

Dirleton Community Association

Minute of Committee Meeting on 25th April 2025

The meeting was held at 7pm in The Castle Inn.

Attendees: C. Hamer (Chair); T. Lonie; J. Macleod; D. Carter; J. Finlay; M. & N. Howarth; C. & T. Drysdale, B. & V. Nimmo; K. Cornwell; M. Henderson; A. Soave; S. Oliver; F. Dingwall, A. Orr; B. Moody; C. Wicker; J. Fergie; J. Ballard; I. Oliver; R. Campbell; M. Hickey; M. Von Schrenk; B. Thomson; +1

Apologies: D. Arnold; S. Paterson-Brown; Z. Trendell; R. Sydeserff; F. McClintock

1. Dirleton Primary School

BM gave a presentation on the vision, values and aims of DPS.

- The pupils were consulted on what they liked about the school.
- The three objectives of Social Enterprise were achieved.
- The pupils have been interacting with Gullane Day Care Centre.
- The staff and pupils wrote a letter of thanks to the community, issued by DCA mailing list.
- They plan to make a visual and audible historical record of the village throughout the lifetime of the school.
- There is a low number of pupils at the school and community engagement is encouraged.
- New values have been established – Community, Respect and Empowerment.

2. Minutes of DCA Meeting 20th February 2025 & LPP Consultation 20th March

BM requested that his name was added to the apologies for 20th February. Proposed by JM and seconded by TL. DC to speak to ZT regarding the LPP minutes.

3. Treasury Report

SPB at GACC meeting. All pledged donations to the heritage lighting fund have been received and the £10k target was met. TD commented that the street lighting on Manse Road is poor. ELC's electrical engineer has been made aware of the issue and DC is to meet them in May. TD suggested more lighting is required and DC confirmed that four more lights are in the plan but not in this year's budget.

4. Kirk Hall

TD explained that there is a formal process for a community to make an application under the government's Right to Buy scheme. He has tried to make contact with the appropriate team and will update the membership at the next meeting. CH has agreed to prepare the necessary plans.

5. Old Village Hall

DC provided an overview of the current situation.

- Storage requirements of various village groups/clubs incl. winter resilience, DPS sports equipment, gazebos and tables.

- Rental considered at Fenton Barns at a cost of £142/mth. Too far to be effective.
- Lease of land for a container on the paddock land opposite the East Lodge. Lease would only be short term and therefore difficult to obtain funding and planning permission is considered a high risk due to visibility from the JMW.
- ELC have valued the building and land, extending to 1m perimeter of footprint and right of access, at £2k. There is no deadline on the offer.

JF gave a presentation of the two options considering either repair to standard suitable for storage or demolish and construct new storage.

- Structural Surveys have been carried out and confirmed the building is in worse condition than envisaged. Repair costs are estimated at c. £100k + VAT for storage use with an ongoing long-term maintenance cost.
- Demolition and topsoiling leaving only the floor slab for future use would cost c. £26k.
- Suggestion to place two shipping containers on the floor slab; cost c. £3k each delivered. Recycle floor timbers for use as cladding to the containers and support for climbing plants as screening. Accurate costing required and consultation required with ELC and Historic Environment Scotland. Purchase from ELC would need to be qualified with planning approval and funding.
- Funding via grants supporting by match funding possibly offset by purchase of the building/land, planning application fee c.£400 and volunteer work.
- External lighting from solar power. No interior lighting is proposed to keep costs down and most storage will be accessed during daylight hours.

Membership agreed to progressing discussions with ELC and HES and accurate costing.

6. Local Place Plan (LPP)

DC explained that the LPP will be updated to include the community consultation on 20th March 2025 and then submitted to ELC.

7. Dirleton Common

TD a note has been circulated to explain that there is no evidence that the overflow car park was designated for use by the village of Dirleton. The fields north of the Eel Burn are owned by Caledonian Heritable. It was suggested that the Dirleton Common area was previously a golf course.

