



**Minutes of Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge Community Council Meeting  
on  
Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2019 in the Burgh Halls at 19.30.**

**Present:** Chair Gordon Smith (GS), Sue Friel (SF), Fraser Falconer (FF), Joyce Hartley (JH), John Kelly (JK), Des Martin (DM), Ron Smith (RS), Mike Vickers (MV), Provost Tom Kerr (TK), Councillor David Tait (DT), and 10 members of the public.

**Apologies:** Pamela Barnes (PB), Martin Crook (MC), Ian Kelly (IK), Maire McCormack (MMcC), Paula Ryans Stokes (PRS), Councillor Tom Conn (TC), Scott Oliver (SO), Mukami McCrum (MMcCrum), Police Scotland– Andrew Murray (AM) & Neil Hunter (NH).

**Declarations of interest:** No new declarations of interest noted

**1. Minutes of Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge Community Council Meeting Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2019.** The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting proposed by SF and seconded by MV.

**2. Matters arising.**

3d	Decriminalisation of parking & yellow lines	An agenda item on next Local Area Committee in respect of this matter is not possible as the subject is under active consideration of the appropriate Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel.
4	Lady Park Path	Referred for 1 or 2 planning cycles at request of officers. A letter has been sent to the Secretary of the Lady Park Trust enclosing a copy of a letter of objection sent to West Lothian Council.
M3	Pedal for Scotland	Email from John Alexander, Head of Ambulance Services, Scotland – has never suggested they would not have the ability to reach an accident on the Beecraigs route. However, there are some issues relating to the route which should be discussed with the traffic management company appointed by Pedal for Scotland.
M4b	Housing	Meeting held 25 <sup>th</sup> April. Notes of meeting to be circulated.

**3. Beecraigs**

JK spoke to the paper circulated with the agenda and highlighted the fact that Beecraigs does fall within the Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge Community Council area. Considering the Forest Plan 2013-34 and the number of projects planned for Beecraigs Country Park, JK suggested a stronger

linkage with Beecraigs. GS suggested a small group biannual meeting with the staff at Beecraigs. JK proposed that initially we invite Tracey Smith, the Ranger, to make a 10 to 15 minute presentation of the future plans for Beecraigs at a Community Council meeting. This was agreed. **Action JK.**

#### **4. Strengthening Community Councils**

MV introduced the paper circulated with the agenda which summarised the consultation undertaken with Community Councils across Scotland. MV stated that the conclusions of the summary report entitled “Strengthening Community Councils” largely aligned with concerns that were expressed in the Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge Community Council response to the consultation, specifically:

- a. the concern that Community Councils are powerless with limited local authority encouragement and yet in principle are responsible for voicing the concerns of their communities.
- b. 90% of the respondents considered that Community Councils should have an automatic seat at the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) meetings and be able to contribute at local authority council meetings.

MV stated that in the context of public service governance those local authorities responding to the consultation implied that they have local matters under control. Yet in West Lothian actions of the Community Council such as the Vennel option appraisal study and the Linlithgow: a Plan for the Future study have not elicited an adequate response from West Lothian Council.

From a Scottish Government perspective, the report is “work in progress” and any resultant legislative action is not expected to happen quickly. In responding to the question “is progress adequate at present based upon the available statistics?” MV stated that government action such as the Community Empowerment Bill is an indication of the wish to empower community councils. During further discussion it was agreed that a first step would be to improve the current system specifically by representation on the Local Area Committee. MV proposed that a small group formulate a response to “Strengthening Community Councils”. This was agreed. **Action MV.**

#### **5. Linlithgow and District Community Day Care Centre**

GS stated that he had received correspondence from concerned relatives/carers of clients of the day care centre who have received letters and invoices from West Lothian Council indicating annual sums to be paid in respect of continued attendance at the Day Care Centre. These invoices were in some cases for several hundred pounds. In response to further enquiries TC wrote to GS explaining the system for ascertaining the charges. This included a telephone call to clients some of whom are severely mentally and physically disabled.

Norman Cummings (NC), Karen Wright (KW) and Rosina Johnstone (RJ) from the Linlithgow and District Community Day Care Centre made a short presentation. There was clearly concern over the new West Lothian policy on support for the day care centre. In some respects, there is a sound funding basis and negotiations are complete regarding the new partnership centre. NC was concerned that the Community Council had raised the issue of funding in a public forum. KW said that she had been with the day care centre for 20 years, the last 7 as manager. At its inception the

day care centre was a social gathering of elderly people who were referred to the day care centre by local GPs. The centre was in receipt of a council grant. Later specific training became a requirement of the care Inspectorate adding to costs. There were five charitable day care centres in West Lothian each a federation member of Optima , (Answer House, Whitburn; Acredale House, Bathgate; Braid House, Livingston; the Rosebery Centre, Livingston and Linlithgow and District Community Day Care Centre). More recently the day care centre has signed a service level agreement with West Lothian Council and received funding based on a per client per day basis. New contributions policy came into effect on 1 April 2019. The day care centre is not suitable for all clients, the assessment of suitability is undertaken by West Lothian Council who determines who should attend. The service provision is more about care than social interaction. Six attendees have stated that they can no longer afford to attend the day care centre.

