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

**On 13th June 2022 at Gifford Bowling Club**

**Participating** Adam White (Chair) Richard Austin Dave Griffiths Wendy Ferguson  
 Jill Hyslop  Rita Buchan Eleanor Hulme

**In Attendance** Councillor Tom Trotter Councillor Shamin Akhtar Councillor George McGuire Councillor John McMillan Neville Kilkenny Rebecca Pringle

**Apologies** Hugh Broad

**1 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

  The meeting approved the minutes of the meeting of the 9th May (approved by Wendy Ferguson and Dave Griffiths).

**2 Presentation about ELC’s Local Housing Strategy 2023 – 2028 by Rebecca Pringle**

Rebecca Pringle, Housing Strategy Team Manager, explained that East Lothian Council needs to prepare a ‘robust and credible’ 5-year housing strategy document, which is approved by the Scottish Government. The document will take into account many factors, including health, the economy, climate change and the labour market. Preparations for the strategy document include consultation and engagement. They are currently consulting with Area Partnerships, Community Councils and Community Groups. They plan to publish a draft document for public consultation in April – June 2023, with a view to having an approved document in place by October 2023. After Rebecca’s presentation the following issues were discussed.

* ELC will look back at the previous strategy document to measure progress achieved. It was noted that Covid will have affected progress.
* Housing requirements are closely related to community health and the housing team do liaise with health and social care teams.
* There is an increasing amount of regulation relating to the protection of the environment, which developers must adhere to.
* It was noted that people sometimes end up in houses that are too big for them, with limited opportunities to downsize within the same location.

**3. Matters Arising**

3.1  Newlands Wind Energy Hub. Richard reported that he had attended a meeting of the Association of East Lothian Community Councils (AELCC) and the issue of windfarm community funds had been discussed. East Lammermuir CC currently receive large sums of money that they struggle to spend. They have been informally helping out other CCs in East Lothian, but have suggested that there could be a more formal collaboration to pool together community windfarm funds to support large county-wide projects, such as an end-of-life hospice. Adam pointed out that the potential benefits of county-wide collaboration would need to be balanced against the needs and views of the local communities most affected by the windfarms. The AELCC is going to discuss this issue again in August.

3.2 Dunside Wind Farm. Nothing to report, other than the discussion about community funds at 3.1 above.

3.3 Duns Road Traffic Survey.  Nothing to report. As reported last month, the council’s current focus is on progressing the legislative process to make permanent the 20mph speed limits introduced under emergency legislation. This will be followed by a monitoring period of no less than 12 months.

3.4    Edinburgh Road Widening Survey. Nothing to report. It was reported last month that a survey had been done and a design proposal was being drawn up by the council’s engineering team. Richard will ask Ian Lennock for a rough timescale of when this will be available. **ACTION: RA**

3.5    Additional Graveyard space. Nothing to report. Councillor McMillan agreed to speak to Eamon John about this. **ACTION: JM**

3.6    Wheelie bins on Main Street pavement. In relation to the proposal to install a wooden unit on Main Street to house shared bins, so that they can be removed from the pavement, Councillor Akhtar needs to confirm the dimensions of the unit and then get quotes for its construction.  A planning application can then be made. **ACTION: SA**

3.7   Defibrillators.

3.7.1 Garage Defibrillator and signage. Eleanor reported that she had been prompted by the Circuit to go and check the defibrillator in the Garage. Everything was in order. It will be checked again in 3 months. Defibrillator signs have been put up at the Nisa and at Hoggs, as well as one at the Garage. It was agreed that a card, and a small gift like a box of chocolates, should be sent thanking the garage for storing the defibrillator (**ACTION: JH).**

3.7.2 New defibrillator for the school. Wendy reported that Sam from the Scottish Ambulance Service had sourced a defibrillator for the school. Wendy explained that this would be an ex-ambulance defibrillator, but it would still have a guaranteed life of c.5 – 6 years. It was agreed that it was better to have a working 2nd hand defibrillator, rather than not having one at all. The staff at the school will be trained and then community training will be arranged.

3.8  Railings at the back steps of Yester Primary School.  Councillor Akhtar reported that the railings were due to be painted imminently.

3.9 Noticeboards.  Wendy, Dave and Adam had met to discuss the proposal for community council to share a large noticeboard with Yester Church. The church is happy to share a board. Wendy has written to the planning department to confirm whether planning permission is required. It was suggested that a metal board, similar to the one at the entrance to Gifford Community Woodland, would be more practical than a wooden one. Dave will investigate options, with support from Wendy and Adam as required. **ACTION: WF/DG**

3.10 Bus Stop – review of position. To avoid passenger confusion, it has been suggested that the bus stop should be moved from outside Lewis & Clarke to a new position on the edge of the square by the Goblin Ha’. The current location doesn’t take into account the fact that buses often use the village square to turn and don’t continue on to the bus stop. Councillor McMillan will look into this. **ACTION: JM**

3.11 Request for help from Yester Primary School for shed replacement. The Head Teacher at Yester has been asked to provide more details about what financial assistance is required to replace the shed.

