

**DAVIDSON'S MAINS & SILVERKNOWES ASSOCIATION**  
**Management Committee Meeting 12 June 2018 at 6.45 pm in Davidson's Mains Primary School**

1. **Apologies:** Tim Mitchell, Ellen Searle, Coll Gardner, Councillors Kevin Lang and Norman Work.
2. **Present:** Rod Alexander (Chair), Charlotte Cowe (Secretary), Gordon McGregor (Treasurer), Seonaidh Edgar, Brain Flanagan, Laura Thomson, Carolyn Williams.  
Rod welcomed Jill Smith to the meeting as a new member of the committee.

In attendance: Councillors Graham Hutchison and Louise Young; Police Sergeant Euan Sinclair and PC Jim Kelly for the police report.

**3.1 Minutes.** The May minutes were approved.

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

Rod reported that there were no changes or additions to either of the logs.

Following discussion it was agreed that subsequent to the meeting the issue of the use of Community Payback Orders on the Council estate would be added to the Ongoing Issues Log while the matter was being pursued by Graham, in recognition of the fact the matter would probably take time to conclude.

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

**3a. Re-Cycling Bins at Tesco**

It was again noted that while two new lifting lid paper containers were on the site and were being emptied on a regular basis, the original fixed top bin was still present, was full of paper and was not being emptied. Louise agreed to pursue this to try to get the problem resolved.

**3b. Street Lights on Ferry Road**

The committee again expressed concern that there had been no progress on the problem of the street lights being out of operation because of the access problem caused by the overgrown conifer trees in Silverknowes Neuk. Graham reported that he understood that the enforcement letters to residents were in hand but it was not clear when they would be sent. It was decided to keep the matter under review.

**3c. Proposal for Grafitti Art on the container at Davidson's Mains Park**

Rod confirmed that the award of £250 from the Almond Neighbourhood Partnership Community Grants Fund had been approved and that the RHS pupils were now planning to paint the container in August after the school holidays.

**3d. HGV's on Main Street**

Charlotte reported positive responses had been received from some of the companies who had been contacted following the weight limit infringements which had been identified from the survey in April. There were others who had yet to reply and she agreed to provide an updated analysis for the committee to consider.

**3e. Jurassic Kingdom Event**

It was noted that the promised report into the planning and operation of the event had still not materialised and Louise undertook to find out when it would be available.

**3f. Repairs to cycle track**

Rod confirmed that after the May meeting he had reported our concerns about the delay in clearing and reinstating the site on Silverknowes Road East which had been used as a base for the works. He had received assurances that the matter was in hand and the committee noted that the site had now been cleared up. Residents had asked about the grass being re-planted but it was noted that it is the Council Policy just to leave it to recover naturally.

**4. Correspondence**

Charlotte was pleased to report that there had been several emails thanking us for informing the membership about the proposed traffic restrictions for the Scottish Power road works and changes to bus routes. All other relevant correspondence had been circulated and/or would be discussed as appropriate under the agenda for the meeting.

## **5. Reports**

### **5a Police Report**

Sergeant Euan Sinclair and PC Jim Kelly were welcomed to provide a verbal police report for May. PC Kelly advised that in total there had been 24 reported crimes in the Davidson's Mains and Silverknowes area of which 9 had been solved. The crimes were in several categories but the main pattern had been the continued instances of attempted and actual break-ins to properties, garages and sheds. There had been a significant number of thefts of pedal cycles some of which had been from poorly secured premises and a strong message from the police was to take care in locking garages and sheds. The problem of youth disorder in the grounds of Lauriston Castle continued to be an issue although the police were visiting the grounds regularly to check and move them on. In response to a query raised at the May meeting Sergeant Sinclair confirmed that there was nothing illegal in local residents using speed guns as a deterrent to drivers breaking the speed limit although for the avoidance of doubt he stressed that it was only the police who could enforce speed limits. There was some discussion on the Bill going through the Scottish Parliament to prohibit parking on footpaths which has been a recurring problem in our area, particularly on sections of Main Street. The Bill had the support of the Police although they recognised that to some degree discretion and common sense would need to be applied to enforcement, a position fully supported by the committee.

### **5b. Treasurer's Report**

Gordon reported that the balance in the account was £9213.58 of which £5054.72 was the accumulated gross income for the Christmas Lights Fund. He advised that membership subscriptions had totalled £1122 to date.

## **6. Planning issues**

### **6a. Former RBS building**

Charlotte reported that she had received two separate complaints regarding the litter around the building. She had contacted the agent who had apologised and had agreed to ask the developer to clear up the mess. Before that could be done the committee were delighted to note that a group of young people who were concerned about the local environment had acted themselves to clear things up. It was understood they had been part of a group linked to the Future DMS project and this was noteworthy in being the first action by the group. It was noted that planning approval had now been given for signage associated with the new development although the start date was being held up by a delay with the Building Warrant.

