**LIVINGSTON VILLAGE COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**MINUTE of MEETING No 3-11 on 10 January 2019**

**PRESENT**:

MEMBERS; Brian Johnstone - Chair, Carole Robertson – Treasurer, Dean Swift, Planning Secretary/Minute Secretary, Shona Mackenzie, Jodi Conner, Catherine Brown, Margaret McQueen

GUESTS: Councillor Alison Adamson, Alan Strachan, Garry Carder, Morag Carder, Elizabeth Scott, Alice Bailey, Helen Lamont, Carol Robertson, Richard Lever, Georgie Hume,

Ian Bieniowski, Network Performance Manager, Lothian Country Buses (part)

APOLOGIES:Apologies received from Councillor Moira Shemilt, Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick, Brian Ritchie

**ITEMS: Action**

1.0 **MINUTE APPROVAL**

1.1 The minutes were not approved as corrections from the previous meeting had not been inserted (see item 1.2 below).

1.2 Councillor Moira Shemilt forwarded DS two corrections from November’s minutes:

Item 6.1.1 should read – The Labour/Tory Council executive has made the decision to strip the level of free care to those who might need it. Charges have been introduced,

for example, home care, for those who are not deemed to be in the severe category. The third sector is voluntary /charities.

Item 6.1.4 should read – The number of recycling centres may be reduced.

1.3 Following the meeting Councillor Fitzpatrick disputed some of Councillor Shemilt’s statements and circulated a report to all that attended the meeting outlining his interpretation. This sparked an debate/argument between them and was shared with a wide audience.

1.4 BJ made the point that Community Council meeting cannot be “political” and are not a place for Councillor arguments. This should not happen in the future.

2.0 **MATTERS ARISING**

2.1 (item 2.1 previous minutes): Knowledge Hub Network was passed to McQ to register,

McQ has not had time to deal with this as yet. **McQ**

2.2 (item 2.2 previous minutes): GDPR – BJ issued the statutory documents to council members and regular attendees. Many have replied and now a new list for circulation will

be drawn up minus those who have not responded. BJ will liaise with DS to confirm new circulation list. **BJ/DS**

2.3 (item 2.4 previous minutes) BJ attended NHS/CC meeting on Monday 3 December,

which was not well attended. Various items covered were: still struggling to get full complement of staff particularly for children’s ward, waiting times not being met, but the number of advanced nurse practitioners is increasing and St John’s has a growth plan related to the increase population in West Lothian.

2.4 (item 3.2 previous minutes) West Lothian Council/Community Council Forum: The biannual conference took place on Friday 7th. BJ attended along with 18 other CCs. Good discussion on usual subjects of Police, Fire, Land Services, etc. If anyone wants a copy of the various reports ask BJ. Good session with speakers on Participation, Community Planning, Police community action. **ALL**

2.5 Local Area Committees (LAC): BJ attended both North and South ward meetings which delivered the usual reports on Police, Fire, Land Services, Housing, Regeneration, Operational Services. If anyone wants copies of the reports ask BJ. **ALL**

3.0 **PRESENTATION FROM LOTHIAN COUNTRY BUSES:**

3.1 Ian Bieniowski, Network Performance Manager, gave a comprehensive presentation followed by discussion from the floor, the main points were:

1. From IB: Lothian Buses have, and are launching, a service in West Lothian in three phases. It is hoped to get feedback in meetings such as this to fine tune the service

as each phase is introduced. They also hope to hold stakeholders meeting with other agencies. They are looking at new park and rides to ease congestion, bus stop intervals to perhaps speed up bus service in some locations and they have noted some bus stops do not have shelters and therefore no information,

2. From the floor: The 22 does not go to St John’s Hospital (IB stated that it does now,

but goes via Town Centre), there are no links to the train stations, there is no express

bus to Edinburgh although there is one to Glasgow now, can small sprinter buses be used? (IB stated that differing volumes during the day make this difficult), lack of information generally (IB stated that generally information in West Lothian has to be provided by the Council), bus pass cannot be used on Edinburgh Tram, real-time

monitor in Town Centre not always correct (BJ will contact transport person in The Centre), also see Councillor Fitzpatrick’s report in appendix under “bus service” **BJ**

4.0 **REPORTS FROM THE CHAIR:**

4.1 Kaims Woodland Sub-Group: There have been no further meeting due to the Christmas break, and no success getting dialogue with the owners of plots 2 and 4. Plot 1 is within the Robertson Homes planning consultation. Plot 3 – New owner is willing to help and will remove problem trees. They have asked for suggestions on how to treat the area but BJ have received only 3 replies from 21 households. Plot 4 – Jodi is very active getting legal aid discussions with University of Edinburgh. BJ has meeting with WLC about amenity notices serving on plot owners.

