

DAVIDSON'S MAINS & SILVERKNOWES ASSOCIATION

Management Committee Meeting 17 April at 6.45 pm at Davidson's Mains Primary School Library

1. Apologies: Seonaidh Edgar, Laura Thomson, Ellen Searle, Councillors Graham Hutchison, Kevin Lang, Louise Young.

2. Present: Rod Alexander (Chair), Charlotte Cowe (Secretary), Gordon McGregor, Coll Gardner, Tim Mitchell, Brian Flanagan.

In attendance: Councillor Norman Work; Sergeant Scott Kennedy and PC Aidan Douds for the Police Report.

3. Minutes: The March minutes were approved.

3.1. Ongoing Issues Log

Rod confirmed that items relating to parking problems at The Green and a request for a review of gritting policy on the section of the cycle route on Silverknowes Drive and Terrace had been added to the log pending agreed follow up actions on each over the summer. The requests for grit bins at locations in the area had each been followed up by the Council and so had been removed from the log.

3.2. Recurring Issues Log

Tim reported that there had not been a requirement to make any changes to the log.

3.3. Matters Arising (excluding items scheduled for later discussion)

3a. Recycling Bins at Tesco.

Kevin had the problem of the poor management of the bins in hand and in his absence it was agreed Charlotte would request an update on the situation which would be circulated to the committee.

3b. Street Lights on Ferry Road

Charlotte advised that Graham had reported that he had not received any update on the street lights on Ferry Road as the responsible officer had been on leave. He had assured Charlotte that he would seek to obtain an update in advance of the next DMSA meeting.

3c. Street Play Schemes

It was noted that the review by the Council into the 2017 events with recommendations for 2018 was still awaited. Rod reported that he had been made aware of intended plans for two local events and the committee expressed concern that the recommendations for 2018 were not yet available. Norman agreed to find out about the situation with the review and the report. It remained the committee's policy that they would consider the Council recommendations as soon as they were available.

3d. Lauriston Castle Review

The committee again discussed the Council feed back on the public consultation into the use of the castle and grounds which had taken place in December 2017. The Council response had comprised a listing of comments from the public and some other interested parties but had not come to any conclusions or made any recommendations. The committee were broadly understanding of the spread of public opinion demonstrated by the review but in the absence of conclusions or recommendations did not see any requirement to follow up with a response. The matter was closed for the present.

3e. Proposed Yellow Box Junction on Cramond Road South at Lauriston Farm Road.

It was noted that this request from the committee had now been added to the local Action Plan and progress would be monitored through that medium.

3f. Clydesdale Bank Closure

Charlotte advised the committee that a letter of concern about the closure had been sent to the bank and in addition she had learned from Graham that he had met with the Regional Manager at the local branch to discuss the problems which the closure would cause for local residents and businesses.

In response Charlotte had received a phone call from the local manageress to discuss the situation in which she had provided information on a range of measures which the bank would be taking to help customers with advice and the transfer of accounts. .

It was agreed full details of these measures would be posted on the notice board and website.

3g Proposal for Graffiti Art on container at Davidson's Mains Park

Rod reported that he had attended a meeting with the Friends of the Park where a representative from Cramond Football Club had also been present to discuss the problem of the graffiti on the football club kit and equipment container at the park. Following much discussion it had been agreed that the RHS would be contacted to see if they would be willing to undertake an arts project for graffiti art on the container. This approach is recognised as being a satisfactory way of camouflaging offensive graffiti, or reducing its prominence and visibility. Rod had agreed to make an application to the NP Community Grants Fund for assistance with the cost of the paint if help with funding was needed and the committee fully supported this action.

4. Correspondence

Charlotte confirmed that all relevant correspondence had previously been circulated and/or would be discussed as appropriate under the agenda.

5. Reports

5a Police Report

Sgt. Scott Kennedy, Community Sergeant in North West Area and PC Aidan Douds were welcomed to the meeting to present the monthly Police Report for February. The committee were disappointed to learn that the written reports had once again been discontinued. It was also disappointing to hear that crime had increased with incidents of people trying doors for illegal entry, five breaks-ins and attempted break-ins; and a spate of bike thefts, currently a city wide problem and a high police priority. There had also been some petty shop lifting incidents and anti-social behaviour which the committee were already aware of, including an incidence of motor bikes being driven across the greens on Silverknowes Golf Course and causing damage. On a more positive note Sgt. Kennedy reported that the courts appeared more willing to use curfew restrictions when releasing suspects into the community and this made it easier for the police to keep tabs on their whereabouts and activities.

The committee were also pleased to be assured that special patrols in the area are continuing in the light of ongoing youth disturbances in the village.

