**Minutes of the Gifford Community Council Meeting held**

**on 14th March 2022, via Zoom**

**Participating** Adam White (Chair) Wendy Ferguson Jill Hyslop

Eleanor Hulme Dave Griffiths Richard Austin Hugh Broad

**In Attendance** Councillor Shamin Akhtar Councillor Craig Hoy Councillor Tom Trotter Neville Kilkenny Ralph Smith

**Apologies** Rita Buchan Councillor John McMillan

**1. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The meeting approved the minutes of the meeting of the 14th February (approved by Richard Austin and Eleanor Hulme).

**2. Presentation by EDF to introduce a proposal for a windfarm at Dunside.**

Sarah Dooley and Richard Fisher introduced EDF’s plans for up to 20 wind turbines, each up to 260m in height, to be built on open moorland at Dunside, adjacent to Fallago Rig windfarm. They emphasised that the project is at a very early stage. They anticipate finalising the design in late summer 2022 with a planning application to follow in 2023. There will be a public exhibition in Gifford on Thursday 24th March to introduce the proposal and gather feedback. More detailed public exhibitions will be held once the design has been finalised. EDF have submitted a request for a Scoping Opinion to the Energy Consents Unit and they will be conducting Environmental Surveys throughout 2022. To raise public awareness, they have distributed a flyer to properties within 12km of the site. The following specific issues were raised:

* **Scoping Report detail.** EDF said that the scoping report has been compiled at a very early stage in the process and is therefore brief. As many of the details have still to be confirmed, there will be no visuals at the public exhibition on 24th March. However, visuals will be available at future consultations.
* **Location of public exhibitions.** Adam asked why Gifford had been chosen for a public exhibition, as he did not think that Gifford Community Council had been involved with the Fallago Rig site. EDF said that they had chosen 3 locations for the public exhibitions based largely on accessibility. Dunside is not any nearer to Gifford than Fallago Rig, but EDF wanted to ‘cast a wide net’ when gathering feedback.
* **Environmental issues.** An objection was raised regarding the choice of a peatland site and a request was made to include fungi within the scope of the habitat surveys, which EDF agreed to pass on to their Ecology Consultant. It was noted that figures and tables were missing from the information online and EDF agreed to correct this.
* **Impact Assessment.** EDF confirmed that the Impact Assessment would look at the cumulative impact of other wind farms which have been proposed in the Lammermuirs.
* **Previous rejection of application to extend Fallago Rig.** It was noted that an earlier application to extend Fallago Rig and been rejected, so EDF were asked to explain what was different about this new proposal. EDF said that previously they had planned to fill in gaps within Fallago Rig and add turbines to the periphery of the site. It had been decided that the benefits of the extension did not balance. This time they are proposing a larger independent project with a bigger output.
* **Berwick Bank off-shore site.** Richard Austin asked why EDF were proposing a small on-shore windfarm when there was such a significant off-shore development very near by, projected to generate 40 times the output of Dunside.EDF said that onshore windfarms were easier to deliver.
* **Additional developments.** When questioned about any further developments, EDF said they were not aware of any other projects being developed in the area.

Adam stated that Gifford Community Council’s role will be to facilitate direct communication between local residents and the developers.

**3. Matters Arising**

3.1Newlands Wind Energy Hub. It was noted that a public exhibition was to be held in Gifford on Wednesday 16th March. Belltown had sent an invitation to local residents.

3.2 Cycle Race. Adam outlined his concerns about the safety of the race. Cyclists will be obliged to give way to traffic at junctions, with marshals having no power to stop traffic. Adam had spoken to both the council’s Safety Advisory Group and the Police, but it had been confirmed that there would be no rolling road closure. The parking restrictions that will be in place from 8.30am on the day of the race will not cover the Goblin Ha side of the road, which has been a problem for hotel residents in previous years. Adam, Rita and Jill have agreed to attend the races on behalf of Community Council.

3.3 Duns Road. Richard had emailed Marshall and Ian Lennock to ask for a progress update regarding the Duns Road traffic survey and the Edinburgh Road survey, but still was waiting for a reply. **ACTION: RA**

3.4 Edinburgh Road. See 3.3 above.

3.5 Longyester Quarry. Held over to next meeting as Councillor McMillan was absent. Wendy informed the meeting that Councillor McMillan had visited the site to see the state of the road.

3.6 Lane between Tweeddale Crescent/Station Road. No schedule yet. Dave reported that the path had been scoped. The council is assessing the gradient of the path to see whether the steps can be removed and whether a handrail would be required. It was noted that the council had completed work on the path from the school to Bablin’s Wynd.

