

LOANHEAD & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL
Minutes of ZOOM meeting on 13th April 21

Present: Gina Temple, David Temple, Norrie Scott, Peter Frame, Suzie McFadden, Pat Kenny, John Thompson, Paul Mephram, Ruth Stephen, Councillors Pauline Winchester and Russell Imrie. Susie McFadden introduced herself to the meeting, she had organized a Litter Lift earlier in the month with 80 volunteers lifting 106 bags of rubbish.

1. **Apologies:** None.
2. **Minutes of previous meeting:** Norrie Scott proposed and Peter Frame seconded.
3. **Matters arising:**
 - 24 Hawthorn Gardens– Still no response about widening the pavement to 2m along the front of this site. Russell to arrange a site visit with the planning officer and Norrie to take this forward.
 - Hunter Avenue is still closed to traffic and no work has started. It was agreed it was unacceptable for a public road to be closed so long and it was suggested that it could be opened up as a single carriageway with temporary traffic lights if need be. Russell agreed to pursue this.
 - The CC Recruitment Poster and Gala Day advert were approved.
4. **Loanhead Gala Day Support** – it was agreed to support the Gala Day by arranging for a banner from the CC which Gina & David Temple agreed could be erected in their garden.
5. **Changes to the Constitution.** Gina reported that we need to change our Constitution to reflect that ZOOM meetings are properly constituted meetings. She also reported that the MFCC had carried out a banking survey of the CCs and it is now possible for Treasurer’s Accounts to be on-line with Bank of Scotland and Virgin Money under a “Dual Authorisation” procedure where the Treasurer creates the payment, and the second signatory authorises it. John Thompson said his preference was to remain with the cheque book as he then had a paper trail for audit purposes. David Temple proposed and Norrie Scott seconded the motion to amend the Constitution to allow ZOOM meetings to be properly constituted and it was agreed by all.
6. **Core Path Repair**

Ruth reported a repair required on the railway path to James Kinch at Midlothian Council but was told there was a dispute as to who was responsible for this stretch. Norrie had obtained a quotation from the Council to submit for Participatory Budgeting funds to lay gravel along 300m of the path leading to Straiton Wildlife Pond. However, Nature Scot have put out a funding call for core paths. Applications are open now and have to be submitted by 30th June 2021, work to be started early 2022 and completed by December 2022. Russell agreed to look into this to see if either or both would be eligible as it was not clear if only the landowner could apply.
7. **Participatory Budget Applications**
 - **Straiton Nature Reserve Path - £11000.** Improvements to the top path through Straiton Nature Reserve was costed at **£11,000** for the worst 300m. However, if it was extended to the steps down to the Edgefield Relief the cost would be **£15,500** for 420m. Quote obtained from Midlothian Council.
 - **Heritage Trail Phase 1 - £5000.** The Heritage Trail will be a long term project. Phase 1 - to get the Heritage Trail started - 10 x 12” cast aluminium plaques = £3600 + VAT, with installation costs. producing leaflets and maps we estimate a budget of £5000 will cover this. The quote for the plaques was obtained from Ward Signs and are maintenance free. However, further research will be carried out to source a company in Scotland. More plaques, street sign posts,

viewpoint and heritage information boards could be added at later stages and eventually benches placed around the trail.

