

Midlothian Federation of Community Councils

17 March, 2021

ZOOM Meeting Minutes

PRESENT

Diane Easton (DE)	Bonnyrigg and Lasswade
Jan Irvine (JI)	Bonnyrigg and Lasswade
Ann Stewart-Kmicha (ASK)	Dalkeith (Treasurer)
Andrew Watt (AW)	Dalkeith
Joanne Gilles (JG)	Damhead
Vicky Milton (VM)	Danderhall
Robin Barclay (RB)	Eskbank and Newbattle
Cath McGill (CMcG)	Gorebridge
David Wilson (DW)	Howgate
Gina Temple (GT)	Loanhead
Robert Hogg (RH)	Mayfield and Easthouses (Chair)
Judy Thomson (JT)	Mayfield and Easthouses
Lorna Crook (LC)	Moorfoot
Dougie West (DW)	Poltonhall
Jim Hiddleston (JH)	Roslin and Bilston
Gordon Brown (GB)	Tynewater

Apologies

Mirabelle Maslin (MM)	Roslin and Bilston
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IN ATTENDANCE

Paul Johnson (PJ)	Midlothian Council (Minutes)
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1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

Robert welcomed those present to the meeting. Apologies of those members unable to attend the meeting were noted.

2. PREVIOUS MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

Correction to Minutes

Gorebridge member previously noted as Hazel Kerr should be Hazel 'Thompson'.

'Services' meeting - previously postponed

Derek Oliver has not replied to an enquiry about rescheduling the 'Services' meeting.

Action: PJ to contact Derek Oliver about a new date for the services meeting

Zurich Municipal Community Council Invoices

- i) PJ has forwarded all invoices received, for payment by Midlothian Council.
- ii) PJ highlighted that:
 - Community Councils need to ensure that any groups working under their name are *registered* as volunteers with the Community Council.
- iii) Poltonhall CC & Bonnyrigg and Lasswade CC will contact Zurich Municipal to discuss necessary policy amendments once the merger has been completed.
- iv) A Community Resilience Volunteer Service (CRVS - www.crvs.org.uk) representative will be attending the April meeting of Gorebridge Community Council. Suggestion raised that they be invited to a Federation meeting.

Action: PJ to circulate a copy of a Risk Assessment for an activity undertaken by a Penicuik Resilience group member

PJ to recirculate guidance from Zurich Municipal about resilience activities

MFCC to set date for Brian McGuff to be invited to Federation meeting

Developer Contributions Meeting (Feedback)

- i A productive meeting
- ii Midlothian does get section 75 contributions even if the 'reporter' rules against the council in planning decisions.
- iii Support for health provision is not currently included in Developer Contributions discussion. Although not included at the moment, health provision could be included in the future Local Development Plan discussions.
- iv Matthew Atkins will provide a list of upcoming developments
- v Danderhall – Developer contributions have contributed to new equipment in the park. Plans for a 'pump' track were rejected by the Millerhill community.
- vi Considerations moving forward.
 - Hold a separate meeting with people who make decisions (Council Officers, Elected members and Planners) to discuss how community councils can be involved in these decisions.
 - Could there be a percentage that would go to community benefit?
 - Would be useful to get Scottish Government guidelines.

Community Council Website Accessibility

- i Guidance from Improvement Service uses quite technical language.
- ii Online tools can be used to check accessibility of existing websites.
- iii Most website providers have accessibility built into the design. As long as major providers are used, it should be OK.
- iv JT has information about existing CC websites and can provide it if required.
- v Tynewater would like information about their site if available.

Action: Community Councils to check the accessibility of their websites.

PJ to discuss with colleague.

Attendance at public meetings of Midlothian Council

- i Have had response from Alan Turpie.
- ii Currently, meetings cannot include the public but can include the attendance by the local democracy reporter (Midlothian Advertiser).
- iii Local reporter is based in East Lothian.
- iv Reports of meeting were not online for at least 36 hours - therefore there was a delay in reporting.
- v Concern expressed that those items the reporter believes should be recorded may not reflect what the Midlothian public would regard as being significant.

