

**Minutes of Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge Community Council Meeting  
Tuesday, 25<sup>th</sup> June 2013 held in the Burgh Halls**

**Present:** Chair – Clive Dyson (CD), Nick Davis (ND), Debbie Dow (DD), Ian Kelly (IK), John Kelly (JK), Fiona Low (FL), David Tait (DT), Ron Smith (RS), Jack Thompson (JT), Mike Vickers (MV), Constable Brian Reid (BR), Councillor Martyn Day (MD), Councillor Tom Kerr (TK).

**Apologies:** Bruce McCallum (BM), Lyn Aitken (LA), Eddy Cornock (EC), Councillor Tom Conn (TC)

**Minutes of Previous Meeting:** Previously circulated - approved as a true record of the meeting of Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2013.

**1. Matters arising:**

	<b>Action</b>	<b>By</b>	<b>Result</b>
1	Notice of meeting in District Diary of Gazette and notice boards	JK	For action
6	Flodden Event: 7 ticket sales have been made. Bruce Jamieson is also running an event at the Academy on 9 <sup>th</sup> Sept	ND	For info

**3. Police Report:** BR gave a brief report on the crime statistics which showed a reduction in most types of crime. The exceptions are crimes related to alcohol misuse and domestic abuse. Domestic abuse complaints are taken very seriously and investigated thoroughly to determine whether a crime has taken place. 20 parking tickets have been issued to those in violation of the Clarendon parking pilot regulations. TK requested advice from the Community Council on whether the pilot at Clarendon should be continued. There has been a number of opportunistic thefts from houses and sheds left unlocked. BR stated that in his opinion the Marches this year was a relatively peaceful family occasion. There were 4 arrests (drunkenness and brawling) and confiscation of alcohol. In answer to a question related to public houses BR stated that there were two classifications, monitored premises and problem premises. There is one public house on the High Street which is currently judged a problem. BR stated that Pub Watch is not strong at present. There were no problems of any kind on the Gala Day. In answer to a question, BR stated that metal thefts in Linlithgow are currently not a problem however, some metal thefts in the outlying areas continue to be of concern. Network Rail is particularly active in monitoring metal theft and the police continue a high degree of vigilance with a specific initiative likely within the next few months.

**4. Councillor's Report:** TK advised:

- West Lothian Council will be taking a decision shortly on whether to continue the experimental parking restrictions at Clarendon and reiterated his earlier request for advice from the Community Council on whether the parking restrictions should be continued, emphasising that any decision would be based on fact rather than opinion.

**Action all – comments to JK asap**

- A request for funding has been received from Bruce Jamieson for the Flodden Event to be held at the Academy.
- The Civic Festival this year was a great success. There were no problems of any kind and no objections relating to noise (as has been the case previously). This was attributed to strict adherence to timing specifically that the event closed promptly at 11pm.
- The approval of the Local Area Committee funding is to be ascertained.

- 5. Development & Planning:** DT advised that the Development and Planning Working Group had met to compile the high level guidelines (previously circulated) which he outlined. JT raised a concern that the documents referred continuously to Linlithgow and it was agreed to include a statement at the beginning of the document to state that references to Linlithgow should be read as Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge. In a discussion of whether development restraint should continue it was agreed by the meeting to support a measured amount of development in Linlithgow in order to fund an infrastructure programme beneficial to the town. MV stated that the basis of the Civic Trust Vision document was that development is inevitable. ND cautioned on the reliance on section 75 agreements which appear to be under stress in both Winchburgh and Whitecross. It was agreed that the Community Council work within a consultation framework with the Civic Trust and the Planning Forum to ensure that whilst the Community Council would make its own views known there is unlikely to be significant disagreement with the other organisations within the town. All organisations will be commenting on the Linlithgow Development Plan due to be published in October 2013.

The development and planning group will address both the day to day monitoring of planning applications and the high-level strategic issues affecting *inter alia* the forthcoming Linlithgow Development Plan. In the context of current planning applications the following decisions were taken:

- the Community Council remains opposed to the application by Scottish Canals for residential moorings adjacent to the canal basin. Some of the issues raised by the Community Council remain unaddressed by Scottish Canals and there is concern that suggested better locations within the town have been rejected.

