

Longstone Community Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 10th February 2025 from 7.30pm to 9pm in Slateford/Longstone Church (Session room).

1. DL welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Attendance / Apologies

Elected members: Des Loughney (Chair)(DL), Alan Gordon (Secretary)(AG), John Allan (Vice-Chair)(JA), Euan Robertson (ER), William Sturgeon (Engagement Officer)(WS) & Anastasia Muri (AM).

Co-opted members: Mary Hill (MH), Kenneth Chisholm (KC).

Nominated Representatives: None

Ex Officio: Cllr Denis Dixon, Cllr Ross McKenzie, Cllr Val Walker.

In attendance:

Public Visitors: 5

Apologies were received from Ray Donnelly, Sonya Nemec, Cllr Cathy Fullerton, Cllr David Key & SW Police.

3. **Minutes** of the meeting held on Monday 9th December 2024 were approved and adopted.

4. Matters arising from the last minutes

a) Bin Hub – 80 Longstone Street – AG advised ongoing issues, food waste lying on ground, bins bags left exposed to animals, fly tipping, residents fed up. Current arrangement works for Waste team but not for residents. Reports to CEC often slow to be actioned.

Suggestions from residents present:

- i. Covering on roof, sides & gated with padlock.
- ii. Keys to bin shed only allocated to people who use it. If bin area becomes a mess, fine all key holders a minimum amount.
- iii. Allocate a key to street cleaning team.

It was also noted by residents present there is wood stacked up against windows behind 7 Kingsknowe Place, car seats, and furniture at the back doors. Back door of 82 Longstone St also filled to brim with furniture & clothing. Details to be passed to local Cllrs.

b) Roads/Potholes – AG confirmed that over a two-week period in late December approx. 50 category 1 potholes were filled by CEC after being reported by LCC.

5. Police Report

AG advised the SW Team had sent a written update (below) and hoped to attend the March meeting.

- a) Police are aware of the ongoing issues with dirt and quad bikes in Redhall and Hailes Quarry park. There have been several foot patrols of the park, in both uniform and plain clothes, and while we can see the tyre tracks, there have been no persons/bikes while police have been in the area. However, any information on who these people are, where they live or where they travel would always be appreciated by police
- b) Further aware of parking complaints in and around Longstone primary school. Police are liaising with the school and have been out with Junior road safety officers (JRSOs) We will continue to attend the area during pick/up drop off when time allows (we have 9 primary schools in our area)
- c) Police conducted speed checks on Kingsknowe Road North where 3 drivers were spoken too but non found to be driving at excessive speeds
- d) Targeted anti-social behaviour (ASB) in the Kingknowe area where we traced one person wanted in connection with crime of dishonesty (outwith the Edinburgh area)
- e) Engaging with Lothian buses re. ASB in and around the depo and on the buses
- f) Carried out licensing checks in local pubs

JA noted a stolen bike was recovered after being hidden in the undergrowth on the railway sidings next to the canal across from Kingsknowe Station. Two further burnt-out bikes were also recovered there.

6. **Community Council Elections** – AG advised all present the nomination window opened on 06/02/25 and will close on 27/02/25. Nomination forms can be mailed in or sent via email. AG will advertise on media channels. Cllr Walker confirmed she is the returning officer for LCC.

7. **Community Events / Campaigns / Fundraising**

- a) **Millennium Woods – wayfinding sign/bench & planting** - AG advised in progress but waiting on better weather for painting the plinth first.
- b) **Dovecot Park tree planting** – ER advised a further 120 saplings are expected to be delivered from the Woodland Trust in early March. Liaising with SW Parks manager on best planting locations.
- c) **Proposed local history project** – AG asked for thoughts on initiating a project to capture memories, stories, photos and the history of our area. MH advised she had already made contact with the 'Living Memory Association'. They have a 2 year project called 'Resourcing Reminiscence' whereby they support local orgs to structure a reminiscence project. This can be done by:
- Supporting your grant or funding applications
 - Training in reminiscence and oral history interviewing
 - Skills in podcast creation
 - Training in social media posting

JA shared an amusing story from his childhood and playing beside the quarry.

Agreed by all present as a good initiative to progress. MH will arrange to meet LMA in person. DL had some ideas about potential funding from a previous project he was involved in.

- d) **Kingsknowe Court/Place & Longstone St public realm improvements** – AG advised he has twice requested an update from CEC officers on progress and not had a response. Cllr McKenzie will chase a response.
- e) **Proposed Junior Park Run HQP** - AG confirmed a useful meeting was convened by MP Scott Arthur where all parties met to discuss the next steps. Run Directors have been identified, including WS and AG. Run Directors will receive training, further marshals will be identified and trained, with expected soft launch around Easter hopefully once all start up requirements are met.