Previous Minutes

Proposed: Jan Irvine

Seconded: Gina Temple

3. COMMUNITY COUNCIL UPDATES

Bonnyrigg and Lasswade

- i Elected members have indicated that they have a sum of £40,000, from their Environmental funds, to spend on projects. Elected members had provided examples of previous expenditure. Elected members indicated that the funds had to be spent on Council owned property and that they make decisions (based on their discussion with community groups) on how the budget is spent.
- ii Local people have expressed concerns about cyclists going at excessive speeds on the Penicuik to Dalkeith Walkway.
- iii The Community Council is highlighting 'Planning' on their meeting agendas.
- iv Once it has merged with Poltonhall and Hopefield, Bonnyrigg and Lasswade is intending to invite Matthew Atkins to a meeting to discuss Developer Contributions.

Action: ASK will check on criteria for Environmental Budget expenditure.

Dalkeith

- i Duncan Bayne from Edinburgh University highlighted its 'Tweak the High Street' project. The focus is on updating the High street. £20,000 will be available to make improvements. Will be involving the local community.
- ii There was a discussion about the elected member's environmental budget.
- iii Developments in Dalkeith Country Park are underway.

Damhead

- i There has been good attendance at Zoom meetings. Recognition that some previous attendees (perhaps less confident using IT), do not attend but that other local people are now joining meetings.
- ii There is concern about all of the proposed developments in the area but because of potential negative impact upon traffic, the ALDI development in particular.
- iii Damhead Community Council has been working to raise concerns with Midlothian Council about motorists travelling at excessive speed and the poor state of paths and roads. Progress on getting any action or resolution to these issues has been slow.
- iv Community Speed Camera – can be asked to be sited where they are perceived to be needed. Police Scotland may have difficulty on using cameras because of requirement for motorists to be stopped safely.

Action: RB will pass information to JG about the Community Safety Camera.

Danderhall

- i The new school hub is being opened after the Easter holidays.
- ii Have almost 600 people on Community Council Facebook page.
- iii The AGM is delayed until June.
- iv DDCC is working to encourage participants from all of the communities in the area.
- v Will be getting a defibrillator installed in the area.
- vi Reintroduction of chemicals for use in weed control
 - Opinions expressed on both sides of the argument.
 - There are concerns that the issue has become political issue rather than an environmental concern.
 - Suggestion that local people carry out surveys (petition) to ascertain the strength of views rather than just using social media.

Eskbank and Newbattle

- i RB noted that local people have raised concerns about the difficulty in safely crossing the A7 near the Sun Inn.
- ii PJ advised that the placement of a crossing at the site had been an element of an action point of a Neighbourhood Plan. At that time, Council officers had highlighted that such a crossing may have an adverse impact on traffic flow vis a vis the existing junction and traffic lights at the viaduct.
- iii The day of Community Council meeting will be changed to the second Wednesday of the month.

Gorebridge

- i** Has been in discussion about Lingerwood developments and the new High School.
- ii** In order to support informed decision-making at meetings, moving forward, the Community Council is going to have 'working parties' that will meet offline.
- iii** Exploring the installation of 'welcome to' signs for Gorebridge.
- iv** Members will be putting 30mph signs on refuse bins.
- v** PJ highlighted that he has been advised by the Lighting Manger that 30mph stickers cannot be put on lampposts. Eskbank and Newbattle CC have been advised to the contrary.
- vi** RH highlighted that, with regard to development, the role of Community Councils is to provide information to their local community.

Howgate

- i** There has been an increase in the number of Community Council members.
- ii** The main concerns are about roads, transport, and safety in the area and members are working on raising awareness of these concerns with Midlothian Council.

