



**Minutes of Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge Community Council Meeting
on
Tuesday 24th September 2019 in the Burgh Halls at 19.30.**

Present: Chair Gordon Smith (GS), Fraser Falconer (FF), Joyce Hartley (JH), John Kelly (JK), Des Martin (DM), Mike Vickers (MV), Councillor Tom Conn (TC), Councillor David Tait (DT), and 3 members of the public.

Apologies: Pamela Barnes (PB), Martin Crook (MC), Sue Friel (SF), Ian Kelly (IK), Maire McCormack (MMcC), Paula Ryans Stokes (PRS), Ron Smith (RS), Scott Oliver (SO), Mukami McCrum (MMcCrum), Provost Tom Kerr (TK), Police Scotland - Andrew Murray (AM) and Neil Hunter (NH).

Membership: MMcC has tried to contact Mukami McCrum regarding her intentions in respect of continued membership of the Community Council.

Declarations of interest: No new declarations of interest noted

1. Minutes of Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge Community Council Meeting Tuesday 27th August 2019. MV corrected the last sentence of item 5 which should read "This agreement will result in a change to standing orders and in the representation of the Joint Forum on Policy Development and Scrutiny Panels and the Community Planning Partnership. Community Councils will also be represented on Local Area Committees". With this correction the minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting proposed by MV and seconded by FF.

2. Matters arising. There were no matters arising not covered by the agenda.

3. Low Port Centre - Report of a Public Meeting 16 September 2019

FF presented a short report of the public meeting held on 16 September in Low Port Centre. 32 people attended the meeting including representatives of the Community Council, Linlithgow Community Development Trust (LCDT), Linlithgow Young People's Project (LYPP), and several users of the centre. FF chaired the meeting which lasted 45 minutes. An email has been sent to West Lothian Leisure seeking further information on the commercial operation of the centre. It was pointed out that the trading report and the state of the building report are in the public domain. FF stated that LCDT has three major projects concurrently ongoing and that more volunteers are required to take a Low Port Centre project forward.

It was reported that the residential element and kitchens are closing at the end of 2019. TC advised the meeting that Robin Strang had given a presentation to elected members on the future of Low Port Centre as a Day Centre stating that if the centre was open beyond 6pm it lost income. In the ensuing discussion It was pointed out that 20 organisations use the centre currently during the day

and the evening. It appeared that the rationale for the current actions were based on saving money rather than generating income. It was suggested that the community should be pressing for the use of the centre as a community centre. JK referred to a paper presented to the meeting which gave a historical background to the centre which opened in 1987 and was run initially by a management team from the local community to provide residential and non-residential outdoor education for schools and groups of all ages and all nationalities. The centre also provided a range of courses for individuals. FF warned of the danger of being bound by a historic objective and that we should be looking for the best use of a valuable public asset in moving forward. This was agreed and bearing in mind the purpose of the residential accommodation, the best use to enhance the viability of the residential element of the building should be found. TC asked who would accept the liability for the areas of the building not used. Anecdotal evidence was presented that residential bookings had been cancelled when the algae levels of Linlithgow Loch prevented water activities. The general feeling of the meeting was that the reasons that people are not using the centre should be investigated and the business plan and trading accounts need to be examined. DT pointed out there were no management accounts. FF stated that the LCDT will be considering this matter further and will report mid-October. **Action FF**

4. Vennel

MV spoke to his previously circulated email referring to a paper by West Lothian Council Chief Executive entitled “Review of Local Government and Community Empowerment – Progress Report” which refers to, amongst other things, coproduction projects. MV suggested in the email that the Community Council may wish to take the redevelopment of the Vennel further by separating the refurbishment or reconstruction of the Cross flats from the remainder of the Vennel project. MV suggested broadening the involved community and undertaking a wider consultation than the 2017 study. After a discussion which included several suggestions including the involvement of developers, the engagement of an architect to design a new frontage look to the existing Cross flats structure, it was concluded that:

- WLC is not currently progressing a development project.
- There is little point in a re-run of the wide-ranging 2017 community consultation until a development project of some sort is launched.
- A repair or replace; whole life costing / cost benefit analysis exercise is required.

5. Report of the Primary School Catchment meeting

JK reported on a meeting held on Monday, 9th September at Linlithgow Academy to discuss a proposal to change the catchment areas of Linlithgow primary schools to better match the housing development proposals described in the local development plan. Most attendees’ questions and comments related to Springfield primary school. JK raised the concern that whilst the 54 houses at Springfield (Cala) and the proposed 200 houses at Wilcoxholm were included in the West Lothian 900 house scenario, the 48 flats on the Edinburgh road were not included. It was agreed that JK would email Andrew Cotton to confirm the accuracy of the current figures. **Action JK.**

6. Local Area Committee representative and alternative representative

It was agreed that JK be the Community Council representative on the Linlithgow Ward Local Area Committee and that MV be the alternate.

7. Advent Fayre

Reference was made to the discussion of the Advent Fayre at the August meeting. It was decided that the Advent Fayre would in future be a coproduction between the Community Council and LCDT. LCDT would take on board much of the administration but the event would be owned by the whole community. TC reported that applications for tables at the 2019 event are healthy with one hall filled and the other hall half filled. There is less response from voluntary organisations. Rotary wish to engage with the proceedings in the lighting of the "tree of light". A Santa Dash fundraising event will occur on the same day. Pub Watch are sponsoring 12 illuminations.

8. Standing Reports.

- a. **Chair:** GS reported that he was unable to attend the Town Management Group but had attended a Cancer Research event. GS is currently working on an article promoting the Community Council for a forthcoming issue of the Black Bitch. The 2nd Girls Brigade company based at St Michael's Parish Church has unfortunately disbanded due to a lack of leaders. The girls have transferred to the 1st Girls Brigade company at St Ninians Craigmalen Parish Church. The Peace Garden committee is meeting on 1st October with the landscape architects who have tendered for the project.
- b. **Secretary:** JK referred to the written secretary's report circulated prior to the meeting and highlighted the forthcoming Joint Forum of West Lothian Community Councils conference on Thursday 21st November commencing at 6:30pm.
- c. **Treasurer:** IK sent a message indicating that there has been no movement in the bank account.
- d. **Planning:** JK referred to the written planning report circulated prior to the meeting in highlighting the following:
 - I. Avondale Holdings Ltd are proposing to develop an energy from waste facility at Avondale landfill site. JK attended a public consultation event at Polmont Community Hall on 19th September. Avondale Holdings have invited members of the Community Council to a site visit if they so wish. DM indicated his interest in a site visit. JK to organise. **Action JK.**
 - II. There were several objections from residents to the Lady Park path which received planning permission in its revised form, notably that the path will be 2m wide along its whole length.
 - III. JK requested questions on any of the other planning items. There were no further questions.

9. AOB & Questions from the Floor.

- It was reported that work to stabilise the exposed gable adjacent to McCarthy and Stone's Templars Court has commenced.

10. Next meeting.

The next meeting is at 7.30pm on Tuesday 22nd October 2019 in the Burgh Halls.

Meeting closed at 20.59

John Kelly, Secretary,
7th October 2019