

# Midlothian Federation of Community Councils

16 November 2022

## ZOOM meeting Minutes

### Present:

Douglas West (DW)	Bonnyrigg and District
Ann Stewart-Kmicha (ASK)	Dalkeith (Treasurer)
Andrew Watt (AW)	Dalkeith
Ailsa Carlisle (AC)	Damhead
Brian Farrell (BF)	Eskbank and Newbattle
Ross McEwen (RMcE)	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
Gordon Brown (GB)	Tynewater

### In Attendance

Paul Johnson (PJ)	Midlothian Council - Communities & Lifelong Learning
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### Apologies

Myrtle Pont (MP)	Tynewater
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## 1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Robert welcomed Community Councillors to the meeting.

## PREVIOUS MINUTES (OCTOBER) APPROVAL & MATTERS ARISING

**Moved:** Andrew Watt (Dalkeith)

**Seconded:** Judy Thomson (Mayfield and Easthouses)

## 2. LOCAL COMMUNITY COUNCIL UPDATES

### Bonnyrigg and District

- i BDCC has held its second meeting.
- ii Now has a full complement of 20 members.
- iii Local MSP attended the last meeting.
- iv An announcement re the Sheriffhall grade separation project is expected in the coming weeks. BDCC was informed that cycling groups are amongst the groups that have submitted objections that may lead to a delay in the project commencing.

### **Eskbank and Newbattle**

- i** Development – variation on planning consent has been granted.
- ii** Members of ENCC have expressed their concerns and have shared them with local elected members.
- iii** Peter Arnsdorf (Midlothian Council Senior Manager Planning Sustainable Growth and Investment) has agreed to attend a meeting to discuss this planning concern.
- iv** ENCC will be undertaking a community engagement exercise to ascertain resident's views about roads that join at the Justinlees roundabout
- v** Funding for a defibrillator to be sited in Newbattle Abbey Crescent area has been awarded.

### **Gorebridge and District**

- i** Cath McGill has resigned as Chairperson. A new Chairperson has been elected.
- ii** GDCC is currently working on revising administration systems.
- iii** Strengthening connections with local community based groups and organisations.
- iv** GDCC has benefitted greatly from the support of CLLE Worker Gillian Cousin.
- v** 30 people attended the November meeting.
- vi** GDCC held a successful Remembrance Day parade.
- iv** On 24 November 2022, 17:30 - 19:30, Council Officers are attending a meeting to discuss and seek views on the provision of Education provision in the area.

### **Loanhead**

- i** Has held the 2022 Annual General Meeting.
- ii** Community Council membership has increased.
- iii** Members do not want the month of future AGM's to be changed.

### **Mayfield and Easthouses**

- i** There are currently 7 planning applications under consideration, two new schools, and five applications for housing developments.

## Tynewater

- i The Midlothian Community Planning Conference was a great opportunity for Networking and useful contacts were made. Participants are looking forward to a summary of the various breakout sessions.
- ii Tynewater CC has been considering the 20 mph speed consultation. Our recommendations for improved access for those without email capacity and for more generalised responses have been forwarded to our Midlothian Councillors.
- iii Christmas Lighting will be switched on 24 November. TWCC has secured sponsorship from local businesses.
- iv A Pedestrian Crossing has been installed in Pathhead.

### **3. ATTENDANCE OF MICHELLE STRONG (EDUCATION CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER)**

- i Michelle Strong has agreed to attend the MFCC AGM in December.
- ii Those present agreed that to assist with preparation, they would forward questions / requests for information to PJ (Midlothian Council) by **Wednesday 7 December**.

**Action: MFCC members to send questions/ requests for information to PJ**

### **4. MIDLOTHIAN COUNCIL MAINSTREAM PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING**

- i ASK (Dalkeith) provided feedback on the discussion at the Midlothian Council meeting held on 15 November, highlighting that there had been a division in opinion about PB processes. A video recording of the meeting can be accessed here: [Meetings and minutes | Midlothian Council](#)
- ii Local authorities in Scotland have agreed that at least 1% of council budgets, made up of revenue and capital expenditure, would be allocated to PB initiatives.
- iii PJ highlighted that in 'Mainstream' Participatory Budgeting initiatives, local communities are invited to have a direct say in how public money is spent and involves existing departmental budgets.
- iv Currently, Midlothian Council is working to develop a programme and identify opportunities for expenditure of its budgets using a PB process. MFCC members will be invited to join a meeting to discuss proposals.
- v Local Elected Member's 'Environmental Budgets' are not currently distributed using a PB process. ASK highlighted there is updated information (September 2022), relating to the expenditure of these budgets. [Members' Environmental Funds](#)

## 5. FEEDBACK ON SURVEY MONKEY RESULTS (CC TRAINING & AGM ALIGNMENT)

- i PJ thanked MFCC and local community Council members for their participation in the 2 surveys.
- ii Summaries of the survey results had been circulated to MFCC members on 19 October and 14 November.