- **Loanhead Litter Pickers.** 50 x litter pickers @ £5.75 = £287.50 + VAT, but if this could be procured via the Council there would be no VAT cost.
8. **MTRaP Update** - Norrie reported that the last meeting discussed larger gritting bins and their operation, roads capital expenditure, core paths blocked by landowners and speeding.
9. **Any other competent business**
- SESTRAN Survey - The questionnaire has to be submitted by 19th April 2021. Gina asked for everyone to email her with items to include.
 - Mavisbank House Redevelopment – Ruth and Norrie had both gone along to the filming earlier in the month. The plan is for a small coffee kiosk and toilets to be included in the proposal but access from Loanhead is still a problem.
 - Dog Fouling – Ruth reported that the waste bins for dog litter are overflowing. Russell said he had passed on our comments to council officers and was still waiting a response.
 - Traffic Congestion at Dryden Terrace/Pentland Road Bus Gate this street is being used as a shortcut because of the current restrictions on the A701. Residents’ report speeding vehicles, damage to parked vehicles and even HGVs using the street. The Council had carried out a survey amongst residents of Dryden Terrace and they voted overwhelmingly for the road to remain a one way. Pat suggested that either a new survey of the whole area is done, or cameras installed to catch and fine drivers going the wrong way through the bus gate.
 - Traffic congestion at IKEA, Costco – it was felt there was very little could be done about this.
 - Traffic congestion at McDonalds, Straiton Retail Park – because McDonalds is only open for takeaway this is causing queuing traffic to block the road holding up cars, buses etc. Norrie suggested re-routing the no. 37 bus to Loanhead Road instead of going through the retail park. Pat said that the bus stops within the retail park were always busy.
 - John Thomson reported we had received our £300 grant for this year from Midlothian Council.
 - Susie McFadden asked what happened to the “Slow Down” signs that were at the entrance to Loanhead – these were removed by the developer and this would be discussed further at next month’s meeting.
 - Paul Mepham highlighted concerns from a Pentland Park resident that the site owners were breaching the terms of their licence. Pauline advised him to put the concerns in writing to one of the councillors and they would ask council officers to investigate. Russell indicated that the best way to tackle any issues on the park would be to form a Resident’s Association to take them forward.

10. Planning

- A meeting was held with representatives of Roslin & Bilston, Damhead and ourselves to discuss and compile a joint letter to Planning re the major developments on the Straiton Corridor. The letter was sent to Peter Arnsdorf, Stephen Iannarelli, Councillors Imrie, Parry, Winchester, Colin Beattie MSP and Owen Thompson MP – so far we have received an acknowledgement from Councillor Winchester and Colin Beattie wrote to the Council supporting our concerns. The Planning Meeting was broadcast on Teams but with only 2 hours’ notice and the New Pentland proposal 21.00055/PAC was discussed. The papers for the meeting were published on line and the Planning Officer’s conclusions were “It is considered that the mixed use development could compromise strategic objectives in the Midlothian Development Plan that require the openness and character of the countryside to be maintained and the amenity of existing park home residents to be protected.” “Notwithstanding this, and prior to any potential support, developer contributions and conditions would be required to secure infrastructure improvements, including: road infrastructure improvements (ie the A701 Relief Road and the

A702 link road), strategic cross-boundary transport infrastructure (under MLDP policy TRAN 2) and in line with Transport Scotland's requirements as trunk road operator), access and junction improvements (including footpaths and cycleways), education provision, landscaping, open space, green networks, water and drainage infrastructure, equipped children's play provision and adequate affordable housing (at least 25%).

- 21/00171/DPP Inveravon Hotel - Pat Kenny had telephoned and emailed Graeme King (the planning officer assigned to this planning application) but had not received any response. Norrie registered an interest in this as the proposed new build backs on to his own property. He and his neighbours had registered objections as to the height of the new build proposed and he had met with the architect to discuss his concerns. He was also informed that the owner intends to submit another planning application for Mayburn House.
- 21/00096/DPP – 25 Hunter Avenue change of use of public open space to private garden ground and extension to dwelling house – Pat agreed to check this out.
- 21/00220/SCR EIA screening opinion for mixed use development at Site Ec3 West Straiton (Straiton West Development).
- 21/00237/SCR – EIA screening opinion for mixed use development at Land a junction of the A701 and Pentland Road (New Pentland Development).
- 21/00262/WIT Pruning of tree covered by Tree Preservation 4 of 1999 at 8 Birch Crescent, Nivensknowe Park.
- 21/00272/CL Extension to dwelling house and infill of garage door and formation of new window opening at 23 Ashgrove Gardens Loanhead.

It was agreed to raise an objection to 21/00220/SCR and 21/00237/SCR until we get more information on these two applications.