

Gifford Community Council

Minutes

Of the meeting of Monday, 11th October 2010, held at 7.30pm in the Todrick Room of the Village Hall.

1. Welcome: John O'Connor, (JOC), chair, welcomed those present: Julian Tennent (JT), Secretary, Elizabeth Whiteford, (EW), Treasurer, Andrew Gilmour, (AG), Alastair McClung, (AMcC), Margaret McDougall (AMcD), Margaret Maslowski (MMas), Jane Steven (JS); ELC Cllr Tom Trotter, ELC Cllr Sheena Richardson (later), WPC Deborah Gray, and one member of the public.

2. Apologies: -- noted from Shona Thomas (ST) and ELC Cllr Ludovic Broun-Lindsay.

3. Minutes of the meeting of 13th September, '10: There was discussion on the process of preparation, amendment, approval by the Chair for circulation, and final adjustment and approval at the following meeting. Members confirmed the procedure as agreed at the 8 March 2010 meeting viz. "that Chair and Secretary confer to prepare a sound draft for circulation, which could be approved or amended at the next meeting". The minutes of 13th September were then *approved* (proposed by AG, seconded by MMcD).

4. Matters arising: None.

5. Police Report:

WPC Deborah Gray - confirmed Police had had a report of a suspicious-looking male in his 40's, seen by Mr Adam White and others at the Sportsfield at a junior rugby practice. He came by bicycle, and went to-and-fro the WC's in a way that seemed odd. Although noted, this report had not led any further incident thus far.

- Speed of vehicles: WPC Gray had noted a complaint from a resident of Walden Terrace. As result a driver had been warned as to their conduct. - This led to some discussion on design of corners, width, layout, parking, etc. *Agreed:* the ELC Transportation be asked to come up and advise on possible remedies.

- Bulky skip complaint: received in respect of the entrance to Old Mill Lane. This was found to be related to works on collapsed river bank;

- Recent break-ins at the Coop in E.Linton, and in Dunbar: the WPC asked that people be aware and alert;

- Gravestones close to the Church vandalised in August: this crime of vandalism had been investigated by PC Stuart Mulroy, Haddington, but to date, persons responsible have not been identified. Funds held by GCC for gravestone repair might be used.

Agreed: EW to consult with Maree Johnston (ELC Landscape and Countryside).

[WPC Gray left the meeting]

6. Appointment of Vice-Chair: no-one wanted formally to be appointed to this position. But AMcC said he was willing to step in when available in the absence of the Chair. *Noted.*

7. Website of GCC: There seemed to have been no progress with Mike Gower, nor any contact with him. A sum had been paid to him at his request for purposes related to the website, and Cllr Trotter gave advice on this. *Agreed:* GCC to ask him how (if) this sum had been applied.

- AMcC is to contact David Walls of Garvald in connexion with his presentation in September about a Broadband Co-op.

8. Correspondence: the Secretary tabled incoming correspondence as follows:

- a. Letter from “Bluefin” insurance advisers about cover for CC’s and their members.
- b. Agenda for coming meeting of Association of E.Loathian CC’s (27th Oct at the Town House). – JOC said he would attend
- c. Street Decorations/ Illuminations: a lengthy document from L.Pryde of ELC. No action by GCC needed as the dangerous voltage electrics for the tree are protected from public access.
- d. Scottish Natural Heritage: an illustrated magazine. For members’ interest.

-EW had had a letter from Yester Primary School saying that Primary 7 children are hoping to have a trip to Finland in February 2011, and asking whether GCC could possibly give them a grant. £150 agreed: see below.

-Kim White had written EW a letter informing the Council of the progress of children in the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme, and saying that £350 per child would be needed for each child to progress with the “silver” level, and asking whether GCC could possibly give them a grant. £150 agreed: see below.

EW had a list of proposed donations by GCC to various groups, and these were agreed. (See below under AOB).

- JOC referred to emails received from Humble, Bolton and Saltoun CC (Rosemary Greenhill) re community transport. There is said to be some money available.