3.7 Additional Graveyard space. Wendy reported that there will be a meeting in the next month to look at funding opportunities for the SEPA survey. **ACTION: JM/WF**

3.8 Wheelie bins on Main Street pavement. Councillor Akhtar reported that there will be a site visit with the recycling team on Thursday 17th March to look at this issue. **ACTION: SA**

3.9 Defibrillators. Eleanor reported on the actions arising out of the recent training event. Eleanor had bought and fitted new pads, and the defibrillator has now been registered. It was suggested that CC members should practise getting the defibrillator in and out of its casing as it was quite tricky to do. Eleanor will investigate signage options for highlighting the location of the defibrillator. Eleanor also passed on information from the training event about 1st Responders. These are members of the public, trained in first aid/resuscitation, who volunteer to be on call to attend emergencies. Volunteers choose specific time slots for being on call. Gifford does not currently have any 1st Responders, so it is something that could be considered for the future. In relation to the purchase of the defibrillator for the school, Wendy advised that Sam (from the Scottish Ambulance Service) had identified one that could possibly be made available to purchase, but that Sam had not had time to deal with this yet. It was noted that the Bowling Club may be a good location for a further defibrillator. **ACTION: WF /EH**

3.10 Beautiful Scotland signage. Adam was still awaiting official confirmation, but had heard that work was underway to produce the new signs. The cost of the signs has increased by 50%, and it was unclear whether the area partnership was covering the cost increase as well. **ACTION: AW**

3.11 Trees (Tweeddale Arms/Witherspoon Plaque/Queen’s Green Canopy). Adam will be speaking to Mike Foy shortly. **ACTION: AW**

3.12 School Railings. Councillor Akhtar reported that there will be a further site visit in either March or April. **ACTION: SA**

3.13 Noticeboards. Dave asked the meeting whether Community Council should share a noticeboard with the Village Hall. Adam and Wendy agreed to discuss this further with Dave. **ACTION: DG/WF/AW**

3.14 Outdoor Classroom at Yester Primary School. The school is looking for practical support and advice, and possibly financial assistance, to develop an outdoor classroom within the school grounds. They initially approached Gifford Horticultural Society, who then contacted Community Council and the Community Woods. Community Council confirmed their general support for the project and Wendy will consider any specific requests for financial support that might be made in the future.

3.15 Position of bus stop on Goblin Ha side of the road. This was held over to the next meeting as Councillor McMillan was absent.

3.16 Public Toilets. The toilets will be open on Saturday 19th March for the cycle race, but will then be closed again. The sign has not yet been covered over.

**4 External Reports**

**4.1 Police**

This report is based on incidents between 13/02/2022 and 10/03/2022. During the period since the last police report there have been very few incidents of note in the Gifford area. There may be more incidents but due to the nature of these or ongoing investigations full details cannot be given.

4.1.1 There continues to be reports of vehicles speeding through the village. This issue was raised at the last CAPP meeting. Local officers will continue to monitor this and take action when appropriate

4.1.2 A query was raised as to why the Police Report did not mention a recent incident at the NISA store which it was understood had been reported to the Police. Jill agreed to ask PC Black about this. **ACTION: JH**

**4.2** **East Lothian Council**

4.2.1 The council has passed its Budget, but this involved the council using some of its reserves. It has protected money for the Area Partnership. Councillor Akhtar reported that there will be more money for youth work to engage with young people to try to avoid them becoming involved with the criminal justice system.

4.2.2 The 20mph speed limits are being extended until September 2022. Councillors McMillan and Akhtar plan to carry out site visits around the county to look at areas where there are very short sections with different speed limits, eg the entrances to Gifford villages currently have very short 30 mph zones.

4.2.3 The Covid Vaccine programme is now open to 5 – 11 year olds.

4.2.4 In relation to the Roads programme, Councillor Hoy encouraged people to feed in their concerns, including areas where road markings are no longer visible.

4.2.5 Knox Academy was looking at issues around behaviour, amid concerns that lockdown has resulted in more pronounced behavioural problems. They are looking to work with social work, mental health professionals and the police.

4.2.6 Councillor Hoy stated that this will be the last meeting he attends as a Councillor. Community Council thanked Councillor Hoy for the work he has done.

