

EAST LAMMERMUIR COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT
SPOTT VILLAGE HALL ON MONDAY 3RD MARCH 2025

PRESENT: Chris Bruce (Chair Oldhamstocks) Kelvin D'Arcy Bruce (Secretary Stenton) Wendy Smillie (Oldhamstocks) Anne Lyall (Spott) Lennox Webb (Spott) Mitch Stevenson (Community Engagement Officer VCEL) Cllr Lyn Jardine (Dunbar & East Linton) Helen Taylor-Brown (ELCBF) Rev Suzie Fletcher (Innerwick)(Remote) Rachel Searle (Foundation Scotland) Julie Aitken (Fred Olsen Renewables)(from 20.30)

APOLOGIES: Colin Bloomfield (Treasurer Spott)

3) Minutes of meeting held on 13th January accepted.

4) Matters arising not elsewhere on agenda

- East Lothian Exercise on Referral Scheme. LJ to raise this at IJB, how to highlight it. Enjoy Leisure role in social prescribing, how much do GPs know? **Keep on agenda.**
- Belhaven Garden letter of support - should be with them. Garden survey has been circulated and petition in process. Community Asset Transfer. NHS Board talking about garden in terms of green space. Opportunities for growing food and outdoor activity. **SF to share letter with ELCC committee.**
- Dunbar LPP submitted but not yet ratified by council. **Keep on agenda.**
- Heat Network Report - feasibility study work started (first phase finishes April). Related LHEES Motion not heard at recent full council meeting (our letter of support arrived after it had been removed from the agenda). Instead it will go to the cross-party climate group and then back to council. Appears to be limited political support across the whole council. The new ELC chief executive starts 22nd April, LJ and Shona McIntosh (Green party) hope to have an early meeting to make him aware of how important this project is.
- LPP - LJ has had no further feedback from other developers.

5) Any other items of business for the agenda - Nothing to add.

6) Treasurers Report (provided by CB)

- ELCC Admin Balance is £3642.14 (as at 26.2.25). This current account is with RBS who have decided to charge "Club and Societies" accounts 35p per transaction from December 2024. In contrast the ELCB account with Virgin Money actually pays us for making certain transactions (cashback at 30p per transaction). Whilst amounts aren't huge, it does beg the question whether we should be moving business away from RBS at some point. Annual CC insurance (Zurich) and ICO (GDPR) fees have been paid.
- Funding Meeting - agreed to hold on Tuesday 6th May 7 pm.
- Rob Fryer email - Aikengal 2 CWP Energy to fund new Oldhamstocks village hall, £345,000 already, any more than that they will draw down. **CBR**
- Aikengal 2a CWP will fund heat network feasibility study (mentioned in item 4 above).

7) Rachel Searle - Foundation Scotland

FS have been working in East Lammermuir area for years, became involved through wind farm funding near Oldhamstocks. Will focus on ensuring East Lammermuir gets the best benefits over the next few years. FS appointed by local consortium including ELCC, ELCouncil, SSE and SPEN as host for new East Lammermuir Energy Projects Partnership Manager position. They will take care of employment side, make sure postholder is paid and able to do job effectively. There will be a support team in place. Hopefully the person appointed will be in post in 4/6 weeks.

In broader work, FS distribute money on behalf of people with wealth or individuals/families who want to donate money to communities/organisation but do not know how to do this. FS are like Government House. When donations received, FS trustees take over legal responsibility. They receive the funds and transfer the money to local organisations who distribute it their own way. FS available to offer advice and support if needed.

About 15 years ago RS was approached by renewable businesses who wanted to give community benefits but didn't know how to go about it. FS work with communities in receipt of money where the donors are comfortable for the community to make their own decisions on how to use the funding.

CBr advised CR4 is in construction, was agreed our share of the related community benefits would go to East Lothian Community Benefits.

NnG project worked with EDF onshore projects in Scotland. NnG will be making an announcement about community benefit arrangements.

RS advised EDF have approached FS for discussions, East Lammermuir significantly impacted community. CBr said FS is more of a professional voice with this developer and if it means a better deal in the long term, because work is mostly in East Lammermuir, then all well and good.

