possibility of signage	<b>Councillor McAllan Ongoing</b>
Contact SLC about vulnerability of residents at Greenhills in an emergency involving the breakdown of transport.	<b>Thelma Ingram Waiting for reply</b>
Write to SLC stating that BCC feels there should be an accessibility fund in place	<b>Jerry Sumpster</b>
Cash cheque for printing costs for visual impairment	<b>Thelma Ingram</b>
Write to Walker's carpets re Clydesdale close	<b>Jan Currie</b>
Update contact details	<b>All</b>
Clarify interests with Jerry	<b>All</b>
Write to Elizabeth Harrison about exchanging lets	<b>Jan Currie</b>
Publicise microgrants	<b>Gil Dunn</b>
Contact Aileen Campbell re 101/102 bus service	<b>Thelma Ingram</b>
Contact Claudia Beamish re 101/102 bus service	<b>Janet Moxley</b>
Meet with Ranald McGregor	<b>Jerry Sumpster</b>
Liaise with Amey re lighting at steps near Campsies	<b>Jimmy Ritchie</b>




