

Ettrick & Yarrow Community Council

Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on Monday 2nd June 2025

St Mary's Hall Cappercleuch

Present: Alison Renwick (AR) (Chair), Kirsty Irving (KI) (Treasurer), Karen O'Brien-Barret (KO) (Secretary), Jane Telfer (JT), John Davidson (JD), Elizabeth Williamson (EW), Neil Chalk (NC), Paul Scott (PS), Councillor Elaine Thornton-Nicol (ET-N) and approx. 18 members of the public

1. **Apologies:** Douglas Walker, Jonathan Rowley, Caroline Cochrane, Councillor Leigh Douglas

2. Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting held on Monday 3rd June 2024 were proposed by JD and seconded by JT

3. Chair's Report

Chair, Alison Renwick, presented the following report.

Welcome all to our 2025 AGM and meeting.

Another 12 months have rolled by, unbelievably quickly it seems, with many challenges and achievements along the way.

Firstly and most importantly I want to pay tribute to Miranda Alcock, our treasurer and friend, who sadly passed away recently following a relatively short illness.

Miranda was the backbone of this council and an absolute stalwart of the community. She was one of the most efficient people I knew and someone you could totally rely on to do the right thing and come up with some very sound advice. We will all miss her hugely and I would like to pass on our sincere condolences to her family at this time.

As a result, we have had to make some changes to our office bearers with Kirsty Irving taking over the reins as treasurer and Karen O'Brien-Barrett stepping up to the secretary's role, at least until our council elections next year. Thank you both. I would also like to formally welcome our newly co-opted members Neil Chalk and Douglas Walker.

The past 12 months have seen us continuing to work on concerns and issues that impact on our communities, we have ringfenced monies for a paths maintenance fund, which basically does what it says on the tin, financing the maintenance of community areas. We have also recently

set up a communications fund which will partly be used to finance the EYE community newsletter which the Ettrick & Yarrow Development Company produce and also the running of our website, keeping the community abreast of what's happening where and when.

One of our larger financial commitments is the provision and ongoing maintenance of the defibrillators which are in place across both valleys, we have Betty Williamson to thank for taking on this huge task and doing a tremendous job.

We are also keen to support our local halls which are the hubs of our community and I would encourage anyone to ask for or seek information on what is available – for individuals funds such as the education and training fund are available to anyone residing in the valleys and could provide much needed support.

Other longer term issues such as the Tour o the Borders and issues around St.Mary's Loch continue, there have been small but meaningful progress with both, and we look forward to hearing about prospective developments on the loch front later this evening. There would however seem to be a breakthrough in tackling the ongoing flooding issues in Upper Ettrick with works proposed to clear the blockages within the river bed which is hoped will go some way to improving the road flooding.

More recently the proposal to erect a massive string of pylons across our valleys has dominated our efforts and of those in the community. Known as the Cross Border Connection and facilitated by SPEN, this proposal has caused huge concern to residents, visitors and anyone with a connection to the area. We have hosted very well attended public meetings and will continue to support the Action Group which has been set up to specifically tackle this very concerning development. This is most definitely a longer term issue which requires focus and knowledge, something the Action Group have, but we will of course provide any assistance as required.

Going forward there is much to focus on and we welcome any support or ideas which would improve what we do. Although extremely concerning the threat from the Pylons has shown what a strong sense of community we have and I believe it has gone some way to bringing people together.

At the risk of repeating myself I am going to reiterate what I said last year and that is - we are privileged to live in such a beautiful area and it is the responsibility of each and every one of us, as residents, to look after our environment and each other.

Once again I would like to thank our 3 councillors, Elaine, Caroline and Leagh. We are very grateful for all your support and advice and last but

very much not least a huge thank you to our team of community councillors who go above and beyond as volunteers to address the many and varied issues and concerns that are brought to us and act on them in the best interests of all.

I very much look forward to working with them and our community in the coming year.

4. Treasurer's Report and Annual Accounts

KI presented the Annual Accounts, copies of which were made available at the meeting and are available on request.

We started the year with £15,517.23 in the bank.

Income of £13,382.15 came from a number of sources including SBC grants and Wind Farm funding. A refund from a grant to the Ettrick Forest Sports Club was made due to a project spend being less than the funds awarded.

Expenditure was £5,413.60 for the year.

The Wind Farm Fund was used to provide £198.34 for defibrillator maintenance, £34 was awarded to Broadmeadows for the repair of the noticeboard. A total of £3375 was awarded to the EYCDC for reprinting the James Hogg Booklet, a planning application fee and publication costs for the EYE newsletter.

The Community Council Fund covered remaining items such as hall hire, website costs, paths maintenance, officer's expenses and Remembrance Day poppies.

The closing balance for the year is £23,485.73

5. Agreement of SBC Community Council Code of Conduct

All Community Councillors confirmed that they agree to abide by SBC Community Council Code of Conduct.

6. Any other competent business

None

7. Date, place and time of next AGM

Monday 1st June 2026, 7pm – Boston Memorial Hall, Ettrick