East Lammermuir Community Council

Meeting 24th August 2026 at 19.00 Stenton Village Hall

Present: Community Councillors: Kelvin D'Arcy-Burt, Lennox Webb, Caroline Anderson, Suzie Fletcher, Colin Bloomfield, Anne Lyall, Chris Bruce (Chair).

In attendance: Beth Landon -Energy Projects Partnership Manager, Jo Demer -ELCC Admin,, Sue Guy - new Local Place Plan Delivery Officer (Community Development Officer), Ellen Abbi – Warm Homes project manager, and Jenny Gries - River catchment restoration project Officer**.** Funding panel member -Paula Oliver, Helen Taylor Brown -East Lammermuir Community Benefits Fund Trustee.

1.Welcome and introductions

Ellen and Jenny spoke briefly about their projects.

To avoid overwhelming landowners with multiple requests, there can be a focus on sharing engagement efforts between project officers. Meetings are already underway, with a note to comply with data protection regulations.

Sue presented the proposed Local Place Plan Governance and Framework for Delivery. The aim is to provide a clear structure for moving the four LPP ambitions into delivery, involving local people through steering groups while keeping appropriate ELCC oversight.

2. Apologies – East Lothian Councillor Lyn Jardine

3. Minutes of previous meeting - not discussed

4. Matters arising not elsewhere on the Agenda

- **Renewing Local Democracy proposal** – decision just to wait for now
- **Dunbar Data Centre -** The group decided that we don't have the capacity to lead the opposition, but ELCC will monitor the situation and support organised protest groups if and when necessary.

5. Any other items of business for the Agenda

- Billing for Photocopying and Printing: Sue G is hosted by the East Lothian Climate Action Network SCIO. Sue raised a question about the ELCAN role. **DECISION** Sue G to ask ELCAN to open an account with Lothian Printers.
- **Path Extension**: A request from Peter Branfield to extend a path in the Little Spott area, which includes a bridge and a gate. There has been previous work done in the area via Spott Community Association so could see how this proposal would align with their ongoing activities. DELAP has previously successfully funded similar extensions. **ACTION** Jenny G, Sue G

6. Local updates

Oldhamstocks

- **Springfield Energy Development**: Update on the energy consent situation for Springfield. **DECISION** to coordinate with other organisations: Oldhamstocks Community Association (OCA), Cockburnspath & Cove CC and SORELL, to ensure their objection strategy is aligned at the pre-inquiry meeting.
- **SPEN Electricity Outage overrun vouchers**: worries about inconsistent distribution of compensation vouchers following a recent power outage overrun. Some residents received £20 Amazon vouchers after doorstep visits or phone calls.
- **Village Hall Construction**: Update on the village hall, noting that internal steel framework and trusses are being installed. Mention of project deadlines.

Innerwick –

- **Hall renovations**, the steel framework is in, scaffolding on
- **Anti-Social Behaviour**: A recent incident involving an air gun causing damage to windows at the Old Schoolhouse. **ACTION Suzie F** Ensure the incident is reported to the police. Kelvin – to CAPP

Spott -

- **Village Social Walk**: Success of a recent walk around the village area. The event, was led by a volunteer who provided historical and environmental insights, was well-received as a positive community event.

Stenton -

- **Traffic Management Strategy**: Report on traffic management options plans, addressing speeding concerns. Proposals to install signs and tables to calm traffic without impeding large farm vehicles.
- **Community Theatre Event**: Successful Illyria Theatre show of Pirates of Penzance thanks to first year community benefits funding, expectations are that future events will be self-funded through ticket sales

7. Treasurer's report

- Caroline Anderson is now both a Trustee of ELCBT and a Director of ELCB Fund Ltd.
- Report on Innerwick hall project finances. **ACTION – Colin to clarify**
- ELCC current balance is £4347.71 . Discussion about using money to instruct an expert for legal advice/expenses for one proposed energy project, but what happens for other projects. Agreed to contribute £2k to costs on this occasion.
- CR4 New Legal Agreement - there are minor legal issues being addressed between ELCB Fund Constitution and the CR4 legal agreement. Looking at small amendments to the ELCB Fund Constitution at the AGM on 5.10.26 **ACTION Colin B**

- IT request for around £20 pcm on a coding software package for 6 months to try to improve the admin user interface for our website - to simplify things for our future admin people. Peter Branfield has done a lot of work on the Website recently **DECISION - Agreed**

8. Local infrastructure developments

The Committee was pleased to have Beth's pre-update to read before the meeting and expressed that it was "most helpful".