4.2 Defibrillator: On order and has been fully paid for by LVCEA (Livingston Village Community Education Association).

4.3 Buchanan Gardens : BJ visited site manager, they hope to complete by June and are about to move site offices.

5.0 **PLANNING REPORT**

5.1 Weekly Planning Lists: up to early January there have been 130 applications but only three minor ones in our area: small adjustment to nursing home application, environmental survey at Charlesfield Road housing site and proposal to erect a wall or fence in front of a property on Main Street (west of the old post office) as well as a summer house in the back garden

5.2 Persimmon Homes : Work has commenced although final planning permission has not been issued. They hope to complete 20 homes by Christmas 2019. The meeting expressed concern over site traffic, in particular large lorries, around the school while

the children were arriving and leaving. BJ will write to relevant Health & Safety contact and convey our concerns, as well as highlight the need for a banksman. **BJ**

5.3 Gregory Road Housing: No change, our representation has been acknowledged and we await WLC decision.

5.4 Hunter Road: Robertson is the preferred builders and are in the pre-planning consultation stage. BJ will be submitting comments this weekend. The drawings indicate about 75-80 houses detached and semi-detached plus two blocks of flats, which will be the “affordable” element. Public reactions thus far have been positive but are concerned about tree maintenance. It was noted that children from this site may use the existing play area in Kaims.

5.5 Livingston West (Gavieside): nothing new since last meeting, we are still awaiting an updated letter from the Developers (Springfield).

5.6 Savills, Charlesfield Road : General comments have been submitted.

6.0 **POLICE REPORT**

6.1 No report

7.0 **NEWS AND UPDATES FROM ELECTED COUNCILLORS**

7.1 Councillor Moira Shemilt:

7.1.1 Councillor Moira Shemilt was unable to attend and sent her apologies.

7.1.2 MS forwarded corrections from last meeting to DS, see item 1.2

7.2 Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick:

7.2.1 Lawrence Fitzpatrick was unable to attend but forwarded a comprehensive report, which is included in the appendix. None of the items refer specifically to the Village but the item on bus service is relevant to the earlier discussion about bus service and clarifies the subject of the information board at McArthur Glen side of the terminal and The Centre.

7.2.2 Lawrence Fitzpatrick forwarded DS comments on Novembers meeting related to Moira Shemilt’s report. See item 1.3

7.3 Councillor Alison Adamson

7.3.1 The Pensioner’s Christmas lunch, provided by LVCEA (Livingston Village Community Education Association with grant assistance from WLC)) was a success and AA would like to thank all involved.

7.3.2 The Livingston Village Community Education Association would welcome any new members. Their next meetings are 22 January, 20th March and 21 May. They may form a pensioner’s group as well as the over 50’s group which currently meets.

7.4.2 The Livingston Station branch of the Scouts, Cubs and beavers are also looking for members.

7.4.3 Tours of the Civic Centre can be arranged for interested parties.

8.0 **TREASURER’S REPORT**

8.1The balance in the bank account is now £224.00 however an expense’s invoice of about £56.00 will be paid in the near future.

8.2 BJ reminded CR that the Annual Accounts would be due at the next meeting ,the AGM

9.0 **WEB & IT MATTERS**

9.1 It was agreed that for the time being the CC would wait until MMQ has time to deal

with this matter. **MMQ**

10.0 **SECRETARIAL MATTERS**

10.1 The LVCC email inbox received 48 messages since we last met. The most relevant were:

* + WLC are running Customer Service Strategy Roadshows. The nearest to the village is Forestbank on 23rd January at 6:30. Anyone can attend. **ALL**
  + Road closure on A71 from Wilderness Roundabout to Polbeth.
  + Airport – New Community Engagement Manager wants to attend one of our meetings. It was agreed that there is not enough interest to warrant his attendance.
  + Local Government,-Democracy Events will be arranged in the near future, more later on this subject.
  + Holyrood, Scottish Government – Climate change meeting to be held on 24th April and Plastic waste meeting to be held on 30 January.

11.0 **AOCB**

11.1 None

12.0 **NEXT MEETING**

12.1 Our next meeting will be held on **Thursday 7 February 2019 at 7:00pm** in the function room of the Livingston Inn. This will be in 2 parts, the AGM followed by a normal meeting.

12.2 The next Kaims woodlands meeting will be held on Thursday 24 January 2019 at 7:00pm in the function room of the Livingston Inn.