5b. Treasurer's Report

Gordon reported that the balance in the account was £7930.89 of which £4427.56 was the accumulated gross income for the Christmas Lights Fund up to the end of March.

Gordon distributed copies of the provisional 2017/18 Accounts and it was agreed these would be discussed at the next meeting on 8th May. If any of the committee had queries in the interim these should be addressed to Gordon or Rod.

6. Planning Issues

6a. Coffee Shop at former RBS Building

Rod confirmed that the application for internal alterations and outside landscaping had been granted by the Council. He also confirmed that the DMSA notice board had been moved to its new site at Black and Lizars. With regard to the metal frame, Rod reported that he was still waiting to receive confirmation from the agent of the new owner of the site that it would be acceptable to the owner for their contractor to remove the frame (requiring excavation) and deliver it to a storage location.

6b. Events at Silverknowes Foreshore

The committee discussed confirmation from the Council that approval had been given for a series of events to be run at Silverknowes foreshore on week-ends over the summer months but also including an uninterrupted full six week period each day during the school holiday's in July and August. As described previously, the event was for a number of chargeable attractions, including a bouncy castle, but the main concern had been the location immediately adjacent to the Boardwalk Beach Café in an area to be fenced in by ugly chain link security fencing on heavy concrete foundations.

The committee were very disappointed by the decision, which had been taken in the face of several known objections, including from the Council's own locality Parks and Greenspace Officer. It was noted there was no means of appeal but the committee resolved to monitor the situation very closely.

6c. Proposed Development at McKenzie's Public House

Charlotte and Rod advised the committee that they had been invited to meet with a possible developer of the McKenzie's site and that this had been arranged for 23 April. The proposal is for the existing building to be converted into three flats and for four new flats to be built on the site of the car park and former "beer garden". The extensions to the original building are to be demolished. Rod had informed the developer that our prime responsibility would be to represent the concerns of those local residents who would be affected by the proposals, some of whom had already been in touch with the Association to request a direct meeting with the developer. This request would be passed on at our meeting but whether it is accepted or not the Association would keep all resident's fully informed and engaged on the details of the proposals.

6d.The Great Scottish Walk and Run Charity Event

The committee discussed an invitation from the Council to comment on a proposed charity run and walk at Silverknowes Foreshore on Sunday 1 July. The committee did not have any substantive concerns around the event or the details on the planning and organisation, particularly recognising that any disruption for other users of the promenade and the other facilities would be only for one day.

7.Almond Neighbourhood Partnership

Rod provided a short update on current issues. As previously circulated he advised the committee that the Chairs of the community groups in Almond had requested bi-monthly formal meetings with the Councillors to try to improve engagement on cross ward issues, the general and unanimous opinion being that the level of engagement on local issues had been badly damaged by the structural changes within the Council with community organisations feeling that they now had much reduced influence.

It was noted that Graham, as Convenor of the Neighbourhood Partnership, had just replied to decline the request on the basis that the situation regarding the changes would become clearer and it would be best to await the final outcomes before committing to regular meetings. It was noted that the next meeting of the North West Locality Committee would be on 25 April when the agenda would inevitably include items related to these issues.

Tim reported that re-establishment of the Almond Community Safety Forum remained under discussion and it was hoped this would be implemented shortly.

8.Local Action List

Rod reported that he and Tim had met with the Locality Road's Engineer to review the list of local projects and to agree revised priorities and completion dates for each. The committee discussed the content of the list which would be amended to remove two projects which had already been completed following the meeting ; the bollard replacements at Cramond Road South/Lauriston Farm Road and Main Street/Corbiehill Road . The updated list would be displayed on the Notice Board and Website along with the list of local road repair projects which was planned for 2018/19. It was noted that a number of streets in Silverknowes were on the list.

9. Christmas Lights 2018

Rod summarised the current position with the plans for 2018. The most important thing was that everyone (committee and Lights Group) was in full agreement that the only realistic option for 2018 was to accept the Council's offer of again providing 13 decorated columns in the village plus the decorated tree at the former RBS premises. In the light of that decision the Lights Group were considering some way of putting their own mark on to the event to add something new to the decorations. Again everyone recognised that a decision about staying with the Council or switching to a contractor would need to be made early next year. For 2018 the Council had agreed to replace the permanent bollards on East Barnton Avenue with re-moveable ones to permit temporary closure of the east end of the road for the switch on event while allowing vehicle access to be maintained to East Barnton Gardens. The Lights Group wanted to have the switch-on event on a Saturday in a move away from the traditional Friday and the Council would be asked to support this change. On fundraising a milestone had been reached with funds being half way towards the £10000 target and this would be an important message for the newsletter in May.

