

DAVIDSON'S MAINS & SILVERKNOWES ASSOCIATION
Management Committee Meeting 9 January at 6.45 pm in Davidson's Mains Primary School

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

In attendance: Councillors Graham Hutchison, Kevin Lang and Norman Work; PC Aidan Douds for the Police Report.

3.1 Minutes: The Minutes of the December 2017 meeting were approved.

3.2 On-going and Recurring Issues Logs – to note

Recurring issues log: Tim tabled the log with updates to reflect an incident of setting fire to a wheelie bin in East Barnton Avenue and current initiatives to try to reduce the litter problem linked to pupils from the RHS .

Ongoing Issues Log: It was agreed to remove the item referring to forthcoming meetings as its inclusion was inconsistent with the purpose of the log. It was noted that the descriptions of the current situation with one or two items were required to be brought up to date and it was agreed that this would be done prior to the next meeting.

3.3 Matters arising (excluding items scheduled for later discussion)

3a. Re-Cycling Bins at Tesco

It was noted that a second waste bin had still not been delivered to the site at Tesco. Kevin assured the committee he would pursue the matter until it was resolved.

3b. Street Lights on Ferry Road

It was noted that an enforcement order had yet to be raised to get the overgrown conifer trees cut back and members of the committee again expressed concern about the safety implications of the inaccessible street light continuing to be out of operation at the location close to a pedestrian crossing point. Graham undertook to pursue the matter to try to get a resolution to the problem.

3c. Vivian Terrace Play event

Rod reminded the committee that the Council consultation on Street Play Schemes would close on the 11th January if any members of the committee wanted to make their own personal contributions. He advised that he would use the consultation to make some points based on his own experience in dealing with complaints about the local events at Vivian Terrace and Silverknowes Gardens. In particular he considered it would have been helpful to know in advance of approved schemes and to have had contact details for the organisers. He said that in his opinion a number of the alleged problems from some residents could have been easily resolved if there had been an opportunity for direct discussion with the organisers in advance of the event. He would be recommending that approved dates and the organiser contact details should be publicised in future.

3d. Grit bins at Cramond Road South/Main Street/ Silverknowes Road.

The committee were pleased to note that a new grit bin had been provided at Cramond Road South to replace the one that had been removed and at Silverknowes Road to replace the bin that had been full of consolidated material. The request for a bin at Main Street at the steps on the path to Silverknowes Road East remained outstanding and Kevin undertook to pursue the matter.

3e. Equipment left on Silverknowes Road

Kevin passed on a message from Louise that the matter had been raised with the proprietor of the shop who had explained that the problem had arisen at a time when material had been getting moved from a previous storage location and the situation would not be repeated. Given that assurance the matter was closed.

3f. Pedestrian Crossing Queensferry Road/Quality Street

Norman advised that he was still waiting for a response to the query about the inadequate time for the pedestrian crossing phase which had allegedly been reduced following recent road works and the matter was carried forward.

3g. Bus tracker out of operation outside Norhet

Norman advised that he was waiting for an explanation from LRT regarding the problem with the bus tracker and the matter was carried forward.

3h. Gritting Policy on Cycle Paths (Item 15k in Minutes)

The Locality and Transport Manager had confirmed that some cycle paths have a degree of priority for gritting just like roads and that the N1 route is gritted from Murrayfield to the former railway bridge at Silverknowes Road. However the section westwards on Silverknowes Drive and Terrace and the lane to Cramond Road South are not gritted, because these roads do not have a road gritting priority. The committee discussed this apparent anomaly and agreed to ask if it could be resolved by including Silverknowes Drive and Terrace on the priority gritting programme for roads or for the on road section of N1 and the lane to be added to the cycle route priority. .

4. Correspondence

Charlotte advised that a letter had been received from the Maitland Bowling Club with a cheque for £100.00 as a donation to the Christmas Lights Fund. A letter has been sent to thank them for their generosity and their name had been added to the published list of all businesses and organisations who had contributed to the fund and which had been displayed on the notice board and website. All other relevant correspondence had been circulated and /or would be discussed as appropriate under the agenda.

