MERCHISTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of public meeting on 16th February 2016 at Merchiston T & B Club

Present

Members:	*Councillors*
Robin Morris (Chair)	Andrew Burns (Leader, CEC)
Tom Graveson (Vice-Chair)	
Sally Lloyd (Secretary)	*Police Scotland*
Ian Clement	PC Sacha Pooniah (St Leonards)
Mairianna Clyde	
James Geekie	*Public:*
Mike Talbot	Richard Lloyd
Ted Tate	John Lumsden

Welcome & Introductions

Robin welcomed all present.

Apologies

Ian Doig, Frances Hawarden, Bridget Stevens; Cllrs Gavin Corbett & David Key; MP Ian Murray

Minutes of meeting on 19th January 2016

The correct spelling of St Kentigern's Church was noted. Acceptance of the minutes was then agreed.

Matters arising

CEC consultation on parking regulations: Cllr Mark McInnes was not able to accept the invitation to attend this meeting to speak about the consultation. However he promised to come to our next meeting on 15th March. The TIE committee should have reached its conclusions on the consultation by that stage. Cllr Andrew Burns expects that the consultation proposals are likely to have been modified in the meantime. The new proposals will be set out in TIE committee papers available on the CEC web site from 9th March.

Petition on gulls de-nesting in North Merchiston: It was agreed that MercCC should register its support for Kay Smith's petition to CEC **[Action: Sally/Robin]**.

Mairianna is to prepare a DIY guide on gull de-nesting that will be posted on our website **[Action: Mairianna & Sally]**.

Banner advertising the meeting venue: The banner has been purchased and was mounted outside the venue earlier today.

Report - Police

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

Robberies: A male has been arrested and charged with robberies at newsagents in Viewforth, Bruntsfield and Morningside. Three youths have been arrested in connection with an assault and robbery of a student on Bruntsfield Links. .

House break-ins: Operation RAC continues to have a positive effect on break-ins. There has been just one break-in reported in January.

Crimes of dishonesty: Three pedal cycles were reported stolen in the area in January. There was a break-in to a car in Viewforth.

Bomb hoaxes at local schools: In Boroughmuir High School and Bruntsfield Primary School.

Anti-social behaviour: There has been a significant drop in the number of reports of anti-social behaviour as a result of proactive work by officers. A bike was set alight in a communal stair. Similar incidents have occurred in neighbouring districts.

Safer Streets: The scheme to improve road safety in the vicinity of schools is being introduced around St Peter's Primary School and may impact on parts of the Merchiston area.

Drop-in service at the Eric Liddell Centre: Police officers attend from 1 to 3 pm on the last Monday of every month to provide advice. Robin noted that no officer was present for the session on 25th January. PC Pooniah said that there had been no visitors at several recent sessions but he or a colleague would be available on the 29th February.

Q&A:

- Security advice has been offered to the Morningside Road shop where purse and bag thefts had occurred on 3 separate occasions as reported at our last meeting.
- Ted spoke about youngsters playing with traffic cones on the Network Rail corridor. PC Pooniah will draw the matter to the attention of a colleague at Oxgangs station.
- Asked about the officer injured in a melee in Church Hill in January, PC Pooniah said the officer had suffered life-threatening injuries but was recovering.

PC Pooniah was thanked for his contributions.

The meeting agreed to make a donation of £50 to the Scottish Police Benevolent Fund as a token of the community's thanks for the work of local police **[Action: Robin & Frances]**

Matters raised by residents

None.

CC Elections & Recruitment of new members

The election of CC members for the next 3-year term is due to take place this autumn. Robin invited suggestions on how we might encourage new members. It was noted that two neighbouring CCs are struggling to maintain viability because of low membership numbers. The meeting agreed to:

- Prepare a leaflet to promote interest in membership **[Action: Robin & Mike];**
- Draft an article/advert for the Canalside magazine **[Action: Robin & Bridget]**;
- Post notices on local community boards, in libraries and shops **[Action: All].**

Report – Neighbourhood Partnerships

South West Neighbourhood Partnership: The next meeting takes place on 23rd February.

