

Largo Communities Together

LCT is Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation - Charity No. SC048447

Largo Communities Together (LCT)

Minutes of LCT (25) Board Meeting Monday 22 March 2021

Present: Nora Conlin, Stan Green, Irene Kay, Emily Macdonald, Dougi McMillan, Jill Miller, Louise Robb (Chair), Beau Russell, Barbara Simpson, James Simpson, Andrew Stenson

In attendance: Ronnie Graham, Brian Robertson, Drew Morrison, Carole Duff, Andy Duff

Apologies: None

1. Welcome, apologies, thanks and introductions

LR welcomed Brian Robertson, Director, Silverburn Park and Flax Mill Project ; Carole Duff and Andy Duff to the meeting.

2. Minutes of 15 February 2021 and matters arising.

Board minutes of 15 February 2021 proposed by DM and seconded by JS. Matters arising would be covered in the agenda.

3. Silverburn Park and Flax Mill Project

BR provided an overview of developments at Silverburn Park and the Flaxmill Project. He gave a brief history of Silverburn from being run by Fife Council in the early seventies as a petting zoo and animal farm to now re current projects. FEAT, a charity promoting mental health is based in the park, and is considered a community interest company (CIC) able to raise income for Silverburn in the form of grant funding. The CIC has a 25-year lease and a management function. BR is a trustee of FEAT. Noted that the animal farm had been very expensive to run and had closed by 2014.

Silverburn has Heart Mind Soul as central. However, there has been instances of anti-social behaviour. The goal now is to bring life back to the park for the local community, including employment. Noted that there is ongoing development of Silverburn and income generation. The Window Café is an example of a profit-making business, as well as the camp site, with plans in place for camper van provision from 26 April 2021 when restrictions are revised.

Friends of Silverburn (volunteers) have also been renovating the pond which is encouraging a wildlife return. People counters have been installed at various entrances. This has demonstrated a large increase in footfall since lockdown. BR mentioned visits of some 200,000 in number which is very positive. Noted the Lantern Project involving the community and local schools has drawn positive attention to the park. The subsequent video has reached 11,000 views.

BR and his team are also taking forward the regeneration of the Flax Mill located within the park. This building has significant historical significance having been one of nine flax mills in the Leven area in the late 1800s. This building will be restored and have various functions: cafe/restaurant, circulation/exhibition venue, meeting and events space, shop, an example of industrial heritage, craft/workshop space, hostel with ensuite rooms and kitchen facilities, offices. The building has open views to the Fife Coastal Path as well as various outbuildings. Fife Council and the William Grant Heritage fund have contributed significant monies. It is hoped that the Flax Mill site will open during 2025.

Questions/Comments

- Impact of Covid 19 on raising funds? *Noted very difficult re raising funding. Regeneration capital grant fund and Levenmouth Restoration (Note link to Rail development.)
Online and outdoor group sessions at Silverburn through Grow Your Mind to support military service veterans. This project is based in one of the Silverburn cottages.*

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- Phased approach possible? *Could phase the development. There has been a significant increase in capital costs. Possible to reclaim VAT. BR is CEO and Project Manager of the Flax Mill Project. The following areas are covered: operations community engagement, finance, campsite. Links with Community Job Scotland 18 – 25 year olds - Kickstart jobs for two young people. Silverburn also links in with Kincardine's Coal Field Service Works.*
- Community engagement and volunteering? *Friends of Silverburn Park local community who help to inform the Silverburn Board. Restoration of the pond taken forward by volunteers, also a wildlife group established.*
- A booklet "Silverburn Through the Ages" provides an insight into background and history. There is a back catalogue re the Russell family requiring to be organised in the future. An industrial archaeologist is also involved with the Flax Mill Project.
- Diversity and sustainability? *The most significant profit is likely to be generated through the hostel. This will be state of the art hostel style accommodation. Noted there is a five-year forecast.*
- Tipping point in terms of site development - when will it all happen? *Development phase review scheduled for 5 May 2021. To date the project is on track. Mentored by a consultant on the Ross Register. Also, a quarterly report required for Fife Historic Buildings Trust. The master plan has been assigned five years.*
- Connecting with young people? *Silverburn is reconnecting with young people. There was engagement by local children in the Lantern Journey and connections made with Levenmouth Academy ASN Department, and links with Parkhill through the John Muir Award scheme.*
- *BR noted: partnership working with Leven Project/railway; community consultation; Levenmouth Together; provision of Lantern Kits; Silverburn Festival; performance stage on top lawn; public art; Fallen Wood Project; crowd funding in place to raise smaller sums; Buy a Brick campaign; collecting boxes in the Window Café; Levenmouth Market; donations of cashmere scarves for sale.*

Noted the importance of publicity: East Fife Mail; Courier online carrying articles about Silverburn; also, a local connection with the Beechgrove Garden. It is important to raise the significance of the park and its developments out with the local area.

