



**Minutes of Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge Community Council Meeting – Draft
- V2**

Tuesday 16th December 2014 held in the Burgh Halls

Present: Chair John Kelly (JK) Lyn Aitken (LA) Martin Crook (MC) Brenda Galloway (BG) Fiona Low (FL), Lesley Malone (LM) Ron Smith (RS) David Tait (DT) Verena Throp (VT) Mike Vickers (MV)

Apologies: Aileen Boyle (AB) Gill Fawcett (GF) Ian Kelly (IK) Bruce McCallum (BM), Debbie Day (DD), Councillors Tom Conn Tom Kerr and Martyn Day Police Scotland- Peter Robertson.

MV proposed LM as a co-opted member of the Council, RS seconded. This was passed unanimously.

1. **Minutes of previous meeting:** The minutes of the meeting of 25th November, previously circulated were corrected to attend to two matters.
 - VT explained that ANET should read ANNIT. JK advised that West Lothian Council had sent the letter mentioned in the second last line of page two on 10th October. Once corrected MV proposed the minutes and DT seconded.
 - There were no matters arising from the minutes. Updates of actions are provided in the appropriate reports.
2. Operational matters.
 - **Interim Chair and Data Control.** After discussion it was unanimously agreed that BM be requested to continue as Chair meantime, and AB absorb the task of Data Controller into her role as Secretary.
 - **Guidelines specifically for LLBCC.** JK stated that all that is officially required by West Lothian Council at present is that Minutes of Meetings are submitted within 14 days of the meeting, and accounts are audited and submitted annually. Guidelines are unclear on procedures for LLBCC, so it was agreed to form a sub committee comprising MV as Chair, with JK and MC as members to begin work on a framework for these. This is intended to be a work in progress to be improved and amended over a period of a year. It will clarify matters such as autonomy of the working groups, and whether members of the public are allowed to attend. MV emphasised that this was important, particularly if we wished other people to be involved in the groups. JK stated that it would also be good to involve others in the planning of the Advent Fayre. MV stated that it would be good to improve the visibility of the Community Council. DT suggested that they could work from the Black Bitch article which had set out the Council's responsibilities.
 - **The proposal to move to the Low Port.** After a lively discussion in which DT suggested using the Star & Garter café for meeting in order to make the Council more visible. BG inquired regarding the acoustics there. DT is to investigate. BG suggested moving to the Low Port in January, and the Star & Garter in February as a trial. It was agreed to hold the next LLBCC meeting at the Low Port lounge, and DT is to approach the Star & Garter Hotel. The Councillors and Police will need to be advised of the change.
3. Updates from Working Groups.

