**BONNYRIGG AND DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the meeting held on 8 May 2025, at Lasswade Library**

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| Present: | George Nicol (Vice Chair), Suzanne Ross (Secretary), Fiona Warner (Treasurer), Dougie West (Media), Liz MacDonald (Minutes), John Aitchison, Joyce Bernard, Ann Cunningham, Diane Easton, Bill MacDonald, Joan Sumner, Stuart Young. |
| In attendance: | Cllrs Dianne Alexander, Derek Milligan, David Virgo; Billy Innes, Flora Kenny. |
| Apologies: | James Cameron, David Hally, Avril Ramsay, Ruth Scott. |

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| **ITEM** | **1** | **Chair’s opening remarks** |  |
| Noted | (i) | As AR was absent, GN chaired the meeting. AR had resigned as Chair, due to ill health. It was agreed GN should assume the Chair’s role, until the AGM in October. |  |
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| **ITEM**  | **2** | **Minutes and matters arising from 10 April meeting** |  |
| Noted | (i) | DE had brought the cheque book and it was handed to FW. |  |
| Noted | (ii) | DE commented the new public bins with anti-seagull strips were unhygienic, as the plastic strips made it hard to deposit rubbish. |  |
| Noted | (iii) | DE queried DM’s report about the rat runs at Douglas Cresent/ Rae’s Gardens not being closed to through traffic. He explained the Council had determined it would not solve the problem and instead would increase congestion at Bonnyrigg Toll. DM added there was to be a public consultation about widening the road at the Toll again, to ease traffic turning right into Polton Street and make it easier for buses moving through the Toll. It would result in the loss of 2-3 parking spaces. DW said he would raise the proposal at the next MTRaP meeting. |  |
| Noted | (iv) | DV confirmed he had raised the road safety issue outside Burnbrae Primary School with the Road Safety Manager. A full audit was underway on Safer Routes to Schools across Midlothian. DA added a few different issues had been brought up about safe routes to Lasswade High School. |  |
| Noted | (v) | DM had asked about regeneration funding. It was unlikely, as there were few listed buildings in Bonnyrigg.  |  |
| Noted | (vi) | DM reported new canopies had been fitted above the old Spar and the Community Charity Shop, but there was still a problem with the pigeons. An application had been made from someone to take over the Spar and turn it into two hot food outlets. It was good to hear it could be brought back into use, but surprising, as it was a big area.  |  |
| Noted | (vii) | GN had sent details of gullies needing attention to DA and she passed them to the Roads Department. As all the gullies in Midlothian had vegetation and there are only two machines, it will take a while to deal with. GN had counted 50 drains locally that were badly blocked and felt more should be done to address the problem. DA said the Roads Department were working as hard as they could. DM was still keen that the machines were put to use outwith normal hours to increase productivity. |  |
| Noted | (viii) | DW queried the wording of the draft letters about the Health Service and asked that reference to “Facebook rules” be amended to BDCC Code of Conduct. |  |
| Noted | (ix) | FW had contacted Catherine Duns about funding for the proposed community garden. The deadline had passed, but she would alert FW of any other funding opportunities. |  |
| Noted | (x) | The motion to approve the April 2025 draft minutes was proposed by FW and seconded by JB. The minutes were adopted as an accurate reflection of the April meeting. |  |
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| **ITEM** | **3** | **Police Report** |  |
| Received | (i) | The police report for April had been circulated.  |  |
| Noted | (i) | DW commented that 90% of litter came from the shops around the Tesco Express. It had even been set alight at the rear of the store. Environmental Health and the Fire Brigade had been alerted. There were safety issues with packaging, as there was no internal storage for it. DV suggested SR raised this with the Community Champion at Hardengreen Tesco. |  |
| Noted | (ii) | EMacD expressed concern about the amount of house break-ins and associated car theft. She recommended people obtain Faraday pouches to keep their car keys safe and DW added anti-snap locks should be fitted to external doors.  |  |
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| **ITEM** | **4** | **Treasurer’s report** |  |
| Noted | (i) | FW was relieved to report that finally all three signatories for the bank account had been confirmed, namely AR, SR and FW. |  |
| Noted  | (ii) | She had applied for the annual £350 administration grant for community councils from Midlothian Council and it had been approved. Sadly, the application for funding of the community garden had not been supported. This was unfortunate, especially as Melville Housing Association had been so helpful, in offering a lease at £1 a year for 15 years.  |  |
| Noted | (iii) | JA asked if the old bank account would need to be closed. FW believed that was done automatically when the move was made to the new bank.  |  |
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| **ITEM**  | **5** | **Secretary’s report** |  |
| Noted | (i) | SR was disappointed that the £1,000 grant for the Community Garden had not been approved by Midlothian Council. She was also surprised that the Council wanted a Change of Use planning permission fee of £288. She had been advised to put in the one planning application listing everything required, shed, gate etc. Otherwise, another application would need to be made with additional costs. DA and DV had kindly offered to help with some money from their environmental funds. DV also suggested that some funds held by BDCC could be used and that Dobbies or Pentland Plants may be prepared to donate some plants/equipment. |  |
| Noted | (ii) | DE asked how the Community Garden would be run and accessed. SR said there was a 6-foot fence in place already. A gate would need to be added. It would be locked at night. She added that a lot of people from the community had already asked to be involved. |  |
| Noted | (iii) | SR said the Midlothian Local Development Plan 2 (MLDP) had been due to start in 2026, but had been pushed back to 2027. 10,626 houses were due to be built across Midlothian in the next 12 years. |  |
| Noted | (iv) | DM explained the new local development plan would allocate new sites for development and new houses are still listed for building on the current plan. He added that every 5 years the Scottish Government asked the councils, social landlords, Shelter etc. where they wanted houses and what type. Recommendations were then made to the Scottish Government |  |
