

Business Meeting

Monday 18th September 2017 at 8:00 pm in Auchengray Church Centre

Minutes

1. **Present:** Alistair Marshall (acting chair), Stephen Midgley (secretary), Margaret Addo, Patricia Tucker, Barbara Robertson.
SLC Councillor Julia Marrs, Stuart Reilly (VASLan Development Officer), Eric Williamson (TVHA); members of the public including members of WAT IF, Tarbrax Village Hall Association and other groups.
Eric Williamson had applied for co-option to TCC and completed the necessary forms. His request was accepted and he was welcomed onto the council. John Tucker will provisionally be the TVHA representative at TCC meetings.

2. **Apologies:** Ian Aitchison, Councillor Richard Lockhart

3. **Adoption of Minutes of the previous meeting:**

A member proposed deleting a short passage from the minutes, and a discussion ensued on the requirement for an accurate account of the meeting versus considerations of public relations. After a helpful contribution from Cllr Marrs, a compromise solution was agreed and the minutes approved.

Proposed by: Margaret Addo

Seconded by: Barbara Robertson

It was also agreed to revert to the previous system of awaiting approval of draft minutes by TCC before making them available to the public.

4. **Matters arising:** On the problem of TCC minutes being removed from the Village Hall noticeboard the secretary reported that, with one small exception, they were now being left in place. A member suggested that each of the village halls be asked if they could keep a file where past minutes could be kept for members of the public to consult. This was agreed. Margaret agreed to check with the halls and purchase the necessary files from TCC funds. The secretary also stated that back copies of minutes are always available from him on request.

Patricia explained that recent minutes and other information had not been posted on the new TCC website owing to poor broadband availability in her area. This situation was likely to prevail for some time, so it is unlikely there will be anything new on the website until further notice. The possibility of a second website administrator in an area with full access to broadband was suggested.

5. **Secretary's report:** Since the last meeting had been three months ago, there was a substantial backlog of information and announcements to be passed on:

Correspondence on TCC 'peace initiative' (see agenda item below)

Correspondence with SLC on road repairs to C37: the stretch of road near Polkelly has been resurfaced. The potholes at the bend by Easterhouse Farm have not been repaired, in spite of written requests from the TCC secretary. The roads area manager had written that people need to drive more carefully, which caused some amusement among those present. Several people stressed that the blind bend at this spot is unsafe – 'an accident waiting to happen'. The secretary will write to the roads department again, and Cllr Marrs also offered to pursue the matter.

Current road closure C24 ('Dogs Trust road'): this West Lothian road, near West Calder, is closed for repairs, starting from today until 22nd Dec.

SLC liaison officer Margaret Macdougall has returned to work, and wrote to thank TCC for the flowers.

Correspondence with Village Hall Association: Since issues previously discussed have all been settled to

mutual satisfaction, and both TVHA and TCC are represented at one another's meetings, it was agreed that there is no need for a separate meeting at this time.

Use of WAT IF office on election days: enquiries with TVHA and SLC's electoral returning officer confirm that use of the office is permissible on election days as long as there is no interference with electoral procedures.

Complaint about personal attacks: A complaint had been made that personal attacks are sometimes allowed at TCC meetings. It was suggested that the public be reminded that our meetings are for civilised discussion about community council business, that personal or targeted attacks (i.e. co-ordinated and aimed at one individual) are not appropriate behaviour, and that respect all round is essential. This was agreed by all those present.

Local Policing Plan and Police Scotland survey: Information was distributed to all present. The Police Scotland survey is open to all members of the public and no closing date is stated. The survey can be found here: <https://scotland.police.uk/yourviewcounts>

6 Treasurer's report: Annual accounts have been approved by South Lanarkshire Council
Current balance is £253.89
Payment was made for this and the next Auchengray Church Centre bookings

7 Updates: Correspondence with WAT IF? – the secretary reported that there had been a further exchange about our request for a meeting with WAT IF, which had yielded no useful result. However, the person handling WAT IF's correspondence at that time is no longer in post and the most recent exchanges have been more encouraging. It was decided to defer discussion on this until after the next agenda item.

At this point, the chair of Tarbrax Village Hall Association made an allegation about a conversation he and two others claimed to have overheard between the TCC secretary and Pat Mavor, strategic manager of WAT IF, about the request for a meeting between the two groups. The TCC secretary categorically denied the allegation. It was stated that some misunderstanding must have arisen, and the secretary proposed to contact Ms Mavor the following morning to clear up the matter amicably.

8 Agenda Items: Community peace initiative – promoting cohesion and co-operation in our community.

The meeting considered this proposal, which had been discussed among TCC members and prepared over some weeks with help and advice from our SLC councillors, VASLan and the Office of the Scottish Charities Regulator. The aim was to try to resolve the difficult relationships which have arisen in recent years between charities and other groups, and if possible to bring an end to disputes between them. The methods proposed included inviting all the groups together for a 'summit meeting', under the auspices and guidance of experienced disinterested parties such as representatives of SLC and VASLan. This could perhaps lead to a forum or working group which might reach agreements covering such matters as communication, co-operation, tolerance and respectful behaviour towards others. It was emphasised that all aspects of the proposal were open for discussion, and alternative ideas would be welcome.

A lively and wide-ranging discussion ensued, with help from our two visitors, and very diverse points of view were expressed. It was evident after a while that there was not sufficient support for the proposal in its present form, either among TCC members or from the rest of those present, so it was agreed to put it aside and think again. The secretary submitted that there is no reason at all why the various community groups should not be able to do their work in a

spirit

of mutual respect and support, and that disputes between groups set up for different purposes were unnecessary.

The Chair summed up the discussion by proposing that we recognise the problems that have arisen; that all the groups put further thought into solving these problems and moving forward; and that we could consider meetings or a forum organised within the community to try to achieve the aims expressed in the proposal without the need for outside assistance, where people could discuss issues and agree upon solutions in a friendly and constructive manner.

Correspondence with WAT IF? Discussion returned to the need to establish normal relations with WAT IF?, the secretary noting that the most recent exchange had seemed more promising. Various obstacles which had arisen to a meeting between the two groups were considered, and it was

finally decided that it would be worthwhile to try to break the deadlock by agreeing to WAT IF's suggestion of having such a meeting tape-recorded. This was agreed by all TCC members. Myra Dick agreed to pass on this decision to WAT IF management, and the secretary will notify them in writing.

- 9 **A.O.C.B.** Some attendees asked Margaret for more information about the current work of the Common Association, and she said that Phase 3 was in hand. They tried to press her for more details, and Margaret said they would find out more in due course. Others praised the excellent results of the scheme.
- 10 **Next meetings:** Monday 23rd October, Auchengray Church Centre 8 pm
Monday 20th November, Auchengray Church Centre 8 pm (AGM and business)
- 11 **Items for Newsletter:** Dates and times of next Business Meetings of TCC as above
- 12 **Close of meeting:** Meeting closed at 9.30 pm