

**DAVIDSON'S MAINS & SILVERKNOWES ASSOCIATION**  
**Management Committee Meeting 14 November at 6.45 pm in Davidson's Mains Primary School**

1. **Apologies:** Brian Flanagan, Councillor Louise Young.
2. **Present:** Rod Alexander (Chair), Charlotte Cowe (Secretary), Gordon McGregor, Coll Gardner, Seonaidh Edgar, Tim Mitchell, Carolyn Williams, Laura Thomson, Ellen Searle (for the Christmas Lights update).

In attendance: Councillors Graham Hutchison, Kevin Lang, Norman Work. Sergeant Richard Homewood for the Police report.

- 3.1 **Minutes.** The Minutes of the October meeting were approved subject to some minor amendments particularly with regard to item 3c Vivian Terrace Street Play Event.

**3.2 On-going and Recurring Issues Logs – to note**

Rod advised that the Road and Footpath Maintenance programme had been added to the Ongoing Issues Log with the intention it should be picked up again in conjunction with next year's budget provision. Tim advised that there was no change to the Recurring Issues Log from the previous month. The content of both logs was noted.

**3.3 Matters arising** (excluding items scheduled for later discussion)

3a. Re-Cycling Bins at Tesco

Kevin confirmed he had had again raised the matter of a second waste paper bin with the Council and had received an assurance that it would be put on site during the week beginning 6 December. The Council had not yet committed to a fortnightly uplift, despite an earlier promise, but it was agreed that it would be reasonable under the circumstances to assess the effect of having two bins in place before insisting on a fortnightly frequency.

3b. Street Lights on Ferry Road

This matter had been picked up by Graham and it was noted that he had been successful in ensuring that four out of the five lights were now operational. The lighting team had unsurprisingly been unable to access one of the columns due to the problem of the overgrown conifer trees in private property and an order had at long last been issued to have the offending trees cut back. It was noted that in principle the order should be applied to all of the trees and not only the ones which were at present preventing the fifth column being accessed.

3c. Vivian Terrace Play Event

Rod explained that following detailed communication with the organiser of the event it was clear that while our comments to the Council raised many reasonable questions relating to public policy around management of these events, our criticism of the role played by the organiser had in many respects been unfair and it would be necessary to amend our submission to the Council Review to take account of the changed situation.

3d. Bus Engines Idling outside the Primary School.

Norman had picked this issue up with the Council and he advised that signs advising against drivers being parked with vehicle engines running were available but that he was still waiting to be informed of a date for the work to be carried out. The matter was carried forward.

3e. HGVs on Lauriston Farm Road

Charlotte confirmed she had written to Neil Williams Haulage to request that their drivers of large skip vehicles should be advised to use the recommended route for heavy industrial vehicles via Telford Road instead of using Lauriston Farm Road but as yet she had not received any reply. It was agreed she would write to them again to press for a response.

3f. Litter in the Grounds of the Primary School

Rod advised that he had spoken to a member of the Parent Council who said they would raise the issue with the school. The committee considered this was a sufficient and proportionate action given the school had a clear anti litter policy and ethos and the incidence of complaints about litter relating to the school was very low.

### 3g. Tesco Site

Rod advised that he had been unable to obtain any substantive information to support the local rumours around a possible redevelopment of the site and the matter was closed.

## 4. Correspondence

Charlotte confirmed that all material correspondence had been previously circulated or would be referred to under the appropriate agenda item.

## 5. Reports

### 5a Police Report

Sergeant Richard Homewood was welcomed to the meeting to provide a verbal police report for November. He was thanked for providing the committee with an emailed short summary the previous month when he had been unable to attend due to priority operational reasons. The main focus of his comment this month was with regard to the ongoing problems of youths congregating in the local area with associated anti-social and criminal behaviour, including some assaults on residents. He explained that a key factor had been theft of alcohol from the local Tesco but the management had co-operated in restricting entry to the store and it had reduced the level of trouble. The whole situation was difficult to manage because for much of the time the youths are not effectively committing any crimes, even if their behaviour is clearly intimidating for many residents. The committee welcomed an assurance that police overtime had again been authorised for the forthcoming week-ends and recognised that the local police were doing as much as they could to maximise the effect against the constraints of available resources. The question of police representation at the Christmas Lights event on 1<sup>st</sup> December was discussed to cover the risk of it being a target for the recalcitrant youths and the committee welcomed the assurance that the local police would be present.

### 5b. Treasurer's Report

Gordon reported that the balance in the account was £5510.59. It was noted there would be costs associated with the Armistice Day Service, the Newsletter, and the Christmas Lights during November which would significantly reduce the balance.

## 6. Planning issues

### 6a. New Build at Davidson's Mains Primary School

Charlotte advised that a letter had been sent to the Planning Department supporting the application. It was noted that while the majority of submissions to the Council were in favour of the application, there had been more than six objections and the application would therefore now be required to be considered by the Planning and Development Committee.

### 6b. Former RBS Premises.

Charlotte reported that several residents had contacted the Association to express concern about a proposal to change the use of the former bank to a coffee shop. Rod explained that the proposal for change of use to a coffee shop was clearly in accordance with current planning guidelines and was unlikely to be refused but the committee recognised the concerns of local residents and agreed to write to request that a condition be set for a closing time of 9 pm. An identical restriction had been applied to the previous planning approval for the Village Coffee Shop to protect the amenity of local residents and our letter would seek to take advantage of this precedent.

