



**Minutes of Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge Community Council
on
Tuesday 23rd March 2021 at 19.30, online.**

Present: Chair Gordon Smith (GS), Martin Crook (MC), Fraser Falconer (FF), Graeme Grant (GG), Ian Kelly (IK), John Kelly (JK), Paula Ryans Stokes (PRS), John Ralph (JR), Mike Vickers (MV), Councillor David Tait (DT), Provost Tom Kerr (TK), Councillor Tom Conn (TC) and members of the public; Robert Martin (RM), Heather Begarnie (HB), Helen Greig (HG) and 6 others

Apologies Pamela Barnes (PB), Liam Fraser (LF), Joyce Hartley (JH), Des Martin (DM), Scott Oliver (SO), Ron Smith (RS,) Margot Watson (MW), Police Scotland - Andrew Murray (AM) and Peter Robertson (PR).

Welcome GS welcomed all to the meeting.

Membership and Declarations of interest: JK, IK and RM declared an interest in the item "Springfield trees" being residents of Springfield.

1. Minutes of Linlithgow and Linlithgow Bridge Community Council Meeting Tuesday 23rd February 2021. Correction to minutes. Under item 5 Low Port Centre the second sentence of the penultimate paragraph should read "Others stated that the premises.....". 4f Health report RM stated that it was the chief executive officer who had moved. With the corrections the minutes were proposed by MV and seconded by IK.

2. Matters arising from the February minutes.

- a) Participatory Budgeting West Lothian Council has not notified Community Councils of the budget for participatory budgeting nor of their intended approach. Other Scottish councils' websites described plans in place. *Note: The Joint Forum discussed this matter with Graham Hope on Monday 8th March and suggested the use of a software package called Consul.*
- b) Smoke detector replacement - disposal of replaced devices. Scottish Government have restated that old smoke detectors should be collected at council recycling centres under the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) procedures. TC confirmed that West Lothian Council is prevented by regulation from collecting replaced devices as they contain radioactive elements. Several efforts have been made to contact SEPA who are currently uncontactable due to a cyber attack. A further email has been sent to Fiona Hislop's researcher. **Action JK**
- c) Springfield Trees. JK referred to a statement made at the March 2020 Local Area Committee meeting regarding the ownership and responsibility for the maintenance of public landscaped open space in Springfield, specifically tree belts. *Note a paper was presented to the Environment PDSP on 30th March 2021.*
- d) Sheriffs Park flooding. No response from West Lothian Council.

- e) Spaces for People. JK reported 44 responses from members of the public following a very short consultation. A paper was presented to West Lothian Council meeting on 16th March 2021. £818,500 spent. Linlithgow topped the complaints table by a considerable margin.

3. LCDT Report Linlithgow Community Development Trust has received a £50,000 grant from the Scottish Government's Adapt and Thrive Programme which supports third sector organisations in adapting to the challenges presented by COVID-19. The grant will support:

- The development of a community hub in the old library building at the Vennel which will provide accommodation for group meetings, events, homeworking, and a more visible home for the tool library, electric bikes and electric van. It is anticipated that the community hub will be open to the public by midsummer.
- The integration of Transition Linlithgow and LCDT as a single Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation. The grant will give the capacity to increase upcycling, focus creative ideas and support Scottish Government plans for 20 minute communities, improve town centres and facilitate green action.
- A community consultation is to be undertaken over the next 6 to 9 months. This extensive dialogue with members, organisations and across the wider community will help identify needs and priorities and enable cooperation and collaboration.

LCDT will be talking to people with resources to design and develop community-led services and amenities with the aim of creating a demonstration town. LCDT is currently working with West Lothian Council and Sport Scotland to have the Linlithgow cycling facility prepared ready for the UCI (International Cycling Union) World Championships in August 2023. *Note This event will bring together 13 different cycling disciplines in one unprecedented event that will see thousands of the world's best cyclists coming to Scotland.*

4. Low Port Centre. Heather Begarnie, community development manager for St John's Church and manager of the New Well, introduced the aspirations of St John's Church and the New Well to consolidate and expand its activities in new premises. HB is currently at an early stage of discussions with West Lothian Council to consider the feasibility of using the Low Port Centre and the possibility of a community asset transfer. St John's Church and the New Well are keen to consult with local organisations to determine the most beneficial ways to partner across organisations to share space and join up services and activities. They envisage any space being multiuse, supporting the local community whilst also meeting the needs of St John's church members.

