

Midlothian Federation of Community Councils

20th April 2022

ZOOM meeting Minutes

Present:

Dianne Easton (DE)	Bonnyrigg
Ann Stewart-Kmicha (ASK)	Dalkeith (Treasurer)
Andrew Watt (AW)	Dalkeith
Joanne Gilles (JG)	Damhead
Daya Feldwick (DF)	Loanhead
Judy Thomson (JT)	Mayfield & Easthouses
Robert Hogg (RH)	Mayfield & Easthouses (Chair)
Paul McGrath (PMcG)	Moorfoot
Dougie West (DW)	Poltonhall & Hopefield
Gordon Brown (GB)	Tynewater
Lesley Kelly (LK)	Midlothian Voluntary Action
Jill Bunyan (JB)	Midlothian Voluntary Action
Natalie Thomson (NT)	Midlothian Voluntary Action
Julian Holbrook (JH)	Midlothian Climate Action

Apologies:

Jim Hiddleston	Roslin & Bilston
Robin Barclay	Eskbank and Newbattle
Edith Cameron	Rosewell
Caroline Brown	Howgate
Myrtle Pont	Tynewater

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

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

2. Presentation from MVA – 20 Minute Neighbourhoods

- i. MVA have successfully applied for funding to engage a Consultant to work with three communities to develop Climate Action Plans.
- ii. JB (MVA), lead contact for the project, highlighted that the aim would be to develop long-term action plans.
- iii. Community Engagement will be a key element in the process. These plans will seek to address climate emergency issues in their area, working with local communities to discuss what 'climate emergency' means to them. The action plans will be generated because of the engagement.
- iv. The end date of the project is anticipated to be February 2023. The Climate Action Plans will feed into the Local Development Plans and other local authority structures.
- v. The brief for the project is in the process of being finalised and it is anticipated that the Consultant will be appointed by the end of June.
- vi. Anticipated that 20 Minute Neighbourhood activities will link to Climate Action Plans
- vii. JH (MCCAN) noted that it would allow communities the time to consider what adverse changes in the climate will mean to them. He suggested that it would be a beneficial process, which will support increased awareness of climate changes and its impact on Midlothian and its local communities.
- viii. MVA is seeking suggestions from MFCC members as to which communities would take part in the project.
- ix. MVA are seeking three communities to participate – could be one from a rural community, one from an urban community and 1 other.
- x. LK (MVA) highlighted that it would be important to work with communities that *want* to participate in the project
- xi. Damhead may want to get involved

Action: MFCC members to ask communities if they wish to be involved.

3. Previous Minutes (March) Approval & Matters Arising

Proposed by: Robert Hogg

Seconded by: Judy Thomson

- i. Chairperson (RH) thanked ASK (Dalkeith) and DF (Loanhead) for their work on the National Planning Framework 4 response submitted on behalf of the Federation, particularly in view of the short timescale available.
- ii. RH noted that Gorebridge Community Council had experienced some difficulties in retaining and recruiting Community Council members. Gorebridge will be

holding an AGM in May, Cath McGill will continue to support the Community Council. RH highlighted that all Community Councils benefit from experience Community Councillor and wished Gorebridge the best.

Participatory Budgeting

- i. Midlothian Council has committed to spending 1% of its Capital Budget through a 'Mainstreaming' participatory budgeting process.
- ii. As requested by the Chairperson, PJ has invited Katey Tabner (Policy Manager - Participatory Budgeting | COSLA) to the May meeting of the Federation.

Environmental Funds

- i. RH had been in contact with Annette Lang (Group Service Manager Community Planning Partnership and Communities Lifelong Learning and Employability) to seek further information about the policy.
 - a. How much environmental fund money was given to Local councillors over last two years each to help fund community projects in their wards?
Allocations to each ward member up to May 22 total £50k per member
 - b. What were the criteria that the Councillors had to use in granting funding?
Fund a capital purchase by Council or by third party group and for latter meet the requirements of following the public pound
 - c. Was there a report done on how the money was spent/distributed throughout the wards if so can we get sight of it? – *No report*
 - d. What were the projects that funds were spent in by local councillors?
There are circa 65 separate projects that ward members have committed funds to across the 6 wards
 - e. Is there any funding left still to be spent by?
Some councillors have not yet committed all funding, as at 21/3 £313k of £900k remains uncommitted.

