

# Echt & Skene Community Council

Minute of Meeting held 19<sup>th</sup> December 2024 at Milne Hall, Kirkton of Skene

**Present:** Fiona Bick (chair), George Glennie, Niall McBeath, Nick Pilbeam, Chris Minchin, Greig Russell, Paula Houston, 5 Echt residents, 2 Dunecht residents, 1 Garlogie resident, 1 Kirkton of Skene resident

**Apologies:** Ian MacMaster, Cllr Craig Miller

**Minute of last meeting:** Approved

**Police Report:** A report was received for November. The only incidents recorded were associated with road traffic – 1 collision and 5 other.

## MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

**Community Resilience:** The refresh of the large display map is still ongoing (**Action:** Grieg). Niall Macbeath circulated a summary of the portable power bank/solar panel options he's identified and costed. Members agreed a grant application should be made for two systems (**Action:** Niall/Nick)

Members reported that most of the resilience cabinets are fully equipped but Milne Hall is lacking tea lights, and Echt still has some wind-up torches loaned out that need to be recovered. **Action:** Nick to purchase replacement items

**Flashing School 20mph lights:** Cllr Miller was advised by council officers that each flashing sign has its own individual timer that has to be adjusted on-site by a roads department employee if the timing goes awry. Any member of the public can report incorrect timings via the Council website Road Faults page. Cllr Miller reported all of the Dunecht and Skene school signs and these are now operating at the correct times. **CLOSED**

**Hill of Fare Proposed Wind Farm:** The developer submitted additional information to the ECU in August in response to comments submitted by statutory consultees, including Historic Scotland, RSPB and NatureScot, and these consultees have made further submissions to the ECU in response. Historic Scotland maintains its objection in respect of the adverse impacts on the nationally important scheduled monuments, Sunhoney and Midmar stone circles. NatureScot and RSPB have both questioned why the revised Red Kite collision assessment for Hill of Fare has been carried out using the Glen Dye windfarm modelling (which includes an assumption of a higher natural increase in population).

**SSEN Kintore to Tealing 400kV OHL Proposal:** Fiona sent a consultation to SSEN on behalf of ESCC objecting once more to the OHL option. SSEN has submitted planning applications to Aberdeenshire and Angus councils for the Hurlie and Emmock substations respectively. These are open for public comment until 18<sup>th</sup> January and 31<sup>st</sup> January respectively. Deeside Against Pylons and Save Our Mearns have template letters and advice on their websites for people wanting to submit representations. **Action:** Fiona to post links on ESCC website

**B977 South of Echt Crossroads Drains:** Fiona enquired with the Council about the lack of progress to the Council but no work has yet taken place.

**Echt Park Remediation:** No progress with the mud on the path. **Action:** Fiona will contact the Echt FC committee.

**Kirkton of Skene Footpaths:** Dunecht Estates' rather discouraging response regarding the path options was received early December from Stuart Young's new assistant, Yvonne. **Action:** Fiona to follow up

The application for consultancy assistance submitted to the Community Path Development team by Chris Minchin has been successful. We await further contact from the consultant to be appointed by the Council. The application

for funding to NESTRANS for improvements to the path on the A944 between Mason Lodge and Pitcairn Lodge Nursing Home was unsuccessful.

**Community Log Bank:** In November Fiona had an online meeting with the Chair of the Marr Area Partnership, which runs the Community Log Bank in the Marr area. The log bank gets donated timber, with a local company processing it into firewood. Volunteers take the firewood to a number of storage/distribution hubs and then deliver bags of logs to people in the community who have been identified as being in need of free firewood. MAP accepts nominations for deserving individuals from a number of partner organisations such as Citizens Advice, Community Councils, church ministers, etc. They are negotiating the setting up of a new hub at the Alford Men's Shed and would consider expanding their coverage to include the Alford Academy catchment area. If the Alford hub comes into being then they will be looking for new volunteers to help distribute the firewood. **Action:** Fiona to follow up regarding current status

**Nethermains Court Waste Collections:** Waste Services has accepted that the residents are vulnerable and this will be classed as an assisted collection from now on, so the Council workers will wheel the bins out for emptying.

**CLOSED**

#### **Treasurer's Report:**

No income since last meeting.

Expenditure since last meeting: ICO £35

Cash in Bank: £6,710.92 (£2740 ring-fenced for Echt play-park; £3,970.92 general ESCC funds)

#### **Correspondence/Consultations/Upcoming Events:**

- Aberdeenshire Council Summer Bedding plants: A letter was received from the Council telling us that their glasshouse irrigation system is broken, and they don't have the money to repair it. Hence, they won't be supplying any bedding plant to communities in 2025. As an alternative, Echt Horticultural Society may be able to raise the plants from plugs at their new premises and will look into the cost of this prior to the next meeting. **Action:** Fiona to enquire whether the Council would fund the purchase of the plugs needed for Echt, Kirkton of Skene and Lyne of Skene.
- Aberdeenshire Council LDP Consultations - Topic Papers for "Infrastructure First" and "Site Selection and Distribution" were received. It's being suggested that some of the allocated housing sites in the current LDP could be de-selected in the next if they don't meet the aims of the new LDP to build where there are adequate local services including regular buses. If followed through this would exclude most or all of the settlements in the ESCC area from new housing allocations.

#### **AOCB:**

- Members agreed to fund new flower barrels for Kirkton of Skene (2) and Lyne of Skene (1).
- Barmekin Hill path – the path from the south side is very overgrown with gorse. This has been raised with Dunecht Estate. They declined the offer for a group of community volunteers to clear the gorse and will look at doing it themselves. **Action:** Fiona to follow up in January
- Villages Hall leases – Garlogie Hall and Milne Hall are both owned by the Council and need roof repairs. The Milne Hall lease is coming up for renewal but the committee don't want to renew unless the repairs are going to be carried out by the Council. It's understood that Kemnay Village hall recently had some repairs carried out. **Action:** Fiona to pass on a Kemnay contact name to Milne Hall committee

#### **Future Meeting Dates:**

- 30th January 2025 Lyne of Skene Hall
- 20th March 2025 Dunecht Hall
- 1st May 2025 Garlogie Hall
- 12th June 2025 AGM Echt Hall
- 24th July 2025 Milne Hall, Kirkton of Skene
- 4th September 2025 Lyne of Skene Hall