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

**on 14th November at Gifford Bowling Club**

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

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

**Apologies** Dave Griffiths Councillor John McMillan

**1** **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The meeting approved the minutes of 10th October (approved by Wendy Ferguson and Richard Austin).

**2** **Matters arising**

**2.1 Newlands Wind Energy Hub**

If Newlands goes ahead, there will be a community benefit fund. The developers have indicated that 80% of the fund could go towards reducing electricity bills. Those within 10km could see a reduction of c.£300 - £600 per year depending on their distance from the site.  The remaining 20% (c.£100K) would be further divided with a portion allocated to Gifford and Garvald CCs for local causes and the remainder available as a county-wide fund to which groups could apply. A community ‘wind farm company’ would need to be set up to manage the fund, along the lines of the Gifford Community Land Company, which manages the community woods. There is also the possibility that Gifford and Garvald could jointly acquire up to 5% equity in the project.  1% would be free and the remaining 4% would be available at cost. Mark Brennan from Local Energy Scotland (LES) has advised that the cost of buying the 4% (c.£4m) could be obtained from the Scottish National Investment Bank. The 1st preparatory step would be to arrange a Memorandum of Understanding between Gifford CC, Garvald CC and Belltown, which says that, if the development goes ahead, then there is an initial commitment to take up Belltown’s offer of some form of community ownership. LES can arrange grants for financial and legal advice. Garvald CC has indicated that it is happy for Gifford to get the grant and arrange the memorandum of understanding. The meeting agreed that Richard should contact Mark to confirm that Gifford would like to proceed with the memorandum. Adam emphasised that this is only relevant if the project goes ahead. There was a discussion about how best to raise awareness locally and ensure that residents know how to give feedback (whether positive or negative). Around 40 people attended the 2nd public exhibition. Jill to publicise the online exhibition (which runs until 30th November) on Facebook. Local residents to be advised that they can contact one of their MSPs: Craig Hoy, Paul McLennan or Martin Whitfield. There was a discussion about liability for decommissioning. The developers expect the decommissioning to be net positive as there is a market for the steel, etc. Some doubts were expressed about that. It was noted that the developers are unlikely to retain ownership throughout the entire lifetime of the project. **ACTION: RA/JH**

**2.2 Dunside Windfarm**

There was a 2nd public exhibition on 26th October.  The Dunside Wind Farm will extend the existing site at Fallago Rig and will have less direct impact on Gifford. If it goes ahead, Gifford will benefit from a Community Fund, but there has been no mention of shared ownership.

**2.3 Edinburgh Road Widening Survey**

Subject to formal notification, it looks like the Area Partnership Roads budget will cover the cost of the bridge widening. Richard will get an update from ELC’s Callum Redpath when he is back from holiday. **ACTION: RA.**

**2.4 Additional Graveyard space**

No progress to report. Funding still needs to be found to cover the cost of the SEPA survey. Hugh agreed to contact Councillor McMillan regarding the high cost of the survey. **ACTION: JM/HB**

**2.5 Wheelie Bins on Main Street**

Councillor Akhtar has obtained a quote of £800 for a wooden storage unit and she confirmed that the quote is the same regardless of whether the container takes 3 large bins or 7 small ones. Councillor Akhtar agreed to give the dimensions to Neville so that he can provide a comparative quote. The unit will not require dropped kerbs as residents will not need to remove the bins from the front. The bins will stay in the unit and residents will lift the lid and add their rubbish. Councillor Akhtar to circulate an image of the unit. **ACTION: SA**

**2.6 Defibrillator**

2.6.1 School defibrillator.  Wendy was delighted to report that the school defibrillator has been installed, it’s working and the staff have been trained. Retrospective planning permission now needs to be arranged, which Richard will help with. **ACTION: RA/WF**

2.6.2 Garage defibrillator. Eleanor has inspected the garage defibrillator and confirmed that it’s working. The cabinet no longer has a working light or fan and it was agreed that a new one should be bought. Eleanor to forward the link for the correct model to Wendy, who will arrange the purchase.  **ACTION: EH/WF**

2.6.3 Bowling club defibrillator.  No update. Following the last meeting, Alison (from VCEL) had been in touch with Dave to discuss possible funding options.

**2.7 School Shed**

Once Mrs Mercer has supplied a costing for the new shed, Community Council can arrange the funding.  **ACTION: SA**

**2.8** **Noticeboard**

Wendy confirmed that the new noticeboard will need planning permission and Richard will assist with this. The new noticeboard will be sited in front of the church, slightly to the right of the existing one. The exact model still needs to be selected, but it will be free-standing, made of aluminium and is likely to consist of 3 x A1 panels.  **ACTION: WF/RA**

**2.9 Bus stop - review of position**

This was held over as Councillor McMillan was absent.  **ACTION: JM**

**2.10 Disabled car parking for Gifford Community Woodland** (to be positioned on Tweeddale Avenue)

The Woods Project Manager, Nev Kilkenny, agreed to contact Keith Scott about this.

