MERCHISTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Public Meeting on 21st January 2020
Venue: Merchiston Tennis and Bowling Club.

Present:

MCC:

Ian Doig
Daniel Cairns
Bridget Stevens
Jake Horsburgh
Vivien Kitteringham
Mairianna Clyde
Ian Clement
Joan Houston
Frances Hawarden
Helen Zeally
Peter Brett
Auley McCaffer

CEC Councillor:
Cllr Gavin Corbett
Cllr Melanie Main

Police Scotland:
PC Simon Wotton

Public Attending:
Mark
Pamela
Andy
Graham
Roma Menlowe

Apologies:

No apologies sent

1. **Welcome and Introductions**

Ian Doig welcomed all who were present and thanked members of the public for attending

2. **Police Report**

PC Simon Wotton provided the police report and answered questions from members of the public and the MCC

A question was asked about Colinton Road and if checks can be done to see how close cars drive past a mock-bike. PC Wotton said it is not possible

Question was asked about Contact Assessment Model, a survey. Ian Doig suggested it can be discussed at the next MCC public meeting to save time today. PC Wotton says the survey will be published.

Question was asked by a member of the public about Eastern Europeans asking for money outside Tesco at Holy Corner. The member of the public said it seems to be an organised group who drop people off outside Tesco and then collect them later. PC Wotton acknowledged the issue and provided more insight.

Ian Doig brought up an article from The Herald; “Phantom policing brings big crime drop”.
Brett says he hears the budget will be cut for the community police.
It was discussed that Edinburgh pays for the community police unlike other councils such as Glasgow.
Helen Zeally asks if the MCC can help show that crime prevention is just as important, if not more than tackling crime i.e. being pro-active is better than being re-active. Helen uses vaccine prevention as an example.

3. **Minutes of MCC Meeting of 19th November**

Minutes were agreed as a correct record

4. Matters Arising from Minutes and Previous Meetings

4.3 Holy Corner Signature Pubs Development

Lead: Bridget Stevens

Bridget Stevens asked if anyone submitted their objections to the Licensing board. Nine people raised their hands. It included members of the public and MCC

Six people said they are going to the Signature Pubs meeting with the Licensing board, including members of the public.

In regards to the Right of Way at signature pubs, Bridget Stevens made it clear that it is a separate issue to the licensing hours issue. Bridget Stevens explained Signature Pubs have blocked the Right of Way and suggested anyone going to the Licensing Board meeting should not distract from the topic of the Licensing hours with that of the Right of Way.

Bridget Stevens explained the MCC's objection letter for the Licensing Board did not initially arrive with the board, it however did end up being processed on time.

Bridget Stevens has a document containing advice and protocols for meetings with the Licensing Board. Bridget explained what to expect in the meeting and how long it would roughly take. The decision of the licensing hours will be made Monday the 27th of January 2020.

Ian Doig asked Bridget Stevens if any press will be present at the Licensing Board meeting, Bridget said there may be.

A member of the public asked Bridget Stevens if Signature Pubs will be legally represented, Bridget said yes.

Bridget Stevens suggests the MCC gather beforehand to discuss the meeting, Bridget used the term "huddle".

Frances Hawarden asked about the outdoor tables and how Signature Pubs will control the time to stop drinking. PC Wotton and Cllr Main said it is down to staff at Signature Pubs. Jake Horsburgh said he witnessed the pub correctly instructing guests to go inside at the correct time.

4.4 Traffic Issues – Watson's School and South Ettrick Road

Lead: Joan Houston

Joan Houston spoke about the issue of speeding traffic and waiting times on the road by vehicles.

Joan Houston would like to see a straight swap regarding the parking arrangement, there is currently 9 hours parking on one side of Abbotsford road and 4 hours on the other side. Joan would like to see that swapped.
The purpose of her proposal is for safe exiting of vehicles

Joan met up with Sharron Lawson from Traffic Orders (CEC) on site to explain what the issue is. Joan explained Sharron Lawson did not understand what Joan was explaining to her and Sharron decided to leave and refuse to come back

Melanie Main said she would contact the Parking section of the SES

Joan Houston asked PC Wotton if he can organise speed checks. PC Wotton said he would.

