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

**on 9th May 2022 at Gifford Bowling Club**

**Participating** Adam White (Chair) Dave Griffiths Hugh Broad Wendy Ferguson  
 Jill Hyslop  Rita Buchan

**In Attendance** Councillor Tom Trotter Councillor Shamin Akhtar Councillor George McGuire Neville Kilkenny

**Apologies** Eleanor Hulme Richard Austin Councillor John McMillan

The Chair opened the meeting by offering congratulations to the elected councillors. Members of community council and attendees introduced themselves to Councillor McGuire who was attending his first Gifford Community Council meeting.

**1 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

  The meeting approved the minutes of the meeting of the 18th April (approved by Dave Griffiths and Hugh Broad).

**2 Matters Arising**

2.1  Newlands Wind Energy Hub. Nothing to report. The Chair explained that the 2 proposed wind farm developments would appear on the agenda each month so that people could raise issues.

2.2 Dunside Wind Farm. Nothing to report.

2.3 Duns Road Traffic Survey.  Before the meeting, Richard had circulated an update from Ian Lennock saying that the council will carry out a traffic survey to assess the effectiveness of the speed cushions, but that the council’s current focus is on progressing the legislative process to make permanent the 20mph speed limits introduced under emergency legislation. This is a resource intensive statutory process involving consultation and the consideration of objections and must be completed before the expiry of the emergency legislation in September 2022. As set out in the cabinet reports, once the order is made there will then be a monitoring period of no less than 12 months. Thereafter, where communities make representations as set out in the policy, an assessment and evidence gathering process will be undertaken to inform a view on additional measures. Until this has taken place suggested changes to speed limits will be deferred unless there are exceptional and compelling reasons for considering them at an earlier stage.

2.4    Edinburgh Road Widening Survey.  Ian Lennock reported before the meeting that a survey involving physical measurements has been undertaken and a design proposal is being drawn up by the council’s engineering team. This will be shared with community council for comment. It was agreed that it would be helpful to have an indication of timescale for when the proposal will be shared. **ACTION: RA**

2.5    Additional Graveyard space. Wendy and Councillor McMillan had not yet been able to meet to explore council funding opportunities to cover the cost of the SEPA survey. There was a discussion about the cost of the survey. Wendy explained that the survey is done over the course of 1 year and SEPA have said there is no way to reduce the cost. There was some discussion about a report that had been done previously and it was agreed that it would be useful to see that report. It was suggested that Wendy could contact Tom Reid, Head of Infrastructure about this. **ACTION: JM/WF**

2.6    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 a quote for its construction.  **ACTION: SA**

2.7   Defibrillators. Wendy reported that she had still not heard from Sam of the Scottish Ambulance Service and the preferred model of defibrillator remained out of stock.

2.8  Railings at the back steps of Yester Primary School.  Councillor Akhtar reported that the railings were due to be painted any time now. See also 2.11 below regarding a school request for help with railings surrounding garden area.

2.9 Noticeboards.  Due to recurring vandalism of the noticeboard, it has been suggested that community council could share a large noticeboard with Yester Church. The shared noticeboard would be positioned outside the church. The more prominent location might deter vandals. Wendy offered to raise the matter at the next kirk session meeting on 10th May. **ACTION: WF**

2.10 Bus Stop – review of position. To avoid passenger confusion, it was suggested at an earlier meeting 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 every 2nd bus has to change direction. Buses often use the village square to turn and don’t continue on to the bus stop. It was thought that Councillor McMillan had raised this at a transport meeting and he can hopefully provide an update at the next meeting. **ACTION: JM**

2.11 Request for help from Yester Primary School for shed replacement. The school has asked for financial assistance to replace a wooden storage shed that is falling down. Councillor Akhtar suggested that the school should agree a specification/quote for the shed with the council and then community council can decide what funding can be provided. The school has also asked for help to re-paint the railings around their new garden are. Wendy has already written to Kevan to discuss the possibility of using any paint left over from the work that is being done on the railings at the back steps. Councillor Akhtar agreed to look at the railings to assess what could be done. **ACTION: SA**

**3      External Reports**

**3.1    Police**

The police report was based on incidents between 14/03/2022 and 09/05/2022. The only matter detailed was that on 19th March the police carried out an anti-hare coursing event in Haddington and surrounding villages. It was noted that the police reports have been written by different police officers since PC Boyd left. Adam asked the councillors whether Gifford would be getting a dedicated community police officer. Councillor Trotter agreed to find out. **ACTION: TT**

**3.2**    **East Lothian Council**

3.2.1    Councillor Akhtar reported that she is looking for suggestions of ways to engage with local residents, such going along to local events or holding doorstop surgeries.