Noted the allotments and Flax Mill building belong to Fife Council.

In summary, significant expertise and funding are being utilised to take Silverburn/ Flax Mill forward. The park is already an important asset to the community.

BR was thanked for his interesting and informative input. LCT offered support and mutual working.

4. Pier update

JS highlighted points from his previously emailed report. Ownership of the Crusoe Hotel transferred on 5 March 2021. Operators experienced in the hotel business are in discussion with the owners re next steps. An announcement is expected by the end of March as soon as agreement has been reached by relevant parties. Representatives of the Pier Group hope to enter into discussions with the owners and operators in due course, depending on the terms of the lease.

JS has discussed a Community Share Scheme with Calum Curry from Portpatrick Harbour. This is a method of raising funds whilst at the same time maintaining community involvement.

JS hopes to have initiated discussions re restoration of the Pier by the April LCT meeting. A high level of cooperation is expected.

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5. Largo Estate update

SG provided an update on developments related to Largo Estate, highlighting points from his previously emailed report. SG continues to work on keeping lines of communications open with the owners.

The gardener is working on a vegetable growing enterprise. Noted questionnaire on FaceBook. Likely to be advertising for an assistant gardener and also two trainees.

It is hoped to increase the Estate Group re numbers and widening the skill set. A Chair for the Estate Group is still being sought. The Group continues to review its position re the Sustainable Development Plan. An approach will be made to Largo Links to feature articles re the Estate.

The Estate Group are proposing another consultation exercise to check in with the community re next steps. Trustees felt it is important to present a vision and options re the Estate prior to any consultation with the community. Timing of any such process would also be important. Aside from the developments the Estate gardener is taking forward, there are other areas also to be considered, e.g. orchard and paths.

SG and Estate Team will continue to liaise with the owners and work on communications. The community need to know what has been happening through a social media presence. SG is linking with DTAS and Ian Leaver, DO. Consideration to be given to developing a comms plan. Noted DM offered support re social media presence.

6. Largo Arts Week update

DM reported on LAW developments. Positive plans re moving forward with the Durham Hall as a community hub during this year, specifically LAW itself. Plans have been accepted by the Kirk Session. All involved have been helpful in moving the partnership forward. Largo Parish Church and LAW will issue a joint statement re progress. More discussions to follow. Thanks extended to IK for her support in negotiations.

AS reported that 60 artists are now signed up for the Open Studio exhibitions across the three villages.

It is hoped to promote LCT and its projects during LAW. The Pier, for example, is a visual reminder of ongoing work. Collecting buckets etc to be in place at gigs/events.

Discussion followed re funding for bunting during LAW. Suggested that an application could be made to Levenmouth Area Committee. EM has organised online funding for Largo through a Donate button. Perhaps this could be considered to support the funding of bunting for LAW. EM, DM, AS to discuss further.

Renovation of the Aurrie Phone Box to begin. Glass has been sourced. DM offered to source materials for the Upper Largo Phone Box too. Offer accepted. Noted that local artist, Alan Faulds, will create a piece of public art for the top of the Aurrie Box.

7. LARCT update

IK highlighted points from her previously emailed report. Dr McLaren continues to provide LARCT with an analysis of local and national statistics. Cases in the Largo area remain at 0-2 range. However, there is the picture in mainland Europe.

Noted it has been a year since LARCT was convened and the first anniversary of Covid lockdown. LARCT is in the process of preparing an annual report, presently in draft, allowing the group to reflect and review developments and consider next steps. IK requested that she present the report at the next meeting of LCT.

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LCT and LACRT insurance provider, Zurich, has approached LACRT to be involved in a short promotional video of work during the pandemic. EM, LR and other LACRT members will be involved in this project.

