

# Midlothian Federation of Community Councils

15 September, 2021

## ZOOM Meeting Minutes

### PRESENT

Diane Easton (DE)	Bonnyrigg and Lasswade
Ann Stewart-Kmicha (ASK)	Dalkeith (Treasurer)
Andrew Watt (AW)	Dalkeith
Joanne Gilles (JG)	Damhead
Victoria Milton (VM)	Danderhall
Linda Pender (LP)	Danderhall
Robin Barclay (RB)	Eskbank and Newbattle
Cath McGill (CMcG)	Gorebridge
Caroline Clyde (CC)	Howgate
Robert Hogg (RH)	Mayfield and Easthouses (Chair)
Judy Thomson (JT)	Mayfield and Easthouses
Lorna Crook (LC)	Moorfoot
Paul McGrath (PMcG)	Moorfoot
John Aitchison (JA)	Poltonhall
Jim Hiddleston (JH)	Roslin and Bilston
Myrtle Pont (MP)	Tynewater
Gordon Brown (GB)	Tynewater

### **Apologies**

Dougie West (Poltonhall)	Gina Temple (Loanhead)
Ann Montague (Rosewell)	Jan Irvine (Bonnyrigg and Lasswade)
Annette Lang (Midlothian Council)	

### 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**

##### **Previous Minutes**

**Proposed:** Andrew Watt

**Seconded:** Judy Thomson

### **Margret Littlewood**

Members were informed of the sad passing of Margaret Littlewood in July. Tributes were made by those present for the important, significant work and contribution made by Margaret for both Roslin and Bilston Community Council, and the Federation of Community Councils.

### **Ann Montague**

Ann has informed MFCC members that she will be retiring from Rosewell and District Community Council at the AGM in October.

Those present acknowledged the contribution made by Ann at both a local and Federation level.

### **Police Scotland – Community Council Reports**

- There was an extended discussion about the availability of Police Reports at Community Council meetings.
- Gorebridge CC has not received a report for some time.
- At their September meeting, Mayfield and Easthouses received a much-improved report.
- Moorfoot highlighted the value of the very good input they had received from their Community Beat officer at their September meeting.
- Tynewater Community Council members have not received a Police Report for some time but have subsequently discovered that there has been a mix up with email addresses.
- ASK noted that delays in receiving reports may be due to the lengthy process that Community Beat Officers have to go through to extract the data contained in the reports.
- Those present highlighted that Police Reports were even more important when Community Council meetings are held remotely and when Police officers are unable to attend due to their restriction of the use of Zoom.
- RB (Eskbank) highlighted the Midlothian Community Access Team reports that are available on a quarterly basis.

#### **Action:**

**ASK to forward the email address of Aaron Clinkscales to MP (Tynewater).**

### **3. Communities, Lifelong Learning and Employability update**

This input was postponed until the October meeting

#### 4. COMMUNITY COUNCIL UPDATES

##### Damhead

- i **A701 Realignment** - The work of the Community Council has recently been focussed upon the new A701 realignment. There are 12 options, all of which would cut through the Damhead community, and a number of which, directly affect residential properties and businesses.
- ii **Straiton West, New Pentland, and Aldi developments** progressing, but not being looked at collectively – it is disappointing that Midlothian Council is not engaging with DDCC (and Loanhead, Roslin and Bilston) re a potential masterplan.
- iii **Superfast Broadband** – Scottish Government (SG) has now agreed BT Openreach community proposal and fibre will be rolled out to a portion of the community within the next 12 months. DDCC will now press SG to link up provision for the remaining part of the community that does not have access to superfast broadband provision.
- iv Separately, for awareness, **Midlothian Litter Pickers** Facebook site has proved to be extremely popular – event arranged for 13 October at McDonalds in Straiton for anyone interested. Suggestions sought re other potential events/locations.
- v **New High School**, noted that Community Council members are keen get an update on the location of the proposals for the site of the new **High School** planned for the area. JH (Roslin and Bilston) noted that their community council had receive responses to questions posed to the Leader of Midlothian Council.

