

# GARVALD AND MORHAM COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting, 5<sup>th</sup> February 2024  
7.30pm at Garvald Village Hall

## 1. Attendance and Apologies for Absence

**In attendance:** Phillip White (PW) (Chair), Anna Derricourt (AD), Ian Middlemass (IM), Ian Smith (IS), David Ramsay (DR), Councillor George McGuire(cGM), Councillor Tom Trotter, Garry McGregor (GM), Graeme Maxton(GMx), Hugo Straker (HS), Caroline Straker (CS), Freda Crosby (FC), Sharon Bolton(SB).

**Apologies:** Roger Harris, Davie Murray, Councillor John McMillan, Councillor Shamin Akhtar

## 2. Minutes from Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

No items to report.

## 3. Newlands Hill

PW reported that the proposed Belltown wind farm at Newlands Hill would generate £560K for the communities of G&M and Gifford with 80% of the revenue being used to reduce energy costs for residents.

CS presented an overview of the Belltown wind farm proposal. Key points were:

- The final proposal from Belltown is for 17 turbines to be erected, each with a 200m tip height (almost as high as the Queensferry Crossing towers over the Firth of Forth);
- The results of the two community consultation exercises were shown to the meeting (displayed as pie charts) and the results should still be on display in the Garvald church;
- That whilst there is a need to move to renewables energy systems, it should be balanced with protecting the environment;
- The construction phase would cause significant disruption with a high level of site traffic;
- Hedges, trees and stone walls will be removed at 35 sites;
- The construction phase will last for at least 18 months;
- New roads will be constructed across farm land; and
- The industrial scale development will cause lasting damage to the area.

Similar concerns were raised by others. TT and cGM stated that everyone will have an opportunity to participate in the planning process and are encouraged to do so by before the end of March. The Scottish government planning web page for the application is at

<https://www.energyconsents.scot/ApplicationDetails.aspx?cr=ECU00004603>

## 4. Garvald & Morham Renewables

A public meeting was held in the Garvald village hall with 40 attendees. Advice was given regarding home insulation and available grants. It was determined that there are currently 10 air-source heat pump installations ongoing in the community. Thermal imaging of some properties will be undertaken.

Two new volunteers were recruited to the green group. Thanks were expressed for the provision of refreshments and to the volunteer helpers.

## 5. Broadband Update

Roger Harris reported by email that:

- He had written to East Lothian Council, the two local MSPs, the local MP and the Cabinet Secretary for Wellbeing Economy, Fair Work & Energy requesting information on when fibre broadband will be available to the area. The responses in essence referred him back to Openreach;
- The attempt to register with the Openreach 'Community Fibre Partnership' has failed as only one postcode at a time can be registered, rather than a cluster of neighbouring postcodes. Hence the property count threshold for each of the postcodes could not be met.
- The Scottish government response included the possibility of appealing to Ofcom; and
- That the possibility of trying to negotiate a paid-for installation with Openreach using windfarm funding was raised.

## 6. Treasurer's Update

IM reported that all outstanding grant monies have been issued to the recipients. Cheques to the value of £8,550 remain uncashed. The balance in the Community Council bank account is £23,238.67.

## 7. Funding Ideas

Funding was covered at item 4.

## 8. Update from Haddington & Lammermuir Area Partnership

There has been no meeting of the Partnership since the Community Council last met.

## 9. Garvald & Morham Hall Updates from Representatives

### Garvald Village Hall

GM reported that:

- The hall accounts show that there is a deficit of £552;
- Appointed committee officers are GM as Chair, Tom Edmunds as Treasurer and Shirley Evatt as Secretary.
- The structural report is still awaited; and
- Five weddings have been booked so far this year.

### Morham Village Hall

Davie Murray reported by email that:

- There were no current issues with the hall;
- The hall accounts have been received by OSCR; and
- That an AGM will be held within a couple of months.

## 10. Report from Phillip White Garvald Neighbourhood Watch

PW reported that there had been three calls to police from the area, one of which was for the breach of a harassment order.

## 11. AOB

- The free version of the Mail Chimp service – which is used to email articles from the Garvald website – has become too restrictive and a paid account costing £10/month has been opened with Mail Chimp.
- The Garvald Funday will take place on the last weekend before the end of the school year. A funding request of £156 will be submitted for the marquee hire;
- The Garvald Flower Show will also be funded;
- Steve Blatherwick has submitted a request for speed limit signs to be installed at Garvald Grange. TT suggested that if he re-sends the request, that he should copy TT and the other councilors; and
- HC suggested that the Community Council should write to East Lothian Council to request that the trimming of hedges and plants which overhang the pavements should be arranged.

## 12. Date of the next meeting is Monday the 25<sup>th</sup> of March 2024 in the Morham village hall at 7-30pm.

## 13. Wind Farm Funding

One application was considered:-

### **Alasdair Easton - Junior Track and Road Racing Cycling Support, £500**

This request was approved, to be paid from the Crystal Rig 2 fund.

**Total Funding approved £500**