MERCHISTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of public meeting on 19th January 2016 at Merchiston T & B Club

Present

Members:	*Police Scotland*
Robin Morris (Chair)	PC Alan Jenkins (St Leonards)
Tom Graveson (Vice-Chair)	Sgt Mark Innes (St Leonards)
Sally Lloyd (Secretary)	
Frances Hawarden (Treasurer)	*Public:*
Ian Clement	Richard Lloyd
Mairianna Clyde	Kenny Redpath (Murdoch Terrace & Yeaman Place RA)
Ian Doig	Gordon Rouse (Kings Church)
James Geekie	David Urch
Bridget Stevens	Francis Valentine
Mike Talbot	
Ted Tate	

Welcome & Introductions

Robin welcomed all present.

Apologies

Cllrs Andrew Burns, Gavin Corbett, Paul Godzik, David Key; Simon Metcalf (MYRA)

Minutes of previous meeting

Acceptance of the minutes of the meeting on 17th November 2015 was agreed.

Matters arising

CEC Budget Challenge: Sally made the submissions as agreed.

Neighbourhood Partnership Capital Roads Programme: Suggestions for road & pavement improvements in the South Central area have been submitted to CEC by Sally.

Parking permits for carers visiting residents: Ian C. raised the matter with Council officers but without success so far.

CEC consultation on parking regulations: Issues raised by the consultation proposals were discussed and the sometimes conflicting needs of residents and shop owners were considered. It was agreed not to pursue the proposed action from the previous meeting. Cllr Mark McInnes, as local councillor and member of the TIE committee, is to be invited to a meeting of MercCC to speak about the background to the Council's consultation. **[Action: Robin]**

Report - Police

PC Alan Jenkins, ward officer for Meadows/Morningside jointly with PC Sacha Ponniah, spoke about policing in the area.

Statistics: Crimes of dishonesty down 27% in year to date; house break-ins have doubled but detection rates have gone up; anti-social behaviour has seen a 31% reduction.

House break-ins: Operation RAC continues. The Prevention_Intervention_Partnership team at the West End station can advise residents on crime prevention and home security [Phone 101]. Home

visits can be arranged. Officers also provide a drop-in service at the Eric Liddell Centre from 1 to 3 pm on the last Monday of every month.

Violent crime and anti-social behaviour: Proactive patrolling is underway. Residents urged to phone 101 (or 999 if immediate action needed) to report incidents or suspicions. In the case of anti-social activities by a few youths in the area the police know who the individuals are and are liaising with school staff.

Illegal drug use: The detection rates for drug use have doubled in recent time. Operation Red Bull is seeking intelligence on sale and user of drugs and legal highs. Residents in tenements are urged to ensure that the main door is secure to prevent use of the stairwells for the injection of drugs.

Crimes of dishonesty: Instances of purse and bag theft have been reported from several shops in Bruntsfield & Morningside Road, in one shop on 3 separate occasions. PC Jenkins promised to visit the shop and offer advice.

Begging: In response to a question from David Urch, PC Jenkins said that begging is not illegal unless it is perceived to be intimidating. Then it should be reported to the police.

PC Jenkins and Sgt Innes were thanked for their contributions.

Matters raised by residents

Petition on gulls de-nesting in North Merchiston: Kay Smith has lodged a petition with CEC urging the instigation of a pilot programme. She seeks the support of MercCC. [http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/directory_record/682902/gull_de-nesting_in_north_merchiston].

It was agreed to:

- Ask Kay to broaden the wording of the petition from North Merchiston to Merchiston since the problem is shared by many tenements in the area **[Action: Robin]**;
- publicise the petition on our website **[Action: Sally];**
- prepare and post on our website a DIY guide to gull de-nesting **[Action: Mairianna, Sally]**.

Street lighting: A resident complained that the increasing spread of tree canopy in Harrison Park was obscuring the light from the street lights. The matter will be raised in the forthcoming walk-about with Council officials **[Action: Tom].**

Ian C. said that the new LED street lights, which can be set at one of 5 levels of brightness, are by default set at the lowest level. However representations to CEC can result in the brightness being increased.
[Note: To report a problem with street lights go to the website
https://my.edinburgh.gov.uk/app/report_it_forms/report_a_street_light_problem
or phone the CLARENCE helpline at 0800 23 23 23.]

