



**Minutes of Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge Community Council  
on  
Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> October 2020 at 19.30, online.**

**Present:** Chair Gordon Smith (GS), Fraser Falconer (FF), Graeme Grant (GG) John Kelly (JK), Ian Kelly (IK), Paula Ryans Stokes (PRS), Mike Vickers (MV), Councillor Tom Conn (TC), Provost Tom Kerr (TK), Councillor David Tait (DT), Helen Hassel (HH) LCDT, and 8 members of the public.

**Apologies** Pamela Barnes (PB), Martin Crook (MC), Liam Fraser (LF), Joyce Hartley (JH), Des Martin (DM), Maire McCormack (MMcC), Scott Oliver (SO), Ron Smith (RS,) Police Scotland - Andrew Murray (AM) and Peter Robertson (PR).

**Welcome** GS welcomed all to the meeting

**Declarations of interest:** JK and IK declared an interest in the Springfield trees both living in Springfield.

**1. Minutes of Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge Community Council Meeting Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2020.** Proposed by MV and seconded by PRS

**2. Matters arising.** FF will follow up the points made at the September meeting regarding the noticeboards. **Action FF**

**3. Lady Park Path.** This item was strictly to have been taken as a planning matter, however, as there were several members of the public interested in this item it was taken early. JK introduced the item by reporting that in March 2019 an application, made by West Lothian Council to widen and realign the footpath bordering Lady Park path, was considered at a Development Management committee meeting. The meeting decided that further consultation should be undertaken and postponed a decision for 2 planning cycles. Lady Park path was considered again at a Development Management committee meeting in September 2019 and planning permission was given. JK stated that the next stage of the process was the raising of a compulsory purchase order to purchase the land from Lady Park Trust.

Alan Herd, speaking on behalf of Lady Park Trust, advised that from the Trust's point of view it was necessary that there was minimum incursion into the field. TC stated that the compulsory purchase order was necessary because of the tenant farmer's preferential rights over the field. There is a specific process to go through which will include a public notification. Jamie Smart (JS) speaking on behalf of Dorothy Johnson has leased the field for 50 years and has never been against giving it up if that was the desire of the Linlithgow community. As tenant farmer there was no wish to institute a right to buy. JS stated that there has been a complete absence of negotiation with the council. At this point there was a brief discussion over the route of the path and the extent of the widening and the reason

for that which was cited as being as a result of erosion of the bank threatening the existing path. It was also stated that the sacrificial erosion strip be rewilded. JS stated that the rewilding will not stop erosion and that he is opposed to the removal of the trees and hedges which lie in the route of the realigned path since his livestock rely on the existing trees and hedges for shelter. Without any shelter the field may become unviable for the grazing of livestock.

**4. Vennel Redevelopment.** JK referred to his report circulated prior to the meeting. In summary; West Lothian Council executive met on 6 October 2022 to consider a report from officers which advised on both the outcome of the consultation on the planning guidance for the Vennel, Linlithgow, and to consider a request from Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge Community Council to make further representations on the guidance in accordance with an approved participation request. JK presented a deputation to the executive meeting which outlined two options for pursuing the Vennel development namely; to sell to a developer and control the project through the planning system or to retain control by appointing a project management and design team, evolving a brief and design in consultation with the community and adopting an appropriate procurement system with partners. After discussion TC presented a motion to the executive committee which was carried by 7 votes to 6. The motion instructed the chief executive to initiate a marketing exercise, inviting potential partners to submit offers and details with a closing date of 31 March 2021.

Following JK's report MV queried the nature of the marketing exercise. TC stated that it was necessary to accelerate the project, the consultation having been done in 2017. What is being sought is partners to redevelop the central area or indeed to redevelop more of the identified packages; the essential objective of the exercise is to get partners coming forward.

**5. Smoke Detector Upgrading.** JK introduced the topic stating that after the inclusion of this item in the agenda the Scottish Government's plans to introduce new standards for fire and smoke alarms in all homes from February 2021 was delayed by 12 months. However, the two essential questions remain being; the disposal of many thousands of non-compliant smoke detectors and grants for those who cannot afford the outlay of around £220 plus labour. TC stated that West Lothian Council is not licensed to collect or dispose of radioactive waste and, since smoke detectors contain a small radioactive element which must be removed prior to the disposal of the unit as waste electrical equipment, they cannot be dealt with by the council. Following a brief discussion, it was agreed to find out more from SEPA and/or the Scottish government. **Action JK**

**6. Springfield Trees.** JK referred to the report circulated prior to the meeting which included a statement made by NETs, Land And Countryside Services suggesting that the residents of the Springfield estate own the trees and open space as "residents in common". Officers are currently undertaking a comprehensive survey of trees and open space following which a public meeting will be arranged with local residents to discuss the options for future maintenance. During the ensuing discussion TK stated that this issue has a long history with the developers of different parts of the Springfield estate making a range of agreements with West Lothian District Council. In some instances, payments were made either by the developer or by the first purchasers of houses in Springfield for Council maintenance in perpetuity. TK agreed that this issue needs resolution. Meanwhile, some maintenance is being provided by West Lothian Council, although apart from grass cutting

this is inconsistent throughout the estate. It was suggested that this item might be on the agenda at the next local area committee. *Note: The next LAC has been postponed until 8<sup>th</sup> December 2020.*

**7. Town Centre Funding.** GS introduced the topic by summarising the paper included with the agenda which itself was a synopsis of a paper presented to council executive on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2020. A grant of £40,551 has been allocated to Linlithgow. The grant may be used to fund third-party capital expenditure on work that will be completed, or at least contracts signed or work commenced by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. MV queried how we were to spend such a sum by next March? FF stated that after coronavirus we will see 24-hour neighbourhoods with local online shopping, an overall expansion of digital services and increasing alignment between business and community groups. We should be considering our digital offering. PRS noted that the deadline for applications is 27 November allowing for collation of bids prior to the local area committee meeting.

## **6. Standing Reports**

- a) **Chairman's report** GS reported that the Community Council AGM is postponed until April 2021 but that the LCDT AGM would be held on 12<sup>th</sup> November. With regards to the expenditure of the previous round of town centre funding GS confirmed that tourist information signs have been manufactured. The Remembrance Sunday service would be held in St Michael's church on 8<sup>th</sup> November with only those laying wreaths attending.
- b) **Secretary's report** JK referred to the written report included with the meeting papers on which there were no questions
- c) **Treasurer's report** IK gave a brief report confirming that there had been no expenditure over the previous month.
- d) **Police report.** There was no police report.
- e) **Planning report.** JK referred to the written report included with the meeting papers highlighting the application made by Cala for 60 houses at Preston Farm off Deanburn Road. It was agreed to delegate the necessary objections and deputations to the Planning Forum.
- f) **JFCCWL report.** JK referred to the written report mentioning the Winchburgh petition against the cancellation of the planned Winchburgh Partnership Centre

## **7. AOB & Public Participation Questions.**

- a) Alan Herd, attending as a member of the public endorsed the 20mph speed limit which he regarded as a good thing.
- b) MV informed the meeting of the death of Nicholas Leonard who many will remember for his tireless opposition to the Burghmuir development.
- c) Helen Hassel was thanked for her behind the scenes organisation of the online meeting which was faultless.

**8. Meeting Close & Next Meeting** GS thanked everyone for their attendance. The meeting closed at 20.50. The next meeting of the Community Council is Tuesday, 24<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

John Kelly,  
Secretary,  
11<sup>th</sup> November 2020