

# Upper Liddesdale & Hermitage Community Council

## Annual General Meeting 9th April 2026

### Draft Minutes

**Location:** The meeting was held at Hermitage Hall starting at 18:45

**Those present were:**

Councillor Watson McAteer

Community Councillors Geoffrey Kolbe (Chairman, GK), Rosemary Webster (Vice Chair) Ian Hunter (Secretary, IH), Martin Steed (Treasurer, MS), Lynda Graham (LG)

There were also 10 members of the public.

**1. Apologies for absence**

None

**2. Minutes of the AGM of 10th April 2025**

IH moved that the minutes be agreed as a true and accurate account of the meeting. MS seconded the motion, which was carried.

**3. Chairman's report of the previous year.**

GK read out his report, which is appended.

**4. Treasurer's Report.**

MS spoke to his report, which is appended.

**5. Re-affirmation of Community Councillors to abide by the Community Councillors Code of Conduct**

All Community Councillors have signed a statement, "We agree to abide by the Scottish Borders Council Code of Conduct for Community Councils", which is appended

**6. Any Other Business**

There was no other business

# Chairman's report AGM

The past year has seen some landmark achievements in creating our Place Plan - and being the first Community Council in the Teviot and Liddesdale region to do so. Also in creating our Upper Liddesdale and Hermitage Organisation SCIO. We thus find ourselves positioned as well as we might be to face a future that is fluid and uncertain, but cannot be said to be bright.

As a rural community, we are not looked on favourably by the urban elites who rule over us. In times where local council budgets are increasingly constrained, it is services to rural areas which are cut first. The much trumpeted 15 minute communities where nobody should be less than a 15 minute walk from shops, schools, doctors surgeries and community centres does not apply to rural communities - so we don't get the shops, the schools or the doctors surgeries - or the means to get to them unless we provide our own.

The local hunt, a centre for social life, is no more as the urban elites thinks hunting is unacceptable. Nobody asked us. Fossil fuels are unacceptable so we must give up our rural landscape and see it turned into an industrial energy park. Again, nobody asked us and our ability to have a say in the matter has been eroded even more now that wind farm planning applications no longer automatically go to a public inquiry if the local council objects to the scheme.

And we have plenty of wind farm applications in our area. Teviot, Windy Edge, Cliffhope, Liddesdale, and Hartsgarth at various stages of planning. We also have the threat of a 400 kV transmission line running through our area to take renewables power down to England.

But we are not alone in having private companies deciding they want to build a wind farm in our midst and finding the planning system rigged to allow them to do it - whether we like it or not.

Starting in the Highlands, some 53 rural Community Councils got together to sign a unified statement calling on the Scottish Government to halt all renewables development until a plan for Scotland's energy requirements had been worked out, consulted and consented. Community Councils in the North East of Scotland formed their own Convention. And then 41 rural Community Councils in the South of Scotland banded together to form the South of Scotland Convention - of which this Community Council is a proud member. Earlier in March, the various Conventions, representing over a million voters, met with Energy Minister Gillian Martin to voice our concerns. They know we are not happy!

And so we continue to work to make the voice of this community heard. But the biggest danger to this community is that people will not step forward to ensure the fight continues to make this community's views heard where it matters. This is the final year of this particular Community Council, which will be dissolved in December pending elections. It is my fervent hope that the people of this community are sufficiently alarmed by the uninvited pressures of change from outside our community, that they will be motivated to step forward and ensure the voice of this community continues to be heard.

**Upper Liddesdale & Hermitage Community Council**  
**Financial Report for fiscal year 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026**

**Bank Balance as at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025** **£3,545.81**

**Income:**

Scottish Borders Council Grant	£594
Hermitage Hall Hire Reimbursement	£113.75
Foundation Scotland	£1,232

**Total Income** **£1,939.75**

**Expenses:**

Design of interpretation boards	Chq 42	£120	
Artwork for interpretation boards	Chq 43	£200	
G Kolbe for resilience shed	Chq 44	£719.60	Pot B funds/ringfenced funds
Transfer of funds to UL & H Organisation	Chq 45	£121.84	Previous ringfenced funds
Hermitage Hall hire	Chq 46	£39	
Donation to Arthur Elliot Trust	Chq 47	£300	
R Webster re Wilson Signs	Chq 48	£1,584	£1,232 from Foundation Scotland
Xmas Cheer Contribution (1)	Chq 49	£97.28	
Xmas Cheer Contribution (2)	Chq 50	£30	
Hermitage Hall Hire	Chq 51	£60.20	
Bank Services Charges for year		£56.50	

**Total Expenditure** **£3,328.42**

**Bank Balance as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026** **£2157.14**

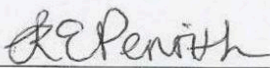
**Ringfenced funds:**

- |   |         |         |
|---|---------|---------|
| 1. ULHCC resolution 08/03/2022                    |         |         |
| Resilience Equipment                              | £250    | £134.40 |
| Less expended                                     | £115.60 |         |
| 2. SBC Resilience Support (02/04/2020 & 24/02/20) |         | £1,000  |

**Total set aside** **£1,134.40**

**Balance of funds available for ongoing ULHCC activities in FY 2026-2027** **£1022.74**

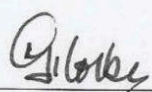
I have examined the books and records for the Upper Liddesdale & Hermitage Community Council for the fiscal year 2025-2026 ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026 as prepared by the Community Council Treasurer and, with the explanations given to me, find them correct to the best of my knowledge.

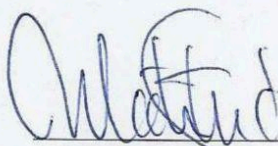
Signed: 

Dated: 03/04/2026

Name: Kathryn Penrith RNM  
 Title: Admiral Nurse Practitioner  
 Address: Wayside Cottage, Newcastleton, Scottish Borders, TD9 0SG

Approved at the Annual General Meeting of the Upper Liddesdale & Hermitage Community council held on 9<sup>th</sup> Day of April 2026.

  
 Dr Geoffrey Kolbe – Chair

  
 Martin Steed - Treasurer

# Upper Liddesdale & Hermitage Community Council

"We Agree to abide by the Scottish Borders Council Code of Conduct for Community Councils"

Geoffrey Kolbe.....*Geoffrey Kolbe*

Rosie Webster.....*Rosie Webster*

Martin Steed.....*Martin Steed*

Lynda Graham.....*Lynda Graham*

Ian Hunter.....*Ian Hunter*

Annual General Meeting, Dated 09 April 2026.