Update: Further information about expenditure of Elected member's

Environmental Funds can be found here: [Members' Environmental Funds | Members' Environmental Funds - summary of spending as at 18 April 2022 \(Excel\) \(midlothian.gov.uk\)](#)

4. COMMUNITY COUNCIL UPDATES

Bonnyrigg and Lasswade

- i. Members ran a Facebook campaign advertising the AGM and advertising the benefits of getting involved in the Community Council. Three residents have expressed interest.
- ii. The AGM will be held on 21 April. The accounts have been examined by JT (Mayfield and Easthouses).
- iii. The Bonnyrigg Bypass [also known as the Distributor Road] is currently closed at the A7 end. Traffic is being diverted through Bonnyrigg and parking restrictions are in place on the diverted route. This is due to last for three weeks from 18 April.
- iv. The Community Council is still meeting over Zoom but looking at face to face meetings. Getting premises is an issue. Some residents replied to our Facebook posts but do not want to join meetings over Zoom.

Damhead

- i. AGM and elections took place on 4th April - resulted in five elected members, which means there is a level of resilience for the Community Council during the coming period
- ii. No information yet on chosen route for A701 re-alignment, which, irrespective of preferred route, will ameliorate significant amount of 'green belt' and green spaces as well as dividing a long standing community
- iii. Community litter pick at the weekend went well with about 70 bags of rubbish collected, including clearance of garden waste fly tipped in local burn. Fly tipping and littering continues to be significant issue.
- iv. OpenReach have indicated whole community should have access to superfast fibre broadband by end of this year, but no implementation plan details are available yet.

Howgate

- i. There has been no response from the Church of Scotland on whether the church and glebe have actually been sold.
- ii. Our meetings have been hampered very much by COVID and the availability of members. However, we are actively recruiting new members. We intend to hold a meeting in April.

Loanhead

- i. The Community Council is still looking to recruit a Secretary for the Community Council.
- ii. Potholes and litter from the Industrial estate are become an issue.

Action: PJ advised that these concerns could be reported via the Midlothian Council website – see links below. PJ also suggested that photographs could be taken and forwarded with the reports.

Potholes - *Report problems with roads and streets - Midlothian Council*

Litter - *Street cleansing service request / Instructions (midlothian.gov.uk)*

Poltonhall

- i. Merger with Bonnyrigg Community Council.
The merger will now need to wait until after the elections in May. It is anticipated that the merger will be discussed at the first full Council meeting to be held after the election on 5 May.

Mayfield and Easthouses

- i. New building developments and planning applications continue to take up a lot of time for members of the Community Council.

Moorfoot

- i. **Gladhouse Reservoir and problems with parking because of vastly increased visitor numbers:**
Midlothian has introduced a temporary parking restriction along parts of the reservoir to allow access for emergency vehicles. While there is still some limited parking available, this will not cope with the numbers seen recently. The Gladhouse working party will be interested to see how the Council deals with the problem of excess cars and whether the restrictions in place can have the desired effect.
- ii. **Village Notice Boards:** Two of our village boards are in a poor state and the CC is looking for help with funding to repair or erect new boards.
- iii. **Temple** has Open Gardens on 23rd April Full details on scotlandsgardens.org
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Rosewell

