**POLTONHALL AND HOPEFIELD COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF ZOOM ONLINE MEETING 13 JANUARY 2021**

Present: J Aitchison, Chair, F Warner, D West, J Cameron, J Bernard, H Taylor

Attending: J Irvine, D Easton, Cllr D Milligan, J Sumnor

Apologies: P Atkinson, T Sime, Cllrs D Alexander and J Lay Douglas

**1. Chair’s Remarks**

1.1 Chair welcomed Hannah Taylor and Joan Sumnor to the meeting. Hannah had applied to become a member of the Community Council.

**2. Minutes of Meeting held on 9 December 2020 and Matters Arising**

2.1 Minutes were approved. Proposed by DW and seconded by JA.

**3. Finance Report**

3.1 No figures available but the most recent expenditure was £300 to sponsor the Bonnyrigg Christmas lights.

**4. Secretary’s Report**

4.1It was noted that all relevant information received from Midlothian Federation of Community Councils was posted on the PHCC website. No other information to report.

**5. Associated Members’ Report**

5.1 Football was currently suspended as a result of the COVID guidance.

5.2 The club was continuing to support positive mental health. One-to-one targeted counselling/support was still being offered. The club was also working with Lasswade High School to deliver some sessions for support staff and senior pupils.

5.3 The menshed project was still going ahead and there was almost enough to kickstart the project.

5.4 It was also hoped to start a lunch club for senior citizens that would like to get involved in the lunch club which would include chair yoga/exercise as well as bingo activities. The Red Cross, health in mind and local church (and their new Chaplain) would all be involved in those projects. All of these organisations have people they support that could get involved.

5.5 Most activities were continuing in some shape or form.

**6. Police Report**

6.1 During the month of December 2020 in the beat area BD01 – Bonnyrigg, Lasswade, Poltonhall and District – there were 59 recorded crimes reported, of which 28 have been solved to date, with a solvency rate of 47%. During this time period, there were 252 calls to Police Scotland.

**INCIDENTS OF NOTE**

About 5pm on Tuesday 1 December 2020 officers stopped and searched a man on Park Crescent and found him to be in possession of controlled drugs. The man was charged and reported to the Procurator Fiscal.

Between 6pm on Thursday 3 and 9am on Friday 4 December at Cameron Crescent, Bonnyrigg unknown person(s) entered a building site and removed the insulation from one of the new build homes. Police enquiries were ongoing.

About 3.30pm on Friday 4 December 2020 a group of children threw a snowball at windows at Eskdale Street, Bonnyrigg. No damage was caused to the windows.

About 7.30pm on Friday 4 December 2020 at Bairds Way, Bonnyrigg a man was witnessed attempting to gain entry to numerous houses and vehicles. Police attended and traced the man a short distance away. He was charged and held in Police custody to appear at court the next lawful day.

About 9pm on Friday 4 December 2020 at High Street, Bonnyrigg a man entered a parked vehicle and started to shout and swear at the occupiers of the vehicle. The man then started searching the vehicles going through bags in the process. The man was then told to leave the vehicle by the driver and when doing so he assaulted her. The man was identified by Police. He was charged with various offences and a report has been submitted to the Procurator Fiscal.

About 2.15pm on Saturday 5 December 2020 at Cameron Crescent, Bonnyrigg a black Vauxhall Corsa collided with two vehicles. The driver was found to be a 15year old boy. He was charged with numerous offences and a report was sent to the Procurator Fiscal.

Between 2.30pm and 5.40pm on Saturday 5 December 2020 at Park Crescent Bonnyrigg a grey Hyundai l10 was damaged by unknown person(s) by scratching the front to the rear of the driver side of the vehicle. Police enquiries were ongoing.

At 1.15pm on Sunday 6 December 2020 a silver coloured 4x4 vehicle hit a dog on Eldindean Road, Bonnyrigg and failed to stop. Police enquiries were ongoing.

Between 6pm on Thursday 3 and 9am on Sunday 6 December at Cameron Crescent, Bonnyrigg unknown person(s) entered a building site and vandalised the new build homes causing thousands of pounds of damage. Police enquiries were ongoing.

