

# Midlothian Federation of Community Councils

20 October, 2021

## ZOOM Meeting Minutes

### PRESENT

Ann Stewart-Kmicha (ASK)	Dalkeith (Treasurer)
Andrew Watt (AW)	Dalkeith
Connie Newbould (CN)	Damhead
Vicky Milton (VM)	Danderhall
Robin Barclay (RB)	Eskbank and Newbattle
Gina Temple (GT)	Loanhead
Robert Hogg (RH)	Mayfield and Easthouses (Chair)
Judy Thomson (JT)	Mayfield and Easthouses
Andrew Marshall (AM)	Newtongrange
Dougie West (DW)	Poltonhall
Jim Hiddleston (JH)	Roslin and Bilston
Peter Brouwer (PB)	Tynewater
Gordon Brown (GB)	Tynewater

### **Apologies**

Lorna Crook (LC)	Moorfoot
Paul McGrath (PMcG)	Moorfoot
Myrtle Pont (MP)	Tynewater

### IN ATTENDANCE

Paul Johnson (PJ)	Midlothian Council (Minutes)
Karen McGowan (KMcG)	Midlothian Council

## 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**

Add Andrew Marshall to the list of those present at the September meeting.  
Item 12 in AOCB. ASK was discussing Saltersgate Park. RB was discussing Sheriffhall South

### **Previous Minutes**

**Proposed:** Andrew Watt

**Seconded:** Judy Thomson

## **COMMUNITIES LIFELONG LEARNING AND EMPLOYABILITY UPDATE**

**Karen McGowan**

### **Community Learning and Development Plan**

- a. KMcG outlined information about the Midlothian CLD Plan and provided a CLLE operational update.
- b. The 3-year CLD Plan has been approved by Midlothian Community Planning Partnership.
- c. A diverse range of partners was involved in the development and creation of the plan.
- d. KMcG thanked Ann Stewart Kmicha for work she had undertaken on behalf of the Federation. Ann had made a valuable contribution.
- e. The CLD Plan can be found on the Council Website here:  
[www.midlothian.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/4295/midlothian\\_statutory\\_community\\_learning\\_and\\_development\\_plan\\_2021\\_to\\_2024\\_pdf.pdf](http://www.midlothian.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/4295/midlothian_statutory_community_learning_and_development_plan_2021_to_2024_pdf.pdf)
- f. Further information about the CPP structure can be found on page 6 of the document.
- g. Statistical information about the county can be found on page 13. This might be useful for anyone looking for funding.
- h. Information about CLLE activities can be found on page 14.
- i. The document highlights unmet need, opportunities, and challenges going forward. The action plan element highlights how these and other challenges will be addressed.
- j. One significant issue is that of Child Poverty where the rate in Midlothian is 23.5% but in Dalkeith is 35%.

### **Community Engagement Support**

- a. The number of staff now supporting community engagement and community groups has reduced from a FTE of 6 in 2015 to 2.8 as of 2019.
- b. During the same period, CLLE staff members have had a number of additional responsibilities including the Army Covenant, Asset Transfer, and Participation Requests.
- c. Although staff will continue to support Community Councils, it will not be possible for staff members to attend as many meetings as they have previously done and will attend meetings by invitation only.
- d. CLLE staff will still be available to work with Community Councils where specific requests for support are made.
- e. They will be available to provide support on governance and organisational matters and will work on a focussed, time limited basis where requested.

- f. CLLE wish to work with Community Councils and Federation members to develop new working and partnership arrangements that will make the most effective use of the time available and have maximum impact.
- g. CLLE Managers would welcome feedback on how these arrangements can be developed. MFCC members can contact Annette Lang ([annette.lang@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:annette.lang@midlothian.gov.uk)) or Karen McGowan ([karen.mcgowan@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:karen.mcgowan@midlothian.gov.uk)) in the first instance.
- h. CLLE will continue to provide support for the Federation of Community Councils and the MTRaP group and provide links with other Council departments where appropriate.

