



**Minutes of Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge Community Council Meeting
on
Tuesday 27th February 2018 in the Burgh Halls at 19.00.**

Present: Chair Martin Crook (MC), Ian Kelly (IK), John Kelly (JK), Des Martin (DM), Fraser Falconer (FF), Gordon Smith (GS), Councillor Tom Kerr (TK) Councillor Tom Conn (TC), Councillor David Tait (DT), Police Scotland – Andrew Murray (AM) and 3 members of the public.

Apologies: Pamela Barnes (PB), Sue Friel (SF), CJ Lambe (CJL), Fiona Low (FL), Maire McCormack (MMcC), Tony Harry (AH), Scott Oliver (SO), Katherine Orr (KO), Mukami McCrum (MMcCrum), Ron Smith (RS), Mike Vickers (MV), Paula Ryans Stokes (PRS), and 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 23rd January. The minutes were proposed by FF and seconded by DM and accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

2. Matters arising from January meeting.

Item 2 - 6biii	Vennel & Winchburgh	Craig McCorriston (CMcC) replied: (i) Vennel – CMcC is meeting with Finance & Estates to discuss will keep us informed. (ii) Winchburgh – CMcC states still intention to open Winchburgh Academy Aug 2022. No development in Linlithgow until after that date.
Item 2 - 8	Environment PDSP	DT has forwarded JK email to Karen Marshall – reply received Jim Jack states that the presentation at the PDSP was a “ <i>means of illustrating that several councils are able to deliver better recycling performance than ourselves with less Community Recycling Centres (CRC’s). That is still the case whether Falkirk have one or two CRC sites. That said I fully appreciate that my error could be misconstrued or interpreted beyond what it was; an error on my part...the closures of 3 CRC sites would be removed from the proposals and officers instructed to develop an alternative proposal for savings in this area.</i> ”
Item 2 - 9	Consultation policy	Email sent to Graham Hope – reply from Callachan Morgan 30 th January – circulated.
Item 2 - 10	Housing	Awaiting meeting of Housing Group
Item 3 bi	Canal moorings	Objection letter sent
Item 3 biii	Letter from minister	Circulated

All matters arising, awaiting replies from council officers or ministers have been concluded.

3. Reports:

- a. **Police:** AM reported that travellers have occupied a site near Philpstoun having arrived on Friday, 23 February. The site is exposed to the East and with the impending deteriorating weather it is anticipated that they will be seeking a more comfortable site with power and water and it is understood that they have been looking at a site at Mill Road industrial estate. They will be evicted but it takes time through the court process. There have been a number of break-ins on the periphery of the town with jewellery and cars being stolen. The break-ins have occurred in property where the owner is on holiday. AM is concerned that intelligence is freely circulating regarding people on holiday principally through social media. Thieves using white vans attempting to deliver parcels gather further intelligence from neighbours. As a result of the West Lothian Council decision to eliminate the community policing budget AM confirmed that the school link programme and the community action team programme will be terminated. Changes to community policing will be reported in May. In answer to a question from GS, AM reported that he was not aware of any changes to the Special Constabulary.
- b. **Secretary:**
- (i) Linlithgow Loch Strategic Management Group Meeting 14th June 2018. GS will attend JK to send details. **Action JK/GS**
 - (ii) Linlithgow Public Toilets close permanently on Wednesday 28th February 2018 to save £66,000 per annum. Councillors agreed on 29th January 2015 that the closure of The Vennel toilets in Linlithgow will not take place until after the opening of the new facilities at Linlithgow Partnership Centre. The Community Council noted the lack of local consultation, no option appraisal and no report to Local Area Committee. It was pointed out that if Linlithgow's aim is to be an attractive destination for tourists (especially those arriving by coach from *inter alia* cruise ships) then there has to be adequate high-quality toilet provision as that previously provided in the Vennel. TC stated that toilet provision in the town was adequate when the temporary toilets for the Gala Day and Pedal for Scotland and the provision by public houses for the Marches were factored in. TC stated that new signage would direct people to the toilets in the Burgh Halls and the Partnership Centre. TC stated that the once per day cleaning of the toilets in the Partnership Centre would be increased if that was found necessary. The supervised Vennel toilets were open each day from 9.30am to 5.30pm. The Burgh Hall toilets are available Monday to Saturday 9am to 5pm and Sunday 11am to 5pm. The Partnership Centre toilets are available Monday and Friday 9am to 5pm, Tuesday and Thursday 9am to 7pm, Wednesday 9am to 3pm and Saturday 9am to 1pm. A single auto toilet cabin is open 24/7. MC pointed out that in two separate surveys 97% and 92% respectively wished to make the town more attractive to visitors with a visitor centre with toilets as a part of the Vennel redevelopment.
 - (iii) Partnership Centre security risks. TK stated that areas with high value collections would always be supervised when open.
 - (iv) The West Lothian Council Facebook page was praised but a request that items affecting Linlithgow be shared on the Linlithgow Facebook page.
 - (v) Noted that recent TTRO's are lacking detail.
- c. **Planning:**
- (i) Disabled Ramp at Linlithgow Post Office: A meeting was held on Monday 19th February attended by post office manager, DT, MC, JK and four WLC officers. The option of an internal ramp was dismissed. Various options for an external ramp were discussed. TC suggested a raised pavement for the whole block of 3 shops. FF stated that the Post Office is a public service and its application should be seen in that light. The Post Office will submit a planning application to start the process. The report circulated by MMCC was discussed.
 - (ii) Templars Court. A meeting took place on 1st February attended by two representatives of McCarthy and Stone, the 3 Councillors and members of the Planning Forum. McCarthy and Stone's preferred option is to stabilise, then metal clad or render the exposed gable and provide a garden to be adopted by WLC. The McCarthy and Stone representatives did not wish to discuss