### **6b. Proposed development at Mackenzies**

Rod confirmed that the DMSA had received a number of requests from residents who were opposed to the proposals for the former Mackenzies site and a letter of objection had been sent to represent their views. This had been previously circulated to the committee. The committee were concerned to note that a significant number of letters of support for the development had been sent from addresses in the Blackhall area and it was understood this had occurred at the instigation of one of the developers. The Association had been obliged to highlight this unusual situation and to request that priority should be given to the comments of local residents.

### **6c. Planning application for Cammo site**

Rod confirmed that in line with the decision taken at the May meeting, a letter of objection had been sent to oppose the housing development at Cammo principally on the basis of the additional traffic and congestion which would be generated on roads which were already operating at capacity. Committee members had been given a copy of the letter. It was noted that there had been more than 220 objections.

### **6d. Application for an Entertainment License by Cameron Codona for Bouncy Castle Play Site at Silverknowes Promenade.**

The committee discussed this application which had been made in retrospect after the site had been previously approved. It appeared there had been a failure to follow up site approval with the need for an entertainments licence. The committee were concerned about the lack of detail in the application which amounted to little more than a few words of intent and an almost undecipherable location map. The committee believed that if a license was to be awarded it should only be for one year to permit a review before any further extension of the license. This was the first time this type of event had been proposed for Silverknowes and there were significant concerns about the implications for the Boardwalk Café and other interested parties who use the foreshore. The question of the safety of bouncy castles at the foreshore in windy conditions was also raised.

It was agreed a letter would be submitted to the Licensing Department to highlight the concerns.

## **7. Almond Neighbourhood Partnership**

Rod provided feedback on few items from the Neighbourhood Partnership meeting on 7 June.

The community grant fund application for £250 to cover the cost of paint for the container at Davidson's Mains Park had been approved and the committee were pleased that the RHS pupils could now proceed

with the project which would benefit the whole community. Also at the same meeting the project for new tree planting at The Green had been removed from this year's programme and this was very much regretted by the committee (see item 8 ). On the question of Davidson's Mains and Silverknowes representation at a community level and ongoing uncertainty about the future situation , Rod said that over the summer he proposed to put together an updated explanation of the difficult local situation arising from the historical boundary divisions which split the area into three parts at electoral and community Council level . It would be discussed at the September meeting.

## **8. Local Action List**

Rod confirmed that there had been two changes to the details of projects on the Action List:

The first was that the upgrade to the cycle track through Davidson's Mains Park between East Barnton Avenue and Queensferry Road was now scheduled to start in September. He had been assured that despite repeated delays the funding was not in doubt.

The second matter was that a decision had been taken to defer the planting of trees at The Green until 2019 because of pressure on the Neighbourhood Environment Projects budget and the need to give priority to a number of safety related projects. Rod said he had been obliged to accept the decision taken at the recent Almond Partnership meeting, although he had stressed that the proposal to plant the trees at The Green had been continually deferred and would make a point this time of expressing concern to Councillors and the North West Locality management. The aim would be to try to get a firm commitment for the funds to be made available in 2019.

## **9. Christmas Lights 2018**

The committee discussed the plans for the Christmas Lights event in December and were pleased to note that the Lights Group were to have a first planning meeting later in the week. Their plans could now take account of the assurance from the Council that East Barnton Avenue could be closed off from Main Street for the event. Fund raising was going well with £5054 in the lights fund and further events being planned including the whisky tasting event on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of the month in the Scout Hall and a Fun Run and BBQ on the 29th. Rod advised that Ellen had an application in hand for a grant from the Edinburgh Airport Community Fund and he would be helping with an application to Tesco's community fund. It had been delayed by the need to have a dissolution clause included in the Constitution but with such a clause having been approved at the AGM the application could now proceed.

## **10. Facebook page for DMSA**

After some discussion it was agreed to use the Future DMS facebook page in the meantime. This had been tried on a couple of issues and met the purpose of distributing local information to a wider audience.

Louise confirmed that pupils from the RHS were keen to be involved in facebook and perhaps even help with a website and this was noted for action after the summer.

## **11. AGM Review**

The committee discussed the AGM and everyone agreed it had gone well at the different location and that there had not been any problems. The attendance of over 70 had been excellent given there had not been any contentious local issues which from experience tends to increase the numbers. The shortened format had also been a success. The only minor issue was that there had been a couple of complaints about the absence of the traditional Q&A session and it was agreed this could perhaps be made available as part of any public event later in the year , for example as part of a possible "Future DMS " follow up meeting . It was agreed to discuss this at the September meeting.

