



DALBEATTIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

### **Dalbeattie Community Council Meeting**

Monday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2025 at 7 pm

Venue - Birchvale Theatre, Maxwell St, Dalbeattie, DG5 4AG

#### **Draft Minutes**

**Community Council Elected Members Present:** Linda Ashton (LA), Edward Palmer (EP), John Thompson (JT), Ron Smith (RS), Lyne Gibson (LG joined at 7.15pm), James Carnochan (JC), , May Donaldson (MD) Robert Widdowson (RW), John Neilson (JN),

**Community Council Members Apologies:** David Reid (MD), Councillor Kim Lowe (KL),

**Regional (D&G) Council Members:** Councillor Davie Stitt (DS), Councillor Ian Blake (IB),

**Dumfries and Galloway Council:**

**Dalbeattie Initiative representative: Royal British Legion Scotland:** Willie Watson (WW), Jim Dingwall (JD), Robert Kirk (RK)

**Dalbeattie High School:** Jennifer Taylor

**Others Present:** Margaret Copp (MC), Suzanne Main (SM), John White (JW), Kate Caldlow (KC), Joyce Ross

#### **1. Welcome and Introductions**

#### **2. Apologies**

Ian Wilbur (IW) (chairman of the Dalbeattie Initiative), Liz Wilbur (LW),

#### **3. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes (17th March 2025)**

- Review and approval of minutes from the meeting on 17th March 2025.
- All approved

#### **4. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes not on the agenda:**

- Updates on action items from the last meeting:
  - **Bandstand Repairs** (JT update on cost estimate)

Quote from M Gafney £7200 plus VAT EP asked if we could claim it back. RS JD asked if he could apply to the Ruth Dunn Foundation MD will apply and liaise with IB. There was a discussion as to whether Dumfries and Galloway Council should do this work and whether they had the budget. IB said he would look into it.

- **Vaccination Centres** (JT update)

Won't know until the end of May

- **Erratic Bus Times** (DS update)

As no dates and time cannot follow up

#### **5. Police Report**

10/02 – fraud reported – enquiries ongoing

13/02 – threatening and abusive behaviour – person traced and charged

15/02 – person found in possession of cannabis – reported accordingly

16/02 – driver drive no insurance – person reported

16/02 – threatening and abusive behaviour – enquiries ongoing



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17/02 – fraud reported – enquiries ongoing  
27/02 – misuse of drugs warrant executed – enquiries ongoing  
02/03 – driver drive over limit – drugs – reported accordingly  
06/03 – threatening and abusive behaviour – person traced and charged  
07/03 – driver speeding – ticket issued  
11/03 – threatening and abusive behaviour/assault – enquiries ongoing  
11/03 – fail to stop at scene of accident – enquires ongoing  
20/03 – vandalism to a vehicle – enquiries ongoing  
21/03 – fail to stop at scene of accident – enquiries ongoing  
22/03 – drive – no MOT – ticket issued  
22/03 – driver speeding – ticket issued  
27/03 – threatening and abusive behaviour – person traced and charged  
01/04 – drive whilst using mobile telephone – ticket issued  
01/04 – drive unregistered vehicle – no licence/no insurance – person traced and charged  
02/04 – driver fail to stop at red signal – ticket issued  
03/04 – driver speeding – ticket issued  
03/04 – driver speeding – report submitted  
03/04 – driver speeding – ticket issued  
05/04 – careless driving – reported to be submitted

People are asked to keep dogs on leads during lambing time.

### 6. Treasurer's Report

#### FISCAL YEAR 2024 Additional Details

OPENING BALANCE £39,884.32 FROM CLOSING BALANCE FY2023 (£36,407 ringfenced for pond)

03/04/2024 Interest £142.53

27/06/2024 Interest £146.16

27/09/2024 Interest £149.81

16/12/2024 Interest £140.34

03/05/2025 donation £60.00 from Maxi Carnochan, mem dominos for pond fund

28/03/2025 Interest £128.70

Total Income               £767.54

#### Expenditure

03/05/2024 DD ICO £35.00

11/11/2024 cheque 129 £33.71 cleared 14/01/2025

TOTAL EXPENDITURE £68.71

Opening Balance £39,884.32

Income £767.54

Opening Balance plus Income £40,651.86

Expenditure £68.71



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Closing Balance £40,583.15

Venessa Whelan was nominated, seconded and approved to review the accounts for the AGM

