

EAST LAMMERMUIR COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT SPOTT VILLAGE HALL ON TUESDAY 10th SEPTEMBER 2024

PRESENT: Chris Bruce (Chair/Oldhamstocks), Kelvin D’Arcy Burt (Secretary/Stenton), Ann Lyall (Spott), Wendy Smillie (Oldhamstocks), Councillor Lyn Jardine (Dunbar & East Linton), Colin Bloomfield (Treasurer/Stenton), Rev Suzie Fletcher (Co-opted Member)

APOLOGIES: Lennox Web (Spott)

Jill Malcolmson has stepped down, new Innerwick representative needed.

Minutes of 20th August accepted.

Matters arising not elsewhere on agenda

- Spott Rd/A1 junction - no further forward. LJ
- Community Council website/social media ongoing management - PB offered to manage this until March, for £100 which he would donate to Richmond’s Hope. Approach to be made to Philip Immirzi (Dunbar) about taking on this task in the longer term.

Any other items of business for agenda

- Belhaven Hospital Garden - community group asked to attend a community council meeting to explain their intentions regarding the garden. Group to be invited to 29th October meeting. CB

Treasurers Report ELCC

Admin balance £4213.88.

£2,000 Admin costs received from our application at last funding round in May 24 should cover requirements through to next year.

Google Workspace costs are running at approximately £1,000 per annum. These are now being paid from the ELCB Trust , as being a charitable entity means we get a discounted rate. We are paying about the same as previously as various new accounts have been added which have increased costs but at the discounted rates. It was felt that Google Workspace offers sufficient benefits as it is secure, and accessible to the right people.

CB has corrected errors on the draft ELCC annual accounts, which will put on the general shared drive and a copy sent to East Lothian Council.

ABEI Energy £600 donation for Local Place Plan work has not been received, and this has been chased up.

Police Report

- Quad bikes and a pickup from Stottencleugh near Oldhamstocks stolen. KDB to attend CAPP meeting 10th October, will ask about any follow up positive prevention work.

Local Updates

- Innerwick P/Office - no update. **SF**
- Outdoor Centre - could be a potential long-term measure. Kitchen/dining area not too bad, sitting area poor. Council Estates Department have considered putting it up for sale, LJ suggested contacting T Reid at the Council. **SF**
- Innerwick Church - planning permission granted for 4 bed house conversion. **SF**
- Oldhamstocks - Voltalia meeting held on 28th August, 102 people attended. Voltalia could not answer questions. Fair to say got a very good feel of strength of opinion. OCA to organise a Q&A session with engineers etc and set up a working group. **WS**
- Anonymous letter received by some Oldhamstocks residents concerning OCA. No more heard about it.
- Oldhamstocks Church - no further forward, however, there is a group interested in the building. **SF** getting nothing from Church Office solicitors. The Church is a listed building so will be challenging to do much with it.
- Innerwick village home heating meeting - about 35 people attended. It was suggested local sessions be held to give residents information about funding available. Engage with someone who could do feasibility study for all the villages. Information being sought regarding insulation, solar heating for the hall. **CB**
- Stenton - repairs to first half of wall is finished. What to do with the verge is an issue as it is part owned by housing association.

How are we doing - review of ELCC meetings/work

- Frequency and length of meetings, emails - who to send to and in what form. To have shorter meetings would mean holding more meetings (in scheme of establishment say should meet monthly). The meetings were regarded as relaxed with open discussion but could sometimes wander off topic. **No increase in number of meetings.**
Emails could be titled/flagged with subject ie. general discussion emails could be titled to read later, prioritisation needed. It was felt the number of emails received could seem overwhelming. Between now and 29th October meeting emails will include titles such as “for action” and see how this works. **CBr**
LJ pointed out this Community Council had heaviest agenda overall because of what is happening in the area.

Local Energy Infrastructure Developments (see eastlammermuirdevelopments.co.uk)

- Voltalia - local peoples' concerns have gone from substation to battery storage but the solar farm application is on another level because of coverage.
- ABEI BESS - Pitcox 2nd consultation 4th September, much the same, few extra panels. Small changes to layout of containers. Fire; each container has a gas suppressor and management system which should shut down element should an incident occur the water tank is for external use. **KDB**
- Energy consents application will need to be commented on in due course so feedback will be required. No objections received. **CB/KDB**
- Branxton Substation - SPEN - possibly going to Planning 1st October. ELCC will be invited to speak at meeting about Council decision to approve or not, too late now to say it is a bad idea. Do we continue to object because cumulative impact not understood. If it were permitted, the developer should be required to engage with biodiversity and traffic groups. Also include notion of “net gain for community”
CBr

