

Minutes of Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge Community Council Meeting Tuesday, 24th February 2015 held in the Burgh Halls

Present: Chair – John Kelly (JK), Lyn Aitken (LA), Aileen Boyle (AB), Martin Crook (MC), Ian Kelly (IK), Ron Smith (RS), David Tait (DT), Verena Throp (VT), Councillor Tom Conn (TC), Councillor Tom Kerr (TK). Constable Peter Robertson (PR).

Apologies: Bruce McCallum (BM), Brenda Galloway (BG), Mike Vickers (MV), Gill Fawcitt (GF), Fiona Low (FL), Lesley Malone (LM), Councillor Martyn Day (MD).

Minutes of Previous Meeting: The minutes of the meeting of 27th January 2015, previously circulated, were accepted as a true record, proposed by AB and seconded by MC.

1. Matters Arising

TC reported that the Springfield Road bottle bank had been moved to a new location and the Priory Road bottle bank removed.

2. Police Report

PR reported two break-ins at Mill Road Business Park, at Play Bugs and Golf Poser. The latter was considered a professional hit; lines of enquiry on both are being pursued. Subsequent to the break-ins patrols in unmarked vehicles had caught people stealing scrap metal. TK reported that the break-ins had been discussed at the latest BIDS meeting in the context of additional security.

PR further reported two burglaries and one attempted break-in to houses in the town. One involved a long-term absence from the house. Alarms had been set off and this has acted as a deterrent. Lines of enquiry are progressing. PR asked that the community remain vigilant. Linlithgow is not being particularly targeted; all areas of West Lothian are involved in a spate of break-ins.

Illegal and inconsiderate parking has been targeted with a number of tickets issued in the area of the Railway Station and High St. There will be an increase in the number of police officers serving Linlithgow and the aim is for an officer to spend at least one hour per day assessing illegal parking. DT suggested a Black Bitch article to highlight the issue of domestic and business break-ins and inconsiderate parking.

IK asked if there was a problem with regard to the sale of “legal highs”. PR advised that he was not aware of any such business in Linlithgow.

3. Membership & Groups

The Community Council has received a formal resignation from Debbie Day. Debbie's contribution to the Community Council during her brief period of membership is acknowledged.

A review of the membership of working groups indicated that the communications working group is now the only group with one member. Members are asked to consider whether they can contribute to this group.

4. AGM Preparation

AB to draft the annual report and circulate to members. IK asked for input from the groups for proposals for spend in the next financial year. This is to be discussed at the March meeting.

5. Planning & Development

JK reported the planning application for a 1115m² retail unit with loading bay, associated access, car parking, servicing and landscaping on land at Edinburgh Road, Linlithgow. (0089/FUL/15). In the subsequent discussion DT stated that a recent report from West Lothian Council has highlighted that water and drainage had sufficient capacity and that this was a very good site given its position and access. The retail analysis pointed towards M&S Food or Waitrose although TC pointed out that this was pure speculation. TK suggested that comment should be made with constructive planning reasons. IK mentioned that Tesco still has planning approval for an extension to the existing store of identical size. It was generally agreed that retailing should not be encouraged beyond the High Street and Regent Centre. It was mentioned that elements of the retail analysis were out of date. It was decided to refer the matter to the planning forum. JK to circulate draft wording of the letter of objection.

Regarding other matters:

1. Burghmuir - still with Scottish Ministers.
2. Clarendon Farm. The position is essentially the same as for Burghmuir. A letter has been sent in response to further information regarding the access to the development.
3. Springfield application for 49 houses by CALA Management Ltd and Kensington Estates. No further information of a Planning Committee meeting yet. CALA has asked for an extension to the application period until May to allow them to answer West Lothian Council queries.
4. Kettilstoun Mains consultation for a housing development by AWG Property Ltd and CEMEX UK Properties Ltd. Nothing further to report.

With respect to the calling in of the Burghmuir and Clarendon Farm appeals TK recommends engaging with Fiona Hyslop. A meeting of representatives of the planning forum with Fiona Hyslop has taken place.

6. Health & Social Provision

The recent health consultation has been put onto the Scottish Health database, VT will circulate the link. VT advised that she has attended a meeting of Linlithgow Link to discuss dementia care and is proposing to set up a meeting with Alzheimer's Scotland. A further meeting with Angela Robinson regarding a talk on eating disorders is proposed.

Questionnaires are available in the library. RS stated that the possibility of funding for the Victoria Hall project would be enhanced if the project could be demonstrated to contribute to community health by meeting needs. RS & VT to discuss. JK asked for advice on the recent consultation for closer collaboration between health and care professionals citing an example of such collaboration in Edinburgh. TK advised that West Lothian was leading the way to a corporate approach to having such services co-located for which government money has been allocated. In Linlithgow discussions are ongoing regarding opportunities for the use of the refurbished County buildings.

7. Housing & Social Housing

No report - meeting to be arranged

8. Education

Brief report by e-mail from FL. This summarised the benefits of an outreach programme with Colonel McFadyen of Drumshoreland Weekend Training Centre who facilitates the educational programme. The programme is very good for pupils who have become disengaged from school or are susceptible to committing unlawful acts. This programme meets the needs of the pupils in most cases and results in qualification which may not have been achievable otherwise. FL has contacted the Academy to hopefully move forward with this. TK gave his endorsement for such a programme.

9. Events

JK advised that now was the time to begin thinking about Remembrance Day Parade and the Advent Fayre.

10. Communications

DT is keen to encourage articles from the Community Council in the Black Bitch magazine. RS voiced concern that the Linlithgow Gazette appears unaware of some key decisions relating to the town. TK advised that the Gazette were very happy to accept copy and generally published material donated.

11. LLBCC Governance

JK reported on a meeting held on 29th of January to discuss governance issues relating to groups and subgroups. A paper was produced and circulated. Discussion on this topic was postponed until the March meeting.

12. Treasurer's Report

IK stated that £350 is still outstanding from Stewart Ness. Cheques had been written for disbursement of Advent Fayre collection to the Army cadets and Sea Scouts as previously agreed. JK is pursuing the petition for the Linlithgow coat of arms. The Lord Lyon's fee for

registering the petition has increased from £200 to £300. JK requested authorisation to expend the £300. This was proposed by RS and seconded by IK and unanimously approved.

13. AOB

VT queried whether a raw sewage was entering the Loch. RS informed the meeting that the centre of the town was served by a combined drainage system in which both a foul and storm drainage flowed to the sewage works. In times of excessive rain the system overflows into the Loch. A tank has been constructed near the Vennel flats in an attempt to balance excessive flow. Also Bell's Burn picks up the outflow from septic tanks on the Edinburgh road, run-off from fields and overflow from the canal. All these feed nitrogen into the Loch and bring about green algae. A project on green algae is being run at Edinburgh University.

14 Close

The meeting closed at 9:17pm.