##### **Action**

**JH to forward responses to JG**

##### Danderhall

- i RH (Chair) welcomed Linda Pender to the meeting, also highlighting the progress made by Danderhall Community Council and in particular the work undertaken by VM on behalf of DDCC.
- ii **AGM** held in June, through Facebook campaigning and leafleting we have brought 6 new Community Councillors on board. We now have a total of 15 so quorum of 5 should be achievable.
- iii **Induction Training session** for the group, many thanks to Paul for providing a session on what a Community Council does, the role of the Community Councillor and the Code of Conduct. Attempts to do ice breaker survey to identify specific skills or interests weren't very successful; efforts to share Secretary workload will be ongoing.

- iv New Chairperson** Linda Pender is joining various meetings (Federation, Shawfair, Planning)
- v First meeting after AGM** was difficult to keep to time & Councillors had to be reminded to be polite to one another amid frustrations.
- vi Subgroups**, suggested that they be created for members to take responsibility for items that take up a lot of time to be discussed, e.g. Police liaison / Roads, Paths & Greenspace maintenance.
- vii** 5 sites at **Shawfair Park** progressing through the planning system - David Lloyd Gym + Danfoss R&D (matters specified additional documentation), Co-op retail, Genus Reproductive health + Dental hospital, extension to Spire Shawfair.
- viii First Bus service**, servicing east/south side of Danderhall began this week - Number 33 now passes through Shawfair Park and does a loop around Millerhill. Concern that there has been no communication with residents - double decker buses every 20 mins, 19 hours a day, 6 days a week past mining cottages over speed reduction bumps.
- ix Cut to rail services**, concern expressed about proposals of a reduction in services after May 2022, Community Council is submitting a wider response & suggested Shawfair LLP do the same. (also see Item 11 Infrastructure)
- x Millerhill Park redevelopment** has stalled because Council dept haven't got the work force to put the new path in, needs to go out to tender.
- xi Various projects** ongoing with Shawfair, Guerrilla Gardeners, Mining Heritage groups.
- xii Meeting format** - Held a survey on Facebook to gather views about returning to 'in person' meetings - small number preferred in person, similar number didn't want to attend in person, majority said happy either way.
- xiii Hybrid Meetings**, new community meeting room in Danderhall Community Hub lacks equipment to support fully a hybrid model - an attendee's laptop would be the only source of sound, microphone, and camera for those joining remotely. Council's Media team doesn't have capacity to help with additional equipment in the short term; we're looking into whether a local business could help. Haven't done any risk assessments yet - found it difficult to get solid information on what social distancing is still required (working to 1m?) but now have volunteers from Community Council to help with venue hygiene and safety measures once we have access to technical equipment. Whether the meeting in 2 weeks' time can hybrid is unclear but it is a priority for us to work out.
- xiv Doctors' Surgery** - not aware of anyone being turned away from Danderhall Practice, have taken on residents from Edinburgh side of the Wisp & new Shawfair residents too.

## Eskbank and Newbattle

- i **June Meeting**, Community Council met in June before the summer break.
- ii **Summer Activities**, our activities over the summer have been mainly monitoring planning applications, consulting other Community Councils about these, and commenting on those where appropriate.
- iii **Face-Face meetings resumed**, we have now resumed meetings (September 8th - the second Wednesday of the month) fully face-to-face at our usual venue of the Board Room at Edinburgh College.
- iv Community Councillors were joined by two of our three Midlothian Council elected representatives (the third called off at the last minute due to a family commitment arising).
- v No **CLL representative** turned up despite being invited (neither did we get an apology).
- vi The meeting was successful and we intend to continue using face-to-face meetings unless regulations change.
- vii **Police Report**, we received a written police report (the quarterly one, due) but they did not turn up to speak to it (they were invited). No residents came.
- viii All our agendas and minutes are published on our website at <https://eskbanknewbattlecc.org/>.

## Gorebridge

- i **September Meeting**, first meeting back after summer break.
- ii **House Project**, we had John Brown from the House Project, which is helping prepare young people who have lived in care to develop the skills needed to live on their own and support them as they learn to do this. I'd highly recommend inviting John to a meeting in order to gain an understanding of some of the things that these young people need support with and how to engage them in the communities through volunteering or job opportunities. It was really interesting.
- iii **Proposed new High School**, we have a subcommittee dealing with the new High School and we had a separate meeting at the end of August on this specific topic. It was really well attended (c70 people signed up to join). We had 3 council officers including Marc Bedwell, Executive Business Manager, and Andrew Souter, Resources; Building Services and Fiona Robertson and they answered all the questions submitted in advance.