## 7. Almond Neighbourhood Partnership

Graham is now the chair of the Almond Neighbourhood Partnership and he provided the committee with an update on the setting up of the four Locality Committees. He advised that a paper was to be considered at the next meeting of the Council into the operation of these committees. The paper would also make recommendations on structures at the level below the committees which may have an influence on the operation of the Neighbourhood Partnerships, although the local Councillors were all clear in their assurances that any doubt about the future of the Partnerships was misplaced and that they would continue to be an essential vehicle for local engagement and representation. The DMSA committee very much welcomed these assurances.

## **8. Local Action List**

Rod confirmed that it remained his intention to discuss priorities with the Locality Transport and Environment Manager and to update the list to reflect the outcome of these discussions. It was recognised there was an essential requirement for it to be updated in association with the Newsletter given the failure by the Council to meet the agreed target dates for completion of several projects. Some of these projects had a high level of interest from residents, such as the ongoing parking problems at the Corbiehill Road/Avenue and Corbiehill Road/ Main Street junctions.

## **9. Newsletter**

Rod and Charlotte provided an update on the production of the Newsletter. It was scheduled to go to the printers the following day and the plan was to have it out to deliverers over the coming week-end. It was hoped all would be delivered by the end of the following week which would be ideal timing for advertising the Christmas Lights Event on 1<sup>st</sup> December.

## **10. Christmas Lights 2017 Event**

Ellen attended the meeting to provide an update report on the activities of the Christmas Lights Group and the plans for the Switch On on 1 December. A flyer to advertise the event and also a Santa Fun Run in Davidson's Mains Park on the Sunday had been designed and would be circulated with the newsletter. Ellen described a very ambitious and imaginative programme for the evening which included a stage, a number of performers, various stalls both inside and outside the hall and multi opportunities for making donations and fund raising. She said the lights committee fully appreciated the financial support of the DMSA and the assistance in dealing with a number of the formal arrangements with the Council. She advised that an active Facebook Page had been created by the Christmas Lights Group which was receiving a high level of hits. The committee formally recorded their appreciation of the efforts of the Christmas Lights Group and wished them every success with the forthcoming events.

## **11. Remembrance Day Review**

The committee discussed the event and the general consensus was that it had gone well, particularly given the very large attendance, a very pleasing factor. The only problem had been with the quality of sound for those on the periphery of the crowd, some of whom had difficulty hearing the service. It was clear that the equipment was satisfactory for internal use and for smaller crowds, but with a large crowd, the necessary requirement for increased volume results in a reduction in the quality of the sound. Another issue is that the effectiveness of the system is limited to an arc of perhaps about 90 degrees. It was agreed Rod and Gordon would look into the problem in plenty time for next year.

## **12. Facebook page for DMSA**

It was noted that the Facebook page is up and running but discussion was carried forward for Ellen to be present to discuss future developments.

## **13. Silverknowes Roundabout**

The committee discussed the situation with the ongoing work at the roundabout which it was noted would continue on to 3 December. It appeared to be the case that disruption to local traffic had been much less than had initially been anticipated, although the contractors had managed to maintain traffic light controlled movements between Lauriston Farm Road and Silverknowes Parkway at all times. The fact that there had not been a complete closure at any time had made a big difference. Only one complaint had been received by the Association and that related to the design, not to the temporary traffic management operations. It was recognised that any complete closure of the roundabout may still lead to a strong local reaction from residents.

## **14. Rat Running in Silverknowes**

Tim advised that he had not heard back from the resident who was interested in undertaking a local survey and the matter was carried forward.

## **15. Withdrawal of 32 and 42 bus services**

Rod confirmed that a meeting had been arranged for Friday 18 November with the Council Convenor for Transport, a manager for Lothian Buses, and our constituency MSP to provide the DMSA and Cramond and Barnton CC with an opportunity to make representations about the negative effects for local residents of recent bus route changes associated with the introduction of the 200 Airport Service. He agreed to report back at the next committee meeting.

**16. Bollards on East Barnton Avenue**

Rod advised the committee that it had been agreed with the Locality Transport and Environment Manager that priority should be given to replacing the permanent bollards on East Barnton Avenue with the removeable type. It would allow the eastern end of East Barnton Avenue to be closed for future events in the grounds of Holy Cross Church while permitting continued access for vehicles to East Barnton Gardens. It would provide more space for access to the events and eliminate any risk from moving vehicles for those attending.

**17. AOCB.**

17a. It was noted that the problem of the grit bin on Silverknowes Road at the bus stop at the shops being full of completely consolidated material had still not been resolved despite frequent complaints from the DMSA to the Council over the course of winter 2016/17. It was clear that the present bin was no longer fit for purpose and Kevin undertook to pursue its replacement.

17b. Kevin advised the committee that the new head of environmental wardens, Alison Brown, is going to speak with the pupils at the RHS regarding litter.

17c. It was noted that the road markings at the box junction on Lauriston Farm Road at the junction with Silverknowes Terrace had become very faint and it was agreed a request would be made to have them repainted.

17d. Committee members were reminded of the police security event at Holy Cross Church Hall on Tuesday 28 November. It had been well publicised and a good attendance was anticipated.

**18. Date of Next Meeting 12 December 2017 6.45 pm in Davidson's Mains Primary School**