

LOREBURN COMMUNITY COUNCIL



Meeting: Tuesday 3 October 2023 at 7:00pm
Held at Municipal Chambers, Buccleuch Street, Dumfries

Sederunt: Robin Wishart (Chair), Simon Jones (Secretary), John Dowson (Vice Chair), Susan Garnsworthy, Graham Macleod, Karl Drinkwater, Carole Hastings, Artemis Adams, Anne Lindsay, Malcolm Johnstone, John Campbell, Graham Bartlett, Olivia Bartlett, Mag Handling, Donna Watson, Ian Gasse, Matt Baker, Morgan Love, Rod Cowan, Andrew Pearson

Apologies: Maureen Johnstone, David Slater, Chris Woodness, Keith Walters

Friars Vennel: the closure of the road at the top of the Vennel came as a shock. We have received a letter from Mike Grunwell of DG Council which will be circulated with these minutes. Donna Watson (Canine Rescue) told us has had a big impact on the traders there. There was no through route, no notification or signage of how to get to the shops, the barriers and cones gave the impression that the area was completely closed. Footfall has been terrible even on the lower half of the Vennel.

Malcolm J told us the road would be open on Friday (and it was). The state of disrepair was shocking and dangerous and he accepted, after a site visit, that the road needed to be fully closed off. He suggested that there should be a stocktake on the condition of our town centre buildings.

AA: Cancer Research have been receiving complaints about the state of the building for some time.

RW: Businesses can claim for loss of earnings on the Council portal.

MJ will ask Chris Woodness to contact the affected businesses.

JC explained that the Communities Committee today decided to reduce rates relief on empty properties (to encourage owners to actually use their properties!)

Questions to councillors

JD asked, regarding the full council meeting about Whitesands. He complained about the lack of consultation and that the related report was inadequate.

RW asked for our concern about consultation to be represented to Full Council tomorrow.

AL asked if the climate panel was taken into consideration.

MJ: No.

Olivia raised her concerns about the new car park at Greensands and the impact on dog walkers and the environment.

SJ asked councillors to talk to council officers about our Participation Request which has been taking some time.

Developing a place plan.

LCC will work with DPAG to develop a place plan.

SJ said that this is a real opportunity to seek positive developments.

Rod Cowan raised concerns about the new £20m for Dumfries, how will that work. He has contacted Alister Jack but the matter was not clarified. DDD is built on community consultation.

AL felt that ideas for breakout groups during consultation for DDD were not represented. Also businesses were not consulted. Historically place plans have not been well received because voices were not heard.

SG said that the DDD plan was driven by consultants and done during COVID. She felt more could have been done to widen representation such as reaching people in their own homes.

RC: DDD is a starting point, not set in stone. Agrees that we need to talk to people face to face.

Donna Watson said come and speak to people

RW suggested themed workshop collaborations between LCC and DPAG.

AL said that businesses will become invested in the plan if we talk to them.

RW: we need to evidence our consultation.

Matt Baker suggested DPAG make a statement of intent about working with LCC on the local place plan.

RW: office bearers will move this forward.

JC: it's great that communities work together

MJ: it makes perfect sense to do this.

Email Security: SJ explained that a community councillor, CH, had been hacked and impersonated. There is support – The Hub do a free basic computer skills course, the Police have info, advice and leaflets about cyber security, ActionFraud and other online sites are available.

Rod C: if in doubt, check before you click.

Mid Steeple Quarter: The AGM at The Usual Place was somewhat chaotic with members being left outside in the rain at one point. It was a standard AGM with accounts and re-election of board members. Consultation with the members in breakout groups will be published on the website in due course.

The project is on track and half a million pounds within budget.

Allocation policy for the flats will be announced soon.

Expressions of interest are still open for the ground floor business space.

Loreburn Flood Group. SJ announced a film and talk on 9th November at the Robert Burns Film Centre.

Planning. It is noted that the Robert The Bruce pub is expanding its beer garden.

LCC congratulates The Venue on its recent improvements.

Correspondence: Dumgal Council parking consultation is active. LCC is concerned about the conflation of decriminalisation (which we see as a better method of enforcement) with parking charges (which are unpopular).

KD Slow Ways review of walking groups <https://beta.slowways.org/>

SJ Help with heating money can be claimed through The Hub <https://www.thehubdg.org.uk/help-with-heating-costs/>

RW: Mr Michael Sutherland asked to present his views on the wearing of face masks in schools. LCC note his concerns but we will not be taking up his offer of a presentation.

RW: DPAG AGM will be on 1st November, 7pm St George's Church Hall.

Matt Baker: Stove have sent out a letter on Democracy Matters. Anyone can apply for a small grant for local consultation (£500). SCDC doing national work. Meeting in Dumfries will be on 22nd Nov. 4 seats for the community council. LCC agreed that we would participate. (RW and SJ).

RW: Last month's minutes approved.

Matters arising: value of money audit on the Fountain.

RW: Dumfries Masterplan: we have made a formal Participation Request – this was agreed unanimously by LCC.

RW: call for ideas on distributing our grants money.

KD asked for a reminder by email about the rules for grants.

SG: the financial years ends on the 31st March.

RW: we have £1500 and £2000 to spend.

AA suggested leaflets on parking.

RW put out a call for a Treasurer for LCC.

Date of next meeting (AGM followed by Ordinary meeting) Tuesday 7
November 2023

<https://loreburn.comcouncil.scot/what-s-on>