In response GS stated that the formula method of assessment seemed cumbersome, staff intensive and expensive. The bills are sent to clients who do not understand them and so tend to ignore them. It was recommended that under the current system all clients should have a sponsor or welfare guardian who are there to receive specifically Council correspondence and telephone calls.

There was no specific action arising out of this item.

## 6. Standing Reports.

- a. **Chair:** GS reported that a meeting of the peace garden committee had progressed to the bid process for the appointment of a landscape architect. Once the landscape architect is appointed and schemes are available, they will be consulted on before the end of 2019.
- b. **Secretary:** JK referred to the written secretary's report circulated prior to the meeting. The West Lothian Community Council joint Forum conference took place on Friday, 3 May and was opened by Graham Hope, Chief Executive. There were 37 community councillors attending from 21 of the 33 community councils. Notes have been received of the meeting on 26 March pertaining to the Vennel project group participation request. Notes confirmed that a decision on the development of the Vennel is to be taken by committee after which further involvement of the Community Council will be determined. Several TTRO's were reported.
- c. **Treasurer:** in the absence of the treasurer JK reported that there has been no change to the bank balance.
- d. **Police:** there was no police report.
- e. **Planning:** JK referred to the written planning report circulated prior to the meeting.
  - i. 1110/FUL/18 Boghall East. MV, JK and David Timperley (Civic Trust member of the Planning Forum) met with representatives of Cala Homes on Friday, 10 May to discuss 'traffic calming' on the A803. It was agreed that a solution comprising the provision of a centre lane (mostly on road already three lanes in width) with a succession of right turn lanes, split with lit traffic islands and high visibility road markings and a new 'gateway' feature denoting the entrance to Linlithgow, may, subject to West Lothian Council's approval, satisfy the 'safety by design' objective at 30 mph. JK invited Derek Lawson (DL), Strategic Land Director, Cala Homes to explain the planning process from the company's perspective. DL gave the impression that Cala Homes was willing to go beyond the strict planning requirements for the entry to the new housing scheme on the assumption that

once the measures are in place and houses are occupied that Cala Homes will pay for, and West Lothian Council will submit, a traffic order introducing a speed limit reduction to 30 mph. It would be necessary for this agreement to be recorded in the section 75 agreement so that West Lothian Council would be legally obliged to submit the order. The reduction in the speed limit is considered desirable by the police as a safety measure; however members of the Community Council still raised concerns that a three-lane road originally designed to cater for traffic travelling at up to 60mph would make enforcement difficult, especially without a roundabout at the town entrance to slow down traffic. The dangers of traffic turning right on to the A803 from T-junctions were also highlighted. RS stated his dissent from the agreement reached. JH stated that a review of the A803 is required in light of the recent fatal accidents. This may involve liaison with Falkirk Council and Transport Scotland.

- II. 0007/FUL/13 post office ramp. DT confirmed that with the assistance of building control and business gateway that progress was being made. SF queried whether there was an obligation on the part of the post office to provide disabled access and DT confirmed that the legal requirements are being fulfilled by the post office.
- III. 0340/P/19 Wilcoxholm Farm. Letter of objection sent.
- IV. 0057/P/18 Clarendon farm appeal. The appeal has been dismissed by the reporter and refused planning permission in principle.

#### **7. AOB & Questions from the Floor.**

There was no other business.

A member of the public raised the question of West Lothian Council's decision to discontinue out-of-school care (wraparound care). She stated that after-school clubs were oversubscribed with 70 on the waiting list for the out-of-school care club at Linlithgow primary school. It was stated that families cannot get after-school care. The discontinuance of out-of-school care clubs not only takes away the opportunity for children to get safe, secure, regulated after-school care but also withdraws the school building itself. Simply Play, a private organisation has undertaken a consultation with parents and carers at Linlithgow Primary School and St Joseph's Primary School. The out-of-school care club at Linlithgow Primary School has been operating for 25 years. The shortage of registered childminders in Linlithgow exacerbates the problem. DT stated that he was currently in communication with Simply Play. There was no action arising from this discussion.

#### **8. Next meeting.**

The next meeting is at 7.30pm on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2019 in the Burgh Halls.

Meeting closed at 21.05

John Kelly, Secretary,  
30<sup>th</sup> May 2019