### 7. Working Party Report/ Sub Group Reports

- **Resilience** – RS reported looking for making a meeting still be set up, but nearly there confirmed availability for an online meeting with the Community Resilience Officer, Becky Robson, on 22 April at 3:30 pm but the availability may not be possible. Discussions are taking place regarding suitable dates and formats.
- **Clean up Dalbeattie**- Cleaning signs and benches and starting to clean the poles in the Park – still waiting on some equipment, LA will chase up as has a meeting tomorrow. LA gave thanks for a great start.  
Dog poo is a major issue, particularly in the park.  
Emma Harper MSP has recognised the group's work and extended an invitation for members to visit the Scottish Parliament. This will provide an opportunity to attend First Minister's Questions and take part in a guided tour.
- **Pond group**, including Pond Group Tender update – having a meeting tomorrow.
- **Community engagement**, including Place Standard Tool Survey update

EP reported on the following:

**Dalbeattie Standard Place Tool Survey Summary.** None of the topics reach  $p \leq 0.05$ , meaning we cannot confirm statistical significance with this dataset currently sitting at  $p \leq 0.22$ . The confidence levels (7-10 scale) remain useful for gauging importance, but they do not confirm statistical reliability. To achieve  $p \leq 0.05$ , you we need 10% response rate. So the survey remains open until we reach this level

The survey highlights **strong community spirit and easy access to natural spaces**, but low public participation suggests that **community engagement remains a challenge**. The lowest-rated category, **decision-making involvement (3.91/7)**, reinforces the need for greater engagement to improve local representation. The **average score across all rated categories is 4.88/7**.

As those who have completed the survey are likely already engaged, the actual figure across the wider population is expected to be lower. This underscores the need for **increased outreach to ensure broader representation**. Greater engagement is crucial for **developing a balanced vision for Dalbeattie's future**, so the study will remain open until statistical significance is reached.

Due to the **high margins of error in this interim analysis (7–10%)**, boosting participation to reach at least **10% of residents** will be essential for more representative and reliable findings. EP

Summarised the following:

#### **Demographic Analysis vs Census Data**

Comparing survey responses to Dalbeattie's census population reveals **overrepresentation in some age groups and underrepresentation in others**:

- **Older adults (45+) are overrepresented**
  - Survey: **85%** of respondents were aged 45 or older
  - Census: This group makes up **~57%** of the population
  - **Relevance**: High participation from older residents may mean **younger perspectives are underrepresented**



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- **Young adults (16-24) are underrepresented**
  - Survey: **8.5%** of respondents
  - Census: This group makes up **~8.9%** of the population
  - *Relevance:* Low response rate suggests younger residents **may not feel actively involved** in local decision-making
- **Children & teens (Under 16) are significantly underrepresented**
  - Survey: **10.8%** of respondents
  - Census: This group makes up **~13%** of the population
  - *Relevance:* **Limited engagement with families and younger community members**
- **Gender representation**
  - Survey: **75 female, 52 male, 1 other**
  - Census: **48% male, 52% female**
  - *Relevance:* Slight overrepresentation of women, indicating a need for **balanced outreach efforts**
  -

### **Key Takeaways & Recommendations on Demographic Analysis**

- **Older respondents dominate the survey**, which may shape priorities toward retirement-friendly services rather than youth-focused initiatives.
- **Youth engagement needs improvement** to ensure broader representation in decision-making.

### **EP highlighted some of the following the Community Engagement Ideas to Improve Participation:**

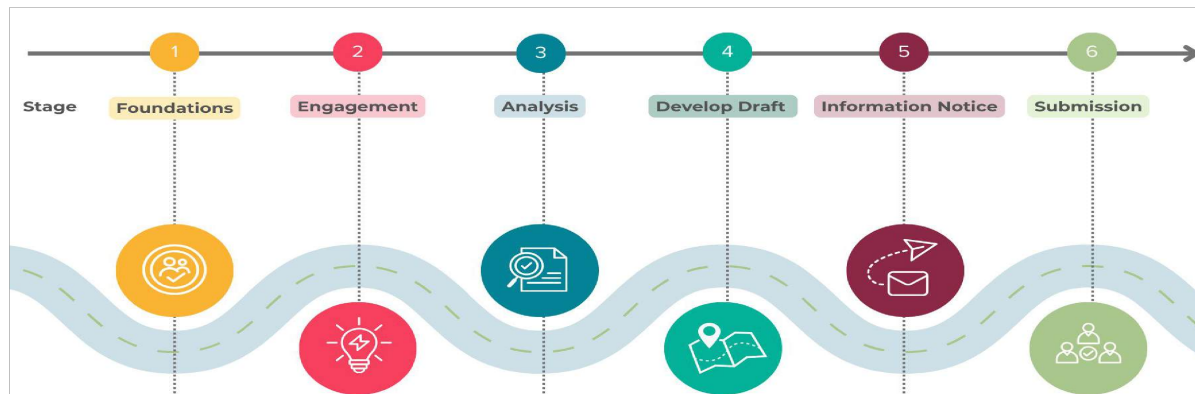
To ensure broader representation, **targeted community engagement efforts** are required:

