

**LIVINGSTON VILLAGE COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTE of MEETING on 3rd MARCH 2022**

PRESENT:

MEMBERS: Diane Loughlin – Chair, Brian Johnstone – Vice Chair, Dean Swift – Secretary, Jacqueline Conway, Catherine Brown

GUESTS: Theo Georgiou

COUNCIL ATTENDEES: Councillor Alison Adamson, Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick (part, not present during planning secretary's report)

APOLOGIES: Councillor Maria MacAulay, Councillor Moira Shemilt (see item 5.3), Margaret McQueen, Carole Robertson, Kirstin Shemilt

ITEMS:

Action

1.0 MINUTE APPROVAL

1.1 Minutes of last meeting, February 2022: motion to approve by Jackie Conway, seconded Brian Johnstone.

1.1.1 AA questioned item 5.3.3 regarding the amount of child allowance, saying it should be £20, not £80 as in the minutes. The figure, as supplied by Councillor MS was for the Scottish Child Payment.

2.0 REPORTS FROM THE CHAIR:

2.1 Although DL had no specific items to report she wanted to record concern over the current Ukrainian situation, and that our thoughts are with Ukraine. She was also proud of Scotland's response. JC reported that the local response has been overwhelming. There is also a WLC web page for more information on helping with relief. LF said that money is also required.

3.0 PLANNING REPORT (Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick not present)

3.1 Glen Turner– The proposals, although rejected by WLC, have been granted on appeal by the Scottish Government. This means the blackening of trees, signs, buildings etc. will increase. Apparently, there is a condition that the developer must clean within a certain distance, but this does not include new build. The only way to object now is to write to the Scottish Government.

3.2 NPF 4 – BJ could not attend first session but will attend the second one in due course.

3.3 Land at Charlesfield Lane - A Proposal of Application Notice has been submitted by Hypostyle Architects on behalf of Dundas Estates and Development Co. for the erection of approximately 50 houses on land at the south end of Charlesfield Lane, where the current office block is located. DS to forward information to all and arrange for it to be put on Facebook.

DS

4.0 POLICE REPORT

4.1 no report

4.2 Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick has told the new commander that Community Councils are disappointed at no representative being available.

4.0 **NEWS AND UPDATES FROM ELECTED COUNCILLORS**

5.1 Councillor Alison Adamson:

5.1.1 Donations for Ukraine. The council has set up a contact for inquiries www.westlothian.gov.uk/help-for-Ukraine. That will be the first point to contact for further details. I know the school is also making arrangements.

5.1.2 The new green bins are due to arrive in May/ June. These will be for all recycling except paper and cardboard. The blue bins will take the paper as normal. 4 weekly uplifts alternating blue and green bins. People can ask for extra recycling bins if they require them. This scheme is the twin stream recycling initiative and will mean better recycling as contaminated recycling should no longer be a problem as before.

5.1.3 Council tax bills being sent out from 7 March by email to email-customers and paper bill customers should get their bills from 10 March. The council tax reduction scheme and housing benefit letters will also be processed at this time.

5.1.4 Great to report the zebra crossing and all the road markings in Kirk Lane are now completed! (also see item 10.1)

5.1.5 Applications are currently open for this year's Place Based Investment Fund. The one suitable for Community Councils is the Town Centre Capital Fund of which £3312 has been allocated to our area. The deadline for applications is 22 April 2022. DL suggested a meeting soon of those who are interested to pursue it. **ALL**

5.2. Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick

5.2.1 The situation regarding the new bins was discussed (see item 5.1.2 above), instructions from WLC will be made available.

5.2.2 Budget - along with all other councils in Scotland it was evidenced that the Scottish Government allocation to councils was £371m short. Following a meeting between Council Leaders and the First Minister on an all-party basis, an additional £120m was obtained. This gave WLC £3.938m and council (on a split vote) allocated £1m to essential road repairs, £1.4m to welfare/homelessness, £550k to jobs fund and £425k to domestic abuse/women's safety.

5.2.3 A council tax increase of 3% has been agreed for 2022/23. Council bands a-d will get £150 from government.

5.2.4 LF noted that there are strict criteria being applied by the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service to install smoke alarms in residential dwellings. The SFRS have no equipment in stock which meets the required specification and he is aware of cases where eligible applicants are very worried about home insurance cover in event of fire.

5.2.5 Free school meals – WLC are in the same position as other councils of not being able to provide free school meals for P6/7 as the funds for kitchen/dining extensions and for staff have not been provided by Scottish Government to bring this into effect for the August 2022 intake. Scottish Government has now delayed the implementation date. (also see item 5.3.6)