4.5 Traffic Issues - Boroughmuir High School, Viewforth, Merchiston Avenue etc.

Lead: residents if available, in absence of Michael Lugton

The report about these traffic issues was supposed to have been submitted to the Transport Committee last summer (2019).
The report has been completed and will be presented to councillors and then the community.

The report consists of a new traffic model, generated by computers which will improve traffic in the area. It has been done for other areas of Edinburgh too.

Member of public (Rona) asked Melanie about the details of the modelling

Peter Brett asked if the report will be available to the public.

Member of the public (Andy Watt) is happy the work is done to create the new model as it has been going on for too long and there are too many issues in and around Merchiston Avenue such as sudden veering of vehicles when emerging from entrances.
Andy says this is a special issue for the area as Merchiston Avenue carries 3,000 vehicles which is most likely maximum capacity.
Andy says CEC does not know the threshold for capacity for the streets in Merchiston, and would like to know what threshold would needs to be broken for CEC to take action.

The main point Andy wants to make is that residents want to see physical improvements and understands these changes take time Viewforth carries more than 3,000 vehicles according to Andy.

Melanie hopes we can have a detailed discussion between the community and councillors after the modelling is discussed.
Ian Doig asked Melanie if a progress report can be passed to the MCC for the February meeting, Melanie says yes.

Mairianna Clyde points out the new traffic model might have a knock-on effect to neighbouring streets and hopes it doesn't push the problem on to other areas.

PC Wotton reminds attendees speed issues occur with every road going downhill, and points out that there are not enough officers to conduct speed checks unfortunately.
Peter stresses anyone going over 20mph should be punished and the police should be strict. PC Wotton points out that many people speed on roads.

Rona endorses the point of Melanie that the area must be treated holistically in regards to the new modelling. Rona asks if the modelling takes the type of vehicle into consideration such as car, van and lorry, as an increased in commercial vehicles is causing an issue. GPS of commercial vehicles often lead drivers though residential streets.
Melanie says the modelling doesn't take the type of vehicle into consideration and points out that if a vehicle is using a GPS designed for commercial purposes it will use different routes than normal GPS systems. Melanie points out that not all companies use these commercial-vehicle designated GPS devices.
Peter Brett asks Rona if these commercial vehicles are destined to the area or are just passing by, Rona says she believes they are just passing though. Another member of the public, Pamela agrees.

4.6 Craiglockhart Primary School
Lead: Associate Member – Chair to report progress

Craiglockhart Primary School have informed the MCC they would like to send a representative from the parent's council to the MCC public meeting. No one from the parent's council attended.

5. **Planning Issues Report**
   Lead: Mairianna Clyde

Mairianna Clyde provides and update about the Right of Way with Signature Pubs and names Alice Fay from Scottish Rights of Way and ScotsWays

Mairianna Clyde explains Martin Duncan (CEC Access officer) is aware of the issue with Signature Pubs and is investigating to see if Right of Way procedures was followed.

Ian Doig asked about how to enforce the Right of Way, Mairianna Clyde explains the CEC can only investigate at this stage and find out how the decision was made to block the Right of Way.

Mairianna Clyde suggests Melanie Main to get in touch with Martin Duncan. Melanie Main explains that she and Cllr Neil Ross are discussing between themselves and the CEC to look into this and it is being taken seriously. Melanie Main says she has been in touch with Signature Pubs about it with other councillors.

The Merchiston Community Council requested a meeting with a planning official at the CEC in regards to the Right of Way and getting a better understanding of how it works. MCC asked if Melanie Main could be part of the meeting to which she agreed.

Signature Pubs have a planning application for their signage which is already up, however the application has not been approved yet.

