

Midlothian Federation of Community Councils

18 May 2022

ZOOM meeting Minutes

Present:

Jammy Gracoeiro (JC)	Bonnyrigg
Ann Stewart-Kmicha (ASK)	Dalkeith (Treasurer)
Andrew Watt (AW)	Dalkeith
Joanne Gilles (JG)	Damhead
Brian Farrell (BF)	Eskbank and Newbattle
Cath McGill (CMcG)	Gorebridge
Daya Feldwick (DF)	Loanhead
Judy Thomson (JT)	Mayfield & Easthouses
Robert Hogg (RH)	Mayfield & Easthouses (Chair)
Paul McGrath (PMcG)	Moorfoot
Jim Hiddleston (JH)	Roslin and Bilston
John Aitchison (JA)	Poltonhall & Hopefield
Jan Irvine (JI)	Poltonhall & Hopefield
Myrtle Pont (MP)	Tynewater

Apologies:

Dianne Easton	Bonnyrigg
Claire Ross	Danderhall
Robin Barclay	Eskbank and Newbattle
Dougie West	Poltonhall
Edith Cameron	Rosewell
Gordon Brown	Tynewater

In Attendance

Katey Tabner	COSLA - Policy Manager - Participatory Budgeting
Paul Johnson	Midlothian Council – Communities & Lifelong Learning

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

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

2. KATEY TABNER (COSLA) – MAINSTREAMING PB

An overview of the Mainstreaming Participatory Budgeting process was presented.

- There has been agreement that 1% of local authority budgets (excluding council tax) will be subject to Participatory Budgeting as a process for expenditure.
- Amount of expenditure allocated by LA's - only the aggregate Scotland wide amount is published.
- There is not one defined model for the way that PB processes are undertaken.
- Mainstream PB enables the direct participation of citizens' voices in local financial decision making, resource allocation and service design.
- This moves beyond allocating individual budgets, also known as small grants PB, or identifying separate budgets for community engagement and consultation, towards mainstreaming PB within decisions on the allocation of existing resources across all council services.
- It can be used alongside other models of community engagement as part of strategic approach to advancing participatory democracy alongside representative democracy and public sector reform.
- There are also several wider benefits to local democracy associated with running mainstream participatory budgeting. It can help improve the democratic process by widening participation and re-invigorating the role of local authorities, local councillors, and civil society.
- It can contribute to the effectiveness of public spending by improving the way money is invested by increasing the knowledge available to the local authority when undertaking service planning.
- KT noted that there isn't one model for carrying out PB processes.
- They reflect the capacity of the community to engage. However work will be undertaken with communities, their groups and members to support community engagement when processes are undertaken.
- There is recognition that not everyone will participate.
- Dialogue and deliberation to elicit the community's wishes and ideas are important.
- A range of voting methods can be used; online electronic voting, voting event, balloting, social media can all play a part.
- RH thanked KT for her presentation.

Action: Presentation from KT to be circulated by PJ when available

3. PREVIOUS MINUTES (APRIL) APPROVAL & MATTERS ARISING

i Climate Action Plan Project

JG (Damhead) noted the interest of Damhead Community Council in being involved in the project. Jill Bunyan (MVA) will be attending the June 6 meeting to provide further information.

MVA are also looking for another location to participate in the project.

ii Sheriffhall Grade Separation project

Meeting notes will be circulated once they have been received from AECOM

A formal vote to withdraw the objection submitted on behalf of MFCC was taken and agreed.

iii Elected Members Environmental Funds

PJ had circulated a link (3 May) to the report on spending. See document here [Members Environmental Fund Expenditure](#)

A brief discussion was held, noting that there was still a substantial amount of funding remained unspent.

DF (Loanhead) highlighted that, in the Penicuik area, £93,000 remained unspent.

iv Police Scotland Command Structure.

PJ had contacted Police Scotland for an update to the document circulated in May 2021. At the point of the meeting there were still changes being made to the personnel listed in the document. However it is anticipated that the information will be finalised before the next MFCC meeting.

Action: PJ to circulate the updated document to MFCC members once received.

Proposed by: Joanne Gilles

Seconded by: Judy Thomson

4. COMMUNITY COUNCIL UPDATES

Damhead

- i The most pressing issue for Damhead and District (DDCC) during the coming period will be proposals for the A701 relief road. The preferred route has now been identified and made public, with engagement with affected property and landowners due to take place this week. In addition to dividing our community, the impact on green spaces for the benefit of enabling further housing development and the saving of 3.5 minutes in travel time is colossal.

Further info on the preferred route (Option C) is available at

<https://www.a701reliefroad.co.uk/>

Eskbank and Newbattle

- i We (ENCC) have been meeting at our regular venue in Edinburgh College, Midlothian Campus (in our ward) since late 2021, except for January when the College restricted off-campus access due to the Omicron outbreak of Covid-19 when we had to resort to Zoom. Our meetings are well supported by our Midlothian councillors and we met our newly elected representatives at our May meeting. We received a Police Scotland report in May (we ask that these be submitted quarterly) but the Community Officers were unable to attend this meeting. However we also received an in person briefing on various initiatives from Sgt Michele Lindsay of the Community Policing Team (that and the regular report will be published in the Agendas/Minutes section of our website).
- ii There are several Planning applications of interest in train, some to be considered by the LRB, but nothing new of special interest in recent weeks. We are concerned that unlike appeals reviewed by the Reporter where policy within Regional and Local Plans are interpreted and applied, the LRB comprised of elected councillors may overturn policy. Since our comment and any objections, which we hope are considered, are based on those policies we hope policy will be adhered to or at least interpreted according to community wishes, and not overturned by some maverick councillor creating exceptions to favour some applicants - or that any such attempts will not be supported in the majority by other councillors on the LRB.
- iii We aim to produce a newsletter (delayed because of Covid) by the summer break - to be distributed door-to-door and published on our website.

