



**Minutes of Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge Community Council Meeting
on
Tuesday 27th August 2019 in the Burgh Halls at 19.30.**

Present: Chair Gordon Smith (GS), Martin Crook (MC), Fraser Falconer (FF), Ian Kelly (IK), Joyce Hartley (JH), John Kelly (JK), Maire McCormack (MMcC), Paula Ryans Stokes (PRS), Ron Smith (RS), Mike Vickers (MV), Provost Tom Kerr (TK), Councillor David Tait (DT), Councillor Tom Conn (TC), Police Scotland Andrew Murray (AM), Lesley Brown (LB) and 5 members of the public.

Apologies: Pamela Barnes (PB), Sue Friel (SF), Des Martin (DM), Scott Oliver (SO), Mukami McCrum (MMcCrum),

Membership: MMcC to speak to 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 25th June 2019. The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting proposed by PRS and seconded by GS.

2. Matters arising.

- | | | |
|---|-----------------|---|
| 3 | Low Port Centre | Linlithgow community development trust have arranged a public meeting to be held at 7:30 PM on Monday, 16 September to discuss the future of the low Port Centre. No formal asset transfer request has been made. The residential accommodation at the centre will close later this year. |
|---|-----------------|---|

3. Town centre fund report

GS reported his presence at a well-attended town centre fund meeting held in Livingston in July at which it was agreed by the majority of those attending that the timescales are too tight to undertake all the work envisaged by the application form. All projects must be contracted and running by March 2020. GS had contacted Dougie Grierson who referred him to Stuart Ness. The projects considered for funding must be capital projects; the council will not be liable for any revenue implication. At a meeting held at MV's house in August it was decided to pursue a project to resurrect the tourist information office in the Burgh Halls to be based at the reception desk. LB confirmed the agreement of the Burgh Halls administrators to facilitating the project. Two plans have been developed and it was agreed that both would be submitted. GS thanked MV, LB and Stuart Ness for their work in developing the project within the necessary short timescale. A further project involving the assessment and undertaking of the necessary maintenance of the High Street trees was abandoned.

Action GS

4. Bus Group report

MC reported that the work undertaken by Transition Linlithgow had elicited over 400 responses. An Active Travel Festival will be held on Saturday, 31 August including a public meeting in the old library at 11am. Processing of the data gathered to date will be undertaken at the end of August/early September. A cheque for £900 in favour of Transition Linlithgow was processed. Currently under discussion is whether to employ a professional survey company for the gathering of data from passengers awaiting trains at Linlithgow station. Two survey companies have been contacted and they anticipate data gathering over 2 to 3 days in one week. MC is of the opinion that the survey is required as results from travellers from outside Linlithgow needs to be captured. It may be possible to undertake the survey utilising resources from Scotland's rural College or alternatively perform the survey with volunteers helped by Transition Linlithgow. Transport Scotland have confirmed that they will pay stage payments to address the cash flow concerns arising from the Community Council paying first and claiming back.

5 Report of the Joint Forum of West Lothian Community Councils (Joint Forum)

JK referred to the written report circulated prior to the meeting. The meeting of the Joint Forum executive was held on Thursday, 15 August at which several items were discussed under the headings of; health, planning, transport and police. These four headings are the titles of separate forums which meet to discuss issues under those topics. Any member of a Community Council can attend a meeting of the forums. JK also reported on a paper referred to as item 6 at the council executive meeting on 20 August which agreed to a motion formalising recognition of the Joint Forum. This agreement will result in a change to standing orders and will result in representation of the Joint Forum on policy development and scrutiny panels and local area committees.

JK also reported on the Scottish Government Local Governance Review report as it affected Community Councils. How Community Councils could play a role in participative democracy at local level has yet to be determined.

6. Advent Fayre

MC reported that the Advent Fayre committee was somewhat depleted, the current membership being TK, TC, MC and Stewart Ness. Last year TC intimated that he wished to step down but has undertaken to help this year as no one else has come forward. MC raised concerns that the bank account was not audited. JK resigned as the treasurer of the Advent Fayre in 2015 but remains a signatory for cheques together with TC; a situation which is not satisfactory. MC reported that the Advent Fayre is now financially secure; charging for torches means that there is now £2000 in the bank. FF indicated that Linlithgow Community Development Trust is willing to take over the running of the Advent Fayre but needed to check the insurance liability arrangements. JK indicated his support for this proposal but others in the Community Council were less enthusiastic and wished to remain an active partner. TC stated that the Advent Fayre was always a Community Council event; it never was a West Lothian Council event although the Council until 2015 had been very supportive. Dr René Gray organised the first Advent Fayre in 1997 with the then town centre manager. JK stated that during his time of involvement Hazel Hay, the then town centre manager administered and effectively ran the Advent Fayre with a small committee and manpower on the day from the Community Council and Deacons Court. Hazel was reassigned and Stewart Ness took over some of the administration in 2013. The financial liability of the Advent Fayre effectively

remained with West Lothian Council until 2015 when financial support was withdrawn leaving the Community Council with increased administration and financial liability.

