MERCHISTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Public Meeting on 18th February 2020 - Draft.
Venue: Merchiston Tennis and Bowling Club.

Present:

MCC:

Ian Doig
Daniel Cairns
Peter Brett
Helen Zeally
Frances Hawarden
Mairianna Clyde
Auley McCaffer
Jake Horsburgh
Ted Tate
Auley McCaffer
Jasmine Blyth
Ian Clement
Michael Lugton

CEC Councillor:
Cllr Melanie Main

MSP:
Daniel Johnson

Police Scotland:
St Leonards: PC Stuart Fraser
St Leonards: PC Neil Mackay

Public Attending:

Shellie Holubek
John Lumsden
Tom Graveson
Maya Amir
Niamh McCabe

Apologies:

Cllr Gavin Corbett
Cllr David Key
MCC: Vivien Kitteringham
MCC: Bridget Stevens
MCC: Ewan Klein

1. **Welcome, introductions and apologies for absence – Chair: Ian Doig**
2. **Police Report – Police Scotland are invited to provide updates and answer questions**

151 calls in the report. Biggest issue is cars being broken into. There was a spate across Morningside and Merchiston. Sash and case break in at Merchiston park.

Banking fraud via telephone is happening all too often now. Police advise to not give out your person details to anyone over the phone. Road traffic accidents discussed.

One person caught breaching parole.

Police are working with community entities such as Edinburgh leisure.

Peter Brett asks: "What will happen if police budget is cut, will MCC be given reports like this?" Police say that they are not spokesmen for this topic and the police are not aiming to do this.

MSP Daniel Johnson says he will take something forward

Mairianna asks about parking violations including parking on double lines. Police say if it isn't an obstruction then it goes to Council Parking Wardens as these parking offenses have been decriminalised. Only when they are causing an immediate obstruction at a junction can the police intervene. Peter points out the issue with this decriminalisation is when the obstruction occurs after 17:30 the parking wardens have gone.

Police say they can only intervene when there is a complete obstruction.

Melanie main says these was brought into 4 or 5 years ago due to budgeting issues. Police are no longer legally obliged to do anything. Melanie says that she is taking video and parking evidence for Planning at CEC. A lot of issues are being reported. Living Streets, Melanie says, is also involved with this. Melanie says Marianna and her are setting up a meeting with someone experienced in Planning to speak with Planning CEC about the issue as "it is dangerous". Melanie describes an incident which is an accident waiting to happen.

Helen tells police about an issue about a Lorry parking on a pavement. Police say they will get involved if it is completely blocking a pavement. For example; if a pram can't get through then police can get involved. Police explain it is a difficult topic to find the line.

3. **Minutes of MCC meeting of 21st January**
   Peter asks Daniel to post the minutes onto the website

   Frances provided correction: Roma was spelt incorrectly. The annual standing order is for £40 for the Cockburn association and £50 for FOMBL, also annually. FOMBL left the payment to our discretion.

Ian spoke about Action Points and asked if anyone wants to comment, they didn't.

4. **Matters arising from minutes and previous meetings**

Michael spoke about the traffic issues: He reiterates the modelling result will be shared to us thanks to Melanie. Chair and Michael spoke about how to organise it, conclusion is to discuss it at the March meeting and/or have an ad-hoc meeting in April.

Michael would like to work with the police on traffic management for Merchiston when the results of the modelling has been published. Once the MCC and other members of the public have come up with a holistic approach, next step is how to engage with the CEC and councillors.
Melanie responds saying it's a good approach, the city mobility plan is a way to feed in this approach.
Melanie's concern is that there is a meeting with the transport committee every two months, so there is pressure to have a meeting to discuss the modelling and come up with a policy as soon as possible. Next meeting is 14th May.

Peter suggests to have another meeting in two weeks. Chair asked everyone when to have a meeting on this and suggested also to invite the public as it will have an impact on the community. Michael thinks public will be interested and will try and get residents to come along. Chair suggests April.

Michael highlights the point that Merchiston is a large area and it will take quite some time as we need to listen to the modelling presentation from the CEC and ask questions as residents do not know much about it.

Helen asks if the traffic issues is down to a commuting issue or is it an all-day problem, Michael says it was initially a community time problem, but not anymore. Michael explains the changes to Viewforth have increased volume of traffic significantly, he thinks 1k extra per day.

Chair asks Police if they are aware of these traffic issues. They are not.