Gorebridge

- i Gorebridge AGM has taken place. Now have 14 members. Police Scotland officer in attendance

Loanhead

- i. A Heritage Trail has been developed

Moorfoot

- i. Our May meeting held in N. Middleton village hall was attended by Michele Lindsay, the Community Sergeant at Dalkeith. This allowed a very useful conversation, updating her on local issues such as speeding through the villages and the danger to primary school pupils.
- ii. We also spoke of anti-social behaviour of cyclists in Carrington taking over the village green.
- iii. Other business of the evening was largely Moorfoot 'in-house' matters.

Financial Support for renewing Community Noticeboard

- i A request was made on behalf of the Community Council for financial support to renew the Noticeboard.
- ii ASK noted that £570 would be available from MFCC funds to either renew or repair noticeboards.
- iii BF (ENCC) provided a link to a site where ENCC had purchased a noticeboard.
[WeatherShield Headline Wall Mounted Outdoor Sign](#)

Action: Moorfoot Community Council members to contact ASK with details of request for funding.

Poltonhall

- i Now holding meetings face-face. Police Scotland officer in attendance.
- ii Merger with Bonnyrigg and Lasswade. Anticipated that it will be discussed and approved at the June meeting of Midlothian Council.

Rosewell

- i Had a successful book sale in the Village Hall.
- ii Police community officers are engaging at a couple of 'drop-ins' sessions in the village.
- iii Co-ordinated a clean-up of the Shiel Burn and got 2 skip worths' of rubbish out of the river.
- iv Have been approached by another Pharmacist who wants to try the application process to get a pharmacy in Rosewell again. Any feedback from other local Community Council areas about how their own pharmacy provision has changed in the last 2 years - might help give weight to his application.
- v ASK suggested that someone from the Health Integration Board (previously Hamish Reid) be invited to a MFCC meeting.
- vi Wondered about applying for trees from the Woodland Trust. We've not heard about any trees for the Queens Jubilee, just keep getting advertising emails for expensive plaques/ flags/ paraphernalia etc.

Tynewater

- i. Has returned to having face-face meetings

5. EDINBURGH AIRPORT NOISE BOARD

- i AW had circulated the latest report (20 May). Members can email Andrew if they have questions relating to the report.
- ii MFCC members are encouraged to complete the survey.
- iii AW highlighted the Edinburgh Airport Consultative Committee, noting that Councillor Russell Imrie is Midlothian's representative. Further information about the work of the committee can be found here: [Edinburgh Airport Consultative Committee | Edinburgh Airport](#)

6 MFCC RESPONSE TO CLLE (OCTOBER 2021) UPDATE

- i JT (Mayfield) has circulated a document to MFCC members. As there were no further comments there was agreement that the response could be forwarded to CLLE.
- ii RH thanked JT and ASK for their work on this.

7. CARE FOR PEOPLE MEETING

- i JT noted that the main focus of the group at the moment is supporting Ukrainian families.

Action: JT to circulate notes of the Care for People meeting

8. COMMUNITY PLANNING

- i. Nothing to report

9. MIDLOTHIAN TRAFFIC ROADS AND PATHS

Sheriffhall Grade Separation Consultation

- i ASK reported that 2 meetings had been held. One with MTRaP members in preparation for the subsequent meeting and then one with AECOM and Transport Scotland.
- ii The meeting had been very positive and the concerns held by MTRaP had been addressed by the Grade Separation project team.
- iii Objections raised on behalf of MTRaP had been withdrawn and are now described as 'concerns'.
- iv AECOM and Transport Scotland had provided in depth responses to the questions raised by MTRaP members.

- v It would appear that a great deal of work on environmental issues and concerns had been undertaken.
- vi Those people representing MTRaP had agreed that the group would circulate information when requested.
- vii A note of the meeting (taken by AECOM) will be forwarded to ASK who will circulate to MFCC members when available.
- viii There is likely to be a Public Local Enquiry later on in the year
- ix RH (Mayfield and Easthouses) thanked the MTRaP sub-group for their work on this matter.

Action: PJ to circulate notes from May MTRaP meeting

10. A.O.C.B.

i. MFCC Responses to Consultation

Agreement that responses to consultations, made on behalf of MFCC, will be submitted by the Chairperson using the Chairperson's Federation Gmail account.

ii. Esk Valley Trust

There was a discussion as to whether MFCC would join. Agreement that individual Community Councils could join if they so wished.

iii. MFCC Bank Account

ASK highlighted that it will be necessary to change the Bank Account to another provider.

iv. Education Scotland Inspection

ASK noted that a range of groups (including Community Councils) joined a Thematic Inspection focus group. The feedback had been very positive highlighting that groups had effectively worked in partnership to support communities across the county.

v. Dalkeith Town Centre

Local communities are encouraged to contribute to the consultation.

Information about consultations can be found here:

<https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/Have-Your-Say-Dalkeith>

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING 15th June 2022, 7 - 9PM (ZOOM)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84379599097?pwd=Wi9VK3hVeTk2WXEvcG1RMEluZ0g0dz09>

Meeting ID: 843 7959 9097

Passcode: 712986