Wider community benefits moving into different phase. Communities with knowledge of benefits are trying to develop more ambitious projects in their communities or with other communities and becoming less territorial about benefits.

FS keen to engage better with communities and developers. Should see opportunities beyond East Lammermuir project. Not on a takeover mission but if can help broker better arrangements happy to do so.

CBr (item 8) community voice session on Community Benefits session at Innerwick on 10th March 7-9 pm. 10 confirmed attendees, invite the wider community, make people more aware. The way developers think about who they give money to is changing. Broader frame and what people think money should be spent on. All important elements of the meeting on 10th, those unable to attend meeting, please submit ideas. CBr

8) Progressing our Local Place Plan

- How to use community benefits.
- Public transport bus tender - not yet announced.
- Biodiversity - plan to develop a fuller vision and set proposals. Looking to funding from Forth Rivers Trust who haven't worked in East Lammermuir but keen to do so.
- Active Travel - not yet sent out invites to form local group. Eastern Green Link section has been fenced off. Can't use normal paths, A1 Innerwick and Dryburn has been closed. Contacted Debbie (SPEN) about this happening without notice, she mentioned a draft notice stating the path will be closed. CBr asked her not to put notice up but to have a discussion. Nick Morgan, Council Paths Officer said core

paths have to be taken into consideration, let people know it may be necessary to close path for 2 weeks and no longer. Active Travel Group could ask which paths are included. CBr

9) Community Benefits from Net Zero Developments Scottish Government consultation

- Need to respond to this before meeting again, if anyone gets a chance to read what is relevant it would help with response. CBr
RS deadline 11th April, won't get a response until later in year.

10) Julie Aitken - FOR Snr Project Manager.

Julie's role is to take projects from early stages and oversee planning applications etc. CR1 repower public exhibition at Innerwick Tuesday 4th March. The turbines will come to an end in 2027/28. Options are life extension, remove or re-power. Decommissioning has to go through planning. Following exhibition last year have had regular meetings with planning and have revised CR1 plans - removed battery storage and solar. Planning application in May, hoping it doesn't go to public enquiry. Old cables are checked, will be replaced at some point. A biodiversity plan is needed before ecologists can assess what is needed.

The turbines can be removed, recycle towers but need to be careful with the blades which can be crushed up and used in cement, for decking etc. Foundations of current turbines stay put.

CR1 down 2027/28, 25 turbines to be replaced with 10 larger ones. Change in community benefit, will look to start talks with community councils.

Meteorology mast on site, looking at potential for CR5. LIDARs gather information on what is going on at the site. CR2/3 at some point will be repowered or life extended. Will speak about this next year, information to be gathered.

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

- Developers meeting 17th March, invitation only. 10/12 community members, developers, council, Tommy Deans (BEAR), Paul McLelland, Martin Whitfield, Craig Hoy. Small group discussions, developers will be invited to say how their proposals will enhance LPP and improve area. New Partnership Manager will hopefully attend meeting. CBr
- Lorries in our Lanes/Biodiversity groups at 31 March meeting will be able to express their wishes to developers and hear their views. RS will attend meeting.
- Accommodation temporary workers. The workforce requirements will be varied at different times. Extra worker numbers are in the hundreds at any one time and would need accommodation here that doesn't exist. This is already in Council's strategic housing plan, may be scope to do this in East Linton or Tranent, whereas Dunbar local accommodation providers are concerned about the drain taking these workers would have on their holiday trade. LJ has had contact with hotels and they are saying no. Could people take in lodgers? Impact on East Lothian housing, already strained enough. Until have the contract SPEN/SSE don't engage the contractors who know the numbers of workers. Construction programmes are in planning applications. Branxton substation is 5-year build programme.
- ELC planning 14th January - CBr tried to influence standard planning conditions. No engagement with planning officers until final meetings. Conditions are slightly better than before but still weak conditions about traffic, biodiversity habitat enhancement plans. Conditions do not mention engaging with community groups, just informing. FO have engaged and listened. Planners say can't mandate this. CBr had telephone contact with Environmental Rights Centre for Scotland lawyer on

Wednesday. Is it true that planning conditions can't ask people to inform can only ask them to engage. **Awaiting response.CBr**

12) Belhaven Hospital

- Lyn Jardine had circulated in advance her final report on the future of Belhaven Hospital. Suzie Fletcher and Wendy Smillie had represented ELCC on the working group.
- Dunbar community council LPP was not settled when decision taken to close BH so a bit of a scramble to find way of encompassing community views. Spent time looking at opportunities for influencing around Local Development Plan 2 and also engaging with ELC and NHS Lothian around ways to develop site. Conversations with and interest from community is helping NHS Lothian understand they have to take into consideration community purpose.
- Community Asset Transfer - garden zoned for housing and hospital for health and social care. Engaging conversations with EL health and social care partnership is hopefully helping each other to do something useful.

