**BONNYRIGG AND DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the meeting held on 12 September 2024, at Lasswade Library**

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| Present: | Dan Lennie (Chair), Alison Thomson (Treasurer), Dougie West (Vice Chair), Liz MacDonald (Minutes), John Aitchison, James Cameron, Ann Cunningham, Bill MacDonald, Kirstie Malley, George Nicol, Avril Ramsay, Ruth Scott, Joan Sumner, Fiona Warner, Stuart Young. |
| In attendance: | Cllr Derek Milligan, Cllr David Virgo, PC Fiona Cunningham, Billy Innes, Flora Kenny. |
| Apologies: | Cllr Dianne Alexander, Joyce Bernard, Diane Easton, David Hally, Sandy Waterston. |

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| **ITEM** | **1** | **Chair’s remarks** |  |
| Noted | (i) | DL welcomed everyone to the September 2024. There were no first-time visitors. |  |
| Noted | (ii) | DL reminded everyone that the AGM would be held on 10 October, immediately followed by the monthly meeting. He would stand down as Chair and as a Community Councillor and DE would stand down as Secretary, but remain a Councillor. |  |
| Noted | (iii) | Councillor Alexander would not attend any further CC meetings, as she was now running a surgery on the 2nd Thursday of the month 7-9 pm in the Lasswade Centre. She had offered to meet with the Community Council’s Executive, not the full council, at another time, but the Executive did not have time for additional meetings. Everyone present felt it was disappointing she had chosen not to attend CC meetings, a long-standing commitment, but to run something else at the same time instead. |  |
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| **ITEM** | **2** | **Minutes and matters arising from August meeting** |  |
| Noted | (i) | DM pointed out nothing could be done about the old Spar building, as it was privately owned. The Christmas lights were due to be tested shortly and he would ask the men to pull out the large weeds on the roof, when they carried out the testing. |  |
| Noted | (ii) | There was no Operations Manager at the recent MTRaP meeting, so no queries could be made about the white lining machine. |  |
| Noted | (vii) | The motion to approve the 8 August draft minutes was proposed by JA and seconded by AR. The minutes were adopted as an accurate reflection of the August meeting. |  |
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| **ITEM** | **3** | **Police report** |  |
| Received | (i) | Police report had been received. Fiona Cunningham was the new Bonnyrigg community police officer. She had 24 years’ service in the police, mostly in East Lothian. |  |
| Noted | (i) | She discussed the report. There had been many problems with youths on the buses, more shop lifting at Tesco Express and the Co-op, theft of gardening equipment from the Cyrenians hut at Midlothian Community Hospital, cars seized on the distributor road without insurance and regular complaints about car parking around schools. The Community Action Team would do safety initiatives during the upcoming Road Safety Week. AC raised again the problem of heavy vehicles speeding on Polton Road. FC was trained to use a speed gun and would consider that street. DV suggested a speed gun should also be used on Elm Row in Lasswade. |  |
| Noted | (ii) | DM said the police should not get involved with the thefts at the Co-op or Tesco Express, as the stores were badly designed, with the tills in the wrong place. The poor lay-out made thefts easier. He believed the Licensing Board should be made aware of the situation and that shops should be protecting children more from harm from alcohol.  |  |
| Noted | (iii) | AT complained about cars parking in the lay-by at Gigi’s, making it difficult for wheel chair users.  |  |
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| **ITEM** | **4** | **Treasurer’s report** |  |
| Noted | (i) | AT reported the opening and closing balance for the month was £3,393.55 and there had been no income or expenditure during the month. |  |
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| **ITEM**  | **5** | **Secretary’s report** |  |
| Noted | (i) | DE was not present, but had said there was nothing to be raised.  |  |
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| **ITEM** | **6** | **Report from Midlothian Councillors** |  |
| Received | (i) | Verbal update from DV. |  |
| Noted | (i) | DV said he could provide the Cyrenians with some money from his environment budget to help replace the tools which had been stolen. |  |
| Noted | (ii) | He reported the Council had less money than last year. The Westminster Government would allocate funds to Scotland and Shona Robison would make a statement to the Scottish Parliament on 4 December about council allocations. There was an ever-expanding gap between money received from council tax and entrepreneurial activities, in comparison with council expenditure. |  |
| Noted | (iii) | He was concerned the capital plan for expenditure was not transparent, as information was not forthcoming on expenditure on schools, care homes etc. |  |
| Noted | (iv) | The Integrated Joint Board (IJB) for Health and Social Care, managing provision of healthcare in Midlothian was also in deficit. Care packages could only be provided where there was significant need. |  |
