

**WEST LINK COMMUNITY LIAISON GROUP**

Committee Room 1 – Council HQ  
Monday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2016

**Present**

Cllr Graham Ross	The Highland Council	Cllr GR
Steve Mowat	Police Scotland	SM
PC Ross Polworth	Police Scotland	RP
Gordon King	Ballifeary Community Council	GK
Brian Mackenzie	Highland Cycle Campaign	BM
Jim Kidd	Muirtown Community Council	JK
Roy Sinclair	Inverness Rowing Club	RS
George Hawco	Inverness West Community Council	GH
George Greig	Inverness West Community Council	GG
Mike Smith	Inverness City Centre Business Improvement District	MS
John West	Lochardil and Drummond Community Council	JWt
Jonathan Wills	Wills Bros Ltd	JW
Colin Howell	The Highland Council	CH
Iain MacLennan	The Highland Council	IM
Mike Stephens	The Highland Council	MS

**Apologies**

Apologies were received from – Jim Smith, Stewart Nicol, Graeme Ambrose, Chief Inspector Jennifer MacDonald, Ms Maria De La Torre and Stewart Wardlaw.

<b>Point</b>		<b>Action</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Chairman's introductions &amp; purpose of the meetings</b>	
1.1	Cllr GR opened the meeting and welcomed everyone, and hoped that the continued series of meetings would be helpful and informative.	
1.2	All attendees introduced themselves to the group.	
1.3	CH explained that Iain MacLennan would be the most senior Highland Council representative on site – and would be resident on site and should be the first point of contact should any members of the public or organisations wish to comment or complain. IM will write to community councils and residents in the near future providing contact telephone numbers and dedicated e-mail address for such correspondence.	
1.4	CH introduced Jonathan Wills of Wills Bros. Ltd – the contractor who has been	

	awarded the Stage 1 and Canal Parks Enhancement Project. JW expressed his desire to construct the works with the minimum of disruption to a high standard – on time and on budget.	
<b>2</b>	<b>Approval of Minutes and Matters Arising</b>	
2.1	Cllr GR explained that the last minutes were circulated around the attendees to obtain approval such that the minutes can be uploaded quickly on to the Highland Council website, and we would look to do the same for this meeting – to provide information to the public timeously.	
2.2	RS stated that JS had supplied plans of the proposals of the West Link (Stage 2) in the vicinity of the rowing club, but noted that these plans were dated 2013. CH explained that discussions are ongoing with Scottish Canals about their proposals in the area and that the design of phase 2 will only re-commence when proposals for the area are better understood. RS confirmed that the rowing club was attending meetings and was aware of the development of proposals and the options under consideration, the next meeting being on the 22 <sup>nd</sup> March.	
2.3	RS reported that parking arrangements for the regatta in February had been difficult, with the Council being unable to assist with parking options. The rowing club had been in dialogue with the police regarding ‘obstructions’ with regard to parking – and this was appreciated. The event went very well, and CH confirmed it was very well organised – the weather was also exceptionally kind. The next regatta is in November during construction of Stage 1, and full consultation with The Highland Council and Wills Bros will be undertaken. IM explained that he will get to know the local community and their representatives well during the construction phase and will always be available.	
<b>3</b>	<b>Stage 1 and Canal Parks Advance Works – Service Diversions and Tree Clearance</b>	
3.1	CH confirmed that all felling and diversion works were now complete with the exception of the major watermain diversion which is due for completion by the 8 <sup>th</sup> April – these works being undertaken by Morrison Construction for Scottish Water. MM Miller will then attend Site and remove all temporary fencing.	
3.2	GK reported that there was a significant flow of water from the main which was channelled across a field and into the river and seemed very wasteful given existing pressure issues in the area. It was explained that this may be associated with the cleaning/disinfectant process of the new watermain but IM committed to investigate and report back. Post meeting it was confirmed by Morrison Construction that this action was to flush the new watermain prior to commissioning.	IM
3.3	CH explained that the new watermain was not yet live – and some temporary disconnections will be required for the commissioning process but Scottish Water will inform directly all affected properties.	