Chair asks what the preferred outcome is for Merchiston avenue residents, Michael says: there are 2 issues:
1) problem of over trafficked streets at the moment (significant increase of traffic),
2) Any further changes to Viewforth such as blocking traffic will increase traffic even more and make things even worse.

Chair agrees and MCC will organise a meeting in April, suggests 2nd week in April. Jake offers Steiners as a venue. Frances reminds the venue needs to be made accessible to all residents. Peter asks to invite neighbouring CC's and invite all councillors in the MCC rota. Suggestions of other CC's are Craiglockart, Tollcross and Morningside. Peter suggests to organise a microphone.

5. Planning Issues Report – Lead: Mairianna Clyde

Melanie Main spoke about Cedric road as the signage is confusing, the 20 mile an hour team is looking at it as it changes between 20 and 30 very quickly.
Auley McCaffer suggested Colington road should be a 20mph road.
Peter Brett highlights the issues caused form swapping 20mph to 30mph and back again very quickly, Melanie Main agrees with Peter Brett's' points.
Melanie suggests the MCC think about raising this with the CEC.
Chair asks if everyone agrees -all yes apart from Ian Clement who asks why not teach children to cross the road properly. One member of public is against it as it is not enforced.

Melanie Main spoke about the switching the parking proposal by the MCC: Head of parking says it makes sense, he has someone going out to look at. It will take some time due to "TRO".

MSP Daniel Johnson says the police put in a lot of effort to control traffic by. Police officer explains there is a lot of time pressure and they always control traffic issues. Police explain drivers who normally do 40mph now do 30 thanks to the 20mph limit.

Marianna Clyde Gilmore Place planning: Marianna said converting church into 4 affordable houses (LAR is the building association) they want to put affordable flats there too. It wouldn't exceed its current hight. Marianna is not initially against it.

Helen Zeally asked about Astley Ainsley and explains planning has been pushed back. NHSL have been asked to provide certain survey reports to the CEC Planning Department who will then draw up a 'place brief' for the site. Marianna explains the steering committee is taking place on February the 26th and says it is coming together nicely.
Helen says the meeting with city council and health board is behind schedule due to queue jumping and other issues they are dealing with.
Ian Clement suggested it is depressing there is no practical solutions, Mairianna Clyde & Helen Zeally said that there are indeed practical solutions being put through.

Marianna Clyde said someone put in a suggestion for occupational therapy and enabled employment for people with a disability

Mairianna Clyde on signature pubs: Mairianna Clyde and Melanie Main have consulted with a retired planner and has found numerous mistakes with the planning put through.
Mairianna Clyde said they are concerned with it including right of way, latest issue is a BBQ in the middle of the area including gas canisters containing warning signs such as no mobile phone as smoking close by the fence.
Marianna's main concern is on the original plan says that there was a mechanism which was supposed to transport equipment from the road to the building, Peter Brett explains how it might be done.
Mairianna explains another planning permission issue with bins. Mairianna Clyde Expresses disappointment with the CEC and their departments.
Melanie Main explains Signature Pubs have not complied with planning rules. Signature pubs are going to meet with a CEC rep to explain why they have done. Melanie Main says people have tried this (what Signature Pubs are currently doing) in the past and not gotten away with it.

6. **Licencing Issues Report – Lead: Chair, in absence of Bridget Stevens**
   Chair reads Bridget's message as she is absent regarding signature pubs. Signature Pubs had da lot more people in favour of the pub than against them in regards to submitted feedback to the CEC. Signature also had a QC which helped their case. Signature Pubs applicants also want 9am to 1am, 7 days of the week as well now. Planning at CEC said residents should raise concerns, breaches and issues with CEC. Marianna Clyde explains Councillors David Key and Nick Cook stood up for residents during the meeting about Signature pubs.
   Helen says Tom Vietch is the person to contact specifically about Signature Pubs licensing hours and breaches, for example, people are outside drinking during hours of 9pm. Member of MCC says they observed Signature Pubs getting people to drink inside at 21:55, so this was out of their licensing hours.

7. **Health and Social Care Issues Report – Lead: Ian Clement**
   Ian Clement gave an oral report on health and social integrations
   Ian Clement handed out leaflets for older people which explain how to get free services to help them by energy experts
   Ian Clement explains there is a greater need for older people in the community as there are services being cut such as 60% of Ashley Ainsley is closed.

8. **Treasurer's Report – Lead: Frances Hawarden**
   Frances Hawarden summarised the treasurers report by saying the MCC is "ending the financial year with a healthy balance".

