



**Minutes of Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge Community Council Meeting on
Tuesday 24th January 2017 in the Burgh Halls at 7.30pm.**

Present: Chair John Kelly (JK), Pamela Barnes (PB), Fraser Falconer (FF), Maire McCormack (MM), Des Martin (DM), Scott Oliver (SO), Ron Smith (RS) Councillor Tom Conn (TC), Councillor Tom Kerr (TK), Councillor David Tait (DT), Police Scotland – Andrew Murray (AM) and Neil Drummond (ND), Craig Turnbull - Gazette and 1 member of the public.

Apologies: Martin Crook (MC), Ian Kelly (IK), Fiona Low (FL), Mike Vickers (MV)

Declarations of interest: no new declarations of interest noted.

(1) Minutes of previous meeting on Tuesday 13th December 2016. These were approved with one correction - Weekly Planning List 0537/FUL/16 planning permission not yet approved.

(2) Actions from previous meetings not covered elsewhere on the agenda

Ref:	Action and By whom	Current status
1602/02	Town Coat of Arms	The Cost of Arms has been received. Arrangements for the formal handing over of the Arms have yet to be made. Item carried forward to February meeting.

(3) Matters arising from the previous minutes - item 4 Air Quality Management Area: PB has not been invited to join the steering group as official procedure requires that the steering group is comprised of professionally relevant West Lothian Council officers. However, PB will attend a meeting with Paul Couper on Thursday 26th January and report back. PB has set up a blog on the LCDT website which has generated:

- 8 ideas for road infrastructure improvements
- 18 ideas for general improvements to the High St
- 11 ideas for High St improvements to assist pedestrians/cyclists
- 10 ideas for managing parking
- 19 ideas for cleaner modes of transport
- 4 ideas for behaviour change

PB advocated the use of the Facebook page and noted the BID survey which was also feeding in. TC confirmed that it is not too late to submit further ideas. **Action PB**

(4) Spotlight Sessions

4a. Communication & Recruitment Plan for 2017. The two separate items on the agenda merged into a single discussion which focused on reaching out and getting more people involved. In the context of the former the Black Bitch and the Linlithgow Gazette were noted. TK drew attention to the fact that after a long absence a journalist (Craig Turnbull) was attending Community Council meetings. SO described the opportunities for the website, the Facebook page and Twitter; the latter are set up but have not gone live. At present the Communications Group comprises only SO. Clarification of membership of the groups is required. JK noted that SO is the only member from Linlithgow Bridge and more members should be sought from this community. TK said that the best method of recruitment is by personal contact.

Community involvement was given a boost as the Community Empowerment Act and the proposed changes to Planning Legislation will empower community bodies through the ownership or control of land and buildings, and by strengthening their voices in decisions about public services. Part 5 of the Community Empowerment Act which provides community bodies with a right to request to purchase, lease, manage or use land and buildings

belonging to local authorities and public bodies came into force on 23rd January 2017. The actions arising from this discussion are:

- Membership of the various groups to be circulated and at the same time a request made for additional members to the groups particularly Communications. **Action JK**
- It is proposed that the March meeting of the Community Council be held in Linlithgow Bridge. JK to investigate a venue. **Action JK**
- Murdo Kennedy to be contacted to confirm that it is in order to recruit via the Linlithgow Facebook page. **Action JK**

4b. **Pedal for Scotland.** Dates for a meeting in February have been proposed. Attendees to be confirmed. MC to email an update report. **Action MC**

(5) Working Group Updates

- **LCDT** - PB reported that LCDT is keen to understand/monitor/facilitate communication between groups within Linlithgow as part of its future programme. It also wishes to reach out to groups. There is to be a volunteering in the Community summit in March. A Community Enterprise Flyer is to be published at the end of March.
- **Planning** – JK referred to the previously circulated planning report and highlighted the following points:
 - **Weekly Planning List**
 - 0537/FUL/16 (previously 0043/FUL/16) Erection of 32 houses and associated access road at land adjacent Willowdean, Bridgend. There appears to be a move in favour of granting planning permission provided construction is restricted to 3 per year until such time as secondary education capacity at Linlithgow Academy is resolved. This appears to contradict the decision to refuse the conversion of the existing Procurator Fiscal's office on the High St into 6 flats (on the basis that the educational product would negatively impact Linlithgow Academy).
 - 0791/MS/16 Erection of 6 five bedroom houses at GM Carpets, Falkirk Road. To be decided; previously granted in principle 0502/P/14.
 - 0739/P/16 Application for a further development at Willowdean, Bridgend for one bedroom bungalows has been approved.
 - **Winchburgh Academy:**
 - JK summarised the position with regard to planning and education as outlined in the planning report circulated prior to the meeting. Three primary points were addressed.
 - No development can take place in Linlithgow until the Winchburgh Academy situation is resolved. It appears that development in Winchburgh is likely to stall at or about the occupation of the 550th occupied house. It was noted that planning permission has been given for 580 dwellings.
 - An application has been made by a developer for £8.87m to fund infrastructure to facilitate the development of 481 houses and 69 flats at Westfield. Westfield is in the Linlithgow Academy catchment area. The identity of the owner of the site and indeed the identity of the developer (Edmonstone Homes becoming bankrupt in 2016), is not known. TK stated that the identity of the owner/developer is not important, what is important is that the site has planning permission and that the impact on Linlithgow Academy has been accounted for.
 - West Lothian Council has entered into contract for the construction of West Calder High School at a cost of £32m; presumably to replace the existing school constructed in 1965. This school is 67% funded through the Scotland's Schools for the Future programme managed by Scottish Futures Trust. This funding is not available for new schools in new developments.
 - The ensuing discussion raised a number of points:

- Are the children of Linlithgow residents guaranteed a place at Linlithgow Academy, specifically the children who attended St Josephs? TK said that this was a question which was repeatedly asked and although West Lothian Council aims to provide enough places for all children in the catchment area at a catchment school, living within a catchment area does not guarantee a child a place at a catchment school. However, to date no child of a Linlithgow resident has been denied a place at Linlithgow Academy.
 - How many houses have been built and occupied as a part of the Winchburgh development? TK quoting Craig McCorrison, reported 340 houses occupied. JK thought this figure low taking account of the total number of houses sold. TC will investigate further based on the number of new households paying council tax.
- Action TC**
- How many pupils travel from Winchburgh to Linlithgow Academy each day? This number is not known.
 - RS asked if the Winchburgh development stalls for the lack of Winchburgh Academy and no development is permitted in Linlithgow, how then will West Lothian Council deliver the houses promised by the Local Development Plan? There was no answer to this question.
- It was suggested that Craig McCorrison be invited to the February meeting to address the issues discussed above.

(5) Police Scotland Update – ND gave a brief summary of police activity over the past month. There was a serious assault in the Linlithgow Rugby Club car park; a person is being held in connection with the armed robbery of the Post Office; theft of car keys followed by theft of the car is still a problem. There have been no further complaints regarding youths gathering behind the Victoria Hall.

(7) Any Other Business and questions from the floor - the following points were raised.

- George Adam asked if the Community Council would respond to the current Scottish Government planning consultation. JK stated that this would be considered by the Planning Forum and reported to the February meeting of the Community Council. Minutes of the last Planning Forum meeting are held on www.llbcc.org.uk
- There was no other business or questions from the floor.

Meeting closed at 8.50 pm.

John Kelly
31st January 2017