- iv The general consensus from speaking to some attendees was that a lot was said but it told us nothing. We understand the timelines for the various stages of consultation (official and unofficial) but the timelines for the new school (previously opening 2025) has now potentially slipped to 2029 with the consultation only starting in 2025.
- v No site has been identified even though over 3 years ago, we had meetings with Midlothian Council discussing 3 potential sites. The concerns raised since the meeting are that the council have decided that Redheugh will be the site for a new school and it will not actually be for pupils living in Gorebridge but will allow for the overspill from Lasswade and all the houses being built around Hopefield and pupils from Gorebridge will still attend Newbattle. There was lengthy discussion around transport being provided for pupils who want to continue at Newbattle.
- vi If we have to wait until 2029 that will be nearly 40 years without a high school/swimming pool and dedicated youth community facilities.
- vii The specific questions about the school and other community facilities will be discussed during various consultations but as a guide, the replacement school for Beeslack could be the blueprint for a new school in Gorebridge.

#### Howgate

- i **Election of new Chairperson and Secretary** held and confirmed in August.
- ii Church and Glebe - Preferred bidder has pulled out, so it remains on the market, though there is speculation that another interested party has come forward. Confirmation will hopefully follow soon.
- iii **Speeding** remains a big concern for the village with what seems like an increase in traffic since the easing of lockdown measures adding to this.
- iv **Former Wellington School planned development**, no further update
- v No planning applications within the area.
- vi **Halloween event** being discussed with a view to holding something on the village green.

#### Loanhead

- i **Planning**, over the summer months, the main topic at our meetings has been planning. We are concerned that there does not seem to be a Master Plan for the area, especially with the creation of the A701 relief road, Straiton West, New Pentland and now the proposed new high school along the A703 on the Bush Estate. We feel much hampered by not getting any information from our councillors, or even being able to discuss the proposals with them.

- ii **Heritage Trail**, Two of our members are forging ahead with the creation of the Loanhead Heritage Trail, a number of famous people from Loanhead have been identified, and their families contacted for permission to include them. Benches have been procured and the wording for heritage plaques has been agreed. The Coal Authority has given permission to use old photographs of Bilston Glen Colliery and a board will be erected at the entrance to the industrial estate. A Heritage Trail Map is currently being developed both as a phone app and paper copy.
- iii **Meetings**, Some of our members are still not keen on face-to-face meetings and prefer to continue to use ZOOM. However, we will be holding our AGM as a public meeting in the Main Hall of the Loanhead Miners Club so that we can be socially distanced, but we may also have to use ZOOM also at the AGM.

### Mayfield and Easthouses

- i **Secretary**, looking for someone to fill the position.
- ii **Community pantry** at the Development Trust is very successful.
- iii **Noticeboard**, we are looking at the possibility of replacing the current fixture.
- iv **New Schools**, we had an update from Head of Education about the future of schools in the area – New Easthouses Primary (two stream with ASN provision) and new Mayfield School Campus, including St Luke's.
- v **'In It Together'** town centre Masterplan is ready to publish/circulate – minus Hawthorn Family Learning Centre. However, it is held up at Council level until it can be presented at a Council meeting (probably December), even though it is a 'community project'.
- vi **Planning applications** or pre-applications at the old caravan site by the Shell garage, at the old Newbattle High School site and North Mayfield. These on top of the South Mayfield...etc site.
- vii **Midlothian Council Staff and membership of Community Councils**, issue has been raised about whether Council staff members are 'allowed' to serve on Community Councils. There is no policy to block it at Scottish Government level. This is something we are concerned about and would like to see in writing one way or the other. We certainly accept that there is a code of conduct that would need to be followed but surely no one should be told what he or she are allowed to do in their free time.

### Moorfoot

- i **First face-to-face Community Council meeting for some time, held in Village Hall**. It was a real joy to be able to freely chat and meet some of our new members for the first time. Community PC Jason McFarlane joined us and spent some time taking questions.