Loanhead

- i** Elected members are seeking applications for expenditure of their environmental funds.
- ii** Concern expressed about the perceived lack of interest from the public about large-scale developments in the area.
- iii** The Community Council is now working in partnership with adjoining Community Councils in order to develop a joint approach and share ideas and information about the proposed developments.
- iv** Communication, highlighting proposals in the three residential caravan parks, has been undertaken.

Mayfield and Easthouses

- i** A bi-election to elect a new Local Councillor is being held.
- ii** The AGM will be held at the April meeting.
- iii** A large scale planning application is in progress.
- iv** Mayfield and Easthouses will be meeting with Gorebridge and Newtongrange Community Councils to discuss concerns about the proposed developments. The developments will have an impact on all three communities, particularly the potential for coalescence of three distinct communities.
- v** Other people in the meeting raised concerns about the capacity of sewage systems and whether appropriate infrastructure will be put in place.
- vi** Education provision is now attracting an increased amount of funding.

- vii Development in the Mayfield area may have an impact upon provision in Dalkeith Primary schools.

Moorfoot

- i Community Council members have held a meeting with developers of the Rocket Project.
- ii Jobs will be coming into the area if the project is successful.
- iii Environment Funds – Elected members are working jointly to seek applications for the available funds.
- iv Gladhouse Reservoir – Planning for a car park for 40 vehicles. Will use local byelaws to monitor camping.

Poltonhall and Hopfield

- i Elected members had highlighted the cooperation of all political parties in setting a balanced budget for the coming financial year.
- ii In order to prepare for and support the upcoming merger, Community Councillors have been attending both PHCC and BLCC meetings.
- iii PHCC is developing the new Constitution in partnership with BLCC members.

Roslin and Bilston

- i There was good attendance at last meeting.
- ii Local people are raising concerns about the number of houses being built.
- iii A Petanque Piste in the park is being developed. Support and cooperation from Midlothian Council has been welcomed.
- iv A Miners Bench is being installed. Costs are being supported by a local elected member.
- v New school being built - £53 million proposed budget.
- vi Met and received support from PJ and Rebecca McKinney (MVA) re future development of activities and initiatives in Roslin.

Tynewater

- i The AGM will be held on Tuesday 30 March. 24 people have indicated that they will attend. It will be the final meeting attended by Henry Gibson.
- ii Still dealing with the impact of flooding earlier on in the year and there is a feeling that issues, such as poor maintenance that caused the flooding, is a Midlothian wide issue.
- iii The A68 focus group is making progress on a range of issues including most recently, the siting of a Pedestrian Crossing in Pathhead.
- iv GB thanked MFCC members for their support.

Action: PJ to add contact details of a TCC representative to the 'Services' group membership

4. CHANGES TO MFCC CONSTITUTION

- i Suggestions for amended clauses to bring the MFCC clauses up to date were discussed. These clauses relate to use of online banking and online meetings of the Federation of Community Councils.
- ii Motions will be discussed at the April meeting.
- iii RH proposed motions for Constitutional amendments. CMcG seconded the motions.
- iv PJ will send out the proposed amendments in a separate document before the April meeting.
- v **Local Community Councils** – Local Community Councils may need to make amendments to their Constitutions. PJ has previously advised them of this and provided suggestions. Community Councils were advised that with regard to payments from their funds they should be following the details of their Constitution. JT will write a report and a proposal to discuss suggested clauses for use by individual Community Councils.

5. TOWN CENTRE FUND EXPENDITURE

- i RH expressed concerns about the way TCCF funding has been distributed in the most recent round of funding. It was noted that improved communication is required.
- ii Previously Midlothian Council has involved local communities in spending these funds. It will be important that communities have an input into future initiatives. Can this expenditure be put on the planning portal so that this process is more transparent?
- iii Community Councils need to have an input into siting of litterbins and grit bins.
- iv Will discuss these issues with Derek Oliver at the 'Services' meeting.

Action: PJ to add these issues to the 'Services' meeting agenda.