**4.3 Community Woodland**

Neville Kilkenny, Project Manager of the Community Woodland, was present at the meeting and provided the following update. The trees that came down during Storm Arwen will be moved shortly, which will mean that any damage to the paths can be assessed. They are working with the school and have agreed different projects with each of the classes. P5 will be assisting with the fruit trees that are to be planted in Station Yard as part of their John Muir Award. The Woodlands team are trialling lots of different events as part of a strategy to future-proof the woodlands in the event of funding ending. Events include Birch Tapping, Easter decorations and Wild Food/Foraging. A recent volunteer day had to be cancelled, but further volunteer days will be scheduled. Some tree thinning work is to be carried out. To avoid damage to the woodland, the work will be done using horses.

**5 Internal Reports**

**5.1 Roads and Footpaths**

5.1.1 Further repair work is going to be done to the B6355 from the Townhead junction to Danskine Lodge for 4 days between Thursday 17th to Sunday 20th March. The road will be closed, with a diversion by Castle Park and Newlands

5.1.2 The footpath between Bablins Wynd and Park Crescent towards the school has been re-surfaced. The steps have been removed, so it is now a ramp.

5.1.3 The path between Park Road and High Street is becoming narrow at one section due to ivy growing over a wall. It also becomes slippy due to wet leaves. Dave has written a report to Road Services.

**5.2 Lighting and Drainage**

Nothing to report.

**5.3 Drainage**

Nothing to report

**5.4 Signs**

The Public Toilets sign has still not been covered. It needs to be covered over to reflect the fact that the toilets are currently closed.

**5.5 Planning**

Please see attached report for planning applications within and outwith GCC Area. Richard informed the meeting that Community Council had submitted a letter broadly in support of the planning application to build 28 lodges at Castle Park.

**5.6 Finance**

Nothing to report.

**5.7 Website**

Jill reported that a number of items had been posted on community council’s facebook page, including information about the Lammermuir Larder, Scotland’s Census and various surveys and road closures. Anyone wishing to add anything to the website or Facebook page should let Jill know.

**5.8 Covid Vaccination Update**

A report is attached as an appendix. Eleanor reported that, as case numbers were rising, people might want to think about taking appropriate precautions. Children 5 – 11 are now being invited for vaccination and an additional booster dose will be offered to over 75s.

**5.9 Yester Estate**

No report received.

**5.10 Resilience Update**

Wendy reported that fish and chips had been delivered on the last Friday of February and had been well-received. The Lunch Club and the Good Companions had decided to postpone re-starting due to an increase in Covid cases locally.

**5.11 Local Business**

Rita had reported before the meeting that the external decoration is in hand and will be dealt with shortly. Rita also reported that the price of milk, which had been raised at last month’s meeting, is set by the Co-op.

**6. Correspondence**

Nothing to report

**7 AOB**

7.1 Telephone box at Longnewton

Following an inquiry last month about who was responsible for maintaining the telephone box at Longnewton, it was reported that Longnewton residents had agreed to maintain the telephone box when it was acquired from BT. A Longnewton resident was going to check to see if there was any specific details recorded about how the box would be maintained.

7.2A member of the public raised a question about the Castle Park holiday lodges planning application. He was concerned that he could not access the full text of the Economic Impact Study, and could only access an Executive Summary. Adam advised that he should continue to follow this up with the Planning Dept. Councillor Akhtar agreed to look into this. It was also reported that a previous access route to Yester Woods through Castle Park Golf Club had been cut off and there was now a No Entry sign. **ACTION: SA**

7.3 Wendy reported that Yester Church will be holding a Garden Party on 4th June.

7.4 Adam proposed moving the date of the next meeting, as several people were going to be on holiday on 11th April. It was agreed to move the meeting to 18th April.

