**LIVINGSTON VILLAGE COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**MINUTE of MEEETING No 25 OF 1st SEPTEMBER 2016**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**. Brian Johnstone - Chair, Catherine Brown, Dean Swift

**GUESTS** PC John McLean, Councillor Angela Moohan, Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick (part Time), Steve Egan – Chair of Eliburn CC, Gordon Pennykidd, Alan Strachan, Richard Lever, Georgie Hume, Vera Turnbull, Violet McGregor.

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1. **APOLOGIES** Apologies from Alan Nicholson, Carole Robertson and Shona MacKenzie.
2. **MINUTE APPROVAL.** The draft minute of meeting 24 on 2nd June 2016 was approved by Richard Lever and seconded by Georgie Hume.
3. **MATTERS ARISING** These would be covered in the report from Chair and agenda items
4. **REPORTS FROM THE CHAIR**

***Buchanan Gardens Update*** Central Demolition continue with the final demolition works and have over run their estimated duration which should now complete at the end of September – so please bear with the dust and noise for a bit longer. Brian spoke with Barratt earlier this week. Barratt now see their site occupation starting in October with the first house foundations appearing early in November.

***Nursing Home*** Planning consent was granted in June. Brian spoke with the Randolf Hill agent this week and has had confirmation that site works will not start until the Gullane building opens in spring/summer 2017 with an estimated opening date here around late 2018. So not much activity here for a while.

***Housing proposal for remainder of the KBC site.***  Brian was unable to get an update this week but senses that the approval process has stalled for whatever reason - update at next meeting

***Village Square*** Brian reported that the plants lovingly planted by Shona and Dean in June were still thriving and looking good. He continued by suggesting these plants are replaced with bulbs at the season end. This was approved by the meeting so Brian or Dean would source a mixture via trade catalogues. Earlier this week Brian had wire brushed and cleaned the phone box exterior and got a red undercoat applied. Showery weather had prevented the finished gloss coat but Brian would complete this as soon as possible. (Post meeting note – Box now looking good with final gloss 05/09/16)

***Health*** The long awaited report on St John’s Paediatric service had been published in favour of retaining a 24/7 service but staff shortages were still making the service a bit fragile however the search for additional staff would continue. The changes to staffing and a revised consultation booking system had improved the appointments and service at Howden Medical Centre.

**5** **PLANNING LISTS & PLANNING ITEMS NOT COVERED BY REPORTS FROM**

Nothing of interest or concern to our area in the lists since last meeting. Out of interest the August lists added up to 30 pages and covered 81 separate planning applications for West Lothians

In neighbouring Eliburn the 90 flats proposed for the area north of the Jehova Witness Hall on Appleton Parkway received a planning refusal.

The application for change of use for the Hairdresser to a car rental base in Folyburn had also been refused but now there is a new application for the same premises for a hot food take away!!

The 2 planning applications for housing on the land to north and south of Lidl’s store were granted planning approval at the June committee meeting. Our representation and attendance as speaker against the proposals at the meeting had no effect on the outcome.

Brian had followed up some resident concerns over 2 garages being built at 44/5 Kirkfield East. These have been constructed to house standard rather than garage spec so will they become an occupied Building??? Brian has arranged that the planning case officer instructs a planning enforcement officer to visit the premises week commencing 5thSept.

**6 POLICE REPORT**

PC John McLean one of our Community Ward Officers attended and reported as follows.

Several instances of wheelie bin theft and burning in the wooded areas adjacent to the river had finally been stopped after multiple reported concerns. The culprits had been dealt with and were not local in the main coming in from a well scattered hinterland.

A number of go kart thefts from the Mill Farm complex had occurred - again culprits have been charged with the thefts and the property has been returned to rightful owners without significant damage

August had 25 police call outs to the village areas but most of these were for the above 2 specifics - the other 2 notables were car thefts following house break-ins to uplift the keys – so don’t leave them handy near the doors!!

There were some calls re bad parking by the school pick up parents – something of a national problem which generated a lengthy debate with us – unfortunately with no magical solution

**7 NEWS & UPDATES FROM ELECTED COUNCILLORS**

Councillor Moohan reinforced the perilous state of children’s services at St John’s due to shortage of doctors nationally. She also reported some improvement at Howden with the introduction of paramedic and clinical nurses.

The travelling people near to the Old Toll House were posing problems with WLC since they are on a high way. The road had effectively been blocked with bollards but apparently these were illegally installed and have been removed as a consequence there is additional access from the roundabout end of the road.

Councillor Fitzpatrick reported all secondary schools in West Lothian had good results consolidating previous year’s improvements. He hinted at some disquiet as to the proposed new feature for Head Teacher roles relative to budget control and increased parental involvement – more of this at a later date. He intimated a new act to cover Strategic Planning was expected and the unnerving aspect of this could be more central decision making contrary to local wishes which is counter-productive to local more detailed knowledge. He indicated some local success with the wilderness area near Bellsquarry where local decisions had been upheld against centralised wishes

**8 TREASURERS REPORT** Carole could not attend but reported current balance is £364.73.

**9** **WEB & IT MATTERS** No report since no show from Margaret and no apologies either**.**

**10** **SECRETARIAL MATTERS** Brian unfortunately ran out of time to analyse the incoming items over the time from last meeting but promised to do better next time. Any salient points would appear in AOCB.

**11**  **AOCB**

Eliburn CC had tackled some problems of excessive vegetation growth over pathways obstructing passage and also limiting lighting from overgrowth to the street lamps. Steve to forward contact details at WLC to Brian who had a similar problem in LVCC patch with thorns near to a children’s park

Dean Swift intimated that the AGM of the Community Wing Letting Group for LV Primary would be on 23rd September and asked for volunteers to consider joining this team.

Gordon Pennykid informed that Rev Smith retires on 25th September and at present the post is vacant at the church, also that the Christmas tree lighting will be on 9th December.

Vera Turnbull – supported by others - felt the bus services were now so drastically altered and cut as to hamper travel. Brian would ask that a bus company representative attend one of our meetings. This issue is of great concern to a wider area since on the one hand we are told to use public transport yet on the other the service is not acceptable . There is a need for major public debate on transport policy.

Catherine Brown asked for a progress report on a local shop. Brian apologised for not chasing Sainsbury on this but would do so and widen the enquiry to include others.

Lawrence intimated a potential rise to Community Tax to some but not all of the Council Bands – This came as surprise news and Brian would try to get some amplification on this

**12** **NEXT MEETING** Next meeting will be on **Thursday 6th October at 7:00 pm** in the function room of Livingston Inn.

*Brian D Johnstone*

*06/09/16*