



**Minutes of Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge Community Council Meeting
on
Tuesday 22nd August 2017 in the Burgh Halls at 19.00.**

Present: Chair Martin Crook (MC), Sue Friel (SF), Ian Kelly (IK), John Kelly (JK), CJ Lambe (CJL), Maire McCormack (MMcC), Scott Oliver (SO), Ron Smith (RS), Paula Ryans Stokes (PRS), Mike Vickers (MV), Police Scotland – Andrew Murray (AM), Councillor Tom Kerr (TK), Councillor Tom Conn (TC), Councillor David Tait (DT), Sammy Thomson (ST) & Tobin Hughes (TH) - Loudoun Productions Ltd, Craig Turnbull - Gazette and 3 members of the public.

Apologies: Pamela Barnes (PB), Fraser Falconer (FF), Fiona Low (FL), Des Martin (DM), , Police Scotland –Neill Drummond (ND),

Declarations of interest: No new declarations of interest noted

1. Minutes of Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge Community Council Meeting Tuesday 27th June 2017. TC corrected the last two bullets of item 3 namely:

- The move of the Day Care Centre to the new Partnership Centre is for the benefit of client's. Recently there has been no great interaction between the Hospital and the Day care Centre and therefore there is no detrimental effect.
- Harry Cartmill is the Executive Councillor for Health & Care

With these two corrections the minutes were proposed by RS as a true record of the meeting and seconded by PRS.

2. Actions from the June meetings. CJL reported that defibrillators are spread throughout the town but not in a 24 hour location; this to be discussed further. Other actions still relevant from the June meeting are carried forward to September.

3. Filming of a Period Feature Film in Linlithgow. ST and TH described the forthcoming filming of scenes for a period feature film. The film will be shot across a number of locations in Scotland in the next 4 months. Loudoun will be shooting in Linlithgow on two occasions, first on the 29th & 30th August and later on the 21st & 22nd of September. Whilst the proposed supermarket site on the Edinburgh Road is being used for the majority of parking, agreement to the use of a proportion of the top deck of the Vennel car park was sought for the parking of horse boxes and other vehicles. After a brief discussion it was agreed that we should facilitate commercial activities of this nature and it was unanimously decided that agreement for the use of part of the Vennel Car Park should be given. TC agreed to investigate whether the County Buildings car park might be used as additional parking during these two days.

Action TC

4. Peace Garden. MC stated that this item had been requested by a member of the public who queried to what extent the Community Council was involved. The Community Council is represented at the Town Management Group where the subject was discussed. A committee has been formed, chaired by Rev Stewart Gillan. Ideas are at an early stage but the principal of the proposal is to build a Peace Garden replacing the current Rose Garden at the Burgh Halls. Some funding for preliminary drawing work has been allocated. TK added further background stating that the idea came from St Michael's Parish Church for a Peace Garden in the manse garden but this was impractical for a number of reasons. TK stated that if the Community Council wished to send a representative to join the group then they would be welcome. RS stated that the current Rose Garden is in a deplorable condition

and maintenance is needed. There has been some concern that the Peace Garden may be taken over by wedding photographers etc. There is a planning element to the proposal as trees need to be removed. MV welcomed the idea as a community garden but added that maintenance is the issue. CJL stated that the Peace Garden could bring new life to the area. The access would have to be through the current pond which will require the existing bins to be put out of sight in a fenced compound. CJL volunteered to join the Peace Garden committee, TK will send further details.