### **Neighbourhood Planning and Local Place Plans**

- a. A new post of Community Planning Support Worker has been created and is currently being advertised.
- b. It is anticipated that there will be a Neighbourhood Planning Review beginning in early 2022.
- c. This initiative will review the Neighbourhood Planning processes conducted in previous years and in addition, consider the role of CLLE, Midlothian Council, the third sector, and community partners in the Local Place Planning processes moving forward.
- d. The Council has three priority areas, Dalkeith/Woodburn, Mayfield and Easthouses and Gorebridge. Neighbourhood Plans in these areas will be the focus for CLLE support moving forward.
- e. This does not exclude other areas from developing their own neighbourhood plans

### **Responses / Questions**

- a. RH and other members noted that MFCC recognised and valued the support provided by CLLE to the MFCC and local community councils. On occasions when local community councils had gone through periods of difficulty, CLLE staff members had provided valuable support and advice and in some cases had enabled Community Councils to continue to function.
- b. RB (Eskbank and Newbattle) asked if there were still 'Link Officers' for Community Councils. KMcG indicated that link officers had been in place to support the valuable work that Community Councils had undertaken during the pandemic and these members of staff had now returned to their other duties. The member of CLLE staff (Brian McGuff) who had been working with Eskbank and Newbattle has been recalled to his duties with Police Scotland. Police Scotland will be seconding another member of staff as element of their support

for the Community Planning Partnership. This person will have a Midlothian wide remit and is likely to be in post in early 2022.

- c. JT (Mayfield) suggested the creation of a 'general' email that Community Councils could use to submit requests for support. KMcG highlighted that Community Councils could use the existing [cll@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:cll@midlothian.gov.uk) mailbox to submit requests for support. CLLE are keen to maintain the close working relationships that local CLLE staff members have with Community Councils.
- d. Andrew Watt (Dalkeith) observed that although he recognised that there was pressure on services, he is concerned that within Midlothian Council the importance of support for Community Councils and Neighbourhood Plans will be reduced. KMcG indicated that in the 3 priority areas there will be dedicated support for Local Outcome Improvement Plans and that in the other 13 areas there may be support but not to the same extent as in the past. Furthermore, under the new Planning Framework there will be greater support provided by the Planning department and other Council departments.
- e. There was concern from members that existing Neighbourhood Plans had not been taken into account when Planning decisions and other Midlothian Council initiatives had been implemented. Moving forward, particularly when implementing local place plans (LPP), Council departments will be required to take cognisance of existing plans. CLLE will be supporting planning colleagues in the development of LPP's.
- f. GB (Tynewater) and others highlighted their concerns about the current situation where council officers were still working from home and its perceived impact on service delivery. They also expressed concerns about the long delays in Senior Officers responding to enquires or requests for information. ASK (Dalkeith) highlighted that there are other organisations that could assist Community groups and Councils in carrying out their activities particularly around planning issues.
- g. RB (Eskbank and Newbattle) observed that he believed that Midlothian Council is lagging behind in the implementation of Local Place Plans.
- h. KMcG indicated that CLLE would be able to provide support to for MFCC members to engage with Midlothian Council to raise their concerns. It would be helpful for MFCC members to gather these concerns along with constructive suggestions / ideas on how they could be addressed.
- i. Chairperson Robert Hogg thanked KMcG for her input and responses to questions at the meeting. He also thanked CLLE and its staff members for their support provided to Community Councils and Community groups.

#### **Action**

**Judy will circulate a Doodle poll in order to organise a suitable date for MFCC members to meet to start the process**

### **3. COMMUNITY COUNCIL UPDATES**

#### **Dalkeith**

- a. Increased police presence is presently re-assuring business owners and residents in central Dalkeith, but questioned if sustainable during COP26.
- b. Dalkeith police custody unit was added on 6<sup>th</sup> October to the list of places from which specified hearings for participation by a detained person through live television link can take place.
- c. Aldi store at Thornybank was opened on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> September by Gemma Gibbons, judo Olympic silver medallist. Sheep trail information and three fibreglass sheep located there.
- d. Lidl store, going to be the largest in Scotland, will open on Thurs 28<sup>th</sup> October.
- e. TSB is now running a pop-up service within the meeting office at Dalkeith Arts Centre on Tuesdays. This involves supporting customers with their banking needs such as making payments, getting help with products and services, and assistance with bereavement. Does not handle cash.
- f. Woodburn Post Office within SPAR will close on 2<sup>nd</sup> November.
- g. Scaffolding still in Jarnac Court and may be there a while longer but promised that the new Christmas lights will go up – town’s traditional nativity scene may need to be re-located though. Santa will attend switch-on.
- h. Midlothian House car park will close on 1<sup>st</sup> November as demolition work starts for “Passivhaus” development. Will put more pressure on availability of car parking within central Dalkeith and cause a re-routing of the recommended safe route to King’s Park Primary School.
- i. Dalkeith Guerrilla Gardeners are working on a Hallowe’en display for Eskdail Court. One Dalkeith building will have window displays.
- j. Replacing our noticeboards, as present wooden ones are not suitable for outdoor use.
- k. Publicising our four publicly available defibrillators – King’s Park pavilion, Dalkeith library, Pettigrew’s Close, MARC building on Woodburn Road.
- l. Lack of response from some MC staff – e.g. roads regarding the inconsistencies between road markings and new bus stops at east end of High Street; parking regarding inconsistencies for disabled parking.
- m. Positive response from Veolia regarding a sewerage leak into River North Esk at Bridgend.
- n. Looking at a recruitment drive.
- o. Held a hybrid meeting in Dalkeith Library.
- p. Supporting music and coffee well-being events in Dalkeith Arts Centre.
- q. Exploring capacity of play equipment within Kings Park.
- r. Possible survey regarding road safety.
- s. Participating in Remembrance Day Wreath Laying Ceremony.

