

Waterside Community Council  
Minutes of Zoom meeting of 29 June 2020

Present: J. Herriot (chair); S. Wilson (vice-chair); C. Lilly (communications);  
K. Chesney-Bathie (treasurer); M. Todd, Cllr J. Jamieson, D. McFadden; C. Willson, D. Malcolm,  
J. Kennedy.

Apologies: J. Whyte (secretary); Cllr. S. Murray

- (1) Meeting started at 7.40pm. (Slow start for technical reasons.)
- (2) Attendees had read minutes of meeting of 4 March.
- (3) **Miners Club buyout:** C. Lilly reported on the current situation. Despite meeting of around sixty people at St Columba's lower hall in March, at which people had volunteered to form a company to apply for Scottish Land Fund (SLF) money for a community buyout, and despite our stage one application to the fund having gone in before the deadline, the SLF was unable to accept it (though it could possibly be reopened), since the Coal Industry Social Welfare Organisation (CISWO), to whom ownership of the club will have reverted, would not say whether they would be prepared to sell the property. David Wright of the Coalfields Regeneration Trust (CRT) had been told by CISWO that there wasn't enough time for them to take a decision on this for us to meet SLF deadlines, and then, despite repeated attempts to discuss this further (including by NUM President and Secretary Nicky Wilson, who very kindly got involved), CISWO gave up responding to communications. Doubtless the COVID-19 lockdown was a contributory factor. David Wright is exploring further funding options for us. He has devoted a huge amount of time to this, including coming to the meeting in March. Enormous thanks to him.
- (4) **CRT:** C. Lilly reported on a CRT Zoom meeting attended by 27 people including D. McFadden and herself and which was offering the possibility of filming, recording and sharing good stories of the COVID-19 lockdown in the Coalfields communities. Training would be offered. Waterside has the Archie's feeding station story (for which we lately applied for and were awarded £938 in funding by the CRT to cover five weeks of meals for children and others); the G66 COVID Response (started by Lynne Bateman and others in Waterside and coordinated here by Emma Wilson); lockdown bingo; fitness efforts using the Waterside bingo; and doubtless lots of other activities. D. McFadden explained his role setting up CRT Connect, a digital platform for sharing coalfields community stories; courses; and a calendar of events. The early part of the Archie's response story is on the platform, and he is working on a Luggiewatch story too (he'll share the links). He mentioned the recent BBC report that showed that former coalmining communities were still poorer than other communities and were among the poorest in Scotland.
- (5) **Vandalism, graffiti, youth partying, fly-tipping, littering:** Various antisocial incidents had happened in the area recently. J. Herriot had discussed with PC Fitzsimmons the recent vandalism at the shop, the graffiti in a close at Duntiblae, and the groups of youths engaged in underage drinking (with no social distancing) at points around the village and bingo. Youths were also reported to have been drinking at Gartconner's new artificial football pitch and leaving broken glass, which could cause damage to it. The police have increased their patrols. Residents should contact them when antisocial incidents occur. There had also been a serious fly-tipping incident at the back of the Miners Club car park. D. Carmichael had been in touch with Cllr. S. Murray about it. There was some discussion about a graffiti incident in the centre of Waterside. The police were involved.

Another issue was people going for walks along the river, picnicking and abandoning their rubbish. A suggestion was made that we should have a supply of bags near the footbridge that walkers could take with them to put their rubbish in. Note that Luggiewatch has a supply of green bags and litter pickers available for anyone who wants to pick litter while exercising. Some Luggiewatchers are doing this.

- (6) **ASN school and petition:** The new design is two-storeys (despite one of the reasons the council gave for using the playing field being that it would provide enough space for a single-storey building, which they claimed was key for an ASN school). The natural space had also been a key factor, though the plans now replace a very large proportion of this with a car park (a loss for both Waterside and the pupils). Despite this vertical expansion, attendees felt the field was still too small to fit in all that was required, and the budget appeared inadequate in view of the road widening need. The design also appeared to take no account of the possibility that COVID-19 may well be an ongoing problem, with lifts unlikely to allow for social distancing and presumably operated by touch, and a sensory trail (which will presumably have to omit touch). Moreover, what about the needs of local residents, many of whom had found the playing field the only place to exercise where they could socially distance adequately (the narrow river paths now being much used by walkers from the wider area)? Concerns were again expressed about traffic issues. A local resident had requested WCC organize a petition which he would deliver to the Scottish government. A survey was also suggested, perhaps using Survey Planet. Cordy Lilly to enlist help of Jim Carmichael if possible and organize.
- (7) **Tribute to Tam:** People expressed condolences to Carole on the loss of her much-loved husband, Tam, who very sadly died on 13 June. Like Carole, he had been an assiduous attender of WCC meetings. J. Herriot then asked C. Lilly to switch off the Zoom connection that she and Carole were using so that the chair and remaining attendees could discuss a fitting WCC tribute to Tam.