8. **Planning**

- a) **Student flats in Slateford on the former Westside motors site.** AG reported no change.
- b) **Former Bookers site / Longstone Link** - AG advised no change.
- c) **Slateford House** – AG advised consent to change to serviced apartments was approved despite objections from neighbours regarding anti-social behaviour.
- d) **Former Longstone Inn site (21 flatted dwellings & 1 commercial unit)** – AG advised a renewed application has been made following the previous one being refused. Concerns expressed
- Height of development, numbers of units on small plot, access to Burnside path being maintained, even though 'no car', likely to attract residents with cars who will park on existing streets, lack of provision of 'affordable' units with developer pitching for 'mid-market rents', inclusion of a playpark on land not owned by the developer and not within site boundary.
 - Currently an ugly scar so would be good for something to be done there. Residents present would have liked to see a new pub built instead.

9. Reports from any LCC member attending meetings obo LCC

- a) AG advised he had attended the Edinburgh Association of Community Councils latest meeting a presentation was made by the 'Improvement Service' who run the 'Scottish Community Councils' project. CC elections were also discussed.

10. Environment

- a) **Redhall Grove – Safer School Streets** – AG read out correspondence from 'Parents at Longstone' (PALs) requesting help with the following:
 - Improving safety for families crossing Kingsknowe Rd North to access local schools and Redhall Park and for returning towards Hailes Quarry Park.
 - KRN is a very busy road for families crossing, vehicles parking or mounting kerbs when turning corners and parents feel it isn't safe.
 - Drivers not obeying speed limits.
 - Ideally a build out or a zebra crossing would help slow drivers and improve safety.
 - Main entrance to both schools prioritises vehicles and they don't always stop to allow children to cross safely to the pupils' entrances.

Points were agreed by locals present with additional points made about substandard width of pavements on KRN, volume of PHCs / Taxis / Minibuses in mornings as well as parents still insisting on driving into the school road not helping matters and parking on double yellows. General frustration at lack of progress of any sort to improve matters from CEC.

- b) **Lanark Rd Pedestrian Crossing** – AG confirmed officers expected construction of the crossing to be June/July 2025 at the earliest due to ongoing SGN mains replacement work commencing at the end of April for 50 days.
- c) **Hailes Quarry Park lighting** – AG confirmed the new lights linking Longstone Street to Murrayburn Road would be installed beginning on 12/02/25.
- d) **Burnside Path Sinkhole** – Cllr McKenzie confirmed that following CEC Estates research a document from 1923 was found with agreement from CEC that the flood defence wall would be maintained at their expense and progress will now be made to survey & repair. ER had reached out to Environmental Rights Centre for Scotland and received a detailed reply from their solicitor. Main points were:
 - The owner of land which is crossed by a public right of way generally has no obligation to maintain or repair the route.
 - It is the duty of the local authority to assert, protect and keep open and free from obstruction or encroachment any route, waterway or other means by which access rights may reasonably be exercised.
 - Local authorities also have legal powers which allow them to repair and maintain public rights of way within their area.
 - In summary, although there is probably no legal duty on anyone which requires them to repair the path, the Council has the power to repair it.

It was noted this is useful to know when the matter of the actual hole in the path and its repair is discussed, although it was expected CEC would also address this.

11. Ward Councillors' report(s)

- Cllr Walker talked about the CEC budget process and proposals highlighting £5m for road safety improvements to reduce delays with installing new crossings and school street improvements. Noted the Lanark Rd resurfacing and gas mains replacements were continuing to cause delays around Inglis Green area.
- Cllr McKenzie spoke about budget proposals and expected council tax rise of 8% which he cautiously welcomed following the previous freeze across Scotland, and would make this less of a 'cuts budget'. Spoke of more scope for housing with transfer of HRA funds being made possible and hoped to see some 'seed' funding made available for Gorgie City Farm to help get it back operational again.

- Cllr Dixon was pleased a longstanding issue with anti-social behaviour in a local tenement had finally been resolved.

12. Treasurers Report

AG reported three transactions since the meeting in December (room hire £46 x 2 and a £4800 credit from CEC for Junior Parkrun, leaving a balance of £5739.20 of which £455.02 is for the Wayfinding Plinth upgrade.

13. Questions from the public

- Observation about a reported pothole being flagged as fixed, not actually fixed and then when chased was filled with cold tar which the resident felt was insufficient. Cllr Dixon advised Gorgie/Dalry likely to be focus of resurfacing efforts this coming financial year. LCC will continue to make case for more to be done locally. Cllr McKenzie observed that because many of the areas roads are in very poor condition it likely slows matters down as streets where a surface treatment is appropriate are prioritised.

14. AOCB

- a) AG confirmed four new dropped kerb crossing points have been installed at the top of Redhall Gardens making the local post box fully accessible following an LCC request.
- b) AG advised there is a civic reception with the Lord Provost at the City Chambers on Mon 24th.
- c) AG advised both the Bogsmill and Katesmill bridges had been damaged by falling trees and remained closed at present. AG will chase for update.
- d) ER asked about previously reported graffiti to Scottish Canals. AG confirmed reported and acknowledged but as yet, no action from them. A local resident also highlighted new graffiti starting to appear on 80 Longstone St gable end wall. AG will report.
- e) ER asked whether Network Rail could be contacted to address overgrown vegetation overhanging the pavement under the viaduct. AG will request.

- 15.** Next monthly meeting is scheduled for Monday 10th March 2025 at 7.30pm in the Longstone/Slateford Church session room.