Tom reported on the recent walkabout with Craig Dunlop, CEC Parks Officer. Issues raised are listed in an attachment below. Craig was commended for his diligence.

Ted asked if on-street waste bins could be secured as there have been several instances recently of bins being blown away from their base and causing hazards.

South Central Neighbourhood Partnership: There is a meeting on 14th March at which Mike will represent MercCC in Bridget's absence. The next walkabout is provisionally set for 4th May.

Report - Planning

4a Merchiston Crescent: Objections to an application to increase the height of this property have been submitted by Mairianna on behalf of MercCC.

Garvald offices at 2 Montpelier Terrace: The proposed conversion of offices to 7 flats has been approved.

Rubber Factory building: Fire-raising occurred recently but there was no serious damage. Redevelopment of the site is expected to start in 6-9 months.

Dalton's Scrapyard, Yeaman Place; It is understood that there are no plans at present for changes at this site.

Report - Licensing

Robin reiterated that Bridget and he would closely monitor any proposals at the Licensing Board that weaken existing conditions on the control of noise from music venues.

Report - Treasurer

Robin, reporting on behalf of Frances, said that the bank balance is currently £1,799. Four cheques reported as uncashed at the last meeting have in fact been cashed. During the past month one payment of £101.60 has been made for flyers and a banner. The only further expenditure anticipated before the end of the financial year is £150 for meeting room rental. The payment of our annual membership fee to the Cockburn Association will be investigated **[Action: Robin & Frances].**

Councillors' Notes:

Cllr Andrew Burns: Reported on some of the items from his caseload:

- Planning issues particularly in Fountainbridge are a recurring concern for constituents;
- A hotel is proposed for the Grosvenor site along the canal;
- The new Boroughmuir High School is expected to open in October 2016;
- The Council's budget for the coming year had been set under tight central government constraints; the Council has also agreed a framework on financing for the next 4 years; the Council's budget consultation and its response was commended.

Q&A

- The Council is keen to introduce a tourist or bedroom tax on larger hotels, the income being used to improve the tourists' experience. However no UK local authority has the power to introduce such taxes;
- James raised the issue of substantially increased traffic in Yeaman Place as a result of road closure around the new Boroughmuir High School. Pedestrians are having difficulty crossing roads in the area. James wrote to the CEC urging the introduction of pedestrian crossings but had received a less than satisfactory response. Andrew said he was seeking from officials long-term proposals to manage traffic in the Dundee Street area.
- Ian C. voiced concern about the funding of the new Integrated Joint Board for health and social care. Andrew said that a grant of £2m has been allocated by Scottish Government to help with the setting up of the IJB.
- Ted asked about the removal of pedestrian barriers beside the shops in Ashley Terrace. Andrew said discussions had taken place but on balance it was thought best to remove the barriers.
- Ted also enquired if a pedestrian crossing could be installed near Margiottas in Ashley Terrace. Andrew agreed to investigate.

- Robin asked about CEC's stance on the Care Tax. Andrew said that this is a national issue but he was sympathetic to the concerns expressed by Frances and others.

Cllr Gavin Corbett: Emailed report attached below.

Engagement

Logo & website changes: Sally is to meet with the Kin Studio design team to seek estimates for creating a logo and for updating the website.

Robin asked that an estimate also be obtained for implementing the virtual 'blue plaque' proposal.

Web statistics: Sally tabled a report on accessions to website, Facebook and Twitter accounts

AOB

Dig-in: The AGM is Monday 22nd February at 6pm in Christ Church.

Spring Fling: Takes place on 9th April at the Eric Liddell Centre. Robin has been in contact with Morningside CC about sharing a table. Volunteers to staff the table are requested **[Action: All].**

Network Rail path: Ted has persuaded youngsters playing with blocks on the path to clear these away.