### **Community Councillor Training**

- iii **Topics for Training** - A wide range of topics for training had been submitted with 'Local Community Engagement' and the 'Role of Office Bearers' having the highest number.
- iv **Time of training** – Weekday evening was seen to be the best time for training events to be undertaken.
- v The information provided in the survey will inform the training programme for the next year.
- vi **Training Event** - A face-face training event for Community Councillors is planned for **Saturday, 25 March** with the venue likely to be Lasswade High School.

### **Alignment of Annual General Meeting and elections**

- i In many authorities in Scotland, Community Council elections and AGMs are held at the same time. In these authorities the perceived benefit is:
  - Clarity about the Community Council election processes including the nomination and election of new Community Councillors.
  - Clarity about the financial year of each Community Council.
  - Opportunity for concerted promotion of the role of Community Councils
  - Opportunity to provide induction training for newly elected Community Councillors.
  - Opportunity to provide training for newly elected Office Bearers or those Office Bearers who are changing roles within their Community Council.

- ii After discussion at previous MFCC meetings, a survey was conducted to gather the views of Community Councillors in Midlothian.
  - Although there was some favourable reaction, overall, Midlothian Community Councillors were not in favour to the proposal.
  - A wide-ranging discussion was held at the meeting. There was agreement that Community Councils in favour of the proposal may wish to align AGM and Election dates.
  - A decision was taken at the meeting that the proposal for a Midlothian-wide alignment of AGM's and Elections would not be followed.

## **6. EDINBURGH AIRPORT NOISE BOARD**

- i AW (Dalkeith) had circulated the November report before the meeting.
- ii AW highlighted that it is important for Midlothian residents to continue to submit information about excessive noise when aircraft are flying over Midlothian.

## **7. CARE FOR PEOPLE MEETING**

- i JT (Mayfield and Easthouses) circulated the minutes of the October meeting on 16 November.

## **8. COMMUNITY PLANNING**

- i CPP Day – 8 November.
  - ASK provided feedback on the event.
  - The Conference had been fully booked but 28 places that had been booked, had not been taken up.
  - The presentation made by young people had been excellent although the sound quality hadn't been very good
  - The 'breakout' sessions had been very good and led to some useful discussion and information sharing. Ask noted that these sessions could have been lasted longer.
- ii GB (Tynewater) and ASK have met with Community Planning Working group members to discuss links between MFCC and the Community Planning Partnership.

## **9. PLANNING**

- i JT highlighted that an application had been made for a mobile catering van to be able to be sited in Mayfield Park. There are concerns that if this were

permitted in one park this would create a precedent leading to similar applications being made to do this in other public parks in Midlothian.

#### **10. GRIT BINS**

- i The 2022-2023 Winter Service Policy and Operational Plan is being circulated. Information about Winter Service provision and the Plan can be found here [Our winter service | Winter on Midlothian roads | Midlothian Council](#)

#### **11. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES**

- i A Midlothian Climate Action Group is being formed.
- ii DF (Loanhead) proposed that she is prepared to be the representative for MFCC at the group.

#### **12. INFRASTRUCTURE**

- i BF (ENCC) highlighted that he would like to contact Lothian Buses with a view to requesting that they notify Midlothian Council in the event that information panels are vandalised or broken.

#### **13. MIDLOTHIAN TRAFFIC ROADS & PATHS (NEXT MEETING, MONDAY 5 DECEMBER)**

##### **Councillor Dianne Alexander**

- i Attended the October meeting to give a brief overview of the portfolio she currently holds (Community Facilities, Climate Change, and Environment’).

- ii **Joint Priorities Initiative**

MTRaP is working with Midlothian Council to discuss priorities for Capital expenditure on the maintenance of footways and roads in the County.

This has proved to be a successful initiative in the past and work will be undertaken to seek suggestions for a Joint Priority Initiative for the 2023 – 2024 financial year.

Local community councils are requested to undertake some consultation with their local community to ascertain what their priorities are in terms of repairs / maintenance and come up with 2 priorities in terms of ‘Footways’ and 1 priority in terms of ‘roads’.

#### **14. A.O.C.B.**

- i **Community Councillors Code of Conduct**

ASK noted her concerns about the tone and nature of personal remarks about Midlothian Council officers, made in the meeting.

The Chairperson noted that Community Councillors are required to follow guidelines as set out in the Midlothian Community Councillors Code of

Conduct (Section 10 - 'Generic Induction Pack' circulated by PJ on 9 November).

**ii Reduction in Midlothian Council Budgets**

The Chairperson noted that there are likely to be cuts in Council budgets and that the consultation period may be short.

**iii Community Council Registration with the Information Commissioner**

PJ highlighted that currently 2 Community Councils are registered with the ICO.

Having checked the ICO office website it is clear that all Community Councils should be registered.

PJ has been in touch with the Midlothian Council Data Protection Officer (DPO). The DPO has agreed that they will draw up a guidance document.

Once issued, the document will be circulated to MFCC members and their local community councils.

**15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING INC. AGM**

**14 December 2022, 7:00 – 9.00 pm (Fairfield House)**