**4      External Reports**

**4.1    Police**

No report received this month. Councillor Trotter provided some East Lothian crime statistics. Jill to contact Sergeant Rhona Meikle to check who we should liaise with following Colin Boyd’s retirement. **ACTION: JH**

**4.2**    **East Lothian Council**

4.2.1    Councillor Akhtar reported that the recruitment process is underway for the Head Teacher position at Yester Primary School.

4.2.2 Councillor McMillan asked Gifford CC to consider twinning opportunities. Haddington is twinned with Aubigny, Musselburgh with Champigny and Dunbar with Lignieres.

4.2.3 Adam asked the councillors if they would like to continue the current system of having distinct areas of responsibility for CC matters to avoid duplication. The councillors agreed to continue on this basis, with the following division of responsibilities outlined.

* Councillor Akhtar – Planning
* Councillor McMillan – Roads
* Councillor Trotter – Antisocial Behaviour
* Councillor McGuire – Amenity Services/Recreation

**4.3    Community Woodland**

Neville Kilkenny, Project Manager of the Community Woodland, was present at the meeting and provided the following update.  The Primary 2 class at Yester had their last forest school session. Primary 1 are visiting the woods on 14 June and P7 are doing a leavers activity on 20 June. Nev will be meeting the Head Teacher at Yester to look at plans for the next academic year. A 5% tree thin has been completed in Fawn Wood. The logs will be extracted by a horse logger, with a start date to be confirmed shortly. The logger is happy for people to watch informally, but he also hopes to do a demonstration. The date will be confirmed as soon as possible. He has advised that dogs do not need to be on leads. Nev will speaking to the path contractor to arrange repairs and water bars to avoid further damage caused by running water. The woods might apply for funding from the ‘Paths for All’ fund. 2 more bushcraft sessions are being arranged, with the possibility of some summer camp activities. There is an Animal Tracks course on 18th June. The woods stall at the Church Fete had been well attended and had raised over £300 in donations.

**4.4 Yester Estate**

No report received.

**5      Internal Reports**

**5.1    Roads and Footpaths**

5.1.1 Longyester/Quarry Road. Alan Stubbs had reported to Councillor McMillan before the meeting that the quarry operative (TQ) does have a planning condition attached to their operations in relation to maintenance of the road from the quarry entrance (eastwards) to Longyester. A Roads Officer has met with the quarry operator on site to agree the extent of repairs required under their planning obligations. The council is currently waiting on a date from TQ as to when this work will be carried out. Failure to undertake this work within the required timescales may result in planning enforcement action. The council also intends to resurface the section of road from the quarry entrance (westwards) to West Latch. This is already included within the current financial year’s programme of carriageway resurfacing work and is likely to be undertaken in the Autumn/Winter.

5.1.2 Overgrown Hedges. Alan Stubbs had confirmed to Adam before the meeting that a council officer would visit a property on Tweeddale Avenue where an overgrown hedge was blocking access to the footpath.

5.1.3 Following a request from a resident, the temporary ‘gates’ around the bell on the bridge onto Station Road have been removed. The gates had been installed to allow the council to repoint the bridge after damage caused by a vehicle. It was noted that the repointing work still needs to be done.

**4.2    Lighting**

Two redundant lampposts on the Duns Road (G25 and G26) will be removed. There was a discussion about when the remaining lampposts will be re-painted. It was previously reported that this would be done in Spring. Councillor Akhtar agreed to check. **ACTION: SA**

**4.3    Drainage**

Nothing to report

**4.4    Signs**

Adam had contacted Martin to ask if the sign (relating to building work on Yester House) that is tied to the fence at the 3-way junction beside Gifford Golf Course can now be taken down.

**4.5    Planning**

Please see attached report for planning applications within and outwith GCC Area.  A local resident has asked for further information about a possible development at the Furniture School. Richard did not have any information but agreed to check. **ACTION: RA**

**4.6    Finance**

Wendy reported that Community Council had received its annual grant, resulting in a bank balance of approximately £13,000.

**4.7    Website**

Nothing to report.

**4.8    Yester Estate**

No report received.

**4.10  Resilience Update**

Wendy reported that fish and chips had been delivered to around 28 people on the last Friday of May and had been well-received.  The Lunch Club had met at the Tweeddale Arms with 27 people attending.

**4.11  Local Business**

Rita reported that staff at the NISA were working hard to manage the shop. Although Community Council will investigate any specific queries, a proportionate response is needed and staff should be given time to continue to get established. CC members had heard about possible instances of theft from the shop, which had not been reported to the police. Councillor McMillan suggested that he could speak to staff about the use of CC TV and that the shop could also ask for help from the community police. **ACTION: JM**

**5.     Correspondence**

The only correspondence received related to ‘sell by’ dates in the NISA store. Rita had checked the dates in the chiller cabinets and found everything to be in date.