Action TK/CJL

4. Vennel Consultation. JK introduced the item stating that following the LLBCC special meeting on 4th July the majority of actions decided upon at that meeting have been achieved with all activities being directed towards the Planning Forum Vennel Exhibition on Tuesday 29th August at the Low Port Centre between 10.30am and 6.30pm. SO has updated the LLBCC website and has produced an interactive questionnaire negating the need to use Survey Monkey. PRS has maintained an interest in the subject through Facebook postings. Paper copies of the questionnaire were put in the Library together with the West Lothian Council consultation documents. To date 193 questionnaire returns have been received accompanied by many comments from Linlithgow residents generally and also from residents of the Vennel flats. The request for a discussion of West Lothian Council Consultation Policy/Guidance at the Local Area Committee was declined. Although we have followed the “engaging communities toolkit” we do not know how our findings will be incorporated into the WLC consultation system. One of the most significant questionnaire results to date is the desire by the majority of Linlithgow residents that the specification of the Vennel redevelopment should involve the Linlithgow community and a significant number of people have given their contact details and offered to participate. The table at the Cross on Saturday 26th was reported. SF reported unease amongst residents regarding the question relating to the demolition and rebuilding of the flats adjacent to the Cross. Maintenance work is currently ongoing to repair leaks. At this point an employee of M&Co stated that there were still leaks even after four attempts to seal the building. It was reported that the survey of the building was ongoing. The question was raised as to the time when anticipated maintenance work reaches a point when it is no longer economically viable to retain the building. JK said that a full structural survey was important as the building was designed under a code of practice BSCP114:1969 which has subsequently been found to be inadequate specifically with regard to resisting corrosion. A member of LCDT gave an example of a partnership arrangement between Edinburgh City Council and residents which was proved to be very successful. It was stated that we need to be very clear as to what we as the community wanted from the Vennel.

5. Communication & Community Engagement. JK stated that there are 3 elements to Community Council engagement:

- Communication with West Lothian Council
- Communication between members of the Community Council
- Communication with the Community we represent

MC ran through the media where we have good exposure citing; the Gazette, Facebook and invitations to our meetings - attendance at meetings has risen significantly in recent months. However, many people are not aware of the Community Council or what it does.

SO posed the question “how do we best represent our community?” and went on to say that the Community Council is the only organisation which deals with the whole town and as such should be seen to be the source of trusted information. Posts on Facebook and Twitter should link to our website; interested people being directed to the appropriate point which could include such information as how to complain. We need to promote our website as the primary source of trusted information. AM suggested that we should be pointing forwards all of the time and three days before a particular event really push it on Facebook. MV reminded the meeting that the Community Council was the lowest level of democratic representation, although we currently have very little power/opportunity to have topics addressed by the next tier of representation. It was suggested that we should be putting more blogs on to our website and linking them to the Linlithgow Facebook page. IK stated that we should be advertising our successes such as the Council house building programme at Mill Road. TK said that we need a higher profile generally and TC suggested that we should have a notice in the Burgh Halls stating when the Community Council meets.

Action JK

RS stated that we need to be more grassroots; channels do exist in terms of working with other groups at all levels. TK said that it is important that the Community Council is seen to be leading consultations and subgroups of the Community Council should not assume a profile which is higher than the Community Council itself. All outcomes of consultations should clearly go out in the Community Council's name.

Note: the above is a draft manifesto for the Communications Group

Action Comms Group

6. Police Report. AM reported that "Party in the Palace" went smoothly, commenting that the weekend was no busier than any other Saturday or Sunday night. There were no other urgent matters.

7. Planning Report. There was a short discussion on the proposal to "extend" West port house. It was agreed that the Community Council should object to this application on the basis that it should not be a householder application but rather be a full application for the construction of a house. Further as the house was abutting the High Street it should be designed and finished in a manner conducive to its neighbours.

Action JK

8. AOB

Two points were raised:

- Thanks were extended on behalf of the residents of the Vennel Flats for the BBQ. This and the subsequent visits gave a quantity of helpful comment with regard to the Vennel development.
- LCDT is investigating the practical factors involved in gaining heat from the Loch which as well as heating homes may help with water quality.

9. Next meeting. Tuesday 26th September at 7.30pm in the Burgh Halls.

Meeting closed 21.06

John Kelly
Secretary
28th August 2017