5. Reports

5a Police Report

PC Aidan Douds was welcomed to the meeting to provide the monthly verbal Police Report for December. There had been only three reported crimes in the area comprising one housebreaking and two vandalisms and the committee were delighted to hear the news, since these numbers represented the lowest crime figures in our area within memory. The police were pleased that the extra resources they had allocated in September and November to counteract the youth problem had apparently had such a positive effect although they were not being complacent and would continue to monitor the situation. Aidan took note of complaints about reports of speeding vehicles on Cramond Road South and Corbiehill Road and of the problem of vehicles using Silverknowes Avenue as an illegal exit on to Cramond Road South and said he would try to ensure that police attention was given to these problems. Graham passed on the thanks of resident's in Silverknowes Gardens for the police action in tackling the youth problems in the street and the immediate area. Tim raised the issue of community payback orders and in particular drew attention to the fact that a consultation document can be accessed on line on which the public can offer suggestions for appropriate activities. This was noted as was the fact that Tim had already made a suggestion for litter clearing on Cramond Road South. He said he would report back to the next meeting on any response. Aidan took the view that pay back orders were under utilised and welcomed any initiative to encourage their wider use in this area and elsewhere.

5b. Treasurer's Report

Gordon reported that the balance in the account was £7108.25. This included the net income from the Christmas Lights fundraising. He confirmed that a summary of income and expenditure associated with the Christmas Lights Events would be provided for the next meeting .The information would also be provided to the Christmas Lights Group.

6. Planning issues

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

It was noted that the application was still waiting consideration by the Planning Development sub-Committee.

6b. Former RBS building

It was noted that the application for change of use to a café (with an upstairs residential flat) had been approved and that the suggested recommendation by the Association for a restriction on evening opening hours to protect the amenity of local residents had not been accepted.

The committee noted that the agent for the new owner of the site would need to be approached regarding the status of our notice board. It was hoped that the new owner would be supportive of continuing the previous agreement from RBS for it being positioned in a corner of the site. It was agreed Charlotte would write to the agent to seek clarification.

7. Almond Neighbourhood Partnership

It was noted that the next NP meeting was business meeting to be held on 17 January. Rod reported that while the Agenda had not yet been circulated, he had been notified that the Community Grants Fund Report would include a recovery of the £2.5k which had previously been awarded to the Association as a contribution towards the purchase cost of new Christmas Lights for Davidson's Mains. That decision had been superseded by the Council's last minute decision to fund and provide lights for 2017 from their own budget and the DMSA had not drawn on the award, although Rod made the point again that the local Lights Committee had raised over £4k and in doing so had completely fulfilled our part of the agreement with the NP. The Association was currently waiting for a Council budget decision about funding lights for Christmas 2018, and the case for making a further application for next year would be considered once the budget decision was known. The situation was noted for the present. .

8. Local Action List

Rod confirmed that the list had been updated and placed on the Notice Board and web site. A date for the previously agreed meeting with the Locality Transport and Environment Manager to discuss revised priorities for the projects had yet to be arranged but Rod hoped to get that sorted soon.

9. Christmas Lights 2018

Rod provided a short overview of the current situation after the success of the 2017 Event. Future actions and use of funds depended on what if anything the Council would be prepared to fund for 2018. Assurances had been received that a decision would be taken by the Council by the end of February as part of the budget process and that there would not be a repeat of any last minute decision as in 2017. The Lights committee would meet to discuss the whole situation after the decision was known. In the meantime they were to meet shortly to discuss fund raising events for the early part of the new year which might include a pub quiz, bag packing, and a fun run. Ellen had said she would report back to the committee after the meeting.

10. Facebook page for DMSA

This matter was carried forward to the February meeting for more detailed discussion.