- i. Held our first face-to-face meeting, 19 attended. Police did not attend which is an issue as there has been a lot of youth vandalism and our woodland classroom toilet was burned to the ground, graffiti in the village and large groups of threatening youths.
 - ii. Crown Estate Scotland is still gathering opinions on the use of the 1300-hectare Whitehill Estate land.
 - iii. There will be Book sale and refreshments in the Parish church hall on Saturday 23rd from 9.30-11.30.
 - iv. A small sub group plan to fundraise for a Miners Memorial plaque and sculpture.
 - v. Volunteer gardening group planning a clean up of our burn on 30th April and have been attending to some council flowerbeds. Got charity funding to re-garden an area of the council owned public park.
- 5. Midlothian Communities Climate Action Network (MCCAN) - Julian Holbrook**
- i. JH (MCCAN) Highlighted that anyone can get involved and there is an opportunity for anyone to sign up to get involved and sign up to the Network.
See further information here:
Email: midlothianclimateaction@gmail.com
Website: <https://midlothianclimateaction.wordpress.com/about/>
- 6. MFCC RESPONSE TO SHERIFFHALL GRADE SEPARATION CONSULTATION**
- i. There had been a discussion about the matter at the Midlothian Traffic Roads and Paths group on 4 April. PJ had subsequently circulated the minutes of the MTRaP meeting to MFCC members. There was also a wide-ranging discussion about the submission (made in January 2020) of an objection to the project. MFCC members noted that they would have wished to see the objection before it was submitted. Some of those present at the meeting observed that the grade separation is long overdue.
 - ii. There was agreement that, in order to have thorough discussion about the next steps, a meeting would be held on Wednesday 27 April.
Action: AW to set up the link to the Zoom meeting with an invite to all MFCC members (and local Community Council members) will be sent out. PJ will also circulate to MTRaP members.

7. ALIGNING COMMUNITY COUNCIL AGM'S TO THE SAME MONTH

- i. In view of the limited number of Community Councils represented at the meeting, there was agreement that a considered discussion would not be representative of the views of Community Councils across the county. PJ will create a Survey Monkey questionnaire in order to elicit ideas about the proposal.

8. EDINBURGH AIRPORT NOISE BOARD

- i. AW will circulate the latest report.

9. CARE FOR PEOPLE

- i. Main focus of the group is on the support of Ukrainian refugees

Action: JT will circulate meeting minutes

10. NOTICE BOARD REPLACEMENT – MOORFOOT COMMUNITY COUNCIL

- i. There was no representation from Moorfoot Community Council meeting. Discussion will be postponed to a future meeting.

11. COMMUNITY PLANNING

- i. Town Centre Action Plan will be discussed at the next meeting
- ii. Single Midlothian Plan will be ratified at the June meeting.

12. PLANNING

- i. The chairperson (RH) highlighted that local community councils would be well advised to keep a note of proposed planning developments and applications in order that responses can be made as quickly and effectively as possible.

13. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

- i. It will be important to keep environmental issues prominent on agendas to ensure that that the issues can be addressed as they arise.
- ii. Those present also highlighted the scarcity of access to Vehicle Electric Charging points in the county. They noted that in order to increase use of electric vehicles many more are required to be installed.

14. INFRASTRUCTURE

- i. Damhead Community Council members are concerned about the proposed routes of the A701 road and the impact on the community. PJ has been asked to seek an update on the latest proposals.
- ii. Those present highlighted the requirement for a strategy for Broadband improvement or provision in the county.

15. MIDLOTHIAN TRAFFIC ROAD AND PATHS

- i. ASK (Dalkeith) highlighted that Midlothian Council officers, Alan Heatley (Roads Networks and Structures Manager) and Wayne Clark (Operations and Asset Manager Roads) have been very supportive of the work of the group.
- ii. Minutes of the MTRaP April meeting were circulated to MFCC members on 19 April.

16. A.O.C.B.

i. Police Scotland Contact with Community Councils

Some of those present noted that as there had been changes to personnel, they were uncertain of who their local community officer now is.

PJ highlighted that a document outlining the Police Scotland Command structure for Midlothian had been circulated in May 2021. In view of the comments made at the meeting, he would contact local officers again to seek a current update.

Action: PJ to contact Police Scotland re updating the names and contact details of local community police officers.

- ii. **Hustings for the Midlothian East ward** will held on Friday 29 April in St John's and King's park Church in Dalkeith. The event will organised and hosted by Eskbank and Newbattle Community Council in partnership with Midlothian View.

iii. Strategy for Sports Provision

GB (Tynewater) noted that there does not appear to be a strategy for sports provision in Midlothian. Although there was some provision for some sports (such as Football and Rugby), provision for other sports is also required.

17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING 18th May 2022, 7-9PM (ZOOM)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84560269682?pwd=NFIQdFIWQXpUWVVRwNGIHNIJkaEI1UT09>

Meeting ID: 845 6026 9682

Passcode: 887633