**LIVINGSTON VILLAGE COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**MINUTE of MEETING No 31 6th APRIL 2017**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**. Brian Johnstone - Chair, Catherine Brown, Carole Robertson – Treasurer, Dean Swift. [4]

**GUESTS** Jo Kilcoyne of WLWA, Vera Turnbull, Violet McGregor, Pam Scot, Kirsty Kane, Shona Mckenzie Eric Mitchell, Alan Strachan, Ben McCosh, Colin McLellan . [10]

1. **APOLOGIES** Apologies had been received from 3 Councillors - Anne McMillan, Andrew Miller and Lawrence Fitzpatrick.
2. **MINUTE RATIFICATION AND APPROVAL.** Since the quorum was not met at the last meeting due to inadequate members (2) Brian asked the 2 other members for retrospective approval for continuing that meeting. Carole and Dean agreed to this . The previous meeting minute was then approved by Catherine and seconded by Alan Strachan.
3. **MATTERS ARISING** These will be covered in the report from Chair and agenda items.
4. **PRESENTATION** Jo Kilcoyne, a fund raising officer with West Lothian Women’s Aid gave a presentation on the works of WLWA. A charity providing refuge to women and their children fleeing domestic abuse. Although this has been established and running for many years a new initiative is spreading the word to wider audiences. Several requests from attendees for notices and information on voluntary help were made so the spread should now grow wider still. Brian thanked Jo for attending and her informative chat to deliver the message to everyone and especially to those affected by this heinous crime
5. **POLICE REPORT** (taken out of agenda order to allow police representative to leave quickly) PC Alan McMahon passed the most recent crime stats round the meeting. These varied little from previous periods with one spike in vandalism and youth problems centred in Eliburn – reason for spike not known but attention is being focussed on the park areas. Alan mentioned some difficulties with the travelling people within Livingston and this prompted a discussion on this topic.
6. **REPORTS FROM THE CHAIR**

***Road Safety matters.*** Brian met with Graeme Noble and Gordon Brown on 23rd march to try to develop the rather inadequate correspondence since we raised 6 topics last October. In summary some answers, some stalling and few actions. On each of our raised issues the outcomes are:-

School layby improvements – WLC consider no action needed since incident frequency and accident record does not warrant any attention.

Priority junction lines in Kirk Lane – Graeme and Gordon did not think any action was warranted and were surprised to learn the works had already been successfully done.

Additional pavements for Kirkton Road North and a road crossing for Kirkton Road South have now been added to get further consideration as and when funds become available.

Unauthorised traffic using bus route through the bus station – WLC unwilling to strengthen the signage to “No Entry except buses” status because of need for vehicle offloading and emergency services access. However they will recommend additional police enforcement.

Congestion /Gridlocking on the routes from multi story car park through past Currys etc. WLC have a reluctance to consider any redesign here to improve traffic flow and rid the frustration factor of driving this route at busy shopping times. The reason given is that removing the narrowing would potentially increase speed and risk of accidents. WLC consider this is primarily a pedestrian area for shoppers so vehicle speed must be kept low. They did agree to monitor the area some more and also check the no right turn signage into the multi story is enhanced and enforced more. We cannot see any point in pursuing these items any more so will drop these out of our agenda – for a while.

***Unconventional oil and gas*** ***extraction in particular Fracking.*** Brian raised this topic again since the Scottish Government’s Consultation on this does not close until the end of May 2017. Brian outlined the listed advantages and the many unknowns associated with the extraction techniques and also the many potential risks. Brian plus 2 other professionals in the audience with career experiences enabling some reasoned appraisal all expressed their concerns and would support an outright ban on the fracking technique within the central belt of Scotland. Dean passed round a number of papers giving descriptions of the techniques and the potential impacts on many aspect. Brian was aware that the WLC report on fracking on the agenda for a recent Transport and Development PDSP meeting concluded against allowing Fracking. After some further discussion it was agreed Brian would draft a LVCC reply and circulate this to all those on the e mail circulation list for comments

