**LIVINGSTON VILLAGE COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**MINUTE of MEEETING No 22 OF 7th APRIL 2016**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**. Brian Johnstone - Chair, Carole Robertson- Treasurer, Catherine Brown, Margaret McQueen, Dean Swift.

**GUESTS** Councillor Anne MacMillan, Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick (part time from item 10), PC Alan McMahon, Violet McGregor, Edward McGregor, Gordon Pennykid, Alan Strachan, Jill Wisekal, Shona McKenzie, Richard Lever, Georgie Hume.

1. **APOLOGIES** Apologies received from Alan Nicholson and Pat Strachan.
2. **MINUTE APPROVAL.** The draft minute of meeting 20 on 4th February 2016 requires some modifications as requested by Councillor Fitzpatrick. First he wished that his part time attendance be noted as from item 7 of the minute. Second that the item on school performance be more general as positive outcome from all secondary schools in Livingston. He has provided a spread sheet with outcomes from all secondary schools in West Lothian. Should anyone wish to view this please ask Brian for a copy. With these alterations the minute was approved by Margaret McQueen and seconded by Carole Robertson
3. **MATTERS ARISING** These would be covered in the report from Chair and agenda items. The exception being a resident raised item about a damaged lamp post in Maukeshill which was totally renewed within a week of LVCC raising a request for action with WLC Operational Services – well done to them- this was echoed by similar prompt action elsewhere to a resident’s request.
4. **POLICE REPORT** Brian agreed to adjust the agenda order to allow PC Alan McMahon to give his report early and leave the meeting since he was actually off duty. No stats were available but in the village itself matters seemed quiet. The travelling people had again been moved on. His focus at the moment was youths drinking etc in and around Eliburn Park. Alan noted concerns re parking at the village school and reported one driver received £100 fine and got points for parking on the pedestrian crossing. The main thrust should be to get pupils and parents to walk not drive. Litter was another reported issue but would be referred to the environmental warden.
5. **REPORTS FROM THE CHAIR**

***Buchanan House Update*** Manor Forrest have no further dealings with the site since Barratt Homes took over on 4th March 2016. Barratt appointed Central Demolition to clear the site starting on 29th March. Demolition and clearing is expected to take 10 to 12 weeks. So the first phase of housebuilding ( 29 units on the southern end of the site) should start in July

***Housing at the Stadium***  WLC housing department have not completed reviewing layouts and we shall be advised of changes. The 2 sites will be separated with the south one (College side) leading first and the northern one at the riverside a bit later. The planning officer seems to think the southern revised plan will be acceptable and asked if we might consider withdrawing our objection for this – but we will wait to see the revised proposal before considering this request.

***Health Matters*** NHS Lothian held a series of public meetings to debate the children services at St Johns. Jim Crombie of NHS came under a lot of fire from many erudite speakers emphasising the clear need for the services to be retained in full. The official NHS responses were vague and hedging and indeed hid behind the long awaited report. As yet no one has intimated a date for release of the report. Anne McMillan agreed the progress of the report was far from good and its delay was unsettling to all especially since the authors had now got all the required data. She went on to confirm that recruitment would again be a priority from the stakeholders meeting.

On the concerns at the new appointment system at the Howden practice there seemed to have been some improvement. Anne McMillan also felt the complaint level to her had died down a bit and she would seek some opinions before we consider any other actions. Brian had heard some rumours that some patients of the practice were having a meeting with staff but could not confirm this so would pursue this again before launching any other action.

***Fracking*** Brian and Dean had both attended a public meeting on this subject last Monday and Brian felt residents should be aware of this controversial gas extraction method. The general principle is to drill deep into shale reserves which abound in central Scotland and West Lothian in particular. Then to inject high volumes of water with chemicals at high pressure to shatter the rock thus releasing the gas. Because of concerns there is a Scottish government moratorium on issuing licenses for this process. Some licences have been issued but are thus inactive. The risks are chemical leaks which could be a public health hazard, disruption to geology leading to possible earth tremors and thirdly risk of injected chemicals contaminating underground water sources. There are assurances that with good regulations the risks could be minimised. However - there is inadequate real data to ensure the risks can be minimised. So the mood of a well-attended meeting including politicians for 4 political parties was very much against allowing wholesale fracking. There is a need for independent long term field trials before any release of moratorium. The main supporter of the process is Ineos – the Grangemouth operating company who hold most of the currently issued licences.