11. Glass/ Bottle Re-Cycling

Tim raised the issue of the use of the blue boxes for glass re-cycling and the situation that they can be on the footpath for days before late uplift with the risk of vandals having access to the glass bottles which are smashed and strewn around. He cited recent instances in the Barnton Avenue/East Barnton Avenue area but following discussion between the committee and Councillors this did not currently appear to be a general problem across our area. Accordingly it was agreed for the present that the problem would be added to the Recurring Issues Log for future reference should the need arise.

12. Tar and Chip Re-surfacing

Tim and Brian had both raised the issue of the poor quality of the tar and chip road resurfacing which had been undertaken on local streets in our area and it was clear that it was a city wide problem. The stone chips are not adhering to the tarmac base, with bald road surfaces developing and loose chips accumulating at the side of the road. It was observed that the process had been justified by its low cost but had an intended life of five years; it was clearly seriously failing to meet that target. Kevin advised he had been pursuing this problem in response to complaints from residents. He was to be given an update on an investigation into what had gone wrong and undertook to share the information with the committee. He was thanked for this and the matter was carried forward.

13. Rat Running in Silverknowes

Tim reported that he had been in contact with the local resident who had expressed an interest in undertaking a localised survey and she had confirmed that she was still keen to proceed with it. She had said she would keep him advised on timing and the matter was carried forward.

14. Withdrawal of 32 and 42 bus services

Rod reported that he was still waiting for the Minutes of the meeting he had attended in November with our MSP and representatives of Lothian Buses, the Council, and Cramond and Barnton Community Council to discuss concerns about recent changes to local bus routes. He had expressed concern about the delay to the Minutes with our MSP who was chasing them up. At the meeting the existence of a report from 2009 into traffic congestion on the Queensferry Road corridor had come to light and it was also to be circulated. Kevin said he was sure he had a copy of the report in his files and would pass it on to Rod.

15. AOCB.

15a. The committee again discussed the issue of parking in The Green and the difficulty at times for residents to find an available space. It was noted that it was only a matter of just over twelve months since the Association had asked residents for their views on the possible introduction of residents' permits and there had been a very poor response. However, there was little dispute that the situation was continuing to get worse. Following discussion it was agreed a draft survey document would be drawn up for discussion at the February meeting. The committee welcomed Caroline's offer to undertake a door to door survey as a means of ensuring a higher level of response.

15b. Tim raised the issue of local air quality with reference to the problems of pollution from older generation diesel engines, the increased popularity of wood burning stoves and the question of the burning of garden rubbish. The issue of the possible introduction by the Council of charges for the collection of garden rubbish was also discussed in the context of an increased risk of more garden bonfires. The committee was generally in agreement with all the concerns but no action was proposed for the present.

15c. Lauriston Castle Review. The committee again discussed the recent Council consultation into the future use of the grounds at Lauriston Castle which had closed on 31 December. Rod again expressed disappointment that because of the holiday period it had not been possible for the committee to discuss a formal response on behalf of the DMSA but he was pleased that a number of the members of the committee had made their own submissions. It was agreed that the committee would in due course give close consideration to the conclusions and any recommendations arising from the consultation.

15d. Laura informed the committee that she was aware from her role in SGN that the utility would shortly be replacing gas pipes on Ferry Road between Silverknowes Neuk and Silverknowes Road East and that temporary traffic light controls would be in place for four weeks, with likely traffic congestion at the Silverknowes Road East junction.

15e. Kevin advised that at the recent meeting of the full Council, in reply to a written question about the status of the inquiry into the fatal accident on the crossing at the west end of Main Street, he had received a reply that the report was likely to be available within a couple of months and that the intention was to invite public consultation on any recommendations. Rod said he welcomed the consultation because there was a fair degree of local concern about public safety on the crossing.

16. Date of Next Meeting 13 February 2018 6.45 pm in Davidson's Mains Parish Church Hall