

GARVALD AND MORHAM COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting, 1st February 2021
7.00pm – By Zoom

1. Attendance and Apologies for Absence

In attendance: Phillip White (PW) (Chair), Anna Derricourt (AD), Ian Middlemass (IM), Ian Smith (IS), Hazel Clark (HC), Roger Harris (RH), Garry McGregor (GM), Tom Mallows, Chiara Vaccaro (CV), Leonie Alexander (LA), John McMillan (JM), Tom Trotter (TT), Craig Hoy (CH)

Apologies: Shamin Akhtar

2. Minutes from Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

Minutes have previously been approved by e-mail and subsequently distributed by e-mail/internet.

3. Update from Ian Middlemass, Treasurer

IM reported that the balance in the bank account was £35,476.14 with no cheques outstanding. Most of the balance is committed to approved projects.

4. Update from Haddington & Lammermuir Area Partnership

JM reported that no meetings of the Partnership had taken place because of the pandemic other than a brief meeting in the summer of last year which had no funding outcomes. However there is a scheduled meeting of the Scrutiny Group this week and the full partnership is due to meet in about two weeks time, to which all Community Councils are invited. The partnership's funding comprises of approximately £50K for community funds and approximately £50K for roads and infrastructure.

5. Garvald Neighbourhood Watch/Police Report

PW reported that the local Neighbourhood Watch scheme consisted of about 50 members. Joining instructions are available from PW. PW also reported that in November last year, a pop-up police station had been established in Garvald and that afterwards it was replaced by a cardboard policeman cut-out.

GM reported that on the 5th of November last year, the plastic bin outside of the Garvald village hall was set alight. The incident was reported to the police. Towards the end of November, there was a further fire-raising event, this time within the gents toilet of the hall, whilst the hall was in use. The hall committee has decided to install security cameras to monitor and record any future malicious activities.

6. Updates on Paths Garvald & Morham

PW reported that the meeting with Nick Morgan of East Lothian Council and the Nunraw estate regarding public access had gone well and that the community's proposal had been accepted. The details will be posted to the Garvald website once it has been formally approved by the estate owner.

PW reported that the proposed Morham to Garvald path was awaiting a meeting with one of the land owners, Niall Donaldson, which has been held up due to the pandemic.

JM reported that the Local Access Forum meets once per quarter and that these two paths had been mentioned at its last meeting.

PW reported that the owner of Whitelaw Farm, Robert Hamilton, was amenable to the digging of ditches within the farm in order to reduce the flooding of the road at Chesters.

AD asked if the East Lothian County Council app should still be used to report road issues. JM confirmed that it was as well as, alternatively, a section of the Council's website.

AD reported that concern had been raised regarding the closure of field paths by temporary fences, due to the presence of livestock. JM stated that any issues should be raised with the Council's access officer, Nick Morgan.

AD raised the issue of the frequent flooding and freezing (in winter) of the road at Coldale. IM commented that workers had been present in the area for a few days but that it was not clear what progress had been made. JM reported that he believed that there was an issue with access to private property but that he would investigate the matter further. IM reported that the problem lay further south where there was believed to be a blocked drain.

PW reported that there was a section of core path 31 requiring repair at Morham. JM stated that there was a budget for this as well as a group of volunteer workers and requested further details be sent to him.

7. Morham Interpretation Board Update

Work is ongoing on this initiative.

8. Garvald & Morham updates from Representatives

RH reported that there had been no activity within the Morham village hall and that it was essentially mothballed. Discussions are ongoing regarding future uses of the hall, including potentially being used for business premises. Business premise use raised potentially difficult issues such as the hall's charitable status, formal change-of-use, a lack of parking spaces around the hall and how to fund the payment of business rates during vacant periods. Potential business activities included a bakery and a café.

JM stated that there is still demand for business premises and that he could put RH in touch with Richard Baty of the Council's Business Development department.

JM also stated that grants were available for village halls and that starting on Wednesday, applications for discretionary business grants of up to £2K would be accepted. The scheme, available on the East Lothian Council website, will only accept applications for a few days.

GM reported that there had been little activity within the Garvald village hall over the past year, due to the pandemic, compared with its normally busy schedule. The Weekly Post Office counter still functions. Consequently, a financial loss of approximately £4K has occurred which has depleted hall funds. An Application has been made for windfarm money. Upgrade projects, other than the security camera system, have been suspended.

9. A.O.B

PW reported that Councilor Akhtar had informed him that there was a danger of Garvald losing the village telephone box if its use did not increase.

JM reported that the Council have established a small business group to investigate how it can help businesses recover from the effects of the pandemic. He also stated that the Council can provide mental health and well being therapy support.

10. Date of Next Meeting – Monday 29th March by Zoom

11. Funding Applications

Applicant	Description	Amount	Status
Whiteadder Water Sports Centre	Purchase of 6 Stand up Paddle Boards	£2,514	Approved
Morham Village Hall	Painting of Village Hall & Roof Repairs	£4,600	Approved
Garvald Village Hall	Covid Impact Funding 50% + CCTV Camera	£2,677	Approved
Knox Academy	Purchase of Chrome Books	£6,000	Approved
Yester Primary School	Outdoor Gazebo/Class Room and Primary 1 play equipment	£4,000	Approved
Kate Bogie	Repairs to wall on Core Path 31	£4,715	Ongoing

Approved Crystal Rig funding applications will be submitted to Fred Olsen for consideration.