- ii **NWH query from Gorebridge and Tynewater residents about the frequency of their Lorries on smaller roads**, we still await a response from NWH, although they are supposed to meet with, and update the community on progress with the quarry infill. The Community Council agreed to ask planning for advice about this lack of co-operation.
- iii **Pump track for North Middleton**, This is to be installed using developers contributions, and following consultation with all the residents, the type of track was agreed. However, there is concern that there is some confusion. The track in Gorebridge, while called a pump track is really just for skateboards and is not at all the type agreed for North Middleton. A meeting has been arranged with a representative from Midlothian Council to discuss.
- iv **Temple Old Kirk**, Has an open day on 25th Sept check details and booking at [www.templeoldkirk.org](http://www.templeoldkirk.org)
- v **Fun day at North Middleton**, This was a very successful day, raising some £1500 for the Village Hall and most appreciated by residents meeting up for the first time since lockdown.

#### Newtongrange

- i **Welfare Park** focus - installation of new lighting, drainage cleaning and engagement with MC on planting / cutting.
- ii **Community Flyer**, development of a quarterly edition is ongoing.
- iii Progressing from Resilience Group to Development Trust.
- iv **Housing Planning Applications**, community engagement is ongoing.

#### Rosewell

- i **Retirement**, Ann Montague will retire at the October (AGM) meeting.

#### Roslin and Bilston

- i **Petanque Piste** now built in Roslin Park and well received.
- ii **Roslin Community Garden** working on a Plan to start a growing space in the Park.
- iii **Roslin Fete/Fun Day**, successful event held on 4th Sept.
- iv **Memorial bench for Margaret Littlewood** on course to be placed at Bilston Community Garden.
- v **Roslin Community Shed** relaunch at Rosslyn Bowling Club 10-2 on Thursdays.
- vi **2 new shops in the village**, Optas Gifts and Vins Portuguese supermarket.
- vii **New Secondary School**, concern from residents re preferred site for with Councillors Imrie & Winchester unable, for legal reasons, to provide detail until the land deal has been concluded.



## **Tynewater**

- i Planning input**, we brought forward a digest of our planning concerns ahead of the proposed meeting with P. Arnsdorf. It is very important to us that that a meeting is scheduled in the near future.
- ii Changes in policing arrangements**, we have raised our concerns to the Chief Constable and the area MSPs over the change in policing arrangements, which has led to the transfer of prisoners to St. Leonard Street and away from Dalkeith Police Station. We note and will be acting on the lack of community policing in our area.
- iii 20 Minute Neighbourhood event**, we plan to engage with this seminar, similarly with Community Learning and Development Meeting.
- iv Zoom Meetings**, we propose to continue using the Zoom meeting format until the Covid situation has vastly improved.

## **5. COMMUNITY COUNCILS – LOCATION OF FUTURE MEETINGS, ACCESSIBILITY AND PARTICIPATION**

- i** Moorfoot, Dalkeith, and Eskbank & Newbattle Community Councils have been able to hold face-to-face meetings.
- ii** Other community councils are still in consultation about whether their meetings can be held face-face.
- iii** Tynewater Community Council has decided that in the short term they will continue to hold online meetings.
- iv** Some Danderhall and District CC members are still not keen to attend face-face meetings. Members are therefore exploring 'hybrid' meetings. Most recently, they have explored the possibility of using a space in the Community Hub.
- v** Howgate Community Council had their August meeting in the car park and several participants had remarked that that it had been a very productive meeting.
- vi** Many of those present highlighted that a particular issue in their location is finding meeting spaces that are large enough to hold meetings where participants can socially distance.

### **Action**

**PJ (Midlothian Council) will look at the availability of the Conference Room 1 meeting space in Fairfield House.**

## **6. EDINBURGH AIRPORT FLIGHTPATHS**

- i** See report from AW attached separately. Upon reading the report, if members have any further questions, please contact: [admin@dalkeithcc.org.uk](mailto:admin@dalkeithcc.org.uk)
- ii** AW highlighted that the Independent Commission of Civil Aviation Noise (ICCAN) is to be wound up by the end of September.

Although AW believed ICCAN had been working well to address the issues of Aircraft noise, a review had suggested that ICCAN's functions would be more efficiently performed by the Civil Aviation Authority.

AW intends to write to Owen Thompson to highlight his concerns.

## **7 GP SURGERY PATIENT LISTS**

- i There was a discussion about the availability of spaces on patient lists in GP surgeries in Midlothian.
- ii Those present agreed that it would be useful to be able get information about GP lists in the county and agreed that NHS Lothian should be approached in order to obtain that information.

