**Minutes of the Gifford Community Council Meeting
held** **on 11th September 2023 at Gifford Bowling Club**

**Participating** Adam White (Chair), Richard Austin, Dave Griffiths, Wendy Ferguson and Jill Hyslop

**In Attendance** Councillor Tom Trotter, Councillor George McGuire and Councillor John McMillan

**Apologies** Eleanor Hulme, Rita Buchan, Neville Kilkenny, Hugh Broad and Councillor Shamin Akhtar

**1 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The meeting approved the minutes of 14th August (approved by Dave and Adam).

**2 Items completed since last meeting**

2.1 The weekly Soup & Smile service has re-started and will run through to the end of March.

2.2 New bins have been installed at Tweeddale Crescent and at the entrance/exit to the community woods at Broadwoodside Road. Community Council has agreed to fund a new bin on the Edinburgh Road.

**3. Matters Arising**

**3.1 Renewable Energy Projects**

3.1.1 Newlands Hill Wind Energy Hub (Belltown Power). Submission of proposals to Scottish Government is anticipated during Q4 this year. The meeting wished to record that Gifford Community Council is maintaining a neutral stance on the renewable energy projects currently under development. Local residents should engage directly with the developers and/or with the planning applications for each project to ensure that their views are heard.

3.1.2 Dunside Wind Farm (EDF). Proposals are with the Scottish Government.

3.1.3 Solar panels at Crystal Rig Wind Farm (Fred Olsen Renewables). Initial consultation event was held in Garvald Village Hall on 28th February. Initial plans can be viewed at [www.crystalrigwindfarm.com](http://www.crystalrigwindfarm.com)

3.1.4 Longcroft Wind Farm (Renewable Energy Systems) This proposed development of 24 turbines would be approximately 9km north of Lauder in the Scottish Borders, lying to the south west of the existing Fallago Rig Wind Farm and to the west of the proposed Dunside Wind Farm. The northern edge of the development is some 15km south of Gifford. Project website is www.longcroft-windfarm.co.uk

**3.2 Defibrillators**

A defibrillator and cabinet have been bought for the bowling club. Richard has prepared the planning application. Community Council thanked the Bowling Club for hosting a defibrillator which will be accessible by the community.

**3.3 New Noticeboard**

The meeting approved a proof of the noticeboard design, showing the wording ‘Gifford Community Noticeboard’. The invoice has been passed to Wendy, who will arrange to pay 50% now and the remainder on delivery.

**3.4 Lighting around the Square**

Jill had circulated Glen Kane’s cost estimate/design spec to improve the lighting around the Square. It was agreed that Jill should try to arrange a site visit with Glen Kane to discuss the design. **ACTION: JH**

**3.5 Nature Corridors and Grass cutting**

Before the meeting Eleanor had circulated the results of the Nature Networks survey. It was agreed that the survey had been a very successful way of gathering local opinion and the comments should now be passed to the council. **ACTION: EH**

**3.6 Airfield Memorial Plaque**

Wendy agreed to collect the plaque so that a proper assessment can be made about where to put it. It was suggested that opposite the churchyard, either on the wall beside the Witherspoon plaque, or potentially on the ground, might work well. The matter will be discussed further once Wendy has collected the plaque. **ACTION: WF**

**3.7 Bleachfield Bench Repairs**

Nev has spoken to Bruce Allinson about the materials required to carry out the repairs. Wendy has confirmed that CC can cover the labour costs of c.£125+VAT.

**4. Projects awaiting update from East Lothian Council**

**4.1 Rotation of speedcheck display board to Edinburgh Road**

Keith Scott is arranging for the board to be moved to the Edinburgh Road, but needs to schedule the work with an external contractor.

**4.2 Wheelie bins on the Main Street pavement**

No update.