- **Public workshops & drop-in sessions** – Host interactive events where residents can complete the survey.
- **Social media & digital outreach** – Use Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, local forums, and WhatsApp groups to reach younger demographics.
- **Youth & school engagement** – Partner with schools and youth organisations to involve younger voices.
- **Local business & organisation partnerships** – Encourage shops, cafés, and workplaces to promote participation.
- **Door-to-door mailings** – Engage residents who may not participate online.
- **Providing paper surveys** – Ensure accessibility for those without internet access.
- **Community ambassadors** – Identify local leaders to encourage participation across different age groups.
- **Library drop-in sessions** – Offer support via library computers for residents filling out the survey.
- **The Dalbeattie Initiative** – Have has offered to include a survey flyer as part of their mailing for the Pantry. EP suggested that Dalbeattie Community Council should reciprocate, creating a mutually beneficial distribution for both groups. There were no objections to this suggestion.
  - **LA asked the following to be added to the minutes:** LA reported that on Saturday night, she was approached by a man who sat next to her and stated that she needed to take action on something. However, he did not provide any specific suggestions and then left.



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### 8. Local Place Plan (LPP)



- **Review of Survey Results:** Discuss the response rate and priorities emerging from the community survey.

The **Dalbeattie Standard Place Tool Survey** provides insights into community priorities, highlighting key areas for development within the **Local Place Plan**.

**EP summarised the following Survey Themes & Key Findings:**

**Moving Around (5.34/7, ±8% confidence, 107 responses)**

- **Key Issues:** Pavement resurfacing, accessibility improvements, pedestrian-friendly infrastructure.
- **Development Considerations:** Investment in better footpaths, improved walkability, and resurfacing of key areas.

**Traffic & Parking (4.11/7, ±7% confidence, 113 responses)**

- **Key Issues:** Parking enforcement, congestion in the town centre, traffic management.
- **Development Considerations:** Stronger parking regulations, traffic wardens, and improved signage to enhance traffic flow.

**Streets & Spaces (4.53/7, ±8% confidence, 103 responses)**

- **Key Issues:** Maintenance of public spaces, improving shopfronts, addressing neglected buildings.
- **Development Considerations:** Revitalisation projects, shopfront enhancements, and general upkeep of streets.

**Natural Spaces (6.02/7, ±10% confidence, 88 responses)**

- **Key Issues:** Accessibility to green spaces, maintaining natural areas.
- **Development Considerations:** Improved access routes, preservation efforts, and enhanced pathways.

**Play & Recreation (5.02/7, ±9% confidence, 93 responses)**

- **Key Issues:** Limited recreational opportunities, need for affordable housing and jobs.
- **Development Considerations:** Development of new recreational facilities, community spaces, and affordable housing projects.

**Facilities & Services (4.67/7, ±9% confidence, 94 responses)**

- **Key Issues:** Lack of diverse shopping options, need for better supermarkets and essential services.
- **Development Considerations:** Encouraging local businesses, expanding retail options, and improving essential services.

**Housing & Community (4.56/7, ±9% confidence, 91 responses)**

- **Key Issues:** Affordable housing shortages, accessibility concerns.



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- **Development Considerations:** Affordable housing initiatives, better rental options, and community-driven housing projects.
  - **Assign Roles for LPP Development:** Allocate specific tasks to members for drafting and progressing the LPP.
  - **Community Engagement Plan:** Finalise strategies for public consultations, including focus groups and social media.

EP proposed the following, which was agreed:

### Gathering Views & Data Collection

Councillors will engage residents to **collect feedback on their assigned topics**. While the approach is flexible, the council **recommended forming small focus groups** to ensure structured input.

#### Sample Focus Group Structure:

- **Demographics:**
  - **1 x Under 29**
  - **1 x 30–59**
  - **1 x 60+**
  - **Balanced gender ratio** (50/50 male-female, with representation from other gender identities).
- **Minimum Participants:** 6 per group.
- **Maximum Participants:** 12 per group.

### 3. Key Questions for Data Collection

#### Strengths:

- What is working well in this area?
- Are there existing infrastructure/services that should be protected or enhanced?

#### Weaknesses:

- What isn't working and needs improvement?
- Are there major issues or barriers affecting the community?

#### Planning Priorities:

- What should be prioritised for development in this area?
- What would make the biggest positive impact for residents?