5.3 Councillor Moria Shemilt: (not present but provided a report)

- 5.3.1 DS read out the main points of Councillor Moria Shemilt's report and stated that a fuller version will be in the minutes.
- 5.3.2 There have been long-standing issues with the management of tree belts in Kaims. I currently have a constituent in Kaims Place worried about the trees directly behind his house. If anyone on the Community Council also has concerns about this particular patch of trees, would they be good enough to contact me.
- 5.3.2 Livingston at 60 - West Lothian Council is in the process of organising several events in order to celebrate the Town's sixtieth birthday. These will include:
- A concert to take place at a venue in Livingston for invited guests
 - Livingston at 60, Heritage Project. This will involve the local community in a celebration of the new towns heritage and will include a 60th tea party at Almond Valley Heritage Centre which will include an exhibition, tours, and reminiscences; an exhibition at the Wee Museum of Memory at The Centre with opportunities to share and record memories and reminiscences and the development of a documentary marking 60 years of new town life which will be shown at Howden Park Centre. This project is funded by Museum Galleries Scotland and is being run in partnership with Almond Valley Heritage Trust and the Living Memory Association.
 - A week of business celebration. Business Gateway will offer a week of activity in promoting enterprise and business support for Livingston's 60th anniversary celebrations recognising the business achievements throughout the last 60 years. A range of workshops and webinars will be available to attend for free as well as access to business advisers and specialist advisers offering a wide range of support.
 - Multi-sports Festival. To bring together schools and community clubs to celebrate Livingston's 60th anniversary through sport.
 - Guided Ranger Walks that showcase Livingston
 - Secondary and Primary Schools in Livingston will be asked to create their own short videos celebrating 60 years of life in Livingston. Selected/winning entries will be shown at Howden Park Centre at the same time as the documentary screening
 - Open Doors Day. Schools and public buildings in Livingston will be open to all generations, COVID guidelines permitting, and any businesses who may wish to participate can get involved to allow residents in Livingston in to visit.
- 5.3.3 Livingston Youth Trust, Livingston 60 funding opportunity - I am a member of the above small trust which provides support to young Livingston residents with skills in the field of Sport, Music or the Arts. As a one-off endeavour, to celebrate the 60th Anniversary, the trust has decided to provide the sum of £6060 towards initiatives or events, which commemorates the anniversary and which aims to benefit young people in Livingston. There will be 6 amounts of £1,010 available. More information will be widely circulated, at a later date, with details of application and entry criteria.
I wish to prime the Livingston Community Council about this funding, thinking about the excellent Halloween and Christmas events that have been put on lately by the Gala Committee. The Committee may have excellent ideas on an event or project which would meet the criteria and might wish to apply for the funding.
I will keep the Community Council abreast of developments.

- 5.3.4 (ref item 5.1.3, bins) – There will be a new bin arrangement, More information and updates on the roll out of the new bins can be found on the dedicated webpage available on the West Lothian Council website: <https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/bin-changes>.
- 5.3.5 (ref item 3.3) - I have been contacted by developers about an application for the erection of a residential development comprising approximately 50 dwellings at Charlesfield Lane.
- 5.3.6 Free school meals - In the 2021/22 Scottish budget, the government announced that they will provide free school meals for all P4 to P7 children, in addition to the existing free P1-3 provision. This expansion is to be delivered on a phased basis. The Scottish government has provided the council with revenue and capital funding to provide free school meals to P4 and P5 children. The next phase has yet to be announced. The increase in meal uptake has necessitated significant capital works in some schools in the county. It is anticipated that the works will be carried out during the Easter holidays. £900,000 of capital funding has been allocated to WLC for the roll out of school meals.
- 5.3.7 More inclusive council - It is my firm belief that any local authority should reflect the diversity of the community which it serves. Only 29% of councillors are female for example, while the majority of those employed by the council are women. As someone who is hearing impaired, in my 5 years as an elected member I have often thought about the barriers to participation for elected members, or prospective members with a disability. At the full council meeting on 15 February, I put forward a motion requesting that a short life working group be set up to consider how the council could be more inclusive. My motion was passed and I will co-chair a cross party working group. The group will call upon a range of organisations with particular specialisms, including race, disability and gender. The group is scheduled to report to the new administration before the summer recess.

6.0 **TREASURER'S REPORT**

- 6.1 SB, new treasurer, to receive books from CR, report will follow at next meeting.
- 6.2 SB requested a "job specification". (post meeting note, DS forwarded the WLC's guidance for officials).

7.0 **WEB & IT MATTERS**

- 7.1 MM was not in attendance, DS reported that he is liaising with MM to put items on Facebook and the LVCC web site.

8.0 **SECRETARIAL MATTERS**

- 8.1 Emails received in LVCC inbox: information about Fairtrade Fortnight and 2022 census. DS has forwarded details to all LVCC members and past guests.
- 8.2 DS repeated that WLC has set up a help Ukraine website.
- 8.3 The Local Licensing Forum has announced that if anyone wishes to know more details regarding licensing there is a web site to contact. DS to circulate. **DS**
- 8.4 See item 7.1 above.

9.0 GALA DAY COMMITTEE

- 9.1 The AGM was held two weeks ago. A few new people have joined.
- 9.2 This year's theme will be Livi Village goes loud after lockdown. There will be bands and events such as a pet show, young men vs old men football and a fun run. There will be a Gala Queen and King, and an entourage.
- 9.3 Current balance is £5856, much of this will be spent on the Gala Day arrangements.
- 9.4 JC informed everyone that the preparations for Gala Day will commence at 9:00am on the day, all help is appreciated!

10.0 AOCB

- 10.1 Following discussion earlier about the zig zags being re-painted at the nursery, JC suggested a letter be written to the nursery pointing out that cars are still parking on the lines. It was noted that some of this is for pick up from the school. TG reminded the meeting that the police have stated they do not have the staff to enforce parking infringements. **DL**
- 10.2 Apparently one person did not get a Christmas hamper. It was noted that under data protection rules a list of current people receiving hampers cannot be kept.

11.0 NEXT MEETING

- 11.1 Our next meeting will be held on **Thursday, April 7th, 2022, at 7:00pm** in the function room of the Livingston Inn.

Dean Swift

4 March 20

