

Gifford Community Council

Minutes

of the meeting of Monday, 13th June 2011,
held in the Todrick Room of the Village Hall at 7.30pm.

1. Welcome: John O'Connor (JOC) Chair, welcomed those present: Elizabeth Whiteford (EW) Treasurer (taking notes), Margaret McDougall (MMcD), Margaret Maslowski (MMas), John Wrinn (JW), Alastair McClung (AMcC), ELC Councillor Sheena Richardson, and 3 members of the public.
2. Apologies: Police, Andrew Gilmour, Shona Thomas, and ELC Cllrs Ludovic Broun Lindsay, and Tom Trotter. Condolences were expressed to Councillor Trotter on the death of his father.

The order of business was interrupted to hear a previously agreed presentation from David Walls and Ian Smith regarding a proposed local fast broadband service from their co-operative Lothian Broadband Ltd (will be owned by the subscribers).

This is partly financed by Tyne Esk Leader, and Garvald and Morham Community Council, and the Scottish Government. The total cost is £400,000: they have grants of £355,000, and the remaining £45,000 will be made up by Garvald and Morham Community Council and their own resources.

Their broadband would provide much faster speeds than is currently available in the area: theirs was currently 2x6.5 Mb per second, but would increase to 20Mb per second both upload and download. It would include the facility for GCC to have its own website. Signals would come from Macmerry to a mast at Garleton near East Linton. From there, it would go to around East Lothian including to the monastery at Garvald, and also to a mast to be placed to the east of Gifford. From this last, it would come (if agreement is reached) to the clock tower on the Gifford Village Hall, and from there to individual properties via a receiver on existing TV masts or similar.

It would greatly benefit the community (and any country area receiving it) in terms of economic growth (as opposed to decline), business, education, and social and cultural vitality.

In the future each subscriber would own 1 share in the co-op, and would give a monthly subscription, which currently is £18 per month. The co-op would be managed by an elected Board, on which three seats would be reserved for Community Councils.

The necessary equipment at the Village Hall would be hidden from view. David and Ian were thanked for their very clear presentation, and left the meeting.

Gifford Community Council then agreed to endorse the project, and to approach the “Feuars of Gifford” (Trustees Finlay Marshall and Max Muir) with a view to finding their reaction to the proposal to house the equipment in the clock tower of Gifford Village Hall, and to advise David of the reaction.

3. Minutes of the meeting of 11th April 2011, which had already been circulated and agreed outside the meeting, and published, were agreed. Proposed by JW, and seconded by MMcD.
Minutes of the meeting of 9th May 2011, Draft 2 of which had been circulated, were agreed with a number of corrections. Proposed by MMcD, and seconded by JW.
4. Matters arising:
None.
5. Police: WPC Deborah Gray, who was absent, had reported by e-mail: her report had been circulated, and appears at the end of these Minutes. It was accepted with thanks.
6. Giffordonline: The website www.giffordonline.co.uk appears to be working well, and was fully up-to-date. It was stated at the AELCC AGM on 8 June agreed, that we could have a link from the proposed AELCC’s website to this website. See also the note at the end of these Minutes.
7. Correspondence: the presentation on fast broadband had been agreed, and recent bus changes etc noted, and an ELC letter of 7 June 2011 regarding “Local Transport Strategy 2011” had been received, and our “buses” meeting on 22 June 2011 had been agreed.
8. Planning: See the report, which appears at the end of these Minutes.

11/00459/PPM Castlepark Golf Club, Gifford

Representations from dwellers near the proposed site: these representations were wholly against the application. After much discussion, which included assertions of the following:

that this application is for the building of an additional hamlet or settlement in a generally unspoilt area of great natural beauty in the countryside, and as such constitutes a major item of unwelcome sporadic development in the countryside, which should be avoided, and is contrary to ELC policy, as it is a proposal of significant size, in conflict with ENV3 of the Local Plan, which seeks to control development in the countryside.
that it would cause light pollution.

that its location on the hillock concerned would, by virtue of its height, exacerbate its unwelcome intrusion into the countryside, and also adversely affect the views from existing dwellings.

that the additional traffic generated would be unwelcome in the countryside, and especially on the very poor roads in the vicinity.

that the proposal should not be considered as "enabling", as the improvements, which it is intended to "enable", will remain in the ownership of the applicant, with little or no benefit to the wider community. Indeed the chalets, which were to be let out, would disadvantage existing local hotels and B&B establishments.

that there was no advantage to the community, such as a proposal to open up membership of the club.

that club fees should be raised to obtain the funds for the proposed clubhouse extension from the members, rather than this "enabling" flouting of good planning practice.

that the account, in the application, of the previous consultations, constituted misrepresentation, and was unfairly in favour of the application.

that this might be the "thin end of the wedge" for yet more development in the area.

Gifford Community Council decided unanimously to ask, that this application be rejected, and that the Chairman should write to the Planners at ELC in line with the discussion. Proposed by JW, seconded by MMcD.

