

Echt & Skene Community Council

Minute of Meeting held 28th October 2021 via Zoom

Attendees: Fiona Bick, Ian Macmaster, George Glennie, Niall MacBeath, Chris Minchin, Cllr Iris Walker, Cllr Ron McKail, Alison Cumming, 1 Dunecht resident

Apologies: Paula Houston, Cllr Alistair McKelvie, Sophie Byers, Nick Pilbeam

Minute of last meeting: Approved.

Police Report: Police reports for August and September show no crimes or incidents other than road traffic offences. Speed checks were carried out in Dunecht on 5 days and in Echt on 1 day resulting in 19 speed warnings and 1 driver charged with speeding (45mph). 6 drivers were charged with a variety of other road traffic offences including drink driving, drug driving and driving without insurance.

MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Council Housing Improvement Programme – central heating: The Housing Manager, Dave Thomson, provided an explanation of what they mean by “beyond a reasonable economic repair” but the explanation only applies to components of the central heating system and not to the whole system i.e. if an oil boiler needed to be replaced, the Council would apparently prefer to incur a greater expense in replacing the whole of an oil-fuelled wet CH system with electric storage heaters, rather than spend a smaller sum to replace the oil boiler alone. The Council still hasn't provided any data about comparative running costs either. **Action:** Cllr Walker to ask Housing Department for running costs data for houses that have been converted to electric heating in Ballater. **Action:** George to speak to the affected resident to check he's aware of the option to retain his oil boiler.

Community Action Plans: A new person has started at the Council to facilitate these, but ESCC has not yet been given a date to commence the programme.

Echt Hall Public Convenience Demolition: Landscape Services has sprayed the weeds, but the demolition contractor hasn't yet returned to rectify the path.

Echt B977 Street Names: The Council has sent letters to all of the residents who would be affected by the address changes inviting comments to Roads Development. A few residents have written back to object. Most have not responded. Residents are encouraged to respond, and the consultation date may be extended. A proposal will go to the GAC for a decision.

Echt speed activated sign on B977: The speed activated signs are still missing from the north and west approach roads. No feedback from Cllr McKelvie yet regarding reasons/justification for their removal. **Action:** Cllr McKail to follow up.

Flooding on Kirkton of Skene to Westhill footpath: It was noted that no progress could be made on this until the Council Roads department prepares an engineering solution to tie-in to drains and/or ditches on Dunecht Estate land on the downhill/south side of the road. **Action:** Cllr McKail to prompt Roads for a response.

Flooding at Greystones: A response is still awaited from Lee Watson in the Flood Team. **Action:** Fiona/Cllr McKail to follow up.

Garlogie Speeding: Still awaiting Aberdeenshire Council trials of Pop-Up Bob. **Action:** Cllr McKail to follow up

Echt Lorries: The drain/manhole covers on Main Road East are only slightly below the level of the resurfaced road and raising them wouldn't be practical. **CLOSED**

Lyne of Skene Speed Limit: No update as Klaus didn't attend meeting.

Dunecht and Echt Playpark Improvements: Dunecht Estate and the Council have now approved the plans for Dunecht. The cost estimates are £41,000 for Dunecht and £11,000 for Echt. A concerted fundraising effort will now be pursued by Sophie/Paula with ESCC being the constituted body making any grant applications. All funds received by ESCC will be ring-fenced. **Action:** Paula and Sophie

Litter Picking Equipment: Alison Cumming advised that the Garioch Area has a small grant scheme which could cover this expense but the Garioch Area Partnership, which previously would have funded such things, has disbanded. **Action:** Niall to apply for funds and purchase the equipment.

Queen's Green Canopy Tree Project: The Woodland Trust has agreed to provide free saplings in the springtime. The Council has agreed to provide free fruit trees in November. A community planting day will be arranged by Paula in Echt in November for the fruit trees. The aim is to apply for the orchard and the other saplings to become part of the Queen's Green Canopy project for Echt once they are in place. **Action:** Paula to coordinate planting by volunteers.

Echt B977 South Road Safety: No progress. The Council seem unsure which department (Roads or Landscape Services) would be responsible for trimming the trees alongside the road. **Action:** Fiona still to speak with Dunecht Estate regarding a new path

Queen's Platinum Jubilee: Niall reported that BA Events is supportive of a bonfire at the Breemie Circle to participate in the lighting of beacons organised either by them or by ESCC. The proposal is still to be put to Alan Brownie.

New Planning Applications:

- APP/2021/2128 Prior notification for erection of agricultural building – Burnwood, Dunecht, Westhill AB32 7BS. It was noted that planning officers have told the applicant a planning application is required as it's unclear whether there's an agricultural justification.

Treasurer's Report:

Cash in Bank: £2643.09 Cash in hand: £39.89

Correspondence/Consultations/Upcoming Events:

- Community Resilience Planning: Fiona to speak to Nick
- ESCC/Cluny CC boundary change – Chris to make Dunecht residents aware of the consultation which closes 26th November.

AOCB:

- Iain reported that the Westhill Men's Shed had been attempting to repair the temporary speed signs owned by the Council, but they are deemed beyond economic repair.

Future Meeting Dates

Although face to face CC meetings are now permitted under COVID regulations, face masks would have to be worn. It was agreed that meetings would continue online for the time being.

- 16 December 21
- 27 January 22
- 3 March 22
- 21 April 22
- 2 June 22 AGM