

Echt & Skene Community Council

Minute of Meeting held 7th September 2023 at Echt Hall

Present: Fiona Bick (chair), Nick Pilbeam, George Glennie (Secretary), Chris Minchin, Niall McBeath, Paula Houston, Cllr Iris Walker, Cllr Ron McKail, 2 Echt residents, 2 Dunecht residents.

Apologies: Cllr Craig Miller, Ian MacMaster, Cllr Fatima Joji

Minute of last meeting: Approved

Police Report: Police Report for July and August expected when PC Emma Forbes returns from leave.

MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Speeding Issues in Dunecht, Echt, Garlogie, Lyne of Skene and Mason Lodge: Chris expressed his frustration that his follow up with Roads regarding the Dunecht residents' petition submitted in January, revealed that they had apparently "lost" it, so we seem to be restarting the conversation about road safety issues from scratch.

A speed survey was last carried out in Garlogie in July 2020 – it essentially recorded compliance with the current limit as 66,000 vehicles were found travelling at an average of 35mph, with the 85th percentile being 39.5mph.

Echt last had a speed survey done in 2017 but it's unclear which road(s) were monitored. **Action:** Fiona to contact the police to ask for prior survey results across the ESCC area to inform where new surveys should be requested.

Community Action Plans: Kirkton of Skene CAP Steering Group has a Stakeholder Meeting scheduled for 28th September to discuss roads and paths issues with Roads and Dunecht Estate.

No progress on recruitment of new Echt CAP Steering Group members.

Echt Playpark Improvements: Breedon has kindly agreed to donate 20 tonnes of aggregate for the woodland path. Carving of the wooden Gruffalo statue has begun. Concerns were raised that the school may be seeking to "annex" part of the park for its own use, which could be contrary to the terms of the original charter granting the park to the community. **Action:** George & Fiona to transcribe the charter into electronic form for wider circulation

Burnside Footpath: This will be absorbed into the Kirkton of Skene CAP process.

Proposed Dunecht Footpath: Difficulties are arising with respect to the requirement for a landowner agreement to cover future path maintenance, which would be required in order to secure funding from Paths4All. The GAC grant of monies requires the £15k feasibility funds to be spent before 31st March 2024, which may not be possible given the other hurdles needing to be overcome.

Hill of Fare Proposed Wind Farm: CC Chairs met on 14th August to discuss survey results. Given that 75% of respondents object to the wind farm proposal, all of the 5 surrounding Community Councils have adopted a position of opposition and the survey results have been shared with Aberdeenshire Councillors, among others.

SSEN Consultation on Proposed new Kintore to Tealing 400kV OHL: ESCC submitted comments to SSEN objecting to the proposed OHL and proposing alternative solutions – either undergrounding of 400kV line, or upgrade of existing 275kV OHL combined with increasing capacity of the proposed offshore cable. It's not clear that local communities' views carry any weight whatsoever in the decision-making process. SSEN appear to be reconsidering the location of the proposed Fiddes sub-station but no other change of course is apparent.

New Planning Applications:

- APP/2023/1424 Erection of Garage - Hillview Croft Dunecht Westhill Aberdeenshire AB32 7EQ. No comment.

- APP/2023/1476 Alterations and Extension To Dwellinghouse - Maryville, Kirktonbridge, Skene Westhill AB32 6SH. No comment.

Treasurer's Report:

Cash in hand of £39.89 was paid into the bank account

Expenditure of £200 since last meeting (50% deposit to wood sculptor for Echt School/Echt Park Improvement)

Cash in Bank: £8,790.71 (£5,200 ring-fenced for Echt play-park equipment installation; £3,590.71 general ESCC funds)

Correspondence/Consultations/Upcoming Events:

- A2B Dial A Bus – Council is consulting about revisions to the Monday timetable
- Aberdeenshire LDP Consultation on Developer Obligations & Affordable Housing (deadline 9 Oct)

AOCB:

- Garioch Area Community Council Forum meeting on 1st September heard about GP provision. The satisfaction levels of users varies depending on the practice. It seems to be particularly difficult making appointments in Westhill. A Doctor Patient Participation Group might be a way to improve matters.
- Aberdeenshire Council Community Learning & Development are carrying out a learning needs assessment for Alford catchment area/ They held an open meeting in Echt on 15th August but only 7 residents attended. They also canvassed door to door.
- Aberdeenshire Council has earmarked funds for improvements to the Dunecht playpark.
- Echt Glass Recycling point - a number of residents are disappointed that objections from just a few residents have halted the siting of new glass recycling bins in the car park beside the football club. It was agreed to carry out a door-to-door survey of as many residents as possible to provide evidence of support for this location to the Council.
- The Lyne of Skene Hall bus shelter has become a congregation point for young people in recent months
- Dunecht experienced significant grid voltage irregularities on 25th August about an hour after a thunderstorm. The voltage went from 230 to 40 to 80 then to 520 within a short space of time damaging a number of items of electronic equipment as a result. We encourage affected residents to make complaints to SSEN, who may be liable for damages.

Future Meeting Dates

- 19th October Milne Hall, Kirkton of Skene
- 30th November Lyne of Skene Hall
- 11th January Garlogie Hall
- 22nd February Dunecht Hall
- 4th April Echt Hall
- 16th May Milne Hall, Kirkton of Skene
- 27th June AGM Lyne of Skene Hall