### **Damhead**

- a. Has been focusing on engaging with development of the A701 relief road.
- b. Members are of the opinion that there should not be a relief road but rather focus should be on improving the Hillend junction.
- c. They believe that an Active Travel strategy is required.
- d. Members are also concerned that footways in the area are in poor condition and are having a serious impact on pedestrians.
- e. Members are concerned that development is having a negative impact on the 'green belt'.

### **Eskbank and Newbattle**

- a. The Community Council has been holding its meetings in person
- b. This has been facilitated by staff from the Midlothian Campus of Edinburgh College.
- c. The college have provided excellent facilities for holding hybrid meetings allowing people to attend in person or online.
- d. Edinburgh College have been working well in engaging with the local community.

### **Loanhead**

- a. Our AGM will be a physical meeting this year in the Loanhead Miners' Welfare Club on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2021 at 7 pm. We have printed flyers to be distributed round the three residential parks (Straiton, New Pentland and Nivensknowe) to try to encourage some of their residents to participate so that we can have their input into the major developments planned for the area. We will be distributing posters and flyers over the next week to raise awareness. A couple of Councilors and the Secretary will be stepping down at the AGM.
- b. The plans for the Loanhead Heritage Trail are now well advanced and it is anticipated that the trail will be up and running in 2022.
- c. Most of our time is still taken up with planning and road safety issues. We attended a meeting with a representative from ASDA to discuss the Aldi planning application and joined in the A701 public consultation last month.

### **Mayfield and Easthouses**

- a. Is holding its first face-face meeting in November. The meeting will be held in the Church Hall.
- b. Looking to enable hybrid meetings and will be looking for equipment to facilitate them.

### **Moorfoot**

- a. Derek Harris from Skyrora gave us an update on the rocket-testing site being built at Broadlaw Quarry. The site is nearing completion, hoping to start operating in November and an open day is planned for before this. He gave details of how test dates would be communicated to us, one to two weeks in advance, encouraging us to share these locally. There will be a security guard on site at all times when it is not otherwise populated. He is already in communication with local schools to get them involved.
- b. A representative from Energie Kontor gave a presentation on a proposed re-application to build wind turbines at Wull Muir near Heriot, in Scottish Borders. The previous application had been refused both at Borders level and again on appeal. The main reason for refusal was the proximity to, and visibility of the turbines on, the escarpment in a prominent position overlooking Midlothian. The re-design addresses these problems by moving the eight turbines further downhill, on the Borders side. They will however be taller (135m). The company is confident that the new proposal will be looked upon favourably. The next step will be public engagement. The CC was keen that there should be a face-to-face presentation in the village hall at N Middleton with a representative present to answer questions.

### **Newtongrange**

- a. The September digital NCC meeting captured community highlights and on-going issues.
- b. Welfare Park improvements also discussed - new LED lighting throughout. £1k grant received to refurbish tennis courts.
- c. Latest developments for Community Development Trust - food bank with fruit & veg.
- d. Rollout of the second issue of the Newtongrange Flyer and Police and Councillor Report tabled.
- e. Aim to hold AGM soon.

### **Poltonhall**

- a. Recent meetings have not been quorate and therefore the Community Council has not been able to vote on the motion to merge with Bonnyrigg and Lasswade Community Council.
- b. Nevertheless in preparation for the merger Community Councillor from both groups have attended each other's meetings.
- c. DW anticipates that the merger will be delayed until early 2022.

## Tynewater

- a. We have continued to set up working relationships between Midlothian Council Housing department, the Dog Warden, and Police Scotland Community Policing team as we address the issue of anti-social behaviour that has arisen in Tynewater.
- b. We continue to try to secure a meeting with Head of Planning.
- c. The issue of noise pollution from an event at Vogrie has arisen. With Midlothian's stated aim of developing this site as an 'entertainment venue' perhaps, this is an area that concerns other Community Councils.
- d. Local people are concerned that there is not plan in place for measuring noise levels at music events in Vogrie Park. Have requested but have not received and request for information from Midlothian Council.