***Update on actions by the Chair since last meeting.*** Brian briefly summarised these as:-

Drafted and circulated 3 representations for the consultations on Scottish Government Planning Review, WLC supplementary planning guidance on Housing and Green Networks. Nobody had made any comments by Brian’ deadline so he has submitted these as they were. He responded to 2 on line surveys on Literacy and the Scottish CC website. Sent supportive letter to the Calder Wood upgrading and forward maintenance proposals. Sent a letter of support to the HMRC campaign to retain the Livingston and Bathgate offices. Visited Buchanan Gardens site, the Hunter Road site and viewed the daffodil displays in our planters. Assisted the Kilandean Allotments team with a challenge to their “bad” neighbours.

***Participation in “Policing2026”.*** We have been asked to take part on the consultation being run by Police Scotland on their future strategy. So far we only have the presentation papers but need to find the actual strategy and consultation questionnaire. Consultation deadline is 08/05/17. Brian to research these and again draft a response for circulation to all on the email listing.

**7** **PLANNING LISTS & PLANNING ITEMS NOT COVERED BY REPORTS FROM THE CHAIR**

***Weekly Planning Lists.***  Since our last meeting the lists totalled 85 applications. Nothing of concern the LVCC area – just interest – 3 retrospective items for Fleet Services, one house extension and a fish ladder at Kirkton weir to ease fish migration upstream.

***Barratts***  As all can see they are moving fast with house building in Buchanan Gardens – the first 2 houses have already been sold with entry about June. On Old Cousland Road although Barratt have now no purchase contract with WLC they wish to obtain planning approval having paid a non-returnable fee. The approval process is now moving slower and we will be informed before any approval is considered by WLC.

***Housing at former Kirkton Business Centre.*** The section 75 completion has lapsed. Case officer wishes another conversation with owner Mr Huss prior to putting this back to the Development Management Committee – possibly on the May agenda – slipped back another month!

***Preplanning consultation on proposed housing at Hunters Road by Persimmon.*** The demolition works were complete and the site cleared at the start of March. Brian had spotted and reported the theft of the gates to one entrance and requested blocking off the road to prevent any unwanted squatters. Persimmon seem to be going even slower and say they are still negotiating site purchase before activating the public consultation. David Jinks sounded a bit vague when Brian spoke with him.

**8 NEWS & UPDATES FROM ELECTED COUNCILLORS**

None present so no reports.

**9 TREASURERS REPORT** Carole reported we had received our annual grant for £285 which took our bank balance to a healthy £614.73.

**10** **WEB & IT MATTERS** Margaret did not make the meeting so no report

**11** **SECRETARIAL MATTERS** Since the last meeting the LVCC email in box had received 14 relevant messages and a host of social media items. Brian’s own e mail took 59 incoming messages relating to LVCC and he sent out 43 – a busy month. The following topics were among the received items to our in-box

Another attempt is to be made to resurrect the WL Association of Community Councils which fell by the wayside in 2015 – we shall support this.

We have an invite to join the BIDS gathering in Perth but since our area is not listed as a BID then we will not attend.

An updating Forth Estuary newsletter was received – no action

We have been advised of the WL Leader grant programmes but we do not qualify.

**12**  **AOCB**

Our bulb planting has developed into a great display so thanks again to our planting team of Shona and Dean.

Buses were raised again and Brian agreed to follow up the Transport Ministers proposal to re bid services.

A question was raised on the flightpath consultation but there seemed to be no mind to join the consultation on this.

A suggestion was tabled that snack bars be made to increase the use of degradable or compostable packaging.

LVCC to log a report on the indiscriminate car parking at the new Gym on double yellow lines in Meikle Road.

Again we are to raise the fly tipping issue with the enforcement team.

A request is to be made for a sweeper and vegetation clearance in the Hunter Road to Kaims Grove approach.

**13 NEXT MEETING** Our next meeting is **Thursday 4th May 2017at 7:00 pm** in the function room of Livingston Inn. Our guest speaker will be Lorna Bryson or Richard Fish from The Cyreneans

*Brian D Johnstone*

*12/04/17*