## **8 CARE FOR PEOPLE MEETING (CFP)**

- i The group is meeting every 2 weeks
- ii The focus of the CFP group is currently on supporting refugees of the conflict in Afghanistan.
- iii RH highlighted concerns about issues in Residential Care Homes and suggested that they should be on the agenda for discussion at the next CFP meeting.
- iv Minutes of the September meeting are attached separately.

## **9 RAMPS PLANNING SYSTEM AND SEMINAR**

- i The Remote Access Midlothian Planning System (RAMPS) is an interface that is very easy to use.
- ii It takes its data from the Midlothian Council Planning Portal.
- iii Those present agreed that in order for Community Councils to be able to obtain further information about the system and how to use it, the Federation would hold a seminar in January or February 2022.

### **Action**

**RH to contact Planning Democracy about their participation.**

## **10 ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES**

- i The Esk River Improvement Group (ERIG) continues to meet.
- ii The minutes of the last meeting (June 25) are attached separately
- iii RH highlighted the work that environmental groups (often on a voluntary basis), across the county, are undertaking on behalf of their local communities.

## **11 INFRASTRUCTURE**

- i Those present highlighted that there are likely to be changes to the ScotRail timetables and at a local level, will have an impact on the Edinburgh to Tweedbank line.

- ii PJ noted that the August Newsletter published by the Borders Rail Community Partnership included a link to the consultation about proposed timetable changes.
- iii MP (Tynewater) noted that the services provided by Borders Buses had been adversely affected by the shortage of drivers.

#### **Action**

##### **PJ to circulate the link to the ScotRail consultation**

#### **12 COMMUNITY PLANNING**

- i ASK highlighted that the next Community Planning Day will be on two half-days on Tuesday 23 and Wednesday 24 November.
- ii An external agency will be organising the event.
- iii An appointment to the post previously held by Alasdair Mathers is expected to be announced within the next 4 weeks.
- iv ASK will circulate a note of the latest meeting.

#### **13 PLANNING**

##### **i Live coverage of Planning meetings**

Those present highlighted that currently there is no live coverage of Council meetings. Although this has been raised with senior Midlothian Council officers, Federation members highlighted that they are unsure that the broadcast of live meetings will resume.

Members noted that, in the interest of democracy and to support their work, it is important that the live broadcast of meetings resume as soon as possible.

##### **ii Submission of Small Grant Application for MFCC training**

ASK will develop an application to support funding for MFCC training sessions in 2022 – 2023. She will circulate the draft application to MFCC members.

#### **14 MIDLOTHIAN TRAFFIC ROADS & PATHS (DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 4 October 2021)**

- i RB (ENCC) noted the level of speeding traffic in the area continues to remain an issue of concern.
- ii See minutes of August meeting and report from Alan Heatley attached separately.

#### **18. A.O.C.B.**

##### **i Planning – Sheriffhall South Community Consultation**

ASK (Dalkeith) noted that the Digital consultation process was unsatisfactory and of a poor quality. Participants were only able to type in questions during the event and responses were slow.

RB noted that Eskbank and Newbattle CC had received a briefing online via Zoom.

AW (Dalkeith) posed a question about how residents were able to comment on the consultations held in a Digital format.

ASK wondered whether there should be a standard for online / digital consultation processes.

**ii Planning – Mayfield**

JT noted the (online) consultations were held over the summer, during the school holidays and felt the local school communities really should at least have been made aware. The whole Dalkeith campus neighbours the area with Saltersgate School having specific concerns about losing access to the public walking path (also known as bridle path).

**iii Agenda items for October meeting**

Members expressed their concern at what they perceive as poorer levels of service now being provided by Midlothian Council. They wish to discuss at the next meeting.

**iv Challenge Poverty Week, 4 – 10 October.**

ASK highlighted the week

Information about activities provided by Communities and Lifelong Learning to support the week can be found on the Eventbrite page: [Communities and Lifelong Learning - Midlothian Events | Eventbrite](#)

**v High level of service provision in Newtongrange**

AM (Newtongrange) commended the excellent work and support that the Land and Resources team had been providing for the residents of the village.

Two Elected members attend community councils regularly although a third has never attended.

**19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – WEDNESDAY 20 OCTOBER 2021, 7.00 – 9.00, Zoom**

**Time: Oct 20, 2021 07:00 PM London**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87629315038?pwd=MIBPL0prVTVkcVIIZHpgZVRQbzVPZz09>

**Meeting ID: 876 2931 5038**

**Passcode: 732348**