**4.3 Road Safety Crossing**

Awaiting update from Ian Lennock

**4.4 Review of bus stop position**

Awaiting update from Ian Lennock

**4.5 Resurfacing of lane between Tweeddale Crescent/Station Road.**

Awaiting update from Ian Lennock

**5. External Reports**

**5.1** **Police**

The Police Report stated that between 1st August 2023 and 31st August 2023 there were 26 calls to the area. This resulted in the police recording 7 crimes: 1 x sexual offence, 2 x vandalism, 2 x housebreaking, 1 x theft of motor vehicle and 1 x opening lockfast vehicle. PC Craig Purves has taken on the role of Community Officer for the Gifford area and will provide an update for the next meeting.

**5.2** **East Lothian Council**

The councillors highlighted the very difficult financial situation that the council is facing.

**5.3 Gifford Community Woodland**

The woodland is holding 2 volunteer days this month to continue work to remove invasive rhododendron. A very successful Fungi Foray had taken place at the weekend. Further events this month include a Silent Walk/Meditation, a ‘Meeting with Moths’ and an outdoor cinema event on Saturday 30th September. A chainsaw course for 4 volunteers took place last week, which was funded by the Heritage Lottery Grant.

**5.4 Yester Estate**

No update. The Yester Fireworks event will take place on Saturday 28th October.

**6 Internal Reports**

**6.1 Roads and Footpaths**

The footpath connecting the village to the Bolton walk needs attention. One of the adjacent landowners has arranged for their hedge to be cut, which has improved access, but the ground needs to be cleared to provide a safe walking route. Councillor Trotter has asked the council to look at options for laying an affordable surface. It was noted that the walkway is a ‘designated path’ and access therefore needs to be maintained. **ACTION: TT**

**6.2 Lighting , Drains and Signs**

The bend warning sign at Slateford is now concealed within a hedge.

The drains at the bridge by the village hall are now full.

**6.3 Planning**

Please see attached report for planning applications within and outwith GCC Area. Richard updated the meeting about the planning applications for signage at The Hopes. The 1st sign, located immediately before bridge, displaying opening hours for Hopes Car Park has been approved. Other signs are awaiting approval. No update on the new NISA signage, which is still not showing on the planning system.

**6.4 Finance**

Wendy reported that £3,000 has been committed to cover payments for the Bowling Club defibrillator, defibrillator cabinet and the noticeboard, leaving a balance of £6,500.

**6.5 Resilience**

‘Soup & Smile’ restarted on 6th September and will run until the end of March. Fish & chips are being delivered to approximately 40 people on the last Friday of the month. CC was pleased to be receiving referrals from the Volunteer East Lothian Centre for both services. Wendy emphasised how these services provide valuable support to older people in the community.

**7. Correspondence**

A local resident had contacted CC asking for advice about grants available to fund art classes in the local primary school. Information had been provided about the National Lottery, Fallago Windfarm, Tesco Community Grants and the East Lothian Education Fund. It was also noted that the Haddington Rotary offers £300 grants to community organisations.

**8. AOB**

**8.1 Witherspoon visit**

Adam reported that descendants of the Witherspoon family had visited Gifford and had met with members of the local community.

**8.2 Poppyscotland Sportive**

This will take place on Sunday 24th September. The village hall will be used as a food and water station from 10am until 6pm. There are no road closures but there will be parking restrictions in the Square. Adam has met with the organiser to discuss the event.

**8.3 Christmas dates**

**Friday 8th December, Christmas Tree Lights Switch On**. The Film Club will have a screening later that night. The woods are not holding a xmas decorations event, but may be doing some other activities. Adam will be speaking to local businesses about their plans for the night.

**Monday 11th – Saturday 16th December, Christmas Card Village Postbox**. Nicola has agreed to have the postbox in Lanterne Rouge. For a small charge people can post cards for delivery locally with all proceeds going to St Columba’s Hospice

**Saturday 23rd December, Christmas Carols Around the Tree.** Adam and Wendy will find out if there are any plans to hold a children’s lantern making activity in the hall.

**8.4 Village Fundraiser**

Rita has suggested holding a fundraising event in the village, perhaps with 2nd-hand clothes and toys. Further details and timing to be agreed.