any technical solutions resulting in the completion of the consented building. TK advised the Community Council to seek clarification on whether a decision has been made at board level to abandon the development. TK said that the Community Council should consider an acceptable solution to avoid an uncompleted gap site. West Lothian Council has no power to require McCarthy and Stone to complete the development in line with the planning consent. TK said that the planning consent should have required McCarthy and Stone to complete the frontage building first.

(iii) Clarendon Farm 0057/P/18. It was agreed that the letter of objection circulated as a draft be sent to West Lothian Council. **Action JK**

(iv) All other planning issues were reported in the written planning report.

d. **Treasurer:** IK reported no change in the written report agreed at the January Community Council meeting.

e. **Chairman:** MC referred to the previously circulated written report of the "Away Day" on Tuesday 13th April highlighting the following:

(i) Responsibilities and Liabilities – note to request that everyone is familiar with the four documents referred to.

(ii) Process - we need to be more aware of the process of consultation which includes the submission of a petition. We possibly missed an opportunity by not speaking at the council meeting that voted on the budget proposals. On the plus side of the consultation we did raise awareness within a short time scale and we did do what the 2015 scheme for the establishment of Community Councils in West Lothian expected us to do. Would we do it the same way again, forwarding residents comments to our elected representatives -- probably yes. Was it appropriate to focus on three single issue topics -- probably yes. Our engagement equivalent to a response from one third of the households in Linlithgow was considerably better than the West Lothian Council 4% response rate.

(iii) Conclusions -- we need to raise visibility by having a short bio and photograph of each Community Council member. We need to do more in terms of articles for the Gazette. We need a plan for responding to consultations quickly. West Lothian Council's Corporate Plan 2018/19 to 2022/23 states that the Council will be "engaging the community in the decision-making processes of the Council, through a range of open and targeted forums". We need to position ourselves ready.

(iv) Actions:

- a. there is a perception that we have difficulty in making presentations to the Local Area Committee, the last two requests to speak at the LAC have been refused. TC wish to correct this perception stating "it is easy to raise issues" as illustrated by the recent presentation by residents of Strawberry Bank.
- b. There is a need for a second "away day" to focus.
- c. We need to engage with community councils who have had success with participatory funding and set up a participatory funding subcommittee.
- d. the list of priorities was discussed.

4. Draft Air Quality Action Plan consultation: A draft Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) has now been drafted and will be subject to public consultation. The public consultation will run from 7 February 2018 - 4 April 2018. West Lothian Council is seeking views on the draft AQAP and the proposed measures to reduce air pollution. An Air Quality subgroup is required.

It was decided to share the West Lothian Community Facebook page.

Action PRS/SO

6. AOB.

a. Potholes. Comment on the number of potholes at present. TK will investigate the particularly bad pothole at Park Farm. **Action TK**

b. FF reported that LCDT is a member of the Scottish Towns Partnership. Other Community Councils e.g. North Berwick CC, are addressing similar problems to our own. Maybe worth having a discussion to exchange ideas and learn from others.

c. A report is sought from Transition Linlithgow regarding Climate Challenge funding. **Action SF**

- d. MC showed the framed copy of the Coat of Arms and suggested that it should be displayed in the Burgh Halls. As it was the year of youth it would be appropriate to give a copy to each school. Further copies should be offered to the Museum and the Provost. TK requested an electronic copy; TK will arrange printing and framing. **Action JK**
- e. Vennel flats. A member of the public brought to the attention of the Community Council that there are 3 empty flats at the Vennel. One has been vacant for 16 months.

7. Next meeting. Tuesday 27th March at 7.00pm in the Burgh Halls.

Meeting closed 21.06

John Kelly
Secretary
5th March 2018