**2.11 EV Charging Points.**

Gifford CC will not apply for Area Partnership match funding for this at the present time due to prioritising the Bridge Widening project on the Edinburgh Road (see 2.3 above). A meeting was held with Ryan Robertson to look charging options. ELC strongly favours siting at least one EV charger in the Square, but concerns have been expressed by residents about whether this is an appropriate location, having regard to Gifford’s conservation status. Newer, more discreet EV charging points are under development, so these may be available when the matter is looked at again in the future.

**2.12 Beautiful Scotland**

Gifford was awarded a Silver Gilt certificate at the recent Beautiful Scotland awards. Adam thanked everyone who had contributed to the portfolio, presentation and judges’ walking tour. Adam recommended taking a break from the competition and making another entry in a couple of years.

**2.13 Dropped Kerbs**

Jill reported that the suggested list of dropped kerbs had been passed to the Area Partnership, who have funding for this. The list is now with Ian Lennock.

**2.14 Gifford’s Village Christmas**

Wendy reported on the arrangements for Christmas. The tree has been ordered and will be delivered during the last week of November. The lights will be put on the tree on the 3rd of December, and the ‘Switch On’ will be on Friday 9th December. The Christmas Post box will be in Lanterne Rouge from 10th - 17th December where people can post cards for delivery locally for a small charge. The proceeds will go towards St Columba’s. The Carols Around the Tree will be on the 23rd December. Adam confirmed that the Community’s Woodland’s Christmas decoration event will take place in the afternoon of Friday 9th December from 2pm in the Village Hall.

**3. External Reports**

**3.1** **Police**

The police report is based on incidents between 01/09/2022 and 31/10/2022.

* One call about youths kicking a bus shelter. Youths dispersed by time of police arrival. No damage.
* One call re youths on roof of primary school. Caller later advised youths left area so police non-attendance.
* Road Traffic accident involving a van and a motorbike near Townhead Wood. One party reported for careless driving.
* Theft of gardening implements reported from garden of dwelling.
* Theft of motorcycle involved in previous RTC reported from near Townhead.
* Local resident reported 5-figure fraud following scam caller purporting to be from bank security department.

Adam attended the CAPP meeting on 7th November and confirmed that speeding and antisocial behaviour had been set as local priorities for Gifford. Community Council members were pleased to have received a police report and hope to continue to build a constructive relationship with the new Community Police Officer, Emma Stewart.

**3.2** **East Lothian Council**

Councillor McGuire reported that the roadworks by Lennoxlove were scheduled for repair in December.

Councillor Trotter reported that he is looking for a new venue to hold surgeries, but in the meantime they will be in the Nungate Community Centre. Councillor Trotter reported on local antisocial behaviour statistics, with reported case numbers down on last year.

Councillor Akhtar reported on the council’s efforts to ensure that people are receiving the full value of benefits they are entitled to.   Councillor Akhtar also reported that the NISA shop front signage was now progressing through planning, but it was not appearing on the portal yet.

**3.3** **Gifford Community Woodland**

Woods Project Manager, Nev Kilkenny, reported that they are running fortnightly volunteer days to clear rhododendron and process the piles of previously cleared rhododendron.  They plan to train one or more people to act as volunteer team leaders so that they can run additional volunteer days. Path repairs will be carried out soon to deal with the damage caused by Storm Arwen. The saw logs which are currently in Station Yard will be removed in 2 - 3 weeks. The chip will be sold locally. Nev is due to meet forestry officers to discuss the ash dieback felling licence. Venturing Out have been running ASN bushcraft sessions in the woods. The fruit trees team met to agree locations for 9 fruit trees and a pack of ‘wild harvest’ trees obtained through the Queen’s Green Canopy. The QGC trees will be planted in November and the fruit trees will be planted in January. Next year there are plans to run a Forest School Summer Camp and an autumn outdoor cinema event.

**3.4 Yester Estate**

Following the community fireworks event on Friday 4th November, the estate contacted Adam to arrange for bags of cut logs to be donated to local residents. Community Council will advertise a date on their Facebook page and people can come and collect 1 bag per household. Date and collection point to be confirmed. The Soup & Smile Volunteers are checking whether anyone on that list - who would not be able to collect a bag themselves - would like one delivered. The estate also has venison burgers and sausages which they are also keen to donate to the community.  **ACTION: AW/JH**

**4 Internal Reports**

**4.1 Roads and Footpaths**

In relation to re-surfacing the road from the quarry to Longyester, Alan Stubbs has reported that they plan to undertake some carriageway resurfacing within the area over the next few months. One location is C98 Longyester School to E Hopes and the 2nd location C92 Longnewton to Longyester.  The latter includes a section to the quarry. Callum Redpath is leading on this and can provide more details when he returns from holiday. As reported at 3.2 above, the section of the B6369 Haddington Road where the edge of the carriageway has collapsed on the narrow section of road past the lodge on the Lennoxlove section will be repaired in December. Dave requested an update from the council about the schedule to resurface the lane between Station Road and Tweeddale Crescent. Alan Stubbs reported that Callum Redpath is leading on this and will provide an update after his holiday.

