

## **Larbert, Stenhousemuir & Torwood Community Council**

### **AGM - 25 September 2017 - Secretary's Report**

#### **Membership**

- As at 25 September 2017, there are 6 elected members, 2 co-opted members and 1 member representing a nominated group.
- The 6 elected Community Councillors elected are: Eric Appelbe, Yvonne Weir, Lauralin Scott, Jim Cowan, Peter O'Rourke and Denis Shovlin. We sadly lost Gillian Bellingham our Treasurer who passed away in June 2017 following a short illness.
- The 2 members co-opted at the outset of the Community Council are: Colleen Hurren and Jim Kelly. Charles Gillespie retired from the Community Council as a co-opted member during the year.
- The Community Council also has 5 places for representatives from local groups. Only 1 place has been filled by Ted Bingham representing Larbert Old Playgroup.

#### **Meetings**

- The Community Council held its 2016/17 meetings on the last Monday of the month and continues to hold monthly meetings with the exception of December and July.
- Meetings during 2016/17 have all been held in the Larbert Old Church halls.
- Notices for meetings are placed in the Falkirk Herald, Library, One Stop Shop, Community Centre, Stenhousemuir Health Centre, ASDA, the Community Notice Board at the Plough Hotel and Crownest Park.
- Notices for meetings, agendas and minutes are also made available on-line on the Community Council website: [www.lstcommunitycouncil.org.uk](http://www.lstcommunitycouncil.org.uk), Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/LSTCommunityCouncil>, Instagram and via our Twitter feed: @LST\_CC

#### **Participation at Meetings**

- Community Councillors - Attendance has improved at meetings with most Community Councillors regularly attending meetings. However some are unable to attend continuously due to illness, work and other commitments.
- Police - There has been a presence at most meetings with very comprehensive reports provided at all meetings.
- Falkirk Council's Community Safety Team has also submitted written reports to all meetings.
- Larbert High School – Our links with Larbert High School continue to be strengthened and we have enjoyed regular updates from S6 pupils on the school's activities and key achievements. This has continued to be a great addition to our meetings and links to young people in the community.
- Local Councillors - There are 7 local Councillors covering the Community Council area. Following recent local government elections, there was a change to the local elected representatives with 5 new Councillors elected with 2 Councillors re-elected. Three of the new Councillors have attended meetings to-date since the elections.
- The Community Council has welcomed attendance and contributions from others at meetings. This has included regular updates from a number of local groups including the Tryst Community Sports Club (TCSC), Cycling without Age and the Communities Along the Carron Association

(CATCA). We have also had representatives from Falkirk Council and First Midland Bluebird at our meetings.

- Members of the Public - There has been continued attendance at meetings from members of the public. The largest public attendance was at our April 2017 meeting where we discussed youth anti-social behaviour in Kinnaird.

### **Correspondence**

- There has been a continued trend in high levels of correspondence this year. Correspondence is primarily by e-mail, Facebook, the website and twitter. There remains very little correspondence received by post.
- A correspondence report is delivered at each meeting highlighting key correspondence for action and summarising correspondence for information and correspondence sent.
- A dedicated e-mail address remains in place: [lst-cc@virginmedia.com](mailto:lst-cc@virginmedia.com)

### **Community Engagement**

- The Community Council continues to pro-actively engage with the local press – Falkirk Herald - to ensure important issues where appropriate are notified.
- Community Council website – [www.lstcommunitycouncil.org.uk](http://www.lstcommunitycouncil.org.uk) The website uses wordpress and contains the following pages: Home (news links), About Us, Meetings, Area, Representatives, Planning, Microgrants, Links and Contact Us. The site is mobile/tablet enabled. Links to planning applications and approvals/declines are updated and news items are also posted on the home page on a regular basis. Agendas, minutes, police report and other documents are also stored on the website.
- The Facebook page continues to increase in popularity with 3685 followers as at 24/9/2017 (Sept 2016 - 3,010, Sept 2015 - 2,332, Sept 2014 – 1,465, Sept 2013 - 491 and Sept 2012 - 61 followers). Posts are now reaching a much larger audience and continue to generate significant discussion, likes, shares and comments.
- We continue to operate a Twitter account - @LST\_CC This now has 599 followers as at 24/9/2017 (Sept 2016 – 503, Sept 2015 – 433, Sept 2014 - 328 followers and Sept 2013 - 109 followers) with regular retweets and favourites of our posts. Twitter continues to be an important means of following key local agencies for news and issues updates as well as keeping followers informed.
- We continue to use Mailchimp for our monthly e-mails for meeting and other important notifications. This enables more professional e-mails to be issued and also enables us to track the number of people opening and clicking on links. It also allows users to subscribe via the website. Users can also unsubscribe at any time or change their own details. This is much more efficient than standard mailing lists. The mailing list currently has 311 recipients. The average open rate is 48.4% and the average click rate is around 16.4% which are considerably above industry averages.
- During 2016, an Instagram account was created. Further work is required to promote this to gain followers and to attract a younger audience. We now have 51 followers on Instagram.
- The Community Council now has access to the Community Notice Board outside the Plough Hotel and in Crownest Park. Information is posted there on our meetings.
- Folders containing information on the Community Council, agendas, minutes etc are also retained in the library and One Stop Shop for those without access to the internet.
- The Community Council has continued to incorporate Matters from the Floor towards the start of the agenda to allow matters to be raised by the public earlier in meetings. This allows

members of the public to raise issues earlier within meetings and to provide sufficient time for full discussion of those matters.

### **Thanks**

- Finally, as always, I would like to thank fellow Community Councillors for their continued support during the year as I continue to juggle full-time work and family along with Community Council activity which can be a major challenge.
- In particular, I would like to thank Eric Appelbe for yet another year of continuing to put up with my constant barrage of e-mails and lengthy phone calls, Lauralin Scott for distributing the monthly meeting posters and helping out with photocopying, and Colleen Hurren for assisting with the administration of the website and Facebook pages.

Yvonne Weir - Secretary – 25 September 2017