Report – Neighbourhood Partnerships

South West Neighbourhood Partnership: The next meeting takes place in February.

Ian D. reported on the work of the SW Funding Panel of which he is chair. Of the £50k available £24k has been allotted already, £10k is to be allocated in £1k lots to youth groups, and the balance of £16k is to be disbursed at a meeting tomorrow.

South Central Neighbourhood Partnerships: The next meeting is due on 14th March. Bridget cannot attend and she asked if Mike would attend in her place **[Action: Mike]**

Report - Planning

Grosvenor development at Fountainbridge: This application was approved recently.

Mecca bingo hall site: The application for student accommodation has been approved.

Garvald offices at 2 Montpelier Terrace: The proposed development has been reduced from 11 to 7 flats.

160 Dundee Street: An application for permission to build 220 student flats is under consideration.

3 South Ettrick Road: Application expected to be granted.

St Kentrigen's Church, St Peter's Place: This application for renewal of consent is expected to be granted.

Old Napier Students' Union, Merchiston Avenue: Work has started on this development.

Draft guidelines on shopping in Bruntsfield & Morningside: The CEC is preparing new guidance on the mix of shops in the area and is seeking the views of locals on their proposals. See https://consultationhub.edinburgh.gov.uk/sfc/bruntsfield-morningside-town-centre . Mike attended a public consultation event at Morningside Library. The consultation seeks views on the balance of shop types that locals consider desirable. Responses are requested on or before 16th February.

Report - Licensing

Bridget reported on a meeting of the Licensing Forum held on the 1st December 2015 at which a presentation was made by Music is Audible Working Group (MIA). The MIA argued that the current rule is too restrictive in that any noise from a music venue that disturbs a neighbour can be stopped. The MIA sought a relaxation of the rule to only cover noises that are deemed to be objectionable. Community reps opposed this as a significant weakening of the existing conditions.

At a meeting of the Licensing Forum held earlier today [A note from Bridget is attached] members were told that should the Licensing Board support the change then a public consultation would be required and a working group formed to consider the proposal. The working group would include CC representatives.

Report - Treasurer

Frances reported that the only recent expenditure was on a protective cover for the CC's laptop. The balance in the bank is currently £1,900. Four cheques issued some time ago have not been cashed. Robin will investigate. **[Action: Robin]**

Councillors' Notes: No reports received.

Engagement

Branding exercise: Sally is seeking advice from the Kin web design group on creating a logo.

Banner for advertising meeting venue: It was agreed that a banner should be obtained for display outside the Merchiston T&B Club on the day of the meeting. **[Action: Mike]**

AOB

Council tax rebate for student flats: In response to a question from Ian C., Mairianna explained that the council tax rebate given on student-occupied properties is refunded to Councils by central

government. The refund mechanism in Scotland also pays for water and sewage charges which, it seems, may not have been taken into account in the relevant legislation.

Virtual 'blue plaques': Ian D. and Robin express support for Mike's proposal for a web based commemoration of interesting people, places and events in the Merchiston area. Bridget agreed to publicise the scheme in articles that she writes for local publications. A prize would be offered for the best/ most interesting suggestion.

Date of next meeting

Tues 16th February 2016 from 7pm at Merchiston Tennis & Bowling Club.

31.01.16

Report on meetings attended by Bridget Stevens for MercCC since 17th Nov 2015

Meadows & Bruntsfield Links advisory Group - 24th November

Review of events on Meadows in summer 2015. Various changes being required of Underbelly – still confidential until new contracts signed.

Management Committee of Dig-in Community Greengrocer – 24th November.

Usual detailed review of trade, staffing, finance, promotion etc.

Planning Aid Scotland) Reception at Scottish Parliament – 26 November

Special meeting of Licensing Forum – 1st December

Attended with Robin Morris. The meeting considered proposed changes by CEC to regulations on Live Music. Proposals would make it harder for residents to complain about amplified noise and have it stopped. I am very concerned about this. Consultation to follow – I will circulate the background papers to anybody interested and make sure our voice is heard. Any views from other MCC members?