About 6.30pm on Sunday 6 December an unknown male threw a brick at the window of a property at Auld Coal Court, Bonnyrigg causing damage. The man made off prior to Police arrival. Police enquiries were ongoing.

Between 9pm on Monday 7 and 11am Tuesday 8 December 2020 at De Quincey Road, Lasswade unknown person(s) entered an insecure building and stole tools and vandalised 3 lights, a quad bike and walls. Police enquiries were ongoing.

On Saturday 12 December 2020 at 12.20pm a man entered Lloyds Pharmacy on High Street, Bonnyrigg and shoplifted. The man was later traced, charged by Police and a report was submitted to the Procurator Fiscal.

About 5.20am on Tuesday 15 December 2020 at Lothian Street, Bonnyrigg Police stopped a grey Volvo S40. The vehicle did not have a valid MOT and had two illegal tyres due to the tread being less than 1.6mm. The driver of the vehicle was charged and a report was sent to the Procurator Fiscal.

About 11.15am on Tuesday 15 December 2020 a man entered Tesco Express, Rosewell Road and started to shout and swear at staff and customers. The man was traced by officers and charged. A report was submitted to the Procurator Fiscal.

About 7pm on Friday 18 December 2020 on Dobbies Road, two unknown person(s) threw a stone at the rear window of a white Citreon Picasso causing it to shatter, before running from the area. Police enquiries were ongoing.

About 2.30pm on Saturday 19 December 2020 police executed a warrant at a property at Dobbies Road. Police located and seized a significant quantity of cash and numerous drugs. Two men were arrested and charged and a report submitted to the Procurator Fiscal.

About 9.50pm on Saturday 19 December 2020 on High Street, Bonnyrigg whilst officers were on mobile patrol they witnessed a silver Volkswagen Golf drive carelessly by speeding and driving on the opposing side of the carriageway. The driver of the vehicle was issued with a fixed penalty notice and charged with careless driving.

About 9pm on Thursday 24 December 2020 on Polton Gardens, Lasswade unknown person(s) smashed two windows by unknown means. Police enquiries were ongoing.

About 1.30am on Thursday 31 December 2020 an unknown woman snapped off a windscreen wiper blade from a grey Peugeot 3008 which was parked at Myre Court, Bonnyrigg. Police enquiries were ongoing.

There have been numerous calls relating to paring issues within the surrounding areas of Lasswade Primary School with parents parking in restricted areas or Blue Badge areas without displaying their Blue Badge.

There have been numerous calls relating youth disorder in the Bonnyrigg area particularly within Old Market Place, Dalhousie Avenue, Dalhousie Place, Eskdale Terrace, Sherwood Terrace, Burnbrae Primary School, Harmony Crescent, Bannockrigg Terrace and Bonnyrigg Primary School. Police have been pro-actively patrolling those and other areas in response to this.

**If any person has any information about the incidents listed above, or indeed any other crime, please contact your Community Policing Officers PC Jonny Cassidy and PC Chris Howarth via 101 or email** **Jonathan.cassidy@scotland.pnn.police.uk****Christopher.Howarth@scotland.pnn.police.uk**

**7. Midlothian Councillors’ Report**

7.1 Cllr DM said that regarding COVID everything continued to move on an hourly basis often conflicting with previous guidance and any thoughts about things reopening in February was a pipe dream. Until at least 30% of the population had been vaccinated then it was not likely to happen. It was noted that the full Council was meeting on a weekly basis and all immediate decisions regarding COVID were taken on cross party lines. When asked about mass vaccination in Midlothian he said that one at Gorebridge and possibly at the Bush were being looked at.

7.2 During the cold weather it was noted there were 29 road workers, a number of landscapers and other staff who could be pulled in to help with road gritting etc. The reality was that there were 9 gritters available which required 9 HGV drivers. It was accepted that there had been a failure to keep the grit bins topped up but all should now be topped up. With a yellow snow warning from 12 midnight an emergency meeting would be convened at 7am to ensure the roads were passable with priority on bus routes, main routes and doctor surgeries. At the end of the month 1 ton grit bins were being looked at being ordered and the public would be asked where they should be strategically placed.