- **Events.** JK submitted his written report regarding the Advent Fayre. In addition he explained that West Lothian Council meets the cost of the Fayre. There were 200 more torches this year and 750 were distributed. LM stated that the glow-sticks ran out. JK advised that he felt that there was a need to specify the LLBCC's responsibilities for the Advent Fayre. The Bucket collection was £448.70 for local children's charity. JK wished to split this into 3 x £150 and advertise in the local press for suitable applicants to apply to LLBCC to receive the money. BG suggested dividing the money between the Army Cadets and Sea Scouts, as both organisations had helped at the Fayre. This was unanimously agreed, with the proviso that there would need to be a statement of what the money was spent on provided by these organisations to account properly for this.
- **Communications.** DT introduced his paper which explained that the *raison d'être* of the LLBCC is in fact to consult with the Community and ascertain its views. Its principal role is to represent these views after gathering them. Until now the LLBCC has raised its profile and reported on what it's doing in the Black Bitch magazine. We need to test public opinion. People have criticised the Council for being undemocratic and unrepresentative. FL stated that we are trying hard to be representative. DT has the contact through the response in the magazine but few use it. Individual special focus meetings such as planning aren't adequate. There needs to be a process for feedback. RS commented that the LLBCC has done a lot, and mentioned the Planning and Health Consultations. There was a feeling that the town was fed up with general comment. DT wants something that give quick feedback. A public meeting takes a lot of organisation.. There needs to be a means of instant feedback. LLBCC needs to be rejigged with a broader democratic process. With the Community Empowerment Bill coming, there needs to be more power given to communities. The new Minister (Marco Biagi MSP) has ideas for this. LM asked if we were looking for LLBCC to be more pro-active in going out to the community? DT mentioned Councillors and MPs surgeries and wanted to get something better to give LLBCC credibility. According to the West Lothian Scheme for community councils the views of the community is paramount. This is quite an onerous responsibility. Is this what we want to do? We need to show that we are collecting information, acting on it, and use it. One suggestion of how to do this is on-line. We want operational procedures. JK mentioned a big-screen TV to scroll through what's happening. LM asked about the possibilities of Tweeting. She was informed that this could be used to bring surveys to people's attention. JK suggested applying for a special project grant of £750 from West Lothian Council specifically for communications. DT is to set up a pilot and apply for the grant with MV.
- **Planning & Development.** JK referred to his written report. He had received a reply from the Appeals office regarding the Clarendon Farm appeal regarding Education. The position is the same as the Burghmuir application and depends on what happens in Winchburgh. It depends on when Winchburgh Academy is going to be built. The developer at Winchburgh can't sell more land to the builders until there's a commitment to build the Academy. West Lothian Council might allow the plots to carry on beyond 550 and still send the children to Linlithgow. All the first 550 plots are sold. The Planning Forum has sent the Main Issues Report to various parties.
- **Health & Social Provision.** VT attended the Partnership meeting. There was a presentation by Alan Bell on Lothian Region Strategy. Ian Buchanan Chair of CHCP stated that there was a Board meeting regarding Linlithgow GPs. LA explained that this referred to Dr Cochrane's retirement in April 2015 when Linlithgow Group

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Practice would take over Dr Cochrane's patients. This would add 4 rooms to the space available in the practice. VT referred to her report on the Public Consultation which is now in its third draft form. There will be a concise report for the general public and an Addendum Report for Health professionals touching on all the details. The report will go out in the New Year with agreement obtained from LLBCC.

- **Social Housing** – No report, but reference was made to an article in the Linlithgow Gazette last week which failed to include any mention of new provision for Council Housing in the town in an article regarding West Lothian Council new build programme for Council Houses.
 - **Youth facilities, youth groups and education.** FL had a meeting with the deputy head of the Academy, and the new link teacher. They wish 6th years to have more work experience with local businesses. The vulnerable group also requires work experience. FL is to work on this. They also wished her to speak to the whole school. LM offered to help. DT will help with the business connections along with Stewart Ness. FL was impressed with the Army Cadets programme and wants them more involved with the school.
4. Reports. None from the Chair. The Treasurer's report has been circulated to all members. No Police were in attendance. No Councillors were in attendance. Secretary's report LA asked where Mill Lane was. She was informed that it was at the Industrial Estate at Linlithgow Bridge.

WLACC. MV explained that at the AGM of the association the current Chair Alan Wright who had been the Chair for 4 years stood down. No one else was prepared to take on the role. If there is no Chair the committee falls. Subsequent to this West Lothian Council put out e-mails and MV & DT responded. What value do Community Councils put on the WLACC and should it continue? MV is of the view that it should continue with more commitment as only a few community councils attend. He would like to see West Lothian Council taking on the Chair. DT WLACC is the link in the upward chain to the Community Planning Partnership and the West Lothian Council. If there is no WLACC there is nowhere else for LLBCC to go in order to contribute to WLC. JK stated that there needs to be more support for WLACC and a full time secretariat then communication would be better. MV said that WLACC didn't have minutes. The forum is vital for Community Councils to communicate to WLC and WLC to communicate to them. Only 8 Community Councils have ever attended its meetings. MV's recommendation is that the Chair of the Planning Partnership should chair the WLACC and then it becomes a real communication focus.

AOB none.

Close of meeting 9.16pm

17th December 2014

Brenda Galloway Minute Secretary.

For information: Dates of meetings in 2015

2015

27 January	28 th April (& AGM)	No meeting in July	27 th October
24 th February	26 th May	25 th August	24 th November
24 th March	23 rd June	22 nd September	15 th December