8. Heritage Lighting

DC confirmed that the remaining heritage lighting is scheduled for the end of May.

9. Planning

[25/00210/P](#) Change of use of Amalfi Café to residential. CH explained the procedure the committee followed. Although there were no architectural conservation issues with the application, the committee voted as to whether to submit an objection. The vote was considered too close and it was decided that the membership should be consulted. The planning timeframe was considered too short to arrange a meeting and therefore on 23rd March the mailing list was used to consult with 235 residents. There were 22 responses, 12 to object and 10 to support. Again, this was considered too close for the DCA to make a formal comment either way, particularly considering the poor number of responses, less than 10% of those consulted. Therefore, on 8th April all residents were informed that they

should make their own responses directly to ELC. ELC received nine objections, insufficient numbers to call the application to a committee vote. The planning officer confirmed CH's original view that the application did not breach planning policy or guidance and consented the application on 22nd April.

John Fergie and others suggested that the heritage value of the shop meant that a public meeting should have been held and the applicant should have consulted with residents. CH stated that there was insufficient time for a meeting and that the mailing list reached out to a far greater proportion of the residents. In addition, it is a private business, and that the applicant has no requirement to consult with the public over his own financial consideration to close or potentially sell the business.

KC commented that the Open Arms is for sale and that the DCA should be vigilant for any planning application for a change of use such as apartments. CH confirmed that the GACC get automatic notifications of all planning applications and the DCA would consult with residents if an application is submitted.

It was suggested that better use of social media could be used to notify residents of meetings. Residents were advised to follow the DCA Facebook page and notify any residents that they are aware do not have a social media presence.

10. PO Box

The PO box was removed on 28th/29th February, following a request from Robert Doris at Amalfi due to inconsiderate parking, shortly before the application for change of use was submitted. The box has now been relocated in Dundee. JM explained that the post office had confirmed they had undertaken an assessment of usage and considering that 98% of residents live within 0.5mile of the remaining PO boxes, it was not required. JM with the support of Councillor Carol McFarlane, is following this up with the post office, particularly an apparent breach of their own procedures to undertake a public consultation.

11. Wonders of Space

DA apologised for his absence prior to the meeting and the event is to be discussed at the next meeting.

12. Gullane Area Community Council (GACC) Update

ZT and SPB were absent due to the corresponding date of the GACC meeting. They confirmed that there was nothing of note to report from the previous meeting. DCA meeting schedule to be aligned with GACC meeting schedule and where if they clash suggest an alternative date or only one committee member to attend.

13. Committee

JM provided a background to the valuable work that Mike Howarth has undertaken for the DVA and now the DCA preparing the website and emailing systems. JM nominated MH as a new member of the committee, and this was seconded by CH and agreed unanimously by the attendees.

14. Village Party

A village party has been arranged for the 19th June from 4 -9pm at the Castle Inn. There will be a 1st drink offered to all and pizza for children. The DCA meeting will be rescheduled.

15. AOCB

VN queried why the Castle Inn is always the venue for meetings and not the Kirk Hall. The reason provided was that the Kirk charge a fee for the hall hire and the Castle Inn provides a more sociable atmosphere and support to a local business.

HM explained that there will be some updates carried out to the website restricting access between 30th April and 2nd May.

Next meeting

The date of the next meeting is to be confirmed.

Actions:

- a) **DC/ZT & John Finlay** to finalise the LPP for issue.
- b) **DC** to follow-up with ELC regarding the missed street lights.
- c) **DC/JF** to progress discussions with HES/ELC regarding the Village Hall and detailed costings.
- d) **TL & Mike Howarth** to collaborate on the linkage between the DCA website & Facebook page.
- e) **SPB** to look into potential premium bonds.
- f) **ZT** to arrange for the local community police officer to carry out a session on fraud prevention. As well as information on First Responders & GACC secretary post.
- g) **TD** to progress DCA registration of community interest in the Kirk Hall. **CH** to provide drawings.