

Lauderdale Community Council

Minute of Meeting held on Monday 9 March 2026
Lauder Primary School at 6.45pm



Present: Alex Baillie, Chair, Alistair Smith, Vice Chair, Jane Elliott, Vice Chair, Anne Lillico, Secretary and Interim Treasurer, Judi Gunn, Amanda Jordan, Jane Johnston, Susan Sutherland, Scottish Borders Council Councillor Jenny Linehan (by TEAMS)

Apologies: Marilyn Aitkenhead, Edward Maitland-Carew, SBC Councillor David Parker and SBC Councillor John Paton-Day

15 members of the public including – Ruth Reed, Alan Reed, Clarke Tait, Caroline Gillespie, Jim Pearson, Martin Paterson, Mark McRitchie, Natalie McRitchie, Mark Walton, G Steel.

1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies – Alex welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted the apologies.

2. Conflicts of Interest – None.

3. Adoption of the Minutes Previous Meeting and Matters Arising - Subject to an addition to paragraph 7.7 the minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2026 were proposed by Susan Sutherland and seconded by Judi Gunn.

4. Lauder to Oxton Active Travel Path - A briefing paper had been circulated setting out the details on the current work being undertaken on the Lauder to Oxton Path. The work involves resurfacing two sections of the path – at the Lauder end from where the existing tarmac ends to the bottom of Blackchesters and at the Oxton end from where the path starts at Burnfoot to just before the pond. Scottish Borders Council have secured the funds from Transport Scotland. There were no questions, but it was noted that the work was looking good from the Lauder end.

5. Longmuir Wind Farm and Biodiversity Project.

5.1 The Chair was handed to Jane Elliott, Vice Chair who introduced Neil Thomson, Project Manager and Colin Williams, Country Director from Galileo Empower who were attending to provide an update on the Longmuir Wind Farm and Biodiversity Project. Longmuir is 4.5km north of Stow and the site of the proposed development borders the LCC area.

5.2 Neil and Colin shared a presentation setting out various aspects of the proposed development including background on Galileo Empower, the need for renewables, the project, environmental assessment, visualisations and community benefit. Neil advised that information presented would be uploaded to Galileo Empower website

<https://longmuirenergy.co.uk/>

5.3 The project consists of 9 turbines, 40 MW Battery Energy Storage System and 49.5 MW solar photovoltaics. Although none of the turbines will be within LCC boundary it borders the LCC area. Access to the site will be via the A7.

5.4 Some of the main points which arose from the meeting can be found at Annex A. As there was not time to ask all 46 questions it was agreed that LCC would submit these in writing to Galileo Empower for answer. (These will be shared when available)

6. West Allanbank Housing Development

6.1 Alex Baillie, Chair declared an interest and left the room. Jane Elliott introduced Eve McCurich, Managing Director, Whiteburn. She confirmed that all the relevant legal work had been completed and that work had begun on the West Allanbank site. The site would provide a total of 110 homes, 27 of these being affordable homes with the land for these having been sold to SBHA.

6.2 The site would be accessed by the Stow Road. Eve advised that there would be no site access via Allanbank Gardens and that a sign would be placed at the entrance to Allanbank Gardens directing traffic up Stow Road.

6.3 As part of the planning conditions site working hours were 7 am to 7pm, but more realistically working hours would be 8 am to 5pm. Parking, turning and layout areas would be created on site. There was a preference not to work Saturdays.

6.4 When completed the roads would be adopted by SBC. New watermains would be installed and as part of the planning conditions improvements would be made to the West Mains pump station.

6.2 There was a discussion on where the soil from the site would be dumped. Eve spent some time with members of the public gallery to point out the route and position of the soil dump. Concern was expressed about the noise impact on the school and general safety at the site. Eve acknowledged that there would be noise from the site and that this was inevitable giving the work being undertaken. She explained that arrangements were being made for Whiteburn to go to the school to undertake a safety talk and organise STEM workshops. She advised that the site was secured using Safer PODs and CCTV.

6.3 Concern was expressed on impact the site would have on drainage. Particularly as the original SUDs for Allanbank Gardens has not been adopted. It was confirmed that drainage from the site would connect to Allanbank Gardens. Eve agreed to go back to Scottish Water regarding the SUDs and hydrobreak proposed for the new site. The ongoing issues regarding the SUDs from Allanbank Gardens would be raised with Scottish Borders Council.

6.4 In response to questions from the CC, Eve advised that completion dated for the project was 2029 but Whiteburn would like to be off site in 2028. Whiteburn are not considering installing additional traffic calming measures such as chicanes on the Stow Road on completion of the development. In response to a question about Community Benefit it was confirmed that there would be a scheme, which was being finalised. Eve added that there had been initial correspondence with the Defibrillator Group, but no conclusion to the discussion. Alistair agreed to speak to the Defibrillator Group.

Action 8 - Alistair Smith take forward outstanding issue regarding Allanbank SUDs

Action 9 - Alistair Smith to speak to Defibrillator Group.

Alex Baillie, Chair rejoined the meeting and resumed the role of Chair.

7. Open Forum - Nothing was raised

8. LCC Subgroup Updates

8.1 ESG – a summary of the round table event held at Scottish Parliament on 24 February 2026 had not yet been received.

8.2 Communications – Judi explained that the group had decide to use WordPress to host and build the new LCC website. She had issued an email to members inviting comments on how we would like the themes clustered. (Since the meeting Judi has advised that she has registered a new cheaper domain name lauderdalecommunitycouncil.org)

8.3 Members would be invited, by email, to consider how third-party surveys should be managed on the LCC Facebook page.

8.4 Lauderdale Development Trust – a summarised version of the Community Action Plan will be published in the Spring 2026 edition of the Lauderdale News, and an online link to the full document will be developed. A public meeting will take place on Tuesday 26 May 2026 to invite the community to become members of the Lauderdale Development Trust.