- Traffic Crystal Rig access - FOR going to put something out in the post.
A1 junction - Tommy Deans (BEAR) to be invited to next meeting to discuss.
- Meeting 26th September Oldhamstocks village hall - Tom Reid, Director for Infrastructure, Ray Montgomery and Graeme Marsden to visit. Graeme (Project Manager) could be the link with the Council to keep ELCC informed of plans. **CBr to attend**

Community Benefits

- Graham Boulton, Local Energy Scotland, has been commissioned to run consultation sessions about any new Community Benefit Funds associated with national grid infrastructure developments, how should this be managed. Questions about East Lothian as a whole against East Lammern. What are the benefits of giving to each community rather than the local authority. People may want to know what the benefits are and become more interested. Message to SPEN was no good making up own system, when we have 11 other potential funding streams, went away with a lot to think about.
- NNG have not finished getting turbines up. Clearly intend to give all their community benefits to Foundation Scotland to administer. Martin Hayman wants heat networks for East Lothian; next step is to get a feasibility study on this. Tarmac has a lot of heat that could be captured. Incinerator too - how to get heat to the towns.
- Paul McLennan and Martin Hayman had a disappointing meeting with NnG on this.
- CBr suggested advising NNG that half (50%) of their community benefit money could go to East Lothian Community Benefit Fund and ask them in turn to pay towards a feasibility study to get things moving forward. This would mean ELCC would be backing half the money going to East Lothian Community Benefit Fund, if this was agreed by all.
- CBr will advise the Association (AELCC) this has been discussed and outline what would be acceptable from NNG. CBr to compose letter.

Treasurers Report Community Benefits

Crystal Rig III Deed of Assignment has been finalised and now signed by FOR Main Board Directors. The purpose of this legal agreement is to transfer rights to receive monies from ELCC (as the current CR III Assignee) to enable future payments to transfer to EL Community Benefit Fund Ltd.

FOR UK accounts team have the financial information needed for ELCBF Ltd so that CR III funds can be released in due course.

ELCB Trust has a financial year end 31.3.24. Draft accounts have been submitted to our Accountants for a first reporting year. Final Trust accounts must be submitted to OSCR including any changes to Trustees.

ELCBT & ELCBF Ltd. AGMs 1st October - notifications of AGM are required to be published. OSCR suggest publishing accounts on website. We will need 4 trustees/directors present either in person or via Whatsapp/phone call. KDB happy to be contacted via Whatsapp. Need to check if other members could be contacted electronically.

CB has opened a 30 day notice account for ELCB Fund Ltd as this gives about 3% interest. This could help pay for our overall annual admin, insurance and other costs.

Liaison Meetings and Roles updates

- Telecom digital switch over Zoom meeting (analogue switch off January 2027). Explained advantages of this, broadband etc. People mentioned resilience or lack of in small villages, talked about “what ifs” and contingencies for older residents, support has to be provided for older/vulnerable people. If power outage digital voice does not work, can’t dial 999 etc. Vulnerable people can get a battery back-up which keeps router running and a digital connection to router, in an emergency the system would find nearest

network. Hybrid phones free to vulnerable customers (£85 for battery back-up, handset £24). **WS**

- Resilience plan - does anyone know of someone in their village who would be willing to develop a plan, templates exist. If one village produced a plan, the other 3 could be similar. The nominated person would need to attend a workshop in Haddington but no date yet. **KDB to speak with Andy Collins (Stenton)**
- 600 properties in East Lammermuir. Battery/digital cost would be about £2k. Satellite phones are expensive, but each village could have one, making the village hall the focal point of each plan.
- Viridor/Valencia/Tarmac - nothing.
- Area Partnership - money in the amenities budget. DELAP newsletter circulated letting people know what they do. Representatives were asked to talk about things going on in their communities, was interesting to listen to. If anything needed in the community contact **AL**
- Alison and Alasdair (Chair & Vice Chair DELAP) raised our point at a ELLC Transport meeting that volunteers were carrying out tasks that the Council should be doing, this was acknowledged. **CBr to follow up**

Association of East Lothian Community Councils - Code of Conduct

- Could someone read and send any comments to CBr.
Primary purpose of code of conduct is to give confidence that there is a procedure to follow should any issues arise within the community council. **CBr**

Next meeting 29th October, Innerwick 7.30 pm

MCJ
11.9.24