Mairianna Clyde explained that a building on Gilmore Place will be turned into student flats. The developers are S1.
It was discussed that small families should be living there not students. The issue of parking was raised because if it is student accommodation then there are no obligations to create car parking spaces. Mairianna Clyde asks the MCC for backing to have more conversations with officials regarding this planning. MCC agree
Jake Horsburgh points out more money can be made from student accommodation than small families.
Gavin Corbett points out it is all down to the CEC to make these kinds of decisions.
Helen Zeally points out the impact on the citizens and the community of having more student accommodation.

Boatels: Government overturned CEC's decision to refuse Boatel planning application.
Mairianna Clyde suggests writing to your local MSP, Mairianna Clyde suggests Daniel Johnson.
Gavin Corbett says Scottish Canals still need to give permission for these Boatels and points out that the issue is the location of the

boatels not the principle of them
Bridget Stevens asks Auley McCaffer if BHS is doing anything about it. Auley doesn't believe BHS is updated about the issue. Gavin says he will speak with the headmaster of BHS to talk about the Boatels
Mairianna Clyde suggests the MCC writes a letter to Scottish Canals

6. **Licencing Issues Report**
   Lead: Bridget Stevens

Peter Brett raised an issue about Montpeliers that at 1am and 2am people are staggering down Bruntsfield, jolly staggering -yet staggering still. Peter pointed out the difference between Montpeliers and Mclarens is that Montpeliers allows for taxi's to pick up guests unlike at McLarens.

Bridget Stevens urges that if anyone has any complaints about either of the pubs at Bruntsfield about sound etc. that it is reported to the police and the CEC Sound Complaints page.

7. **Health and Social Care Issues Report**
   Lead: Ian Clement

Ian Clement explained he is the representative of a body representing an older generation of Edinburgh citizens at the CEC, which has not been abolished.

Ian Clement wishes to get in touch with Scottish Power, water and gas to get greater engagement with them and Community Councils. Ian Clement explains it is still early days for this and he hopes something can be arranged.

8. **Treasurer's Report**
   Lead: Frances Hawarden

Frances Hawarden spoke about setting up an annual standing order to the Cockburn Association, it is £40 per year. For FOMBL (Friends of the Meadows and Bruntsfield links), the annual subscription is is £50 and it was left to our discretion.

No financial issues were reported

9. **Public Engagement and Communications Group**
   Lead: Vivien Kitteringham

Vivien Kitteringham said things are quiet at the moment however she has a map of all notice boards, 8 of them which we have access to now. Vivien asks for help and might delegate the distribution of leaflets which need to go on the boards.

Vivien Kitteringham gets Jake, Auley and Peter to have discussion about community engagement.

Ian Doig highlights the Community Engagement Group plateaued somewhat towards the end of the last elected MCC and highlights how good it would be if we could increase activity with the engagement group.

Vivien Kitteringham expressed a desire to engage with the community and says she is thinking about how to collect the ideas and thoughts of the community

10. **Associate Members' Reports**

Jake Horsburgh explains his school (Steiners) is getting annoyed about teenagers congregating at night near the school. These groups have an intimidating presence. These groups consist of about 15 to 20 people gathering at Harrison Park at around 18:30. Pupils of the school are raising this issue.
Daniel Cairns asks Gavin Corbett if Friends of Harrison Park are aware of this, Gavin does not.

11. CEC Councillors' Reports

Councillor Gavin Corbett talked about the following:

1) Budget: Councillors do not have the next budget yet from the Government. There are going to be cuts again, perhaps around the sum of 40 million this year.
2) City Plan: Choices Document comes out next week. There will be a consultation about the development plan.
3) Traffic volume and problem with displacement: Congestion in the community is getting worse due to higher volume of traffic at the moment.
   The Mobility plan is to come out at the same time as the Choices Document.

Ian Doig asks Councillors Main and Corbett about the brown bin charges.

Helen Zeally asked the Councillors to thank the CEC environment department for cleaning up Albert Road

Peter Brett spoke about Printmakers and the lift bridge will be closed for months and is inaccessible for wheelchair users at the moment.

Ian Doig spoke about other bodies wishing to run presentations at the MCC public meetings and asks the MCC for their thoughts. MCC said yes for these bodies to present posters but not long presentations due to time restrictions