8.5 Public Hall – Susan advised that Amanda Jordan had joined the Public Hall subgroup. Following a meeting with LiveBorders and SBC a steering group made up of regular users of the public hall would be established. Invites would be issued shortly with a view to a first meeting being held in April.

8.6 Domestic Planning – Alistair and Amanda advised that they had no observations to make in respect of the two planning applications had been circulated:
26/00262/FUL change of use to form residential flat from first floor office suite at Bank of Scotland 3 Mid Row
26/00262/LBC alterations to form residential float from first floor office suite Bank of Scotland 3 Mid Row.

8.7 Traders – the next meeting will be held on Wednesday 25 March 2026.

9. LCC Outreach – several the potholes around Lauder had been filled. A list of outstanding potholes will be compiled once the Go Fibre works are completed. Pictures showing the ditch that needs repaired at the Old Schoolhouse, Blainslie to be forwarded to Councillor Linehan

Action 10 - Anne to contact Go Fibre to find out when work is due to be completed.

Action 11 - Judi to provide photos of the ditch to Councillor Linehan.

10. Any Other Business

10.1 Treasurer's Update – Anne advised, that including ring fenced funds, there was £3758.70 in the bank. The LCC accounts would be closed at the 31 March 2026 and examined in time for the AGM.

10.2 Lauder Primary School - The CC was advised that Lauder Parent Council was concerned over the arrangement where both the Head and Deputy Head posts at Lauder are now joint appointments with Westruther PS. Given that Lauder PS is the largest school feeder school to Earlston HS they were disappointed that they had not been consulted on this, and disappointed in the response they received from Scottish Borders Council. Councillor Linehan agreed to follow this up with the Education Team.

10.3 Bicycle rack Penny on the Move – There was a suggestion that a bicycle rack would at Penny on the Move would be a useful addition to the town. It was noted that Community Action Plan would deal with things like this.

10.4 Cornet's Pin - It was agreed that an estimate would be obtained for this year's Cornet's pin.

Action 12 - Anne to contact Hamish Smith for an estimate.

11. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Monday 13 April 2026 at 7 pm in Lauder Primary School.

Longmuir Windfarm and Biodiversity Project –Public Consultation

Galileo Empower attended the Community Council meeting on 9th March to update us on their revised proposals following their public consultation in April 2025.

The Community Council posed a number of questions including questions submitted by the community. There was not time to ask all 46 questions so we have submitted them in writing and will update the community once we receive answers.

Some of the main points which arose from the meeting were:

1. The proposal has seen a reduction in the number of wind turbines from 10 to 9. The area given over to solar photovoltaics (PV) has now been determined. The location of turbines and solar PV was shown on a map of the site, which will be available to view at consultations.
2. It was not clear that the biodiversity measures proposed by the developer offer a significant net gain to what is already happening in the area.
3. A member of the community challenged the developer's persistent claim that Longmuir Moss is a 'degraded peat bog' in need of interventions as part of the project's biodiversity enhancement mitigations. That Longmuir Moss is a richly biodiverse, ecologically stable, multi-habitat area has previously been shared in detail and at length with the developer in a scoping meeting, but this is not reflected in the updated proposal.
4. The developer confirmed that results of environmental surveys and reports will not be available until any planning application is submitted by them to the Energy Consents Unit (ECU). They acknowledged that this leads to short timescales for scrutiny of and response to the reports, though suggested that individuals can request an extension for their responses.
5. The developer did not give a clear answer to the question "when would the project achieve carbon payback?", though promised to send on some illustrative calculations from another development. (The carbon payback period is the point at which carbon emission savings from the development outweigh carbon emissions from its manufacture and construction)
6. The proposal at present does not stipulate the connection point to the grid and the developer could not say if the connection would run across Lauder Common.
7. New visuals, as requested by the Lauder Community Council, were

presented but were difficult to interpret on the projector screen. It is hoped that large scale reproductions at the public events will be better and if not we will request them again. The visualisation from Staunchley Hill did serve to illustrate how much larger the proposed turbines are than those already in place (200m to blade tip compared with approx. 60m to blade tip).

8. There have already been informal discussions concerning community benefit with Stow and Oxton but not with Lauderdale. As both of those catchments already have significant community benefit funds from other developments it was suggested that the developer is favouring a reduction in electricity bills for a 5km radius rather than a Community Benefit fund. Lauderdale currently has no access to community benefits and both Lauder and Blainslie will fall outside the 5km radius

9. It was confirmed that the haul route will be along the A68 as far as the B6458 to Tynehead, then along the A7.

10. The developer acknowledged that the proposed development is within the MOD 'consultation area', a 50km radius around the Eskdalemuir seismic array. This is a monitoring station used as part of the UK's obligations under the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. Onshore wind turbines can create signals which are picked up by the seismic array and may affect its monitoring capabilities. Requirements within the consultation zone are currently under review for the MOD, and an update is expected soon.

11. The developer confirmed that following the National Energy System Operator (NESO) reforms, the Longmuir Windfarm project does not yet have a connection date (i.e. it does not have 'Gate 2' status). At this pre-consultation stage there is an opportunity to influence both the final application and plans for administering any community benefit, should the final application be approved. Lauder Community Council will be writing to the developer highlighting areas of concern.