**6.     AOB**

6.1 Damage to wall at the Bleachfield. Rita reported that the wall at the Bleachfield was being damaged through vandalism. Rita had been given photos from a local resident, which she agreed to pass on to Councillor McMillan. Dave also highlighted damage to the wall on Park Crescent by the garages. **ACTION: RB**

6.2 Rita confirmed that the planters have been done. Community Council thanked Rita, Charlotte and James for their hard work and Rita for buying the plants. Rita did not wish to be reimbursed for the plants, but Wendy confirmed that community council funds are available to cover the costs of the plants. Thank you cards to be arranged. **ACTION: JH**

6.3 Financial Scams. Richard told the meeting about a recent case where East Lammermuir CC had been scammed out of £1,800 after their email account had been hacked into. Wendy informed the meeting that Gifford CC requires 2 separate approvals for every payment and that payments are normally discussed in advance so that there is good prior knowledge of payments before they are due.

6.4 Keep Scotland Beautiful. Adam reported that the Keep Scotland Beautiful campaign will be presented in the village hall on 3rd August.

6.5 Richard reported that the cherry trees planted beside the Tweeddale Arms appeared to be dying back from the tips and that they were also rocking. Richard will pass a photograph to Adam to be forwarded to Andrew Hogarth. **ACTION: RA/AW**

6.6 Adam confirmed that community council will continue to meet in the Gifford Bowling Club for the foreseeable future and do not intend to go back to the Todrick Room.

6.7 Adam informed the meeting that a Production Company intend to film at various locations in the village on Friday 24th June. It’s a TV film called ‘Love in Scotland’, which initially will only be shown in the US.

6.8 Gifford Community Woodland would like to be able to provide a disabled parking to make it easier for people with disabilities to access the woodland paths. As the woods are accessed via a private road, a suggestion has been made to provide a disabled parking space on Tweeddale Avenue. It was noted that an overgrown hedge is currently blocking part of the footpath, meaning that people have to exit cars onto the road, but the council plans to speak to the relevant property owners to have this addressed. Adam to speak to Keith Scott ([kscott@eastlothian.gov.uk](mailto:kscott@eastlothian.gov.uk)) about opportunities for a parking space. **ACTION: AW**

**Date of next meeting -** 7:30pm on Monday 11th July 2022.

**APPLICATIONS WITHIN GCC AREA**

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|  | **Date Validated** | **GCC first discussed** | **Comments** | **Status** |
| 22/00578/P | Change of use from agricultural ground to domestic garden ground, formation of hardstanding, extension to house and erection of garage (part retrospective) | 8 Longyester Cottages Yester Gifford EH41 4PL | 24/05/22 | June 2022 | Single storey, two bedroom extension and separate garage. Application includes retrospective change of use for driveway and garden. | Awaiting decision |
| 22/00549/P | Extension and alterations to house | Mellendean High Street Gifford EH41 4QU | 17/05/22 | June 2022 | Single storey extension to rear, replacing existing smaller lean-to. | Awaiting decision |
| 22/00509/NAF | Prior notification of - Erection of agricultural building | Newlands Farm Gifford East Lothian | 03/05/22 | June 2022 | Erection of general purpose farm building (not requiring full planning permission). | Approved |
| 22/00455/NAF | Prior Notification of - Extension to agricultural building | Snawdon Farm Gifford Haddington East Lothian | 19/04/22 | June 2022 | Three bay extension to existing seven bay farm building (not requiring full planning permission). | Approved |
| 22/00445/P | Change of use of agricultural land for the installation of solar panels for domestic use | Land North West Of Broadwoodside Station Road Gifford Haddington EH41 4JQ | 22/04/22 | May 2022 | Installation of ground mounted solar panels in a field to the north of Broadwoodside. | Awaiting decision |
| 22/00407/P | Alterations to outbuilding, erection of fencing and gate (Part Retrospective) | 4 The Avenue Gifford East Lothian EH41 4QX | 06/04/22 | Apr 2022 | Alterations to studio at Rose Cottage and erection of fence. | Approved |
| 22/00370/P | Change of use of agricultural land to domestic use for the installation of ground mounted solar panels and associated works | Giffordbank House Edinburgh Road Gifford Haddington EH41 4JE | 31/03/22 | Apr 2022 | Fencing and hedging of 20m x 20m part of the field adjacent to Giffordbank House for installation of ground mounted solar panels. | Approved |
| 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 |
| 21/01457/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. |
| 21/01108/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 |
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**APPLICATIONS OUTWITH GCC AREA**

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|  | **Date Validated** | **GCC first discussed** | **Comments** | **Status** |
| 22/00354/P | Erection of hut | Bolton Muir Wood Gifford East Lothian EH41 4JH | 19/04/22 | May 2022 | Application for erection of a hut within another of the lots at Bolton Muir Wood. This application includes an Ecology Report, but not the specific Site Management Plan, Woodland Management Plan and Species Protection Plan as were required as conditions of approving similar applications. | Approved subject to 10 conditions, including submission of Site and Woodland Management Plans within 3 months. |

**OTHER PLANNING MATTERS**

**Newlands Hill Wind Energy Hub (Belltown Power)**

Second consultation event is scheduled for Sept 2022, prior to planning submission to Scottish Government in Q2 2023.

Expected planning determination date is Q1 – Q3 2024.

**Dunside Wind Farm (EDF)**

Planning application is expected early 2023.