7.3 There was a question whether or not resilience was working. It was, but it was clear that some people were reluctant to go along to Bonnyrigg Rose FC or the charity club foodbanks for fear of people seeing them asking for help because they had to queue outside. There was now a single number to call for help if people were struggling financially and they would be passed to the benefits section to ensure that benefits were being paid and be put in touch with the income officer to ensure all claims were correctly submitted. Help with compiling a CV was also being offered for people who were now having to look for other jobs and example was given of a former pilot who was now working at the checkout at Morrisons.

7.4 The Bonnyrigg Christmas lights included reindeers which were put in the community garden in Lasswade as well as in Bonnyrigg and a new addition were Victorian lamps. Alison Wright, Head of Adult Social Care had spoken to a friend who kindly donated Christmas trees to nursery homes and Midlothian Council lighting department had agreed to instal the lights for them. Bonnyrigg Christmas Lights Committee had covered the cost of the lights and local schools were involved in decorating the trees. It was such a shame that despite being the 30th year of the Bonnyrigg Christmas lights it was not possible to have a normal celebration. It was hoped to make up for that and have a great day at Christmas 2021.

7.5 Cllr JLD was unable to access the meeting but sent the following report. The Cross Party Working Group for Education had an assessment update for the senior phase. External consultant and DHT for Newbattle summarised work being undertaken to review processes in order to deliver the national certification model for qualifications in 2020-21 in a consistent and equitable way across our secondary schools. There had been a great deal of collaboration and information sharing including Lasswade High School Chair of Parent Council. Schools were still awaiting guidance from the SQA but there was a push for the date of submissions of grades to be moved to the end of the current academic session to create more learning time in school. Funding was available and consideration was being given to use it for study sessions to improve grades for young people post lockdown. Foundation Apprenticeships have also been impacted, i.e. started late, online tuition and changed again. All schools were open (no hubs) with the percentage of the school roll in attendance in the week to 15th  were Lasswade Primary – 16%, Bonnyrigg Primary – 11%, St Mary’s Primary – 13.8%, Burnbrae Primary – 13%, Hawthornden Primary – 18% and Lasswade High School – 5.1%.

7.6 A new domestic abuse (ANI New Code Word) scheme had just been launched and was being delivered across Scotland from Boots the Chemist. There were already awareness raising campaigns in our area such as the Safe Spaces Scheme which was delivered from some of our smaller local pharmacies. The ANI scheme was designed to work alongside those already existing. For local residents it was available at Boots in Dalkeith High Street, Cameron Toll and Straiton as well as a long list of pharmacies in Edinburgh.

7.7 Cllr JLD had been in communication with the Council/Roads Department since October about the Distributor Road bus shelter. There was a safety issue with the proposed original location that has been rectified by the developer and the bus shelter was now being made and a timeline requested.

**8. Any Other Business**

8.1 The co-option of Hannah Taylor was agreed and she was now a full member of PHCC.

8.2 As the Committee was in quorate the proposal to go ahead with the merger with Bonnyrigg and Lasswade Community Council (BLCC) was agreed. Chair advised he would send a letter to Midlothian Council advising of the agreed merger and ask for the 90 day consultation process to begin.

8.3 There was a question raised about the help being given to children from low income families. For key workers’ and vulnerable children in school Midlothian Council was providing a free packed lunch from the school meal service. For all other children and young people from P1-S6 who were entitled to free school meals because of low income, BACS payments would continue as the current 4 week cycle. Payments were only to parents/carers where a pupil was eligible for free school meals. The amount given was £44.10 per primary pupil and £48.30 per secondary pupil.

8.4 Cllr DM was asked about the provision of broadband to low income families. It was reported that 3,500 Chrome Books were to be issued to families with a further 300 on order and awaiting delivery. Because of connectivity and broadband issues the Chrome Books came with dongles linked to Midlothian Council.

**Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting would be held on Zoom on **Wednesday 10 February 2021**