Charlotte provided the committee with an update on membership renewals and applications following on from the AGM. Of the 240 members at the close of the last session, 144 had already renewed and there had been 11 new first time applications. This initial rate of response was in line with expectations and she confirmed reminder letters would be delivered by early July.

## **12. FutureDMS**

Following the AGM an excellent presentation had been given by the group to approximately 110 people and was enjoyed by all who attended. The event had taken the form of a short presentation about the opportunities for improving community engagement and then for groups of about ten to consider what could be done under a range of different criteria to improve the local environment and encourage local participation and activity on specific projects. The proposals were varied and imaginative and will now be combined with the results of a similar exercise undertaken with local schools and youth groups to come up with a few specific actions to be discussed and considered at a later meeting, possibly in the Autumn.

## **13. Parking at The Green**

There was further discussion on the planned survey of residents in The Green to establish whether there would be support for the introduction of a resident's parking scheme. The survey had been requested by some residents but it had been put on hold for time to find out about the Council's revised charges for permits. This was now available and it was agreed to have the documentation prepared by the end of July

for Carolyn and Laura to undertake the survey in August. On a different matter relating to The Green, it was noted there had been complaints about the extent of dog fouling coupled with the absence of bins. It was understood that the Council were reluctant to provide bins because they wanted dog owners to take the dog muck away but it was agreed this would be raised with the Environmental Wardens.

#### **14. Tar and Chip Re-Surfacing**

It was noted that the anticipated report on the failure of tar and chip re-surfacing projects had not yet been made available and Louise undertook to investigate when it would be produced.

#### **15. Shoreline Project**

Rod reported that he had met with Eddie Tait of the Boardwalk Beach Club Café to discuss projects for the Silverknowes Foreshore and a further meeting was planned. He explained that it was now clear that the funds available for Shoreline Projects were for Arts and Culture related activities whereas he believed it was fair to say the Association gave a higher priority to getting support for improvements to services and the environment. Notwithstanding that point he would see if there was support for an arts related project which could attract sponsorship funding and would at least generate community interest. Rod advised that an earlier provisional application for grant funding towards an arts project for the foreshore had not been successful because it had been described only in outline terms. All grants which had been made to date had been for projects which had been fully specified and were ready to proceed immediately.

#### **16. Request for Bus Service to Silverknowes Foreshore**

As a follow up to the discussion at the May meeting Charlotte reported that a further letter had been sent to Lothian Buses to reinforce the strong case for provision of a bus service to Silverknowes Foreshore , although it was accepted with reluctance that it was almost certainly too late now for a service to be provided this year . It was noted again that since the earlier refusal by Lothian Buses the Council had approved a bouncy castle event to run over the summer and were supporting a number of one –off sporting events which would create additional potential demand for a bus service.

#### **17. Scottish Power Works**

The committee discussed the implications of the road works, traffic diversions and changes to local bus services which would be in place from Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> June and there were a range of concerns. It was recognised that these works were essential involving cable laying on Clermiston Road, Queensferry Road and Quality Street to increase capacity but it was concerning that despite being known about for several months, the detail of road restrictions and the timing had only just been made available. The principle effect locally would be the closure of Quality Street in a northbound direction for the first two weeks of the works with consequential traffic diversions and changes to the 21 and 41 bus services. The committee were very concerned about the potential for serious congestion and difficulties of movement and accessibility for local residents.

#### **18. Street Play Events**

The committee discussed the Council's proposals for the planning and organisation of Street Play events. These had been updated in the light of some of the problems from last year and it appeared that the Council were intent on enforcing the regulations more strictly and to provide more support to the events. Following discussion the committee agreed that approval for any of these schemes should be a matter for the residents in the street and that we would remain neutral on the case for any particular event , unless there were to be external factors such as serious disruption to through traffic. The committee would help residents with advice about the scheme if asked but no more than that.

#### **19. AOCB.**

19a. It was noted that the bench and footpath outside the former RMS building had been frequently covered in litter and it was surmised that this may be due to the removal of the litter bin from the RBS forecourt. It was agreed this matter would be followed up.

19b. Brian advised the committee that he had recently observed the police taking action against bus drivers who were in contravention of the regulations in allowing their engines to tick over while parked outside the primary school. He said he had contacted the bus operator to complain about the practice and had been told by them that the responsibility lay with the company or organisation which was hiring the buses. The committee considered the stance of the operator to be nonsensical and were pleased that the police were taking an interest in the issue.

19c. It was noted that traffic wardens appear to be operating in the village again, particularly first thing in the morning. Recent observations confirm that several cars had been given tickets on Main Street.

#### **20. Date of next meeting 11 September 2018 at 6.45 pm at Davidson's Mains Primary School**