

Echt & Skene Community Council

Minute of Meeting held 25th June 2026 at Dunecht Hall

Present: Fiona Bick (chair), Chris Minchin (Vice Chair), Nick Pilbeam (Secretary), Niall MacBeath, Greig Russell, Ian MacMaster, George Glennie, Paula Houston, Cllr Craig Miller, 2 Dunecht residents, 2 Echt residents, Alison Cumming (Aberdeenshire Council)

Apologies: Cllr Ron McKail

Minute of last meeting: Two corrections required (i) replace “developer contributions” to “community benefit” in the description of the upcoming GACCF meeting, and (ii) amend the shortfall in funding for Echt picnic bench from £114 to £86.

Police Report: No report received.

Skene Paths Group: A litter pick took place on the football field in Kirkton of Skene on 29th May with 5 volunteers. The estate ranger, Sandra Crighton, left Dunecht Estates in April. It’s not known if a replacement has been recruited yet. **Action:** Fiona to enquire about second work party request for drainage works on Bothy 57 path.

Response to ALOAF re Core Paths Review: Members discussed a number of routes they would like to see designated as Core Paths in the ESCC area. Under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003, Local Authorities are required to designate a network of outdoor routes—called Core Paths—to give the public reasonable access throughout an area. There are very few designated core paths in our area at the moment and certainly there is no network. **Action:** Fiona to mark up the path suggestions from members on the map provided by ALOAF and reply.

MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Hill of Fare Wind Farm: We are still waiting for a decision by Scottish Ministers.

NE Scotland Convention of Community Councils: No update. Item closed for the time being.

WECC Joint Statement on Aberdeenshire Council Funding Share: No update. Item closed for the time being.

Community Resilience: One of the resilience power banks was lent to Dunecht Parent Council for the Dunecht Dash event to power the PA system. It worked well and has now been recharged and returned.

The grant application for snow blowers is still ongoing with a number of documents being required to support the application.

Action: Chris is still to return the salt spreader to Westhill Men’s Shed for a refund.

SSEN Kintore to Tealing 400kV OHL Proposal: The public inquiry is ongoing. Fiona attended the Community Hearing at Kintore on 19th June, the Landscape and Visual Hearing session on 24th June in Brechin and will be at the Conditions Hearing on 26th June in Brechin. Members agreed to reimburse her mileage costs to Brechin.

Speed Limit Reductions: Aberdeenshire Council Roads department is reviewing its Speed Limits Policy to move to a more risk-based approach. It’s unlikely any of the recently proposed speed limit changes will progress to formal consultation until a new policy is adopted and they can be judged against the new criteria.

Vegetation Obscuring Road Signs: Fiona has logged the obscured Skene School flashing signs on the Council’s Road Faults website. The flashing sign north of the school is almost completely invisible. No action has been taken to address this yet. **Action:** Cllr Miller to follow up with Roads

Flower Barrels: £80 was received from Garologie community groups as a donation towards the cost of plants. All the bedding has now been planted out in Echt, Garlogie, Lyne of Skene and Kirkton of Skene. Thanks were expressed to Mitch Dunbar of Echt horticultural Association for coordinating this. **CLOSED**

Prior Planning Applications:

- APP/2026/0560 Internal and External Alterations - Monecht House Echt Westhill AB32 6UN Decision still pending

Treasurer's Report:

Income since last meeting: nil

Expenditure since last meeting:

- Foxlane Garden Centre for 2026 flower barrel plants - £470
- Scottish Rights of Way 2026/27 subscription renewal - £30
- Lyne of Skene Hall rental - £20

Cash in Bank: £5,357.90 (£25.24 ringfenced for resilience centres; £1846 ring-fenced for Echt Park; £3,486.66 general ESCC funds)

It was agreed to fund a gift of chocolates for the independent examiner of the annual accounts

Future Meeting Dates:

- 6th August 2026 Milne Hall
- 24th September 2026 Lyne of Skene Hall
- 29th October 2026 Garlogie Hall
- 17th December 2026 Echt Hall
- 28th January 2027 Dunecht Hall
- 11th March 2027 Milne Hall
- 22nd April 2027 Lyne of Skene Hall
- 3rd June 2027 Garlogie Hall AGM

AOCB:

- BT is again seeking to remove the payphone in Echt. Mobile reception in Echt is still patchy and anyone wanting to use the defibrillator needs to call 999 to obtain the PIN to open it up. The defibrillator was actually used a few weeks previously. **Action:** Fiona to respond and advise reasons to keep the payphone
- Echt Litter Bins – birds are raiding the bins and throwing litter out. **Action:** Fiona to ask Waste Services to replace the open-top bins with bins that have a cover
- Echt Junior Dippers – for information, this children's group (set up by the SWRI) will be picking apples in the Echt community orchard in the autumn as part of a cookery project.