<b>4</b>	<b>Stage 1 and Canal Parks Enhancement Project</b>	
4.1	Using the flythrough – available on the Council’s website the extent of Stage 1, the link from Dores Road to the A82, together with the Canal Parks Enhancement Project which includes the synthetic pitch, clubhouse and parking etc was explained. CH confirmed that following a tender process 6 tenders were received, Wills Bros tendered the lowest tender assessment figure of c£22.5M and the contract was duly awarded to them on the 4 <sup>th</sup> March 2016. The Council have arranged a meeting (the inaugural meeting) with Wills Bros on the 23 <sup>rd</sup> March – at this meeting the official start date will be established.	
4.2	CH confirmed that all land required for the West Link is now in Highland Council possession, and that the tender was below the budget allocation for both the Stage 1 road element and the Canal Parks Enhancement Project.	
4.3	JW hoped to establish a site compound early in April, and that will be the first evidence of the start of construction.	
4.4	JW explained that Wills Bros are currently developing their construction programme and method statements and at the next community liaison meeting will be able to provide much more information on the works and their proposals for the construction.	
4.5	IM brought a copy of the contract to the meeting to demonstrate the complexity, and it ran to many lever arch folders and some 500 contract drawings.	
4.6	Concern was expressed about traffic impacts on the A82, associated with the construction and also the issue of the canal bridge openings and potential diversions of traffic. IM explained that the contract included many constraints to minimise disruption and that detailed discussions with Transport Scotland, Scottish Canals and the Police will be held as the traffic management proposals are developed. CH reported that the contract had a ‘lane rental’ clause for lane restrictions on the A82, this means that Wills Bros have to effectively rent lane occupation from the A82 – so that extended disruption will be a significant cost the contractor, the aim being to encourage the Contractor to take steps and programme the works to minimise such disruption. JW confirmed that they are currently developing their proposals in respect of traffic management and explained that this is likely to be an early construction element. The meeting drew attention to increased traffic volumes using the A82, and also the increase in traffic during the tourist season.	RS
4.7	Cllr GR explained that following traffic issues associated with the canal swing bridge becoming jammed and also coincident events which caused traffic disruption – meetings have been held to aim to reduce such impacts going forward. One action from this has been a review of diversion routes and also installation of diversion signing – such that reaction times and diversion routes can be established much more quickly.	
4.8	Excavations are ongoing on both sides of the river – it was confirmed that this	IM

	<p>was unrelated to the West Link and maybe archaeological investigations for housing developments . In terms of the West Link, archaeological trenches have been dug – and an archaeological watching brief is required for all topsoil strip and provision contained within the contract if finds are made that need further archaeological investigations.</p> <p>Post meeting it was confirmed that both excavations were archaeological trenches, on the east side of the river the excavations were for future housing development and on the west side it was on behalf of the Highland Council regarding Stage 2 and Golf Club works</p>	
<b>5</b>	<b>Associated Projects, Golf Course, Golf Club and West Link Stage 2</b>	
5.1	<p>CH explained that it is necessary to relocate the golfers from the area of Stage 2 such that Stage 2 works can then commence. Tenders for the new golf course will be invited in the very near future – with works programmed to commence in the summer – works will be carried out and the golf course formed such that grass establishment can occur to enable the new course to become playable. This is programmed to be in Spring 2019, the golfers will then use the new course vacating the area needed for Stage 2. Stage 2 is then programmed to commence with completion in late 2020.</p>	
5.2	<p>CH confirmed that detailed discussions have been held with the golf club to ensure that a course is available at all times. There may be some disruption to golf holes during the construction as existing holes are reconfigured but it will remain playable. The golf club has been fully engaged in this process but CH offered that if there are golfers who remain uncertain of the proposals he is happy to arrange a meeting on this topic alone, open to all players.</p>	
5.3	<p>CH identified the helpline number of 07557 744442 which can be called at any time if anybody wishes to raise any issues with the construction phase of the West Link. Note this number is advertised on the Councils West Link Web page.</p>	
<b>6</b>	<b>AOCB</b>	
6.1	<p>Concern was expressed about a catastrophic failure of the canal leading to water loss. CH confirmed that as a Scheduled Monument – the details and construction proposals have been well considered and agreed and that measures are included to ensure the stability of the canal is maintained.</p>	
6.2	<p>It was noted that there is traffic management on General Booth Road – a potential diversion route for traffic disrupted by A82 works. IM will look into this and ensure such works are coordinated such that diversion routes are not compromised.</p> <p>Post meeting it was confirmed that the traffic management on General Booth Road was to allow roads maintenance works on behalf of the Highland Council to be carried out. A meeting will be arranged with the Inverness Area Community Services department, to coordinate the works to avoid any clash which may cause further delay to the travelling public. This meeting will be held once a detailed construction programme is agreed.</p>	IM

6.3	<p>BM drew attention to an upcoming meeting, flyer appended, on:-</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>The Case for Presumed Liability on Scotland's Roads</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Protecting Vulnerable Road Users</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>7 - 8 pm on Tue 22 March 2016</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>in the Spectrum Centre, Inverness.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>The guest speaker will be Brenda Mitchell</b></p>	
7	<b>Date of Next Meeting</b>	
6.1	7pm Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup> May, Committee Room 1 – Highland Council Headquarters	