10. Facebook Page for DMSA

This was carried forward to the next meeting.

11. AGM Planning

The committee discussed provisional arrangements for the AGM to be held on 23 May and agreed to finalise on the details for the event at the next meeting on 8 May.

It was agreed that it would be helpful to bring the start time forward to 7 pm to allow more time for the exercise on community engagement and Charlotte undertook to confirm this would be satisfactory with the Church. She also agreed to check the kitchen facilities to confirm if they were suitable for serving refreshments. It was accepted that decisions about timing and refreshments would need to be taken prior to publishing the AGM notices.

One factor to be addressed was the layout of the hall and the use of space for the community engagement exercise and Rod said he would discuss this with the presenters at a planned meeting next week.

The provisional timetable would be to post the AGM notices by the week end of 28/29 April, and to have the membership renewal letters and newsletter ready for delivery by 5/6 May.

12. Jurassic Park Event at Lauriston Castle

The committee had a further discussion about the outcome and lesson's from the event and acknowledged that Tim had been undertaking a very helpful role in liaising between the problems encountered by local residents and the organisers of the event. He was thanked for providing direct feed back which had broadly represented the views of the committee and of resident's who had contacted the Association. It

was recognised that there had been many young children who had enjoyed the displays but the fact was that the concerns about damage to the site, the lack of parking facilities, local congestion, accessibility for large vehicles and site security which had all been flagged in advance had proved to be correct to varying degrees, even recognising that foul weather had been at least a factor in contributing to damage on the site. It was understood a formal review of the plans for the event would be undertaken and that was welcomed by the committee.

13. Data Protection Act May 2018

The committee approved a draft statement of policy and compliance which the Association would use to meet the obligations and requirements of new data protection legislation to be introduced in May. The statement would be posted on the Notice Board and Website and be included with membership renewal letters. The intention would be to consider also including an abbreviated version in the forthcoming Newsletter, although space would be at a premium.

14. HGV's on Main Street

The committee further discussed the apparent high frequency of heavy vehicles breaching the 7.5 tonne weight restriction on Main Street and agreed to carry out a spot survey on 19 April to obtain evidence of the problem and to follow up with complaints to those companies whose drivers were ignoring the restriction.

15. Community Payback Orders

Charlotte advised that she had received an update from Graham who had been trying to establish clarity around the Council's policy with regard to the use of community payback orders on Council owned property. The information was that there was a ban on the use of these orders on Council land, with the basis of the rule being related to a perceived threat to the security of jobs being undertaken by paid employees. Graham had said he would continue to look into what would need to happen to affect a change in this policy. The general view of the committee was that they could understand the issue around any risk to jobs but saw no reason why payback orders could not be used where jobs would not be under threat.

16. Tar and Chip Resurfacing

It was noted that that the anticipated report on the Council's investigation into problems with "tar and chip" resurfacing had still not been presented to the Transport and Environment Committee and the matter was carried forward. Kevin would be invited to provide an update for the committee.

17. Shoreline Project

Rod gave a short report on the recent event he and Gordon had attended at the Botanic Gardens where representatives from community groups had been invited to give comment and ideas for development of the waterfront from Cramond to Seafield. (He had previously circulated full details).

On the evening there had been a significant degree of input from North Edinburgh Arts with an emphasis on events at the Granton shoreline and Rod said the challenge would be to try to obtain funding and promotion for activities and projects on the Silverknowes part of the foreshore. He had agreed to meet Eddie Tait (owner of the café) to discuss how some ideas could be developed .Rod envisaged the Association as being involved in a promotion and facilitating role but not as a direct organiser of any events or activities.

18. Request for Bus Services to Silverknowes Foreshore

Charlotte reported that a reply had been received from Lothian Buses in response to the request by the Association for a bus service to be provided to the foreshore during the summer season, with the suggestion that any one of the services currently terminating at Silverknowes could be extended to the foreshore.

The request had been refused but both Rod and Charlotte considered that the reply had not properly addressed the case and the matter would be pursued with a further letter. It was now clear that with more events being planned for the foreshore, including the Council's own approval for the "bouncy castle" events, the case for a regular bus service was even stronger.

19. AOCB

19a. The Committee discussed a request from Tesco for their Community Letter to be displayed on the Association Notice Board. Following some discussion around the problem's of displaying notices from businesses and commercial organisations the request was agreed on the basis that the notice contained only community information with absolutely no commercial content.

20. Date of Next Meeting Tuesday 9 May 2018 6.45 pm in Davidson's Mains Primary School