| Noted | (v) | SR asked why Midlothian Council did not object to the scale of development, with Midlothian being the fastest growing local authority area in Scotland. The pace and scale of housebuilding outstripped the Council’s capacity to provide the necessary infrastructure, in schools, roads, health centres and the staff to service them. This led to a discussion on the planning process. If the Council objected to developers’ proposals, the developers often appealed and the Scottish Government generally overturned the objections. DM confirmed there would be no more new sites in Bonnyrigg until the necessary infrastructure was in place. |  |
| Noted | (vi) | DV said MLDP2 had dragged on for too long, with consultation going back and forward and being liable to change by the Scottish Government. He felt there needed to be a full land audit across Midlothian. |  |
| Noted | (vii) | FK said all the new houses led to increased flooding, with repeated problems. DV agreed and said more developer contributions were needed to combat the risk. DA added a flood expert had recently been appointed to the Council. SEPA were the drainage experts. They were asked to comment on developer proposals. Similarly, Lothian Health Board and the IJB were asked if they could provide sufficient care for the proposed increased population. Councillors rely on input from the “experts” when agreeing development plans. |  |
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| **ITEM** | **6** | **Report from Midlothian Councillors** |  |
| Received | (i) | Verbal update from DV. |  |
| Noted | (i) | He said the MLDP2 and a review of developer contributions were under discussion at the Council. Section 75 contributions were legal agreements, but could have been agreed years ago, before inflation increased. There was very little the Council could do, as they couldn’t go back to revise the contributions. |  |
| Noted | (ii) | A review of revenue generating ideas was ongoing, including wrap around child care and leveraging assets at Vogrie Park. There were some low-cost, high yield ideas for Hillend, with external interest. |  |
| Noted | (iii) | School and adult social care transport cost £8m per annum and were likely to rise to £13m in the next 5 years. |  |
| Noted | (iv) | He was keen to encourage safer routes to schools, but a definition was required of what safer routes were and what needed to be done to achieve them. He wondered should Midlothian Council be providing so much school transport.  |  |
| Noted | (v) | The A7 Urbanisation Project was still under discussion. It would be paid for by the Scottish Government, not Midlothian Council. |  |
| Noted | (vi) | He approved of the aligned school curriculum and broadening of opportunities for Midlothian young people. There was a big push to applied skills and apprenticeships. By bringing college courses into schools, pupils were more likely to stay in education. |  |
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|  |  | Verbal update from DA |  |
| Noted | ii) | A bag it and bin in campaign had been launched. If you take a photo of yourself putting stuff in a bin and send the photo to the Council you have a chance of winning £100. |  |
| Noted | (ii) | She was keen that people used bicycles or the bus and left their car at home.  |  |
| Noted | (iii) | She had asked Lothian Buses to implement a circular route for the 31 and 46 to include Hopefield and Rosewell. |  |
| Noted | (iv) | She had asked the planners to consider the proposed community garden application favourably, but sadly that had not happened.  |  |
| Noted | (v) | Pavement parking was still an issue for wheel chairs and prams, in some places. |  |
| Noted | (vi) | She had asked for King George V Park to be cleaned up for Workers’ Memorial Day on 28 April. |  |
| Noted | (vii) | GP services were run as private businesses. There was little councillors could do to alleviate problems. |  |
| Noted | (ix) | She said it wasn’t just buses having difficulty at the Toll, but also bin lorries. Cameras were to be fitted to bin lorries to help identify pot holes and take photos of cars blocking access. |  |
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| **ITEM** | **7** | **BDCC Groups and Associated Member reports:** |  |
|  | **a** | **MTRaP** |  |
| Noted | (i) | SR said the MTRaP meeting had been rearranged for a later date. |  |
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|  | **b** | **MFCC** |  |
| Noted | (i) | SR reported the 20 mile per hour speed limit was discussed and questions raised as to when it was to be implemented. No date had been determined yet, though it was already in place in Pathhead. It was agreed it would help combat serious injuries with road accidents, especially scooters and off-road bikes. |  |
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|  **Draft**  | **8** | **AOCB** |  |
| Noted | (i) | The Health Service – JA would send electronic versions of the documents he and JC had produced to the BDCC email address for subsequent distribution. |  |
| **ACTION** | **(i)** | **Office bearers to publicise the reaffirmation of BDCC support for local GP services and public health access.** | **SR/DW**  |
| Noted | (ii) | JA queried use of the Community Council notice board, which currently had circus posters stuck on the outside. They needed to be removed and the glass cleaned with a solvent remover. A gas meter key was required to open the noticeboard to place items for display. GN and SR would attend to this. |  |
| **ACTION** | **(ii)** | **GN and SR to clean the Community Council noticeboard and display meeting agendas, minutes and other information.** | **GN/SR** |
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| **ITEM**  | **9** | **Planning** |  |
| Noted | (i) | A planning application had been made to turn half of the old Spar into a pizza takeaway. It was deemed not great to have another takeaway in the town, but it was better than the building lying empty and becoming more dilapidated. |  |
| Noted | (ii) | Planning permission was sought for a new house to be built on land to the north of Wadingburn Lane and 2 access roads, with 1 coming out onto Lasswade Road, near a bend and traffic lights. It was agreed BDCC would object to this access road on safety grounds. |  |
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| **ITEM**  | **10** | **Date of next meeting**  |  |  | Thursday 13 April at 7 pm in Lasswade Library. |
|  |  | Thursday 12 June 2025 in Lasswade Library at 7 pm. |  |  |  |