3.2.2 Councillor Trotter reminded the meeting that any problematic hedges that were blocking pedestrian access could be reported to the council.

3.2.3 Councillor McGuire said that he was pleased to be attending his first community council meeting and looked forward to assisting with matters in the future.

3.2.4 Adam asked whether any feedback had been received about the change of venue for the polling station from the village hall to the bowling club. It was agreed that the bowling club allowed for a more effective, accessible, one-way system. However it was reported that some elderly residents found it too far to travel. Although postal voting is available, it was noted that some people are keen to try to vote in person if they can. The provision of transport, whether by means of an informal local network, or something organised by the council, could help people get to the polling station. It was thought that previous services like this had operated in the past, but had been stopped due to Covid.

**3.3    Community Woodland**

Neville Kilkenny, Project Manager of the Community Woodland, was present at the meeting and provided the following update.  The trees damaged by Storm Arwen had now been removed and repairs to the paths were in hand. Engagement with the school continues to go well. Primary 2 have now received 2 forest school sessions and all other classes have had an introductory session. A recent foraging event had been very successful and had raised over £1,000 for the woods. Several free events had been held, including a bushcraft session for younger people and a Bird Call ID session. Nev was finalising a date with the horse logger to thin some tree in Fawn Wood.

**4      Internal Reports**

**4.1    Roads and Footpaths**

Nothing to report.

**4.2    Lighting**

1 faulty light on Main Street to be reported. **ACTION DG**

**4.3    Drainage**

Nothing to report

**4.4    Signs**

Dave asked whether Yester Estate still needed the sign that is tied to the fence at the 3-way junction beside Gifford Golf Course. Adam agreed to ask Martin if this can now be taken down. **ACTION: AW**

**4.5    Planning**

Please see attached report for planning applications within and outwith GCC Area.

A couple of residents had made inquiries about the colour and use of the garden building at The Heddle. The meeting agreed that it might be useful to check the specification agreed during the planning process in case further queries are received. **ACTION: RA**

**4.6    Finance**

Wendy reported that there was approximately £11,000 in the bank. Community Council had agreed to pay for several tree protectors and a payment would soon be made for paint for the school railings.

**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 40 people on the last Friday of April and had been well-received.  The Lunch Club had met with 25 people attending.

**4.11  Local Business**

Rita reported that she had been speaking to NISA staff following some negative discussions on Facebook. She will continue to speak to staff to try to resolve problems. The temporary signs should be coming down soon. To help residents understand that community council members are working with NISA staff to try to resolve problems, it was agreed that we should post something on Facebook detailing what we are doing. **ACTION: JH**

**5.     Correspondence**

The only correspondence received related to a complaint about the NISA store. The person had suggested that a meeting should be arranged, but it was agreed that people are always welcome to attend community council meetings and that a separate meeting was not necessary. As detailed in 4.11 above, Jill will publicise the fact that we are working with the NISA to try to resolve specific issues.

**6.     AOB**

6.1 Litter/food waste left in woods and subsequent dog injury. Nev informed the meeting that people had recently camped in the woods, and had left a lot of mess, including corn cob husks. A local resident’s spaniel had eaten the husk and needed emergency surgery to remove it. There was a discussion about different ways of monitoring unauthorised events, including warden patrols and temporary cameras. It was noted that under Scottish Access Rights it might not be possible to stop people camping, but it was important to stop people lighting fires without permission and people must clear any litter.

6.2 Witherspoon plaque. Wendy had received correspondence, which she read out to the meeting. A local resident had read in a recent set of minutes that a cherry tree was being planted beside the Witherspoon plaque (at the entrance to the village opposite the church) and that the tree would be uploaded to the Queens Green Canopy website. The resident had inquired whether it was appropriate to link the jubilee tree to a historical figure, who is now considered to have been involved with the slave trade. Adam informed the meeting that the cherry tree was originally planted to commemorate 40 years of 1st Gifford Brownies. The tree had died and was being replaced as an ongoing reminder of the anniversary of the Brownies. The Witherspoon plaque had been mentioned only as a way of identifying the site. It was not known whether East Lothian Council intended to take any action to inform residents about the subjects of public memorials, in circumstances where additional information is now known.

**Date of next meeting -** 7:30pm on Monday 13th June 2022.

**APPLICATIONS WITHIN GCC AREA**

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|  | **Date Validated** | **GCC first discussed** | **Comments** | **Status** |
| 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. | Awaiting decision |
| 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. | 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 |
| 21/01457/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 |

**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. | Awaiting decision |

**OTHER PLANNING MATTERS**

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

Nothing to report since April meeting.

**Dunside Wind Farm (EDF)**

Nothing to report since April meeting.