#### Project Ideas:

- Identify potential new initiatives to improve each area.
- Explore sustainable solutions or community-led projects.
- Record the number of participants' agreement with each project idea.

#### Mark on Map:

- Highlight key locations where projects should be implemented.

EP to email out and hold a meeting by Zoom on Thursday night for any councillors that need clarification. JT said does not do Zoom EP said he could come around to EP's house and attend there.

This structured approach will ensure **broad community representation**, allowing councillors to **develop informed proposals** for discussion at the AGM





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- **Timeline for LPP Completion:** Establish key milestones and deadlines for completing the LPP.

Needs to be completed by the summer

- **Budget for External Expertise:** Discuss potential budgeting for expert consultation in drafting and reviewing the LPP.

RS reported had not heard back so does not know yet what budget there is for the Local Place Plan

- **Any feedback to Colvend & Southwick Community Council on their Local Place Plan**  
No comments

### 9. Regional (D&G) Council Report to the Council

**Road Improvements:** Funding has been allocated for tree removal and surface changes on the route to Castle Douglas, similar to the work already completed in Beeswing.

**Parking Decriminalisation Delay:** The process has been delayed, as the Scottish Government has requested further details. It was noted that parking signage should be checked to ensure it is correctly in place before progressing further.

### 10. Planning Applications Requiring Community Council Comment.

Isles Long Term Forest Plan and UKWAS Certification – No comments.

### 11. Road closure: John Street/Park Terrace, which is due to be closed for 8 weeks starting mid-April.

DS reported that significant excavation work will take place from Station Road to James Street. IB confirmed that the work is scheduled to begin this week and is expected to last approximately four weeks. The excavation will be classified as emergency active.

It was noted that companies receiving deliveries and lorries should be notified to ensure minimal disruption during the works.

### 12. Other Projects

EP suggested including the following articles in the newsletter:

- The delay in the Town Hall project
- The 20mph speed limit initiative
- The Dalbeattie Clean-Up Group's ongoing efforts

Other potential topics, to be proposed by council members

Please send articles to EP by the end of the week

It was suggested that the newsletter should be mailed out alongside a reminder about the survey, and no objections were raised to this approach.

### 13. Public Feedback



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Public Feedback

Town hall delayed because of dry rot, but 3-4 months

JW asked about GP panel representation. JT will enquire about who is on the liaison panel.

LA said there was a consultation EP had sent to all members at the beginning of April that may wish to attend:

Hello,

*We would like to invite members of your community council to take part in an important discussion on the future of general medical practice in Dumfries and Galloway.*

*As you may be aware, the Dumfries and Galloway Integration Joint Board (IJB) has approved a proposal to develop a long-term vision for GP services across the region. This initiative aims to address key challenges, including recruitment and retention, growing patient demand, and evolving healthcare needs.*

*To ensure that local communities have a voice in shaping this vision, we are holding two online engagement sessions specifically for community council members. These sessions will provide an opportunity to explore key themes which can be explored in this work, including:*

*The sustainability of general practice services*

*The role of different healthcare professionals within GP practices*

*The use of technology to improve patient access and efficiency*

*Raising public awareness of the evolving structure of general practice*

*Your insights and perspectives as community representatives are invaluable to this process, and we would be grateful for your participation.*

*Online Session Details: You are welcome to join either of the following sessions:*

*Session 1: Wednesday 23rd of April 2025 at 2pm - 4pm*

*Session 2: Wednesday 30th of April 2025 at 10am - 12pm*

*Both sessions will be held via Microsoft Teams. A meeting link will be provided upon registration.*

*There are a limited number of spaces available at these sessions, allocated on the basis of those first to register.*

*To confirm your attendance, please RSVP by Friday 18th April 2025 by contacting the project team at [dg.shapingthefutureofgms@nhs.scot](mailto:dg.shapingthefutureofgms@nhs.scot) providing your details, including the community council of which you are a member.*

*We look forward to your participation and to working together to secure a strong future for GP services in our region.*

*Best regards,*

*David Rowland*

*Director of Strategic Planning and Transformation*





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JW asked how much councillors get paid, the reply was that nothing was paid and we are volunteers. JW then asked about D&G councillors and was told that it was not a Community Council issue and that the information was in the public domain.

RW raised that the blocked drains near to Medical Centre (A710) were not functioning properly.

RS Sponsored walk to the heart stone on Sunday, 12 June for veterans

#### 14. Date of Next Meeting

- Confirm next meeting date as the AGM: **Monday, 12th May 2025.**
- Where potential Local Place Plan Projects will be presented and next steps agreed.