6. CARE FOR PEOPLE

- i The March meeting was cancelled.
- ii Vaccine programme in the county is going well.
- iii Covid figures in Midlothian are reducing overall.
- iv Concerns about visiting in Care Homes remain.
- v Care Homes appear to have differing rules and restrictions for visiting.
- vi Gorebridge Leisure Centre is opening as a vaccination centre, 7 days a week, 9.00am – 9.00pm.
- vii List of resources to support mental health in the Community. JT (Mayfield) offered to send any information she has to JG (Damhead).

Action: JT to send information on support mental health in the community to JG

7. COMMUNITY PLANNING

- i** Meeting postponed until 31 March.
- ii** Alasdair Mathers will be retiring on 31 March.
- iii** ASK will be representing the Federation at Alasdair's online leaving event.
- iv** The vacant post has not yet been advertised.
- v** ASK was thanked for her notes of Community Planning Meetings.

DRAFT

8. PLANNING

- i Noted that a workshop on Planning would be helpful to the Federation; especially around issues of climate change.
- ii Noted that Community Council involvement in Local Place Plans will be important.
- iii PJ highlighted that the intention is that Local Place Plans will be created from work undertaken by local communities (including Community Councils), the Planning Department, CLL and other partners.

9. INFRASTRUCTURE

- i Sheriffhall Roundabout – funds being spent on line marking and cats eyes.
- ii Due to numbers of objections that have been raised there may now be a need for a Public Enquiry.

10. MTRAP – (Next Meeting is 19 April)

- i March minutes to be circulated for the next MFCC meeting.
- ii Noted that roads budget is based on expenditure over the next 5 years.
- iii Alan Heatley (Roads) had provided a great deal of useful information and this had been appreciated by group members.
- iv Eskbank Community Council has been discussing ‘active travel’ with Councillor John Hackett and received support about these issues. Suggestion proposed that that an Active Travel Group be developed through MTRaP.
- v Concerns about access to public paths being blocked were raised. This is an issue that does not appear to be addressed by either landowners or Midlothian Council.
- vi ASK highlighted that the £16 million Roads Budget is for a period of 5 years.

Action: RB will discuss formation of an Active Travel group with ENCC colleague.

Alan Symon.

PJ to add ‘Active Travel’ to next MTRaP agenda.

MFCC members to inform Rhona Matthews if they are aware of any paths where access has been blocked.

11. ENVIRONMENT

- i Malcolm Spaven (former MFCC member), is actively working on environmental issues. RH suggested the Malcolm be invited to a future MFCC meeting to provide an update on the environmental issues in the county.

- ii RB highlighted the issue of the release of sewage into the river Esk and whether it was safe for people to go into the water (swimming, recreation). He had enquired whether signs warning residents of the potential danger of doing so would be erected. Midlothian Council Environmental Health will erect signs where the rivers flow through Council owned land but not where it flows through land held in private ownership.

Action: MFCC members to agree and set a date for Malcolm Spaven to be invited to discuss environmental initiatives at a future meeting
RB to provide an update on any information available on the testing of bacteria levels in the Esk rivers

12. EDINBURGH AIRPORT

- i Survey questionnaires are due to be completed 31 March.
- ii The survey has already been circulated to Community Councils.
- iii AW requested that Agenda items be 'recycled' in order that they can be fully discussed.

Action: AW will host a meeting to discuss the survey
PJ to rearrange order of agenda Items

13. A.O.C.B.

- i Lothian Bus services will be suspended after 7.30 for one evening. Anti-social behaviour is causing concern for drivers.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING - WEDNESDAY 21 APRIL, 7.00 – 9.00

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89734280164?pwd=NU95aDBTODZLdEQveEZEbXZlclRvdz09>

Meeting ID: 897 3428 0164

Passcode: 891762

Dial in: 0131 460 1196

Meeting ID: 897 3428 0164

Passcode: 891762

Join by Skype for Business

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89734280164>