**4.2 Lighting**

The two street lamps on Lillies Lane have had new bulbs put in them and are now working. No other faults known. The painting of the new street lamp posts on Duns road has been completed. Redundant lamp posts on Duns Road towards the 30 mph limit have not been removed yet. On Main Street in the area between Hoggs Newsagent, Goblin Hotel next to the Square, and the intersection to the High street, is quite dark and Dave has asked the council’s lighting department to look at it. Alan Stubbs has reported that Glen will look at what is possible within current design guidelines. It might be possible to apply for Area Partnership funding to cover the cost.

**4.3 Drainage**

Nothing to report on drainage except a lot of the gullies are now filled with leaves. Callum Redpath to confirm when the next gully sucker visit is planned.

**4.4 Signs**

Yester Estate still need to confirm whether they still need the sign at the junction by the golf course, or if it can be removed. As reported at 3.2 above, the new signage for the NISA shop is currently progressing through planning.

**4.5 Planning**

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

**4.6 Finance**

Wendy will make the necessary arrangements for the CC accounts to be independently assessed, which is an annual requirement. **ACTION: WF**

**4.7 Website/Communications**

The Christmas dates have been added to the website.

**4.8 Resilience**

Adam reported that fish and chips had been delivered on the last Friday of October and the Lunch Club had been well attended.  Weekly Soup & Smile deliveries are now being made on Wednesdays throughout winter. This initiative aims to reduce loneliness and social isolation. Jill to apply to the Area Partnership for funding for £1375 to cover 50% of the cost. **ACTION: JH**

**5. Correspondence**

A local resident had emailed to ask about the possibility of getting the existing half-hourly bus service between Edinburgh and Pencaitland extended to come into Gifford.   It was agreed that this should be passed to Councillor McMillan. **ACTION: JH**

**6. AOB**

**6.1** Issue 3 of the Gifford Grapevine , a directory of local events and activities, has now been published. It will be delivered to all houses in the village, as well as some of the outlying areas, and Adam asked community council members if they could help with the delivery. Volunteers should contact Adam.

**6.2** Nev suggested that the council look at the narrow section of the B6369 Haddington Road (by Lennoxlove), as there is a tree stump which should be removed. *After the meeting Nev reported that the tree stump had been removed, but there were some large boulders (the remains of a former wall) near to the edge, which should possibly be removed.*

Date of next meeting: Monday 12th December.

**APPLICATIONS WITHIN GCC AREA**

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|  | **Date Validated** | **GCC first discussed** | **Comments** | **Status** |
| 22/01228/P | Repainting of windows and door (retrospective) | 4 The Avenue Gifford East Lothian EH41 4QX | 07/11/22 | Nov 2022 | Retrospective application for change of colour of windows and door to black. | Awaiting decision |
| 22/01128/P | Alterations to house | Garden Cottage Edinburgh Road Gifford EH41 4JE | 14/10/22 | Nov 2022 | Replacement windows, internal alterations and flue for woodburning stove. | Awaiting decision |
| 22/01013/P | Alterations, extension to house, erection of flue and formation of hardstanding areas | 4 Old Mill Lane Gifford East Lothian EH41 4QQ | 13/09/22 | Oct 2022 | Alterations to internal layout and windows to rear within same footprint. Extension to entrance lobby to front. | Approved |
| 22/00798/P |  Repainting of house and doors (Part retrospective) |  Lomond Tweeddale Avenue Gifford East Lothian EH41 4QN | 12/09/22 | Oct 2022 | Repainting of white external walls in dark grey. | 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 |

**NO APPLICATIONS OUTWITH GCC AREA**

**OTHER PLANNING MATTERS**

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

A second consultation event was held in Gifford Village Hall on Wednesday 9th November. This exhibition included visualisations of the turbines from various locations, including Longyester and the Haddington Road out of Gifford.

The exhibition can be viewed online until 30th November via a link from [www.newlandshillwindenergyhub.com](http://www.newlandshillwindenergyhub.com) .

**Dunside Wind Farm (EDF)**

A second consultation event was held in Gifford Village Hall on 26th October.

The exhibition can be viewed online at [www.dunsidewindfarm.co.uk](http://www.dunsidewindfarm.co.uk) under the ‘resources’ section of the main menu.