Largo Friends and Neighbours Befriending Project continues to develop well, including looking to use technology to support social inclusion (four tablets and broadband access purchased through grant funding from Befriending Network, UK). In addition to the aforementioned, a Shopping Buddy Service to support community members to carry out their own shopping tasks has just begun. The shopping client reported very positively re this support.

It is hoped to start a Befriending Volunteers Walking Group to allow sharing of experiences/support in line with Government guidelines.

As the Befriending project moves on to face to face befriending, policy documentation will be augmented, e.g. lone worker.

8. Community Sustainable Development update

JM is considering ways of engaging young people. She will contact Robert Graham, Community Development Officer.

Suggested that representatives from Fife Coast and Countryside Trust would be informative speakers for LCT. Both JS and JM are on their Board, and LCT/ Pier Group are in partnership with FCCT. At a future meeting they should be invited to talk about community engagement and fund raising.

Since our meeting of 22 March 2021, JM has received an update email from Eugene Clarke, Chair, Levenmouth Rail Campaign. LMRC, following advice, have made changes to their Grant Application form which is to be discussed and confirmed at a meeting on 22 April 2021.

A hospitality group is being set up led by Christopher Trotter to identify what needs to be done to develop provision in the area.

EG reiterated that LMRC are open to ideas to make wards 21/22 better for our community. LMRC are also pursuing ideas around digital inclusion for people, businesses and council services.

Noted that any future actions must go through Levenmouth Area Committee.

9. Treasurer's report

EM provided an overview of LCT finances and related activities. See report for details.

All bank accounts are solvent and LCT is in a healthy financial position.

LCT bank account balance – £1,740.14

- Details of transactions noted in report.

LACRT bank account balance – £13,801.26

- Details of transactions noted in report

Pier bank account balance £21,704

- Details of transactions noted in report

Insurance

- Renewal quote from Zurich Insurance for LCT including for Befriending of £233.83
- Enhanced cover from 27 March 2021
- Customer Story Video – note in LACRT report above. LCT to be involved in an advertising campaign for Zurich. Customer story video to be developed focusing on how LCT has overcome the challenges of Covid 19 pandemic. There will be two versions of the video: with and without mention of Zurich. The

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version without can be used for LCT promotion purposes. LR, EM to be involved and members of LACRT.

- Donate Platform - EM has registered LCT with Donate. First campaign to raise funds for Largo Links. The platform can be used for other funding raising activities. Note Donate charges 4.5% of donations received. No other charges incurred.
- EM attended DTAS seminar on VAT. Slides available. Very informative.
- General rule: VAT applies to all construction projects at a rate of 20%
- Professional fees are always 20% VAT rated.
- Zero rating VAT: only applies to new build and needs to be for zero-rated purposes. Details in ER's report, including key points to consider when embarking upon a project.
- Note Alan Glen at DTAS available for advice. Can allocate an hour free of charge.

10. Membership update

Working group continuing in updating the LCT member database to ensure as many email addresses entered as possible.

11. Communications update

JK provided an update referring to her previously emailed Comms report. Issue 2 of Largo Links has been delivered and positive feedback received. Grant funding of £500 received from Fife Council. Reference made to EM setting up Donate facility online and by text, see above. In due course, it is hoped Largo Links will be self sustaining.

A4 versions of the magazine available in Zaphar and Andy's shops or from sub group member.

Contacts being explored with overseas communities to widen the reach of Largo Links.

12. Discussion and approval of Code of Conduct, Bullying and Harassment Policy, Grievance Issues. Discussion of other Governance issues. Process for disseminating to all sub groups

The policies are being disseminated to all direct sub groups of LCT.

13. A speaker or learning feedback from trustees of sessions attended. A pitch of one feedback session per meeting.

A number of trustees have attended seminars/events/meetings run by organisations such as DTAS or FVA. Suggested that members share any relevant learning. To be discussed at a future meeting.

14. Correspondence, AoB, Date of Next Meeting

Communications on Men's Sheds project emailed. Local men have expressed interest. Outdoor meeting to be organised. Contacts presently: LR and EM to be handed to interested men asap.

Note: date of next meeting: Monday 26 April 2021 7.00 – 9.00 on Zoom.

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