| Noted | (v) | Midlothian Council couldn’t carry on spending money if nothing was done to increase income. |  |
| Noted | (vi) | On a more positive note, much work had been done with road re-surfacing and line markings. The Lasswade Bridge roadworks was causing delays, but it would be much worse if the bridge collapsed. He explained there could be delays between re-surfacing works and subsequent white lining.  |  |
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| Received |  | Verbal update from DM. |  |
| Noted | (i) | He was pleased to see work progressing at the old St Mary’s School on the replacement for Highbank Intermediate Care.  |  |
| Noted | (ii) | The pothole machine was only working 35 hours a week, yet had cost a huge amount to purchase. He was keen to get extra shifts established, to make better use of the equipment. |  |
| Noted | (iii) | He also commented on the IJB’s funding deficit, with a £9m overspend in a £58m budget. The IJB decided how the money was spent, while the Council had a statutory responsibility to provide services. |  |
| Noted | (iv) | The SNP’s administration had been in charge for two and a half years, yet there was still no information on the budget and how it would be balanced. He believed council tax would need to increase by at least 5%. A council tax freeze would cause major problems. Hard decisions had to be made, but if they are not made the situation would only get worse. He suggested community councils should look at the impact the situation had on education and social care. JA asked what community councils could do? DM said they should speak to councillors about potential cuts, such as moving to 3-4 weekly bin collections, reducing grass cutting etc. DL wondered should the issue be taken up by the Federation of Community Councils? DM said not all community councils would agree, especially over the replacement for Beeslack High School. He was keen that community councillors understood the consequences of decisions being made. £120m was to be spent on Beeslack, but what about the refurbishment of Lasswade Primary School? |  |
| Noted | (v) | The Christmas lights switch on was scheduled for the 1st Sunday in December.  |  |
| Noted | (vi) | SY asked about facilities in Lasswade High School, noting the café now shut earlier. DM said this was to save money by paying staff for less hours. |  |
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| **ITEM** | **7** | **BDCC Groups and Associated Member reports:** |  |
|  | **a** | **MTRaP** |  |
| Noted | (i) | Golf Course Road had been resurfaced. |  |
| Noted | (ii) | Two years ago, the Community Council had been asked to put forward a list of roads and pavements for repair. The request will be made again for three roads and three pavements in Bonnyrigg.  |  |
| Noted | (iii) | Midlothian Council had introduced special traffic orders for 20 mile per hour zones in rural areas, such as Temple, Pathhead and Auchendinny.  |  |
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|  | **b** | **Residents’ Forum** |  |
| Noted | (i) | The BDCC Residents Forum had created a post requesting comments on its future, be emailed. Only 3 emails had been received and the new Bonnyrigg Forum was up and running. The BDCC couldn’t close the original forum, as they don’t own it. It appeared it would have to be suspended each month. DL would investigate another solution. He stated every big issue BDCC faced had been because of the forum. There was no public engagement wanting it to continue, especially as a new forum was operating. BDCC can still use the new one.  |  |
| **ACTION** | **(i)** | **DL to investigate means of closing the BDCC Residents’ Forum.** | **DL** |
|  | (ii) | JA said his proposal at the June meeting had been to open the forum so people could comment, but instead they had been asked to email. |  |
| Noted | (iii) | DL proposed the BDCC Residents’ Forum be closed. KM seconded this.  |  |
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| **ITEM**  | **9** | **Planning** |  |
| Noted | (i) | Howgate Community Council had contacted BDCC, concerned about the route to move 150m high wind turbines across Midlothian. People along the route were bound to complain. It was agreed this was unfortunate, but there was a need for renewable energy. An exercise would have to be carried out prior to the actual move. There was concern about disruption to water supply and street furniture needing to be moved. It would be a night time operation, but how long would it take? There were no grounds for BDCC to object to the operation. JS asked who would pay for it? DL confirmed it was Electricite de France (EdF). She wondered could they be asked to pay for road repairs? DL said this was unlikely and JC commented the pressure per tyre would be less than an average family car, as the axels would spread the load. Street furniture, especially at roundabouts would need to be removed and there could be a delay getting them replaced.  |  |
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| **ITEM**  | **10** | **Date of next meeting**  |  |  | Thursday 13 April at 7 pm in Lasswade Library. |
|  |  | Thursday 10 October 2024 in Lasswade Library for AGM followed by the monthly meeting. |  |  |  |