## **5. EDINBURGH AIRPORT NOISE BOARD**

- a. See report previously circulated

## **6. CARE FOR PEOPLE MEETING**

- a. Last meeting was beginning of October
- b. Covid Testing Kits can be requested and distributed for use by community based groups
- c. Winter Planning was discussed.
- d. JT raised issues of grit bins (new bins, location of existing bins etc
- e. Did raise question about Care Homes but JT was asked to provide more specific question

**Action – JT to send to Community Councils.**

## **7. MFCC ZOOM LICENSE AND BOOKING OF EVENTS**

- a. PJ noted that despite booking the events via the Federation booking procedures, two of the last three MTRaP meetings had been ended prematurely by a Community Council logging on and ending the MTRaP meeting.

**Action: Those booking events via the Federation Zoom account to ensure that they use the two-stage booking process when organising meetings (see booking procedure attached)**

## **8. LIVE STREAMING OF MIDLOTHIAN COUNCIL MEETINGS**

- a. ASK (Dalkeith) noted that she had received assurances from Jackie Dougall that she would investigate the reason why meetings had not been available. Midlothian Council will be rectifying the problem as soon as they are able to. There have been some technical issues in the past and the current system needed



to be checked. Jackie Dougall indicated that she would try to ensure that all meetings are available on You Tube and that, in future any member of the public who wishes to access Council and Planning meetings will be able to do so.

- b. JT (Mayfield and Easthouses) expressed her dissatisfaction at the way that Midlothian Council had responded to the complaint that she had made when highlighting issues involved in resolving this issue. JT has submitted a formal complaint, which she considered had been dealt with inadequately. JT indicated that she is now going to submit a stage 2 complaint.
- c. AW proposed that if these complaints were not resolved satisfactorily then MFCC should contact the Ombudsman.

## **9. COMMUNITY PLANNING**

- a. There had been an emergency meeting to discuss COVID and wider planning matters
- b. Midlothian Council believes that it has the resources to deal with current levels of infections
- c. The National Care Service for Scotland – Consultation has been published. Copies can be downloaded here:  
[www.gov.scot/publications/national-care-service-scotland-consultation/](http://www.gov.scot/publications/national-care-service-scotland-consultation/)
- d. Rebecca Lewis has taken up the role Climate Change Champion
- e. ASK will circulate documents from the meeting

## **10. PLANNING**

- a. JT (Mayfield) noted that a planning application has been made for the development of a Crematorium.
- b. RH (Chair) highlighted the need for Community Councils to maintain an awareness of the planning application submissions in their local areas.

## 11. CENSUS – MARCH 2022

- a. RH (Chair) noted that there will be a Census in March 2022 and that it is important that all groups in the County should be able to participate.
- b. Webinars have been organised to support the participation of groups and individuals.

Weds', 3 November 2021	11:00 – 11:30	Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME)	<a href="#">Click here to register for event</a>
Weds', 10 November 2021	14:00 – 14:30	Veterans	<a href="#">Click here to register for event</a>
Weds', 17 November 2021	11:00 – 11:30	Older people	<a href="#">Click here to register for event</a>
Weds', 24 November 2021	11:00 – 11:30	Digitally excluded/High deprivation	<a href="#">Click here to register for event</a>
Weds', 1 December 2021	11:00 – 11:30	Gaelic Speakers	<a href="#">Click here to register for event</a>
Weds', 8 December 2021	11:00 – 11:30	People with disabilities	<a href="#">Click here to register for event</a>
Weds', 15 December 2021	11:00 – 11:30	Rural areas and islands	<a href="#">Click here to register for event</a>
Weds', 12 January 2022	11:00 – 11:30	LGBTI	<a href="#">Click here to register for event</a>
Weds', 19 January 2022	11:00 – 11:30	Young people not living at home	<a href="#">Click here to register for event</a>

## 12. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

- a. ASK (Dalkeith) highlighted the recent successful Midlothian Outdoor Festival organised by the Ranger Service. There had been a long weekend of walks around the county, taking in the countryside, towns, and farmland.

## 13. MIDLOTHIAN TRAFFIC ROADS & PATHS

- a. Date of next meeting is 15 November, 18.00 – 19.30
- b. Contact PJ (Midlothian Council) if your community councillors wish to attend.

## 14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING - WEDS' 17 NOVEMBER, 7.00 – 9.00, Zoom

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87879800505?pwd=OGU3OWV3akdnRys1a3JmRW5rNmduZ09>

**Meeting ID:** 878 7980 0505

**Passcode:** 438349