**Date of next meeting -** 7:30pm on Monday 18th April 2022.

**APPLICATIONS WITHIN GCC AREA**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Date Validated** | **GCC first discussed** | **Comments** | **Status** |
| 22/00100/P | Erection of greenhouse and trellis | Garden Cottage Edinburgh Road Gifford East Lothian EH41 4JE | 16/02/22 | Mar 2022 | Erection of greenhouse in grounds of Garden Cottage | Awaiting decision |
| 21/01599/P | Erection of 1 house and associated works | Land Adjacent To Castlepark Golf Club Yester Gifford East Lothian EH41 4PL | 31/01/22 | Feb 2022 | This is a separate application to that for the holiday lodges (21/01457/P, below) and involves a six bedroomed house attached to the west of the clubhouse, for occupation by the owner/manager. | Awaiting decision |
| 21/01504/EOL | Erection of 11kv overhead line | East of Haddington To Gifford Area East Lothian | 14/12/21 | Jan 2022 | Replacement and in some cases rerouting of 11kV (wooden poles) power lines between Haddington, Gifford, and Morham. | ELC Planning recommend additional work wrt trees and archeological features. |
| 21/01457/P | Erection of 28 holiday lodges, 1 reception/plant room/store building and associated works | Castlepark Golf Club Gifford East Lothian EH41 4PL | 01/03/22 | Jan 2022 | Application has been re-submitted and validated. GCC comments, broadly in support of the development, have been submitted. | Awaiting decision. |
| 21/01313/P | Change of use of woodland to domestic garden ground, extensions to house, erection of wall, gate, building for residential ancillary accommodation, generator building and installation of air source heat pumps | Quarryford House Yester Gifford East Lothian EH41 4PL | 10/11/21 | Dec 2021 | Two storey extension and annexe on west face of Quarryford House. | Awaiting decision |
| 21/01108/P | Change of use of woodland area for use as a nature kindergarten for nursery children, erection of log cabin, toilet, log store and associated works | Wester Wood Near Gifford East Lothian | 09/09/21 | Sept 2021 | Erection of 6.5m x 2.75m log cabin, compost toilet and log store in Wester Wood. Possible implications for right of access? | Awaiting decision |

**APPLICATIONS OUTWITH GCC AREA**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Date Validated** | **GCC first discussed** | **Comments** | **Status** |
| 22/00087/P | Erection of hut and composting toilet | Bolton Muir Gifford Haddington East Lothian EH41 4JH | 01/02/22 | Feb 2022 | Application includes a Site Management Plan, Woodland Management Plan and Species Protection Plan as were required as conditions of approving similar application 20/01247/P (22/10/21). | Awaiting decision |
| 21/01433/P | Erection of hut and shed (Part Retrospective) | Bolton Muir Wood Gifford Haddington EH41 4JH | 20/01/22 | Feb 2022 | Application makes no reference to a Site Management Plan, Woodland Management Plan and Species Protection Plan (See 22/00087/P above) | Awaiting decision |

**OTHER PLANNING MATTERS**

**Newlands Hill Wind Energy Hub**

* GCC have submitted comments to the Scottish Government on the Scoping Report for the Environmental Impact Assessment.
* First public consultation exhibition is on Wednesday 16th March, 1-8pm, at Gifford Village Hall.
* Virtual exhibition can be viewed at [www.newlandshillwindenergyhub.com](http://www.newlandshillwindenergyhub.com) until 28th March.

**Dunside Wind Farm**

* EDF Renewables have approached GCC to give advance notice that they have submitted an EIA Scoping Report to Scottish Government’s Energy Consents Unit (ECU) for development of a 100MW wind farm in the Lammermuir Hills. This is an extension to the existing Fallago Rig wind farm.
* A previous application to extend Fallago Rig wind farm was rejected by Scottish Government in 2020.
* GCC has not yet been formally asked by the ECU for comments.
* Representatives from EDF Renewables will be attending the GCC meeting on 14th March to introduce proposals for the development.
* An exhibition will be held on Thursday 24th March, 2-6pm, at Gifford Village Hall.
* Online exhibition is expected to be available shortly.

Report for Monday 14th March 2022 Gifford Community Council

Selected data on case rates for week of 28th Feb to 6th March 9, 2022. Data is for the 7 day case rate per 100.000 population (see below), source is the public tableau below.

* Scotland: 1,110.6
* Lothian: 999.7
* Haddington Rural: 1253.7

Case rate is defined as: the number of cases present in a population of 100,000 people over 7 days. It includes re-infections after 90 days. The area we are in is (I think) Haddington Rural and has a population of 6700. In the last 7 days there have been 107 cases total (not new) here.

**Boosters from national statistics,** source below, as of Wednesday 9th March 2022:

<https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/phs.covid.19/viz/COVID-19DailyDashboard_15960160643010/Overview>

**Nationally:** Booster/Dose 3 over 18s plus all adults: 77.4% (Feb 74.8% )

**Lothian:** Over 18s: Boosters: 75% (Feb 64.3%)

**East Lothian:** Over 18s Booster/Dose 3=84% (Feb 81.4%)

**East Lothian by Age group:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **AGE** | **Boosters March 9th** | **Boosters February** |
| 12-15 | **1.4%** | **1.1%** |
| 16-17 | **20%** | **15.3 %\*** |
| 18-29 | **59%** | **52.5%** |
| 30-39 | **69%** | **64.6%** |
| 40-49 | **80%** | **77.4%** |
| 50-54 | **90%** | **88.5%** |
| 55-59 | **>90%** | **>90%** |
| 60-64 |
| 65-69 |
| 70-74 |
| 75-79 |
| 80+ |
|  |  |

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