Agreed: JS to follow up with Rosemary Greenhill (with special reference to a possible car-sharing scheme. AG proposed a letter of congratulation to R.Greenhill for pursuing the issue thus far.

9. Planning: there were no applications from our area for planning permission within the period and thus the report from AG is a “NIL” return: it is therefore not included in these minutes.

[ELC Cllr Sheena Richardson joined the meeting at this point]

-Affordable Housing: JT drew attention to a PAN (Planning Advice Note) from the Scottish Government. This substantial paper suggests good intentions and plans to make good the vast shortage. However, the absence of enough political will to overcome the lack of **building land** seems to nullify this.

AG clarified that, for Gifford itself, the Local Plan zones no land for this purpose.

JOC registered his impression that the building of affordable housing was desirable, - but not immediately in Gifford itself; - because affordable housing in Gifford would at once be filled with applicants from all over, who scored points for homelessness, drug addiction etc, but who actually would not choose a rural setting like Gifford.

There was some discussion between members and Cllr Sheena Richardson on this.

She noted that there is now some power for LA’s and HA’s to hold on to affordable houses once built (so that the stock is not diminished as soon as it comes into existence).

Agreed: that GCC write urging that affordable housing in East Lothian be prioritised.

10. Reports: - None.

11. Potholes and Road repairs: Some satisfaction was expressed at recent progress with resurfacing.

12. Christmas Tree 2010: EW said that Hugh Broad was now casting about to locate a suitable tree. The notion of barricades to separate people from the tree was raised. It was felt unnecessary in Gifford where the dangerous voltage electrics are well buried, and thus protected from public access, so that the public was thereby protected. –

Regarding a date for erection: *agreed* to ask that 10th-11th December be aimed for.

13. Ongoing items not covered elsewhere: (A number of matters under this omnibus heading were deleted, pending a time when it might be more appropriate to raise

them again. These were - Litter bins (£300/200)/Recycling Area, Kirkyard full, affordable housing, this last to be discussed under Planning, as required.).

- Menotti Centenary celebrations in 2011: JS reported that Elspeth Wylie had been interested in going to attend, but her plans are complicated, as she is shortly to be married.
- GCC Records: these are contained in three steel cabinets against a Todrick Room wall. Unfortunately, the area has become a mess and cabinets are interspersed with untidy items of playgroup equipment. JT said he would rearrange the cabinets in a tidier group.

14AOB: (NB some of these items were actually discussed further up the agenda).

- (i) GCC small donations to local groups: EW enumerated groups and donations for approval. A list is appended. A suggestion was made that GCC might be proactive and write to groups inviting them to apply. *Agreed.* (Regrettably some groups do not reply or say how the money is to be spent).
- (ii) Roundabout and play equipment in Sportsfield: AMcC is continuing, in consultation with Liz Stewart, to progress an upgrading project. A package is in the pipeline valued at about £30K.
- (iii) BT Telephone Kiosk at Long Newton: *Agreed* it would be inappropriate to “adopt” the kiosk
- (iv) Multiple Recycling Bin Facility: ELC had proposed an arrangement such as that now located in the Court Street pedestrian area. They suggest a corner of The Square. *Agreed:* to reject this as unsightly. (ELC had already rejected a GCC a suggestion by JOC, that it should replace the existing recycling facility in the Avenue).
- (v) Bell from Yester School: this is an item of traditional and historical interest, and has been kept at the school for many years. There seems to be some doubt as to its safe care. *Agreed:* that GCC write to the school suggesting it be kept in the Village Hall.

15. Date of next meeting: Monday, 8th November, 2010.

Appendix:

Schedule of small grants from GCC to local groups – as approved at this meeting:

Brownies	£100
Guides	£150
Rainbows	£100
Cubs	£150
Duke of Edinburgh Scheme	£150
Gala	£250
Newsletter	£150
Good Companions	£100
Play Group/Toddlers	£100
Leader Training	£150
School Trip	£150
Youth Drop-in	£100
Total	£1650