**6** **PLANNING LISTS & PLANNING ITEMS NOT COVERED BY REPORTS FROM CHAIR** The 5 weekly lists since last meeting amounted to 28 pages of applications but there were no items of interest or concern to LVC. Our lodged cautionary note for the 99 housing units at Old Cousland Road has been acknowledged by WLC so that item will also go to Committee.

The nursing home detailed application is still rumbling on with Planners waiting for the developer’s Edinburgh agent revising the elevation treatment of the building. Brian has established director level contact with this agent who has offered to attend one of our meetings. It was agreed to wait for the new proposals before seeking a meeting.

**7** **NEWS & UPDATES FROM ELECTED COUNCILLORS**

*Anne McMillan* Anne confirmed her input had been covered earlier under the health section. She reconfirmed the WLC budget had been agreed. In response to Margaret’s comments on why incur cost of new smaller landfill bins Anne explained WLC were committed to reduce amount going to landfill because of high costs and to accept a wider range for recycling and confirmed that households could get second blue bins on request from the department.

*Lawrence Fitzpatrick*. Although not present until nearer the meeting end his points are reported here. He reported that WLC had investigated plastic playing pitches in light of press reported health concerns and stated that none of the WLC pitches pose any health danger. Capability Scotland are holding an advice session for anyone with hearing impairment at Howden Centre on 3rd May from 6 :00pm. The housebuilding programme has slowed because of lack of money particularly to provide infrastructure and support for more houses.

**8 TREASURERS REPORT** Carole reported that approval of new signatories had been received and the grant cheque from WLC had been deposited in the account. Our current balance is thus £585.34.

**9** **SECRETARIAL MATTERS** Brian said the LVCC e mail had received 9 main items and a host of “social” items since last meeting. The main items worth listing for committee reading are Leader grants, Tesco plastic bag hand outs, Volunteer gateway survey, Faith Handbook, River Almond Barrier removal project, Training for community engagement.

Brian’s own e mail handled 48 incoming messages relating to LVCC and he sent out 36.

10 **WEB & IT MATTERS** Margaret reported the web site was up and running and she volunteered to add any item as requested. Twitter was busy with 121 or thereby contacts and Facebook with 42 items. She felt this social route would increase our exposure. Margaret to send copy accounts to Carole for recompense for the outlay in setting things up.

11 **AOCB** A resident has reported missing “poo” bins Brian to alert the relevant WLC crew.

The location of bins was debated and Brian was asked to enlist help from environmental wardens on this topic and also seek their comments on fly tipping.

Eliburn CC have been invited to join our next meeting although Anne felt this being one night after their own meeting they may not come so also offer them the June meeting,

A reminder that the Village Gala day is 11th June and volunteers are needed on the day and beforehand to assist with arrangements. Gordon Pennykid asked that the Gala day be an agenda item for our next meeting. Meantime to support funds there is a Beetle drive on 22nd April 2016

Catherine asked if pothole repairs could be arranged for the road to the Inn car park Brian would verify if this road is private or the responsibility of WLC.

Some debate took place around the suggestion that another shop such as Sainsbury could be viable in the area since there are to be 112 new house on Buchanan House site and a further 100 at Old Cousland Road

Dean raised the topic of replanting the square and volunteered to labour if plants could be sourced. Shona added her name to the volunteers. Gordon suggested Brian tries Barratts as they now have a presence as sponsors for plants.

12 **NEXT MEETING** The next meeting is on Thursday 5th May 2016 at 7:00 pm in the function room of Livingston Inn.

*Brian D Johnstone*

*11/04/16*