**LIVINGSTON VILLAGE COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**MINUTE of MEEETING No 21 OF 3rd March 2016**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**. Brian Johnstone - Chair, Carole Robertson- Treasurer, Catherine Brown.

**GUESTS** Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick (part time), PC John MacLean, Violet McGregor, Edward McGregor, Eric Mitchell, Colin McLellan, Pam Scott, Anna McMahon, Jim McMahon, Pat Strachan, Alan Strachan, K Kane, R Gillies, A Ramage, D Ramage.

1. **APOLOGIES** Apologies received from Councillor Anne MacMillan, Councillor Angela Moohan, Alan Nicholson, Gordon Pennykid, Margaret McQueen, Annette Logan.
2. **MINUTE APPROVAL.** The draft minute of meeting 20 on 4th February 2016 requires the addition of Catherine Brown’s name to the list of tendered apologies. With this alteration the minute was approved by Catherine Brown and seconded by Carole Robertson
3. **MATTERS ARISING** These would be covered in the report from Chair and agenda items
4. **REPORTS FROM THE CHAIR**

***Buchanan House Update*** Despite one lodged objection the twin housing proposals were granted planning approval under delegated powers without the need to go to committee, formal issue of the notices being 26th February. Brian was unable to speak with site owner Manor Forest but thinks that Barratt take over the site on 4th March with demolition start imminen.

***Kirkton Business Centre*** The demolition contractor has now completed the demolition of the buildings and is disposing of the rubble etc off site. Thus KBC will be dropped from our agenda and be replaced by the detailed planning application for the nursing home and later for the 29 houses. We have lodged an official objection to the mass and elevation treatment for the proposed 60 bed nursing home building. Our concerns are shared by the planning officer who has held a meeting with the Edinburgh agent for the nursing home and he is consequently relooking at the detailed treatment for the building. This application will now be subject to a committee decision at some future date

***Housing at the Stadium***  WLC housing department are still reviewing layouts and we shall be advised of any changes. It is likely that the 2 sites will be separated with the south one (College side) first and the northern one at the riverside a bit later. Planning officer seems to think the southern revised plan will be more acceptable – but we will wait to see the revised proposal. Decision will be at a Development Management Meeting but is not on the March agenda.

***Health Matters*** After pressure from Community Councils and the public in general NHS Lothian is having a series of public meetings to debate the children services at St Johns For West Lothian the venue is Howden Park Centre at 6:30 pm on Mon 7th March and 2:00 pm on Wed 9th March. The survey remains open on the web until 18th March.

Again a number of residents raised concerns at the new and unacceptable appointment booking system at the Howden practice. Jim Forest NHS director took the comments on board and would report back. A suggestion here could be to invite the Head of the Practice to attend one of our meetings. This to be tabled and decision made at our April Meeting.

Brian mentioned there was a comprehensive monthly report issued by Ian Buchanan as chair of the West Lothian Public Partnership Forum for Health & Care. If anybody would like to see copies contact Brian (2 did so copies have been e mailed to them)

***Tree matters at Cousland Road and the Kaims area*** Brian met with WLC tree specialist Craig Sinclair at the property concerned in Kirkfield East where he and the resident learned that the tree belt is confirmed to be in WLC land and thus they have a duty of care to look after the trees. This however is restricted to dealing with unsafe specimens and 5 to 10 year thinning – due in 2021 for Cousland Rod. Craig promised a written summary of WLC tree policy and action within a month to remove excess ivy from adjacent trees and suggested that residents could cut back branches overhanging their property provided it is done by professional tree pruners.

At Kaims there seems to be impass. The 2 strips where unwanted pruning and felling took place are in private hands and thus WLC has no powers to impose on the owners and can only politely request that as goodwill they replant young trees to replace the felled ones. Just today Brian got a written statement from Chris Norman of WLC in response to his request dated 12th Jan 2016 for update and meeting. The statement reads “I can confirm that I am proposing no further action in respect of tree removal at Kaims at this stage. If tree felling continues I would review this position”

5 **PLANNING LISTS & PLANNING ITEMS NOT COVERED BY REPORTS FROM CHAIR** The 4 weekly lists since last meeting amounted to some 29 pages of applications but there were no items of interest or concern to LVC. We did lodge a cautionary note for the 99 housing units at Old Cousland Road in the hope that some conditions would be applied to the approval process.

6 **POLICE REPORT** PC John McLean attended as one of the 2 allocated community police for Livingston North Ward – the other being Alan McMahon. He confirmed the new Chief Inspector is Stephen Dolan. The new community team based at Broxburn is now active. PC McLean intimated there had been 7 reported incidents in the village area this month and 26 from the start of the year.

7 **NEWS & UPDATES FROM ELECTED COUNCILLORS**

 *Lawrence Fitzpatrick* Lawrence reported the WLC budget had been agreed and approved. He intimated that the Central Government were calling in any planning applications where appeals exist. In some instances Scottish Government are approving developments that WLC have refused. There is a danger here that local knowledge and comments are being ignored centrally which defeats the purpose of local government. The imposed need for houses is driving this issue. Lawrence would copy Brian with the relevant letter.

Lawrence also indicated some of the school assessment figures which placed Linlithgow Academy as the lead secondary in West Lothian followed by James Young High School. Also that Toronto Primary extension works to the tune of £2.2M were under way.

8 **SECRETARIAL MATTERS** Brian said our e mail had received 9 main items and 40 + tweets since last meeting. Of the 9 - 2 were invitations to meetings - NHS and fracking - ,1 about grants I on paths and 1 on good places

9 **WEB & IT MATTERS** Margaret was not able to attend so no report. Margaret to liaise with Carole for recompense for the outlay in setting things up.

10 **AOCB** Brian will attend Eliburn CC meeting on 9th March

 There will be a public Meeting about Fracking in West Lothian College on Monday 4th April. This is the controversial gas extraction method where a drilled well is injected with high pressure chemical laden fluid to crack underground rock to release gas.

 Planting and phone box remedials will be on next agenda – some volunteers would be appreciated.

 A reminder that the Village Gala day is 11th June and volunteers are need on the day and beforehand to assist with arrangements. Their next committee meeting is 8th March here at 2:00pm

A resident in Maukshill asked if we could apply pressure on WLC lighting section to deal with a potentially dangerous severed lamppost outside no 44. This had been cut and taped over pre CChristmas. Brian would contact the relevant team.

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

*Brian D Johnstone*

*12/03/16*