**8.5 Update from Yester Church**

The Yester, Bolton & Saltoun parish has merged with Humbie, and will now also be joined with Morham & Garvald. The new parish will be known as ‘Lammermuir Parish’. The church buildings at Saltoun and Bolton are to be sold and there have been expressions of interest from community groups for both buildings.

Date of next meeting: Monday 9th October. This will be the AGM.

**APPLICATIONS WITHIN GCC AREA**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Date Validated** | **GCC first discussed** | **Comments** | **Status** |
| 23/00878/P | Extensions to house | Quarryford House Yester Gifford Haddington EH41 4PL | 04/08/23 | Aug 2023 | Revised proposals for extensions to the west of Quarryford House, similar to those approved under 21/01313/P in March 2022 | Awaiting decision |
| 23/00888/P | Change of use of flat to short term holiday let (Retrospective) | Kilchoan Main Street Gifford Haddington East Lothian EH41 4QH | 03/08/23 | Aug 2023 | Retrospective application for change of use of first floor flat. | Awaiting decision |
| 23/00699/ADV | Display of advertisements | Land North Of The Steading East Hopes Yester Gifford East Lothian | 28/07/23 | Aug 2023 | Signage, located at entrance to parking area, displaying opening hours for Hopes Car Park. | Awaiting decision |
| 23/00697/ADV | Display of advertisements | Land 20M South West Of Mid Hopes Cottage Gifford Haddington East Lothian EH41 4PL | 25/07/23 | Aug 2023 | Signage, located on approach road, displaying opening hours for Hopes Car Park. | Awaiting decision |
| 23/00698/ADV | Display of advertisements | Land West Of 1 East Hopes Farm Cottages Yester Gifford East Lothian | 12/07/23 | Aug 2023 | Signage, located immediately before bridge, displaying opening hours for Hopes Car Park.  | Approved. Planning officer’s report states that ELC Roads Dept have agreed with the landowner that existing unauthorised and misleading signs are to be removed. Roads Services are monitoring this. |
| 23/00670/P | Installation of solar panels | 3, 12, 14, 15, 23, 25, 32 & 40 Walden Terrace Gifford East Lothian EH41 4QP | 04/07/23 | July 2023 | Installation of roof mounted solar panels to eight properties in Walden Terrace. | Approved |
| 23/00669/P | Installation of solar panels | 5 Park Crescent Gifford East Lothian EH41 4QR | 04/07/23 | July 2023 | Installation of roof mounted solar panels to one property in Park Crescent. | Approved |
| 22/01169/P | Alterations, extensions to agricultural buildings to form 7 houses, erection of a shared domestic ancillary building and associated works | Longnewton Farm Steading Yester Gifford East Lothian | 12/12/22 | Jan 2023 | Conversion of stable block to form 2 dwellings, steading block to form four dwellings and granary to form one dwelling. Barn to be converted for shared use. | 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 | Six bedroomed house attached to the west of the clubhouse, for occupation by the owner/manager. The applicant has requested several extensions of time in order to prepare supporting information. | Awaiting decision |

**APPLICATIONS OUTWITH GCC AREA**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Date Validated** | **GCC first discussed** | **Comments** | **Status** |
| None |  |  |  |  |

**OTHER PLANNING MATTERS**

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

Submission of proposals to Scottish Government is anticipated to be during Q3/Q4 2023. A Memorandum of Understanding for Community Benefit has been agreed between Belltown Power and Gifford CC and Garvald & Morham CC.

**Dunside Wind Farm (EDF)**

Proposals were submitted to Scottish Government in July 2023 are are being considered

**Solar panels at Crystal Rig Wind Farm (Fred Olsen Renewables)**

Project timeline indicates further consultation events and application submission during Q4 2023. Initial plans can be viewed at [www.crystalrigwindfarm.com](http://www.crystalrigwindfarm.com)

**Longcroft Wind Farm (Renewable Energy Systems)**

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