- **Zenobe Branxton BESS** – Chris and Beth had a positive meeting with Viki McCormick (Stakeholder and Community Engagement Manager) about Branxton BESS, north of Oldhamstocks by the mainline railway, 650MWatt. Start construction late 2027, possibly early 2028. Proposal for Haul Road that will link with the Bilsdean slip road that has just opened. Viki will attend the Energy Developments meeting for Zenobe (see next item) and possibly the next Community Traffic and Travel Forum drop in style event (20th October). Zenobe will offer £200 MWatt/y as community benefits fund, which is above draft Scottish Govt guidance, after they connect.

- **Energy Developments meeting –** Annual meeting to bring together representatives of the energy projects in East Lammermuir with community members, East Lothian Council and others. Wednesday 23 September, 6:30 – 9pm, Innerwick Outdoor Centre. Invites to be sent next week, and information on how to book a place. Table groups to discuss principles of engagement to help newer projects to learn from existing developers and local residents/groups. Looking for extra facilitators if anyone wants to volunteer. **ACTION Beth/Jo**

- **Dunbar BESS site visit** – Beth is arranging a site visit to the place this development will be constructed, on road south to Pitcox from Thistly Cross roundabout off A1 (B6370) due to start June 2027, near the existing Dunbar Substation, with the developer, FRV Powertek (Mike Clements) and the Biodiversity Community Liaison Group and Community Traffic and Travel Forum provisionally late September. **ACTION Beth to share date and details.**
  Update: site visit postponed to the New Year by developer**.**

- **Pitcox BESS** – ELC have removed their objection and this is now awaiting ECU decision, but is unlikely to go to Public Local Inquiry (PLI). ELCC has asked to be involved in setting planning conditions.
- **Crystal Rig 1 repower** –
  ELC is working with Fred. Olsen Renewables (FOR) on overcoming the ELC objection to this application. As the project is in Scottish Borders, with the access route through East Lothian, SBC is the main Local Authority consultee. SBC responded

recently and have not objected, therefore this will not automatically go to PLI, even if ELC's objection is not withdrawn.
East Lothian Community Benefits SCIO are in active discussions with FOR about the potential for Shared Ownership of any replacement CR1 windfarm.

- **Grid discount scheme** – in the news recently, applies to Branxton Substation.
- **Reporting portal** – 20 reports so far, mostly issues with roads, potholes, speeding, dust on roads, dangerous driving and some early ones relating to the blocked access to the NCN now resolved (National Cycle Network). Responses from energy project representatives have been timely in the main and Beth is keeping an eye on things in the background. The portal is undergoing iterative design, with improvements made as users feedback.
- **Flower show stall** – Beth and other new role holders were invited by the Oldhamstocks Horticultural Society and Oldhamstocks Community Association to the flower show on 15 August to give local people an opportunity to meet us and find out information about the community benefits funded projects and energy developments.
- **Local Storytelling Exchange interview –** proposal for interviews sent to ELCC by email on 11 August. Independent journalists who produce video stories about net-zero. Beth has agreed to share the story about the Local Place Plan and the cycle path access solution from earlier this year.

9.Progressing our Local Place Plan (LPP)

- **Next steps for four local ambitions**

  Community Transport Association membership renewal due. Change contact to Sue Guy. **DECISION** – yes to renew.

  Walk Wheel Cycle Trust A1 crossing feasibility expected this week

- **BCLG T&Cs review** – deadline to respond to the online survey was Monday 24 August. ELCC members invited to participate. "Official" ELCC response was delegated to Beth and Chris.
- **How do the new roles fit together**? This links to the governance review. DECISION agreed LPP Governance and Framework for Delivery in principle. Check at next meeting.
- The new LPP webspace should help residents to find updates more easily across all LPP delivery activity in one place.

