



**Minutes of Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge Community Council AGM
on
Tuesday 24th April 2018 in the Burgh Halls at 19.30.**

Present: Chair Des Martin (DM), Pamela Barnes (PB), Sue Friel (SF), Ian Kelly (IK), John Kelly (JK), CJ Lambe (CJL), Maire McCormack (MMcC), Katherine Orr (KO), Paula Ryans Stokes (PRS), Gordon Smith (GS), Ron Smith (RS), Mike Vickers (MV), Provost Tom Kerr (TK), Councillor David Tait (DT), Derek Halden (DH) and 5 members of the public.

Apologies: Martin Crook (MC), Councillor Tom Conn (TC), Fraser Falconer (FF), Scott Oliver (SO), Mukami McCrum (MMcCrum), Police Scotland– Andrew Murray (AM) & Neill Drummond (ND).

Declarations of interest: IK is an employee of Philip Bald, the confirmed examiner of the LLBCC accounts. IK advised that West Lothian Council was aware of the position and accepted that IK is a qualified accountant and are comfortable that, although he is employed by Philip Bald, the accounts are examined by a suitably qualified person who is not connected to the Community Council.

Minutes of Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge Community Council Annual General Meeting Tuesday 24th April 2017. MV proposed acceptance and RS seconded the proposal.

Chairman's Report. JK presented the report on behalf of MC. JK referred everyone to the written report previously circulated. JK stated that 2017 -18 could be considered the year of community consultation. The year began with the discussion prompted by a paper to West Lothian Council Development and Transport Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel which proposed a project for the sale of several properties in and around the Vennel which were surplus to requirements upon the opening of the new Partnership Centre at County buildings. During the remainder of 2017 an extensive programme of community consultation was undertaken including a BBQ for Vennel residents. An exhibition of what the Vennel might look like and an extensive on-line and paper-based questionnaire undertaken. A decision on the Vennel by West Lothian Council is awaited.

The second big consultation began in October 2017. Entitled "Transforming Your Council" the consultation drew focus from the potential curtailment of the local bus service and the potential closure of the recycling centre which drew extensive comment, (one in three households commented). The cuts to instrumental music also figured highly in the community debate, a debate which continues. On Tuesday, 13th February West Lothian Council decided on the budget.

The other consultations of note were the air quality action plan consultation and the Edinburgh airport proposed new flightpath consultation. A decision on the latter has been delayed by the CAA awaiting further information from Edinburgh airport.

In June we were involved in a debate on the future of St Michael's hospital. Thankfully the future of St Michaels Hospital seems secure with the recruitment of several permanent staff.

A discussion of the future of the West Lothian Association of Community Councils resulted in a proposal from Linlithgow & Linlithgow Bridge Community Council to relaunch the Association in the form of a biannual conference. The inaugural conference will take place on Friday, 27th April in Livingston under the title of the Joint Forum of West Lothian Community Councils.

In August 2017 there were extensive discussions on the proposal to replace the rose garden with a peace garden. In general, the proposal was welcomed as the peace garden could bring new life to the area notwithstanding the fact that several trees need to be removed. This debate of course continues with the submission of the planning application.

The September 2017 meeting gave extensive feedback on the Pedal for Scotland event. The feedback was to be given at a meeting on 24th of October but the Community Council was unable to elicit an invitation from the organisers to the feedback meeting. One officer of West Lothian Council attended the meeting to give the views of all West Lothian communities. 200 people signed an online petition objecting to the sale of Annet house and this too was raised at the September meeting.

The Remembrance Sunday parade remains the only event run solely by the Community Council and passed off well in November. Community Council support the Advent Fayre but are no longer the prime organisers of the event. The Advent Fayre too was a great success.

Planning of course takes up considerable Community Council time mostly through the Planning Forum. The consultation on the Planning Bill is complete and the Bill should be passed by Parliament before the summer recess. The Linlithgow Plan for the Future was applauded as a fine example of a Community Place Plan by the Minister. The Local Development Plan has been reported on and now only awaits ministerial approval which is expected imminently. The Victoria Hall, Templars Court, The Vennel, the Post Office access ramp, Clarendon Farm Development are some of the many projects discussed and reported on.

Discussion on the Chairman's report – The topic of the Peace Garden raised a question over the accuracy of the reported statement in relation to the removal of trees being discussed at the August meeting. JK referred everyone to the meeting minutes of the August meeting which stated “...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 of 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.” The minutes were accepted as a true record at the September meeting; the only relevant matter arising was that CJL was to be invited to subsequent meetings but never received an invitation.

Treasurer's Report – IK presented the accounts which had been circulated prior to the meeting. IK highlighted the cost of the Remembrance Sunday parade which remains the Community Council's item of highest expenditure. There were several one-off costs associated with Town Coat of Arms and the upgrade of the Community Council's IT provision. The accounts show an acceptable deficit this year of £189.05 which can be accommodated from the surplus from last year. The Chair asked for a proposer for the accounts to be forwarded for examination. RS proposed and SF seconded.

Election of Office Bearers - at this point all office bearers resigned and Provost Tom Kerr took the chair. The following election of office bearers took place:

Chair; JK nominated Martin Crook, seconded by DM.

Vice Chair; GS nominated Des Martin, seconded by IK.

Secretary; MV nominated John Kelly, seconded by GS.

Treasurer; MV nominated Ian Kelly, seconded by DM

There being no other nominations those nominated were duly elected.

Planning Secretary; SF nominated Ron Smith seconded by PRS and MV nominated John Kelly, seconded by DM TK asked RS if he was willing to accept the nomination and RS declined. TK asked JK if he was willing to accept the nomination and JK accepted. JK was duly elected to the position of Planning Secretary.

Provost Tom Kerr handed over the chair to DM.

Date of next AGM and meeting dates. The date of the next AGM was confirmed as 23rd April 2018 and the meeting dates for the remainder of 2018 and the whole of 2019 were confirmed as those listed on the agenda notice. Dates of all meetings are on the website.

The AGM closed at 19.50

John Kelly
Secretary
26th April 2018