St John's Church currently meet at Linlithgow Academy on Sunday mornings and run weekday activities from buildings in Union Road and at 183 High St. The activities include a weekly toddler group and parents café, so blessed (weekly craft group), community café, youth groups, worship band practice, meeting point (monthly club for seniors) and other small groups. The buildings also host the ladies choir, froggy friends (preschool scene group), a writers group, kids art class (monthly), first step bike sales (monthly in partnership with community café), cocaine anonymous recovery group, MSPs surgery (from time to time), and other occasional meetings, groups and events.

New Well community charity has recently emerged from St John's Church to provide counselling, Oasis Café for those struggling with their mental health, the Christians Against Poverty job club, and other support services for local individuals.

HB emphasised their enthusiasm to talk with any of individuals and organisations who are interested in being part of the conversation about the future of Low Port Centre.

In the ensuing discussion HG described the current situation of the Lochside Playgroup in its search for alternative premises, if they cannot continue at Low Port Centre. The playgroup will be able to open shortly and currently serve over 30 families in the town but are looking to expand.

FF stated that any community consultation mustn't presume that community buildings will remain as pre-pandemic. Post-pandemic buildings will be required to satisfy new demands and lateral thinking is required to satisfy these. Buildings used once or twice a week should be looked at to see whether new demands can be met in existing property. MV queried whether West Lothian Leisure will rent until March 2022 and received the reply that West Lothian Council and West Lothian Leisure could mutually close earlier by agreement.

5. Standing Reports

- a) Chairman's report GS reported:
 - i. All town centre fund money has been allocated with £3500 already spent.
 - ii. INEOS has advised that their new energy plant project is moving forward.
 - iii. GS read out the salient points from the police report for Linlithgow Ward presented to the Local Area Committee.
 - iv. GS gave a brief report of the loch users meeting which included comments on the compulsory purchase order for the land adjacent to Lady Park footpath.
- b) Secretary's report JK referred to the written report, with another long list of TTROs. JK highlighted the one-month closure of the A706 at Woodcockdale canal bridge which has been delayed until 10 May. The diversion will be via Lathallan.
- c) Treasurer's report IK stated that the bank account balance was currently £2567.37 and requested any outstanding expenses claims.
- d) Health. GG made reference to the health report previously circulated. GG highlighted the high level of Covid infections in West Lothian and queried the source.
- e) Bus Group MC reported that the funded programme has been extended and will cover the final piece of work which is the closing report. JK to advise details of new Broxburn bus service. *Note: details at <https://news.westlothian.gov.uk/article/68993/New-town-bus-service-launches-in-Broxburn-and-Uphall>*
- f) Planning report JK referred to the planning report circulated with the agenda for the meeting in which there were no questions.
- g) Joint Forum of Community Councils in West Lothian. JK referred to the matters discussed at the joint Forum meeting on 18 March 2021 described in the report circulated with the agenda. JK highlighted the issues noted at the February meeting regarding accessibility of website information. West Lothian Council Coins is considered not to be compliant.

6. AOB & Public Participation Questions.

A member of the public raised the current problem of overflowing litter bins alongside the Linlithgow Loch path. A campaign to get the Golden Chip to change from polystyrene to recyclable containers has been partially successful but the cardboard replacements are larger than the previous containers causing the bins to be filled quicker. A poster campaign is proposed in fast-food outlets. TC advised that

existing bins will be replaced by Big Belly Bins which have the advantage of preventing seagulls gaining access and send a message when the bin is full.

7. Meeting Close & Next Meeting GS thanked everyone for their attendance. The meeting closed at 20.45. The next meeting of the Community Council is the AGM to be held on Tuesday, 28th April 2021.

John Kelly, Secretary,
5th April 2021