Dean Swift

13 January 2019

**Appendix:**

Report by Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick

**General**

I have attended a raft of Christmas events including…

* 3 primary school nativities
* 2 roles as Father Christmas
* Cut the ribbon to celebrate the opening of the refurbished Asda Store
* Attended the highly enjoyable Firefly Arts (youth drama group) at Howden Park
* Attended Annual Business Awards for West Lothian
* Two TV interviews over the KAIAM closure. Visited Livingston Station Community Centre, the community involvement in raising cash & kind for the 300+ redundant staff was very moving and overwhelming. Some relief gained by staff receiving their due December salaries.

**WLC Advice Shop**

Recently awarded the National Standards for Advice Providers levels 1/2/3 covering housing/benefits/housing advice. The first Council is Scotland to achieve this accolade and tribute to the dedication; expertise and commitment of staff that provide this essential assistance to those in most need in our communities.

**Education**

ACE (Adverse Childhood Experiences) - Council giving intense input to this initiative. Scientific research has indicated that when children have been exposed to adverse and stressful experiences, it may well have a long lasting impact on their ability to think, interact with others and on their learning as well as their health. The aim of the initiative is to treat and prevent toxic stress. The West Lothian ACE’s Hub works on a multi-agency basis including the Crown Office with the purpose of enabling all schools in West Lothian to access the resources and raise awareness of ACE for the benefit of all.

**Improving Attainment in Mathematics**

Great success at the National Quality and Improvement Awards 2017/18. Have raised attainment in National 5 Mathematics by TEN PERCENTAGE points and in Higher by NINE PERCENTAGE points. Council is building on this practice for the benefit of our young people.

**Re-location of Cedarbank School, Livingston**

This tired building had has its day. The proposed new purpose built accommodation will be built within the estate of the James Young High School at a cost of £6M to accommodate 90 secondary pupils. Consultation will commence early 2019.

Officers have been asked to carefully examine traffic entrance/exit arrangements including the entrance to Quentin Rise.

**Active Schools and Community Sport**

Record achievement – 16 West Lothian Schools hold a Gold School Sports Award. More of our pupils, more active, more often than ever before.

In medal awards, West Lothian Schools attained 10% of all medal awards in Scotland. Three times higher than local authority average.

Over 2017/18, our Active Schools Co-ordinators worked with 532 volunteers.

**Community Safety**

Our Neighbourhood Safety Teams work with partners including Police Scotland on residents’ complaints on anti-social behaviour and noise nuisance. The prime approach is of early intervention to prevent further escalation of incidents.

Livingston South Ward – April – September 2018 recorded 223 incidents. Bathgate highest on 310 with Whitburn/Blackburn on 294.

**Housing**

Total Council housing stock in Livingston South

* Bellsquarry – 5
* Dedridge – 706
* Ladywell – 639
* Howden – 20

Turnover of stock is very low as it has been for some time. For three months July – September, Dedridge 12 Houses and Ladywell 7 houses re-let.

Newly constructed houses at Owen Square, Dedridge/Livingston Football Club near full completion and let. First Council housing built this century in Dedridge.

Homelessness – Currently costing 2M per annum for Hotel B&B. Council has agreed first iteration of Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan working with partners; especially RSL’s to seek to bring a resolution via intervention, prevention and housing options to stop homelessness happening in the first place.

Private landlord registration enforcement/implementation of Rent Penalty Notices – more robust measures now agreed by Council Executive.

**Bus Service**

Town centre Bus Station – the long on-going saga to the electric screens – power has been returned to the McArthur Glen side of the terminal and the information is accurate and functioning. The Centre side remains non-operational. Following further pressure with SESTRAN/SSUK, an electrician has been contracted to investigate and resolve the power outage. SSUK confirms the electrician will be on site week commencing 7 January 2019.

**Social Care**

Almost all Councils in Scotland charge for this service, excluding personal care.

Those who receive this care should be eligible for DLA/Personal Independence Payment/Attendance Allowance. These are non means tested benefits (savings are ignored). These payments are not a payment for disability/frailty but are to assist recipients pay for the care that they need.

**Council Budget**

Due to be set in February. WLC will have to sustain yet again a cut in core revenue budget based on December ’18 announcement by Scottish Government. We hope that Parliamentary pressure will result in additional allocation as budget bill has to be considered in Scottish Parliament on 31Jan, 6 Feb and 21 Feb 2019.

Both the Independent Accounts Commission and Audit Scotland have warned Council budgets are at ‘cliff edge’