Date of next meeting

Tues 15th March 2016 from 7pm at Merchiston Tennis & Bowling Club.

23.02.16

Issues raised in joint CEC / MercCC walkabout in South West area on 26th January 2016

- The pavement outside Margiotta's door in Polwarth Gardens floods in not very heavy rain.
- There is no protection for pedestrians trying to cross Yeaman Place or Polwarth Crescent during, particularly, rush hours where there are large volumes of traffic displaced by the closure of Viewforth. Only car drivers have been considered. No response to CC member contact with CEC. (Set to become a constant problem with future restriction to Viewforth)
- Trees in Harrison Park West beside canal obscuring street lights.
- Bad flooding at junction of Polwarth Tce / Harrison Rd / Gillsland Rd
- Overflowing communal bins (including but not limited to Harrison Road, Harrison Gardens, West Bryson Road)
- Asked Craig Dunlop (CEC Parks Officer) to determine whether or not LED street lights are adjustable and (if they are adjustable) what the CEC default setting is.
- Resurfacing of east end of railway path has improved the surface and reduced mud underfoot.
- Road and pavement flooded at junction of W Bryson Rd and Bryson Rd.
- Lid of silo bin in W Harrison Park damaged by high winds

Tom Graveson, James Geekie, Ted Tate

Councillor's Notes: Cllr Gavin Corbett, by email 11th February 2016

The main things from me are:

1. I have organised a tidy up of the newly-surfaced Caledonian railway path on the morning of 12 March – from Harrison Place to Dundee Terrace. With the local scouts; and one of the local residents will put it on facebook and register it with Keep Scotland Beautiful

2. The consultation on the Russell Road to Union Canal shared path has gathered 95% support, with the main issue still TBC the fate of the Telfer Subway

3. By the time you read this I will have met on-site with residents of Meadowspot angry at parking pressure from contractors at the Royal Edinburgh project. There may be wider spillover effects.

4. The very busy North Merchiston Club at Watson Crescent lost £16k of core funding and £22k of extra funding which it applied for playgroup development in the most recent Children and Families grants. This is very disappointing and Melanie I sought to introduce an appeal mechanism which could have helped those losing funding. But it was rejected

5. I am meeting Scottish Canals and local police at the canal in early March to discuss how to reinvigorate the shared space message for use of the towpath.

6. Meanwhile I am also (slowly) trying to persuade Sainsbury (in response to customer requests!) to install cycle parking hoops in front of its shop in Dundee Street. Anyone who finds the council or NHS Lothian hard to deal with should try Sainsbury….

7. Finally, the South West NP participatory budgeting exercise "Grant a Grand" closes for voting on 24 February. Please encourage all young people (aged 10-19) to vote at Fountainbridge Library.

Ian Murray MP – Report to Merchiston Community Council (16/02/16)

Sorry I've been unable to make it to the Community Council meetings of late. As I am sure you can appreciate that I'm required to be in Parliament Monday to Thursday each week. I thought it may be beneficial to provide you with a brief outline of some of the things I've been up to locally. I plan to send you these reports every month however, if there are any issues that are of particular concern to you, please do not hesitate in contacting my office. As ever, thank you for all the good work that you do.

Scottish Refugee Council - Syrian Refugees

This month I was pleased to welcome Graham O'Neil of the Scottish Refugee Council. As you will be aware around 50 Syrian refugees have already been resettled in Edinburgh. Graham and I discussed the many ways in which the local community and charities are continuing to help refugees integrate.

Shelter Scotland- Meeting on Housing provision

Earlier this month I had the pleasure of meeting the Shelter Scotland staff at their South Charlotte Street office hub to discuss housing in the constituency and throughout Scotland. The staff at Shelter Scotland offer specialist housing advice and support services. Shelter Scotland helps over half a million people a year struggling with bad housing or homelessness and campaigns to prevent homelessness in the first place. For free housing advice you can contact the Shelter helpline on 0808 800 4444 or visit the website: http://scotland.shelter.org.uk/get_advice