The Chairman reported, that at the AGM of AELCC, there was grave disquiet expressed by three other Community Councils at the manner in which ELC Planners dealt with Planning Applications. He had then expressed our disquiet on the issue. This will be further discussed at the AELCC February 2012 meeting.

9. Reports:

At the AGM of AELCC, there was a suggestion that the current term of Community Councils might be extended to Autumn 2012.

10. Pot holes and repairs:

Cllr. Richardson was thanked for her assistance in getting road defects dealt with.

The Chairman agreed to report the following Gifford road defects to ELC: Pot holes in the Avenue, and Bablins Wynd.

The damaged manhole cover in the pavement outside No. 17, Station Road. Walden Terrace road needs whitelined to give right of way to school traffic. Duns Road concrete pavement is crumbling away right from the Co-oP upwards, and along the telephone exchange/kiosk hedge.

The wall round the Pound needs refurbished including the part along the pavement along the Green.

After the meeting, it was also reported, that in Park Crescent near its junction with Walden Terrace, there is a large, though not yet deep pothole in the middle of the carriageway: this had been marked out for repair many months ago, but this marking is now disappearing with wear.

11. Christmas Tree 2011: to be discussed at our September 2011 meeting.

12. Ongoing items not covered elsewhere: none.

13. AOB:

The heaps of branches in the Pound need removed.

The Mercat coat of arms needs its paintwork touched up: Alastair Watt to contact EW with a firm price.

It was stated, that Gifford was being used as a dumping ground by ELC Housing Department. The Chairman agreed to write to them, regarding the allocation of houses.

JW requested that finance be discussed at the next meeting: it was agreed, that in the meantime, no money should be given to organisations.

The meeting closed at 9.40

14. Date of next regular meeting: Monday, 8th August 2011 at 7.30 pm in the Todrick Room of Gifford Village Hall. The “Buses” meeting on 22 June 2011 comes before that.

Website www.giffordonline.co.uk is expected to show these Minutes, and future Minutes. Click on the “Village page” link above a nice photograph of Gifford Main Street. It also shows all our Minutes for 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, those for February, March, April and May 2011, our Mission Statement, our Constitution, and the **dates of our regular meetings** in 2011.

GIFFORD COMMUNITY COUNCIL POLICE REPORT FOR MAY/JUNE 2011

1. On 14/5/11 there was a report of a noisy party at Walden Place, Gifford, however all was quiet on Police arrival.

2. On 16/5/11 Police officers from Haddington stopped a vehicle in Main Street, Gifford whereby the vehicle was seized as the driver was not insured and the driver was also charged with several other offences under the Road Traffic Act.

3. On 30/5/11 there was a report of 2 broken windows at Yester Primary school. I attended this incident and enquiries are still ongoing in relation to it.

The following two Operations are ongoing at present in the local area:

1. Operation Euro, which runs between June and September 2011. The aims of the campaign are:

To carry out high visibility patrols of popular tourist areas in East Lothian and to provide crime prevention and public safety advice so as to:

- **Provide public reassurance**
- **Prevent crime and deter anti-social behaviour**
- **Interact with the public and offer crime prevention and public safety advice**
- **Collate any relevant intelligence and submit in the appropriate manner**
- **Adopt a multi-agency approach to increase effectiveness and extend to a wider community base**

2. Operation Erase

This Operation takes place between 6th June 2011 to 31 July 2011 and will run in conjunction with the National Safer Scotland campaign.

The purpose of this initiative is to:-

- **Reduce instances of alcohol fuelled violence**
- **Prevent street disorder**
- **Combat drinking/possession of alcohol in public places**
- **Provide public reassurance and reduce the fear of crime**
- **Increase the detection of those responsible for alcohol fuelled antisocial behaviour, assaults, breach of the peace and carrying knives and offensive weapons in public places**

Weekly Listings of Registered Applications over the past weeks since the last meeting contained the following application for work within the GCC area.

	Registered
12.05.11	nil

19.05.11	nil
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26.05.11	nil
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02.06.11	nil
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09.06.11	1
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**11/00459/PPM Application for permission in principle to build
3 chalets and 7 houses as an enabling development to fund
an extension of the existing clubhouse
Castlepark Golf Club, Gifford EH41 4PL**

— this is a proposal of significant size, in conflict with ENV3 of the Local

Plan which seeks to control development in the countryside. Consultations last summer were held on the basis of 10 houses, now reduced to 7 (but with 3 chalets added); the supporting statement says that this development is “the minimum required to fund the clubhouse improvements”. Should there be a guarantee that no more houses will be applied for? There is still a lack of important information (especially on ground contours which affect the prominence of the houses in the landscape), but this is only an application “in principle” and much of the argument for this “enabling development” has to be taken on trust. There is general support for the Golf Club to improve its facilities, so the question must be: at what price to the local environment? These houses will generate a significant amount of traffic.

Andrew Gilmour
12 June 2011