**Action JK**

- There has been insufficient time to consider the application by Miller homes for 14 houses on East Mill Road, Linlithgow Bridge. The decision of the Community Council is that it is minded to comment on this application and will do so following its next meeting.

**Action JK**

- 6. Health & Social Provision:** a letter has been sent to the Linlithgow Group Medical Practice seeking a meeting to discuss those health service provision issues of interest to the Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge community. Other health matters reported are:
- ND advised that there is a pilot exercise involving a rapid reaction team which is sent to the home of an older person with an emergency health problem. The aim is to prevent admission to hospital.

- JT stated that he had written to the Lothian Health Board to clarify a comment made by a housing developer that St Michael's Hospital is likely to close in the medium term.
- JK advised that Blackburn Community Council had organised, and Winchburgh Community Council is organising, a public meeting to discuss the difficulties being experienced at A&E, St John's Hospital, Livingston. Some emergency cases are being diverted to ERI because of a lack of emergency medical staff at St John's. JT stated that this is a temporary situation and should not concern the Community Council. For a full explanation see note appended to these minutes.

**7. Housing:** this group will be meeting shortly.

**8. Education and Youth:** FL advised that Mr MacKenzie of Linlithgow Academy would be pleased to attend a Community Council meeting to discuss secondary education provision in Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge. It was agreed that this would be an ideal opportunity to recruit young people onto the Community Council and that JK would obtain from Lorraine McGroarty the relevant guidelines. FL had collected significant data on the current school rolls in Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge which she will circulate. ND will contact LYPP.

**9. Communications:** this group will be meeting shortly.

**10. Events:**

- **Deacon's night:** A pleasant evening but the location of the Community Council event could have been better communicated.
- **Remembrance Day Parade:** ND advised that the appropriate applications had been made to the Police, West Lothian Council and Historic Scotland. The meeting approved a budget for hospitality provision as last year. It was agreed that Longcroft Hall be booked.

**Action ND**

- **Advent Fayre:** ND has spoken to the fire commander re: coverage at the Advent Fayre. Agreed in principal; details to follow.

**Action Advent Fayre Committee**

**11. Secretary's Report:** JK's brief report was circulated. ND advised that any comment to the Licensing Board should be made via the Licensing Forum. JK made a plea for an assistant secretary.

**12. Treasurer's Report:** EC reported (in writing) a balance of £2275.41.

**13. AOCB:** It was decided that all future Community Council meetings commence at 7pm with a finishing time of 9pm.

**12. Close:** there being no other business the meeting closed at 21:00. The next meeting is on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> August 2013.

John Kelly, 26<sup>th</sup> June 2013, Minute Secretary.

## **Item 6 – St John’s Hospital**

### ***Message forwarded on behalf of the Public Partnership Forum for Health & Care***

In response to the currently circulating petition which states that “NHS Lothian are considering changes to services at the Children’s and Accident and Emergency wards at St John’s Hospital”, I would like to note that NHS Lothian are NOT “considering” such changes. The use of the word “considering” implies that the intention is for a deliberate and planned downgrade – this is not true and the language used is selective and misleading.

Currently, there is a shortage of certain specialists and this has led to contingency planning regarding future staffing arrangements; or, to put it another way, NHS Lothian have gone through a hypothetical “what shall we do if we cannot fill these places” exercise. This is responsible management by NHS Lothian and they fully intend to fill these places.

Given the highly specialised nature of health care provision, it is likely that every year or so there will be a national shortage of a specialisation. NHS Lothian will no doubt make contingency plans and this will no doubt be portrayed by some as a “planned downgrade”. As with virtually every other time these contingency plans have been made, they rarely need to be actioned, and, if they are, only briefly until recruits are found.

We should all remain vigilant to the level of services provided at St John’s and I would not wish to discourage anyone from making their opinion known to the responsible minister; however, I would suggest that there is a stark difference between the deliberate planned removal of services undertaken prior to 2007 and the hypothetical contingency planning being undertaken now.

Furthermore, please note the last item on page 4 of West Lothian Council’s most recent Weekly Planning List (dated 17-23 July 2013). Here it is noted that NHS Lothian are applying for planning permission for the “Erection of a 190 sqm extension to form MRI unit” and that this is to be located at “ST JOHNS HOSPITAL”.

This facility represents a £2.5 million investment in St John’s and is a clear demonstration of the commitment to maintain and upgrade services at St John’s.

Regards,  
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