7. Remembrance Sunday Parade. GS reported that the uniformed organisations had been contacted and had confirmed that they would be taking part in the parade. JK requested help on the day to liaise with the police and help with the hospitality following the parade. GS confirmed that the Air Cadets would be supplying help for the hospitality.

8. Vennel Update. JK presented a brief written report prompted by the article in the Linlithgow Gazette of Friday, 16 August 2019. Highlighting the main points from the report JK stated that the Vennel buildings were constructed between 1967 and 1969, receiving a Saltire Award in 1969. In 2004 a £2.1 million modernisation project installed external wall insulated render, new roofs and replacement doors. In 2017 Scott Bennett associates undertook a limited structural survey over six days. They reported on only those defects which affected the structural integrity of the building. These defects related to water ingress through cable holes, ill fitted copings, render loss, cracking render and roofing defects. West Lothian Council reported that a single tender had been received for the repair work, but that tender was in excess of the budget. In 2018 following an extensive period of consultation, the Linlithgow planning forum produced an options appraisal for the Vennel scheme described in a West Lothian Council design brief. Of the six options considered four were considered to be profitable. JK stated that it is possible to continuously maintain buildings, St Michaels church and the palace being examples. However, the Vennel could not be considered either economically or culturally significant and there has to come a point when the cost of maintenance significantly outweighs the benefit gained from the buildings. A member of the public pointed out that a different approach to the maintenance work involving new cladding and roofing should be considered. JK and RS made a participation request to participate in the compilation of the project brief. At a meeting with representatives of West Lothian Council JK and RS were informed that the scheme described in the design brief was not being progressed at this time.

6. Standing Reports.

- a. **Chair:** GS reported his attendance at a community asset transfer meeting at the Chalmers Hall in July. GS is a member of the Joint Forum police forum but was unable to attend the inaugural meeting. It is proposed that the police forum meet with police commanders to discuss community policing in West Lothian.
- b. **Secretary:** JK referred to the written secretary's report circulated prior to the meeting and highlighted:
 - I. a consultation on land reform which ends at the end of September. **Action All**
 - II. Details on contacts and an information meeting being held in three locations with regard to recruitment to the Children's panel.
 - III. Several TTRO's.
- c. **Treasurer:** IK referred to the written Treasurer's report circulated prior to the meeting on which there were no comments.
- d. **Police:** AM reported on:
 - I. Party in the Palace which passed without significant incidents.

- II. Police youth volunteers had taken part in a education day in the High Street attempting to bring potential traffic offences to the attention of drivers. This will be followed by an enforcement day.
 - III. The attention of the police has been brought once again to speeding on St Ninian's Road.
 - IV. Police had visited several off-licences and other licensed premises to reinforce the importance of determining the age of young customers.
 - V. Reported youth disorder in Rosemount Park is thought to be encouraged by the ability of social media to bring to the attention of those in South Queensferry and Polmont that there will be a gathering at that location.
 - VI. Neighbourhood disputes continued to absorb significant amounts of community policing time.
 - VII. Shift patterns in the current climate are particularly challenging for community police particularly when abstractions take them away.
 - VIII. AM clarified the fact that the offence of parking on zigzag lines must be corroborated by a fellow officer.
 - IX. The detection of perpetrators of public order and traffic offences would be heightened by the availability of CCTV in the town.
 - X. The management of tour buses is problematic particularly at the Cross and Kirkgate
- e. **Planning:** JK referred to the written planning report circulated prior to the meeting in highlighting the following:
- I. Avondale Holdings Ltd are proposing to development an energy from waste facility at Avondale landfill site. Avondale Holdings are willing to attend a Community Council meeting to present the project. A public consultation event will be held at Polmont Community Hall on a date to be confirmed.
 - II. 0201/FUL/18 48 Flats Edinburgh Rd. The section 75 agreement with West Lothian Council has been signed and the reporter has formally confirmed planning permission.
 - III. JK requested questions on any of the other planning items. There were no further questions.

7. AOB & Questions from the Floor.

- IK brought the Community Council's attention to a message from education services which notifies the reorganisation of Linlithgow school catchment areas. A pre-consultation meeting has been scheduled at Linlithgow Academy for Monday, 9 September 2019 from 6:30pm to 8:30pm at which planning officers will be available to answer any questions. There is some concern in the community over the availability of Linlithgow Academy places for Linlithgow pupils.
- A question was asked on how much of the £111,592 town centre fund has been bid for by organisations in the ward. It was not possible to answer this question.
- In answer to a question it was stated that the peace garden group is currently examining tenders from landscape architects.

- A letter from McCarthy and Stone has indicated that they are willing to consider an offer from one of the three developers interested in the site or to transfer the site to West Lothian Council for £1 or to transfer the site to the Templars Court residents for £1.

8. Next meeting.

The next meeting is at 7.30pm on Tuesday 24th September 2019 in the Burgh Halls.

Meeting closed at 20.50

John Kelly, Secretary,
30th August 2019