13) Liaison Meetings & Roles

- **Torness** - 25th March, raise subject of hydrogen again. **KDB**
- **Viridor** - 21st January, no site visit. LJ said meetings can be quite technical but they're happy to have people visit. Ask about small funds and managing what benefits fund allocates. **LJ/Christy PH**
- **Valencia** - public meeting held, plant to shut July/September 2025. Will stop taking waste and publish restoration plan. Much of Site to be fenced off by Eastern Green link.
- **Tarmac** - Rolling restoration, suggestions to fill quarry with water, create nature reserve, looked at for sea cadets but not suitable.
Want to know about visits to sites **CBr**
- **Area Partnership** - Need to find rest of funding. Some money went to The Ridge for outreach to come to villages. **AL**
Want a written piece from each village of about 200 words WS (Oldhamstocks),
- KDB/CB (Stenton), SF will ask someone from Innerwick.
- Community festival celebrating networks suggested.
- Health & wellbeing group. 8 different groups voting members of DELAP. HWB feel they should be included in this - ongoing. **AL**
- DELAP AGM does not seem to have same level of publicity, no minutes taken. **MS**
- Parking in Town Centres - AL to represent ELCC. Online meeting next week and on 17th March. AL can't attend Tuesday meeting. CBr asked if she could attend a meeting.
- **AELCC** review revised complaints policy (to be circulated). Who to refer to if can't resolve issue at local level. **CBr**
- **ELCB** - has website and some money in bank account. Only money for heat network feasibility study. Restricted funds.
- KDB asked where the money was coming from. Discussion between CBr/KDB. CR4 providing money, decided about 18 months ago. When being set up there was a question about percentages, KDB thought this was still open, not been discussed in group. **CBr unsure - to review minutes**
KDB thinks repowering will be different, draw a 10 kilometre circle and each village will get a share. Julie said she would talk to the community councils.

14) Correspondence

- Trains - looks like going to do what we want. December 2025 East Coast timetable showed Dunbar losing 17.05, 17.34 trains from Waverley, asked for one to be put

back on. Announcement to be made Friday, East Linton & Reston are different. **CBr**

- Proposed Solar farm near Oldhamstocks - ELCC submitted our opinion that the scoping opinion too narrow -ECU agreed. Flooding mentioned, curling pond too which is listed in historical curling ponds. Voltaia will have to do more work. **CBr**

15) Police Report

- Report circulated. Next meeting 10th April 6 pm, any issues send to KDB.
- PC Laura Jackson to attend June ELCC meeting.

16) Local Updates

- **Stenton** - wall is finished, the security fencing has been removed on lower half. East Lothian Housing Association put it up because the old wall was falling down. Bottom bit available to do something with ie. guerilla gardening. Speed survey to go online to Stenton, paper copies to those within 20 mph zone. Speed camera still not working. **KDB**
- **Spott** - No survey yet for 20 mph, white lines - heard from Alan Stubbs, planning to undertake surface/dressing work at Wester Broom to Spott later this year, happy to do when weather improves. Bridge repaired. **AL**
Foundations need looking at. **LW**
- **Oldhamstocks** - Community Association AGM Tuesday 4th March. **WS**
Oldhamstocks church - had final service but not handed over yet. **SF**
- **Innerwick** - hall work moving forward. Meeting with QS and contractors. Funding in place, hoping to get ELC John Martin's approval soon to move into outdoor centre in next few months and hopefully get the tender/negotiations organised with The Ridge. **SF**
LJ suggested SF email JM and she will pick it up.
Community Council member update - nothing to report. **SF**

Meeting closed.

Next meeting 28th April (Oldhamstocks)