   Frances Hawarden explains Direct debits need to be setup and 2 signatures are required so the MCC can pay their liability insurance premium, it is just under £70.

9. **Public Engagement and Communications Group Report – Lead: Ewan Klein**
   No one in meeting to discuss this topic

10. **Associate Members' Reports – Opportunity to discuss issues and potential projects**
    Jake Horsburgh said there is nothing to report from his end.

    Auley McCaffer said there is an increase number of traffic going across Viewforth bridge at BHS.

    Jasmine Blyth: Explained about the traffic issues (congestion) due to parents dropping folk off at George Watsons college. The schools headteacher has been trying to deal with the issue.
    MSP Daniel Johnson says the drop off and pick up zone, (near or at opposite The Grand Stand) was discussed with parents.

    Mairianna Clyde talks about a pontoon issue near BHS.

11. **CEC Councillors – Opportunity to provide updates and answer questions**
    Melanie Main talked about the City mobility plan and explains it is a long-term plan. Melanie Main said that if you look at the plan's map there are no changes planned in Merchiston, it is missed off the plan completely. Melanie suggests MCC should look into because Merchiston is not on the long-term plan. Consultation is open until March.

    Peter Brett said he and Vivien Kitteringham will be at the consultation. Peter suggests to look at the city mobility plan and give feedback. Feedback is due by the end of March

    Melanie Main mentioned the South Suburban consolation is out.

    MSP Daniel Johnson talked about restricted parking is a "needle we need to grasp", especially in the Shandon area. Daniel said he spoke to councillors.

MSP Daniel Johnson spoke about short-term lets and Airbnb and was discussed, Daniel has a concern about them. 5% of residential addresses are registered with Airbnb in Daniels area he explains. He is interested in the MCC's views.
Helen Zeally asks about a tourist tax, Chair says it is Scotland wide. Melanie Main says that Edinburgh will enforce it.

Melanie Main explains AirBnB is a business and thus any property setting AirBnB up need planning permission. Staff in council deal with people starting an Airbnb without permission. This division in the CEC are closing down AirBnB because they don't have planning permission, Melanie gives examples of this happening. Ian Clement highlighted another example.
Helen asks about people using AirBnB to rent out a room -this is allowed and doesn't require planning permission, Daniel Cairns attempted joke which failed.
Jake Horsburgh asked Melanie Main if this AirBnB requirement (to apply for planning permission) affects different properties, Melanie says it affect any type of property

12. **Consultations currently open**

Chair explained he is looking for at least one person to help with responding to consultations. Peter Brett said he would but will not do all the "leg work". Peter says it is a lot of work, 20-30 hours of work to read and go through all the information. Peter says he can't do it for all the ones MCC has been invited to contribute to. Peter iterates he would need assistance with the work. Chair says we don't have to limit ourselves to the MCC, could be the public. Chair asks member of the public, Tom Graveson what he did as previous Chair, Tom agrees with Peter that more resources are needed. Chair suggests Peter gets a team together.
Helen Zeally said he doesn't think the MCC will get a group together, suggests people get in touch with Peter if they are interested and send their key point responses. The first three in the agenda list are the essential consultations are the essential ones we have to prioritise unless someone has a burning desire to respond.

A member of the public (Shellie) says it is so horrible and difficult to respond to consultations such as the tourism consultation. She asks if they get any better or worse. Peter Brett says it gets better.
Melanie explains you don't have to respond to the entire consultation, you can respond to key points. Melanie suggests the MCC reads key bits of the consultation. Peter asked for interested folk to let themselves know as soon as possible.
MSP Daniel suggested not to respond in length to each point in a consultation, Daniels suggested to look into the police consultation and find an area MCC is interested in. MSP says we are under policed. This is why Daniel is highlighting the police one.

Chair asks to focus on the key points when filling in a consultation

13. **Any other competent business**

Public Engagement and Communication Group Report: No one in meeting to discuss.

Vivien will represent MCC at the Police workshop.

Action points were discussed:

- Peter Brett to action with Melanie in regards to the new procedure about requesting 20 mph
- Peter Brett will draft a proposal about part of Colington
- Daniel Cairns to organise April meeting with Jake Horburgh for a meeting about the traffic issues. It should take Place before April the 24th due to exams
- Peter Brett to advertise special meeting about traffic to Cockburn association
- Daniel Cairns to organise another informal meeting