

# LOREBURN COMMUNITY COUNCIL



## Minutes

Meeting: Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2023 at 7.00pm

Held at Municipal Chambers, Buccleuch Street, Dumfries

### Present

Artemis Adams, John Dowson, Robin Wishart, Dean Vaughan, Anne Lindsay, Ian Gasse, Gerald Donnelly, Jim Parker, Sean Mckay, Donald Gibson, Peter Kormylo, Graham McLeod, Malcolm Johnstone, Karl Drinkwater, Carole Hastings, Jim Wallace, Lesley Macleod.

### Apologies

John Campbell, Simon Jones, Chris Woodness, Susan Galsworthy, Rod Cowan (DPAG)

Following the resignation of Anne Lindsay, John Dowson took the Chair and called for nominations for the position of Convenor of the Community Council. In doing so he paid compliments to the previous service given by Anne Lindsay. We are all aware of the dedicated work she does for the community and hopefully will continue to do. We also recognised the resignation of Lorna McGowan and thanks must be extended to Lorna for her service.

One nomination was received for Robin Wishart, nominated by Graham McLeod and seconded by Carole Hastings.

With no other nominations, Robin Wishart (RW) was duly elected.

RW took the Chair and also thanked AL for her previous service.

There was no police report.

### Questions to Councillors

Malcolm Johnstone (MJ) commented that there had been some discussion around a 'Masterplan' for Dumfries. He thought it was important that this was pursued and that we did not just accept the DDD plan developed by DPAG.

Keith Walters (KW) gave us some feedback on a recent seminar about Whitesands Flooding options. There are options to either pursue the current scheme or scrap it completely. There

may be other options that could be considered. The current position is that it remains in the long term capital budget but at this stage Council does not have a budget allocated towards further progress.

Dumfries High School options have been approved.

Some schools have been affected by the current aerated concrete issue. Schools have been surveyed and identified.

The fountain is under 2 years warranty and Lost Art from Wigan have been called back to address the problems with the gold.

Artemis Adams (AA) asked that a Value For Money audit should be carried out on this fountain project. At £400,000 it is extremely expensive and it was confirmed that this was paid for by the council and that no special grants had been involved. Council has a duty to ensure value For Money and many residents and taxpayers believe that this has not been achieved on this project.

Lesley Macleod, head teacher at Loreburn school, urged councillors to take urgent action to progress the works intended for the school. She said it was being held up by the bureaucracy of the Scottish Government and asked councillors to intervene. There are 175 children now next to a busy car park and derelict buildings. 130 families are affected. There is a need for a safe space for children and new proposed flats overlooking the playground create a child protection issue.

Peter Kormylo (PK) fully supported the points that Lesley made and thought that the Scottish Government should be shamed into action.

### **St Andrews Church**

Mr Jim Parker led a delegation from the church to ask the CC to support their efforts to obtain grants to carry out renovation works to the building and the steeples.

The CC enthusiastically gave them support and asked that further reports be provided so that they could be widely circulated amongst the members.

### **Robert Burns Statue**

Donald Gibson circulated a report and updated us on the imaginative proposal to take the statue indoors for future preservation. Also to replace the statue at Greyfriars with a cast copy. Without this the statue will effectively be destroyed over time. It is now in a worse condition than 5 years ago when it was cleaned. We were all urged not to support further cleaning.

In Connection with this John Dowson (JD) suggested that this was an important opportunity for the whole Burns Collection to be reviewed and perhaps moved to a more town centre location. To create a meaningful and respected visitor location for people from around the world. Councillors were asked to consider this option even though it would be expensive, it would be a valuable investment in our town centre regeneration.

LCC have agreed to host a public meeting to gather public support for this course of action. St Andrews Church offered their hall as a venue for such a meeting.

### **Participation Request – Greensands**

Finally we have a more positive response from council officers and Jamie Ferguson has agreed to meet our representatives when he returns from holiday.

### **Planning Issues**

Nothing to report

**Treasurer's report** has been circulated. Any questions to RW.

### **Place Planning**

RW AL And Simon Jones (SJ) had met with council officials.

The DDD report was regarded as a nucleus for a new place plan. There is a need to work together with DPAG. We must avoid duplication and any danger of different place plans being drawn up. This also links to the council discussion about a Masterplan for Dumfries.

Rod Cowan, Chair of DPAG had been invited to this meeting but was not able to attend. LCC should now take the lead on this work as we are the democratically elected statutory body for |Dumfries town centre and wider area.

AL commented on the work that she had been doing and her criticism of the DDD plan which had not been the subject of full consultation. Many traders had not been asked to contribute and the consultation had been minimal and selective.

LCC wanted to encourage AL to continue with her work and commitment to speak to traders and others about any future place plan.

LCC agreed to fully support the Midsteeple Quarter Project in relation to the Scottish Civic Trust – My Place Awards. JD will progress this.