MERCHISTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting on 17th February 2015 at Merchiston Tennis & Bowling Club

Present

Members:	*Police*:
Robin Morris (Chairman)	PC Neil Fergusson (Oxgangs)
Ian Clement (Vice Chairman)	PC Evelyn Hegarty (St Leonards & Howdenhall)
Alison Edelsten (Secretary)	
Mairianna Clyde	*Public*
Ian Doig	Antoni Gobeo
James Geekie	
Thomas Graveson	
Sally Lloyd	*Councillors & MP*
Ted Tate	Ian Murray MP
Mike Talbot	

Welcome & Introductions

Robin welcomed those present.

Apologies

Frances Hawarden, Bridget Stevens, Cllrs Andrew Burns & Gavin Corbett.

Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting on 20th January 2015, as circulated by email, were approved.

Matters arising

Bainfield Park (Linear Park): Ian Doig asked about the area of ground marked off as asbestos contaminated. Mairianna will enquire about the situation with the builders of the new Boroughmuir High School. **[Action: Mairianna]**

Trees at Gibson Terrace: Mairianna has been pursuing with Napier University the issue of replacements for the recently planted, but subsequently vandalised, trees in Gibson Terrace. She will also take the matter up with Council officials **[Action: Mairianna].**

Walkabout in SCNP area: Ian Clement is awaiting information from Mags Campbell on the appropriate person to contact in order to arrange a walkabout **[Action; Ian Clement].**

Meeting with Edinburgh Police Commander: Alison received an email from Cllr Gavin Corbett concerning the issues he promised to raise on policing. He had not been able to meet with the Edinburgh Police Commander as planned but has spoken with the Head of Community Safety. He has also been in touch with James re parking on double-yellow lines.

Police

PC Fergusson said that there had been 237 incidents reported to the police from the Fountainbridge/ Merchiston area over the past month. 37 of these incidents were classed as crimes, representing a 43% decrease from the previous month. Crimes included: 1 business break-in; 1 residential break-in; 2 attempted break-ins with intent to steal; 9 thefts (includes the theft of a boat from the Union Canal); 5 assaults; 5 breaches of the peace. Half of these crimes have already been solved.

PC Hegarty reported that the Operation Comatus initiative is addressing a recent spate of break-ins, mainly in South Edinburgh.

In discussion, the community's wish for locally identifiable officers was raised once more. PC Hegarty encouraged the CC to feedback issues of this nature to the local station commanders, preferably in writing. Concern was expressed about delays in response to 999 calls. Responding to questions on the new 20 mph speed limit the PCs confirmed that complaints had been received about speeding in each of their areas. Once trained in the use of speed cameras it should be possible to enforce speed regulations.

The PCs were warmly thanked for their attendance and their contributions.

Planning

Mecca Bingo Hall: A planning application is under consideration.

Ex-Napier Students' Union, 12 Merchiston Place: A decision is awaited on this application to build two new villas in place of the existing building.

6 Bruntsfield Terrace: No concerns have been received from residents about this planning application.

Fountainbridge Springside Development: The developers, Grosvenor, continue to be proactive in seeking views and responding to comments. Mairianna expects to be able to attend an upcoming presentation on the development **[Action: Mairianna].**

Plant Unit at Napier University's Merchiston Campus: There is no further news but it is understood that Cllrs Gavin Corbett and David Keys have the matter under consideration.

Licensing

88 Bruntsfield Place (Manacraft): The application for a restaurant licence for a 80-seater American-style diner is under consideration.

Neighbourhood Partnerships

South Central NP: The next meeting of the Partnership takes place on 2nd March 2015.
Robin is to enquire about the status of MCC's submission on the SCNP Roads Capital Programme **[Action: Robin].**

South West NP: The next meeting of the Partnership will be held on 24th March. Alison will attend a meeting of the Community Safety Group.

Ian D. reported that the SWNP Funding Panel will shortly consider a further round of community grant applications. Under consideration will be Mairianna's application for a grant to erect an information board alongside the community herb garden at Harrison Park. It was agreed that MCC should contribute towards the costs of VAT and applying for planning permission if these items are not covered by the grant.

Alison is to attend an induction session for new Community Councillors on 18th March on the topic of Neighbourhood Partnerships **[Action: Alison].**

Accounts
Robin tabled a report on behalf of Frances which shows a credit balance at the bank of £1325.

Councillors & MP

Ian Murray spoke about some of the local issues in which he has been involved including:

- Neighbourhood policing: He was concerned at some of the changes introduced by Police Scotland, including the temporary disbandment of the specialist burglary unit, and the downgrading of the Safer Neighbourhood and Youth Action Team initiatives. He pointed out that the CEC has been paying for extra local community policing but this service no longer appears to operate.

- South Morningside Primary School: Agreement has been reached to use Deanbank House at Canaan Lane to serve as an annexe to the school. Primary 1 and 2 classes will be based there from August 2015.

- Midmar Paddock: There were worries that the land which is being offered for sale may be developed for housing. He was of the view that planning permission may be difficult to obtain.

Ian also responded to questions on wider issues including TTIP and fracking.

Any other business

Parks & Open Spaces: Meetings of groups involved with parks in our area have taken place recently, or are due to occur soon, including MABLAG, FOMBL and the Fountainbridge Canalside Initiative.

Mairianna asked, in the event of there being reductions in grass cutting in parks, if CCs might assist. It was agreed that this was not likely to be practical but we should await results of the Council's budget review.

Publicity: Flyers giving details of meetings and web presence have been prepared by Mike and copies given to members who arranged for display on noticeboards and in shop windows throughout the Merchiston area. A second set of flyers with more information about MCC's role, and targeted at individuals, is also available.

Communications: Members are urged to use 'reply all' when responding to emails from other members **[Action: All]**.

Representations: Robin asked that members who are due to attend meetings as a representative of MCC should notify the Secretary in advance. **[Action: All]**.

Ian C. will be representing MCC at meetings of the City for All Ages.

Christmas Lights: The date for this year's switch-on of the Christmas Lights at the Eric Liddell Centre has been set as 2nd December. The maintenance of the lights is an issue now that the Council no longer takes responsibility.

Dig-In Community Greengrocers: Bridget is due to attend the AGM on 23rd February on behalf of MCC.

Notice boards: Keys to access Council public notice boards in our area are held by Ted for Harrison Park, and by Robin for Bruntsfield Links. Bridget also has a key.

Planning Democracy: It was agreed that Alison should represent MCC at the Planning Democracy meeting in Glasgow on 25th April **[Action: Alison]**.

Website: Sally was congratulated for her work on the website. Recent minutes of meetings are now available and earlier minutes will be added when time permits. Some members have not provided personal profiles and were urged to do so **[Action: All].**

Conservation Area Consultation: Rachel Howarth from the Planning Department proposes addressing us on the CEC's review of Conservation Area Character. It has been suggested that the presentation be done jointly with Morningside and Merchiston Community Councils, as part of our next meeting. Robin and Ian C. will liaise to negotiate arrangements **[Action: Robin, Ian C.]**.

Robin noted that the MCC area includes 5 separate conservation areas.

Spring Fling: Takes place on the 11th April in the Eric Liddell Centre. MCC will have a table shared with Morningside CC.

Edinburgh Association of Community Councils: Ian C. and Robin are keeping in touch with the progress in revitalising the Association.

Date of next meeting

Tuesday 17th March 2015 commencing 7pm at Merchiston Tennis & Bowling Club.

Robin will not be able to attend. Ian C. will chair.

23.02.15