10. Community Benefits (Chris Bruce)

- **East Lammermuir Community Benefits**
    - Chris B highlighted that while long-term funders (such as Fred. Olsen) have established trust and delegated management to the group, there is a trend with some funders to set rules and introduce complexity. How can ELCC proactively steer new funders in a direction that works for our area.
    - The Distributing Differently evening workshop 20th August with Foundation Scotland (FS) had been an informative start. Now seeking assistance from FS to create an ELCC Funding Strategy with a proposed Funding Strategy workshop to be arranged in October? **ACTION Chris/Jo** to field date suggestions.
    - **DECISION group -** to collaboratively write a community benefit funding strategy
    - Beth L highlighted that the focus of her work would be shifting to concentrate on thePlanning and Construction elements of the lifecycle of the energy projects. While Legacy overlaps with this, the delivery of the LPP through strategic spending of community benefits will be the focus of Sue's work, working closely with Beth.
    - Colin B noted how with more funds coming online there will be more documentation and more criteria for applicants and the Funding Panels. Suzie F highlighted how Co'path & Cove had streamlined their five funds into one with help from FS.
    - The Warm Homes Project funding was discussed with a lack of experienced retrofit assessor locally, and the decreasing amount of daylight as we head to winter, there was a need to plan and book people from central Scotland and to get the next stage underway. This makes it urgent to understand how much community benefits will be available when and to utilise recent learning about "distributing differently", e.g. through direct commissioning of work. **Decision; members agreed to consider a "Strategic Award" application at an extra meeting on 28 September.**
    - **Some kind of visualisation** to map the various funding sources would help the committee and community understand where funding originates and what it supports. For locations see the EL Energy Developments 'Interactive Map', click on  to go to specific proposal location.

11.Liaison Meetings and Roles – updates

- Biodiversity Community Liaison Group 14 September (Chris B)
- Torness (20 October 16.30) (Public Meeting) (Lennox, Beth)
- Viridor Liaison 1 December (Christy Pryse-Hawkins)
- Valencia Liaison - no known date (Christy)
- Tarmac Liaison 26 June (Christy)
- Area Partnership postponed to 5 Oct (*now clashes with ELCBF*) Upcoming Community Transport workshop after the summer, DELAP would like input from East Lammermuir. (Anne/Sue/Paula could go?)
- Association of East Lothian Community Councils 25 August (Chris)

- Community And Police Partnership CAPP 8th Oct (Kelvin)

12. Correspondence (all circulated previously under separate cover)

- Statutory Consultation on **East Lothian Visitor Levy** discussion – **DECISION To submit a Formal Objection to Visitor Levy**. ready for the council portal that highlights the lack of an impact assessment for small businesses and suggests delaying the implementation until after Edinburgh's experience can be evaluated. Online deadline 18th Sept 2026 **ACTION Lennox to draft and share then to submit a response on the ELC portal.**

- **Data Centre** site near Spott roundabout- private meeting Weds 20th August with MSPs organised by Dunbar against Massive Datacentres (DAMD) and ELCAN to see the site which is in East Lammermuir but just across the A1 from Dunbar and is on West Barns Mains which has caused some confusion. Anne L and Suzie F to attend for ELCC. Lyn J said that there was not any sign of an application to ELC yet.

- **Springfield Solar Farm** PLI Pre-examination meeting (& Bowshiel) – discussion of Springfield Inquiry legal representation,
  Also questions about Voltalia planning application for areas Oldhamstock/Grantshouse Bowshiel and the connection to the grid infrastructure that was excluded from the initial Environmental Impact Assessment, and that the developer has failed to provide transparency regarding this infrastructure. Bowshiel Solar Farm Website - Solar Farm
  Concerns about pylons. **ACTION** Chris objection letter to ECU (Energy Consents Unit) Suzie F also Co'path & Cove CC via Cllr James Anderson Borders CC

- **LSA Landscape Sensitivity Assessment** from ELC – discussion before entering ELCC's response. ACTION – Chris to send final response before deadline midnight end of August 24th . The committee felt unable to comment on levels of Medium/High as beyond collective technical knowledge but had other questions and comments.

Dates of Meetings 2026 – MONDAYS at 19.00 in the village hall

26 August 5pm	*Funding Decision Making Group online – 5pm NnG*
5 Oct 2026	East Lammermuir Community Benefits Trust and Fund Ltd. AGM's Stenton
26 October 2026	Innerwick
9 Nov 2026	*Funding decision making meeting Online CR and NnG*
30 November 2026	Spott