

Midlothian Federation of Community Councils
20 December 2023
ZOOM Meeting Minutes

PRESENT:

Dougie West (DW)	Bonnyrigg and District
Ann Stewart-Kmicha (ASK)	Dalkeith and District
Andrew Watt (AW)	Dalkeith and District
Ailsa Carlyle (AC)	Damhead and District
Robin Barclay (RB)	Eskbank and Newbattle
Barbara Mackie (BM)	Eskbank and Newbattle
Eddie Robertson (ER)	Gorebridge and District
Steve Chalmers (SC)	Gorebridge and District
Judy Thomson (JT)	Mayfield & Easthouses and District (Treasurer)
Robert Hogg (RH)	Mayfield & Easthouses and District (Chair)
Andrew Hudson (AH)	Moorfoot and District
Ken Brown (KB)	Penicuik and District
Helen Blackburn (HB)	Rosewell and District
Jim Hiddleston (JH)	Roslin and Bilston
Gordon Brown (GB)	Tynewater and District

IN ATTENDANCE

Paul Johnson (PJ)	Midlothian Council - Communities, Lifelong Learning and Employability
Grant Ballantine (GB)	Midlothian Council - Lead Officer Conservation and Environment
Keith Luke (KL)	Midlothian Council - Planning Officer

Apologies

Brian Farrell	Eskbank and Newbattle
Paul McGrath	Moorfoot and District
Diane Easton	Bonnyrigg and District

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

RH (Chairperson) welcomed Community Councillors to the meeting.

2. LOCAL PLACE PLAN UPDATE (GRANT BALLANTINE – MIDLOTHIAN COUNCIL)

- i GB thanked Community Council members for their work and submission of draft Local Place Plans that the council has received and the indications of intent to prepare Local Place Plans (LPPs). The Council is grateful for the great efforts and interest shown in the process.

- ii** Seven draft LPPs have been received and 3 bodies have indicated intention to prepare a LPP – all of which are from Midlothian community councils. That is two thirds of the Midlothian community councils preparing or expressing interest in preparing an LPP.
- iii** No other community groups have expressed interest or submitted a draft LPP. Planning officers liaised with CLLE to identify known constituted community groups in Midlothian. Invitations to prepare a LPP were issued on 9 March 2023 to all Midlothian community councils, development trusts and known faith groups. Follow up emails were issued to those initially invited to provide updates and act as reminders of the initial invitation.
- iv** A report will be going to the 23 January 2024 Planning Committee which will contain copies of the draft LPPs, summaries of them and details of the next steps.
- v** There may be scope for Peter Arnsdorf to give a verbal update on draft LPPs received before 23 January but should not be relied upon. Very limited information could be verbally presented by Peter and copies of the report will be circulated to elected Members early in January. Therefore, there would be no written details in the report of LPPs being submitted in January for draft LPPs submitted in January.
- vi** The Council is asking for final LPPs to be submitted to the Council by 31 March. The minimum 28-day period for the local community to provide comments on a finalised plan would need to be done by that that and reflection made in the final documents how the comments were considered and what the outcome of that consideration was. LPPs should show what efforts were made to try and get comment on the documents – a list of efforts made is sufficient for evidence.
- vii** Planning officers are able to provide guidance on the requirements to be met for LPPs to be registered and verified by the Council. Keith Luke has been supplying information on this. Attached is a guide for assistance from PAS (Planning Aid for Scotland).
- viii** The Council wants to get the final LPPs by 31 March so they can be reported to the 30 April Planning Committee with a recommendation, or not, to verify and register them. Registered LPPs need to be taken into account and demonstrably considered in the in the preparation of the next Local Development Plan; and

- ix The Council wants to report to the 30 April Planning Committee as it wants to have verified LPPs before starting work on the Proposed Plan. The next Planning Committee after 30 April is 4 June. The Council anticipates/hopes the Gate Check of its Evidence Reports for the Local Development Plan might be finished by June. The Council will commence work on the Proposed Plan after the Gate Check process is finished. The Gate Check is the check of evidence reports prepared by a Council that is undertaken by the Scottish Government's Division of Environmental and Planning Appeals (DPEA) to see if they (the DPEA) consider sufficient information has been collected and due process followed; and
- x The Council is still working to reporting its Evidence Reports to Planning Committee and Council in March 2024 to get authority to submit them to the DPEA for the Gate Check process. Authority for submission would be sought at the 26 March Council meeting.
- xi RH enquired as to whether a map of planning applications could be provided. GB (Midlothian Council) will be able to provide some information relating to the request.
- xii RH encouraged all community council members (on behalf of their local communities) to make elected members aware of how the community feels about planning proposals.

3. PREVIOUS MINUTES (MAY) APPROVAL & MATTERS ARISING

Moved: Dougie West

Seconded: Judy Thomson

4. LOCAL COMMUNITY COUNCIL UPDATES

Bonnyrigg and District

i No update

Dalkeith and District

i No update

Damhead

i No update

Danderhall and District

i No update

Eskbank and Newbottle

- i No update

Gorebridge and District

- i No update

Howgate and District

- i No update

Loanhead

- i No update

Mayfield and Easthouses

- i No update

Moorfoot

- i **Local Place Plans:** the Moorfoot wide consultation will close on 31st Dec. An extra CC meeting on 24th January is arranged to start collating and to consider the final document.
- ii **Speeding in Borthwick:** Wayne Clark, Roads Network & Transportation Manager, spoke at our meeting, addressing concerns over speeding on our small rural roads, and particularly the road through Borthwick. His talk included information about proposed changes to speed limits and how they would be implemented in Moorfoot. Local residents attending had the opportunity to ask questions.
- iii **NWH Recycling Application:** a petition, organised by a local resident and objecting to the plans with 150 signatures, has now been passed to planning. In addition, the CC, responding to the strong feeling locally will lodge an objection. The CC has asked Cllr Douglas Bowen to call in this planning application.
- iv **RES - Torfichen Wind Farm:** The CC discussed whether or not they felt they should object to this proposal and decided by a clear majority that they would.

Newtongrange

- i No update

Penicuik and District

- i No update

Rosewell and District

- i No update

Roslin and Bilston

- i No update

Tynewater

- i No update

5 COMMUNITY COUNCIL TRAINING EVENT

- i PJ (Midlothian Council) advised those present of the proposal to hold a training event at Lasswade High School on Saturday 23 March.

6 HYBRID COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

- i An Elected Member had contacted the CLLE team requesting information about whether Community Council meetings would be held online or on a hybrid basis.
- ii PJ had provided information to the elected member, highlighting that Community Councils have the capacity to hold meetings online and that many do so. Furthermore, he had indicated that members would be consulted at an MFCC meeting.
- iii Those present at this meeting discussed the potential for CC meetings being held as 'hybrid' meetings. The following points were noted.
 - The current national guidance does not indicate that that *all* CC meetings *should* be hybrid meetings.
 - Where possible, meetings could be held in a hybrid format but that would be a decision to be made by individual community councils.
 - Currently, although meetings can be and frequently are, held online, infrastructure is not always available to successfully hold meetings in a hybrid format.

7 DATA PROTECTION AND COMMUNITY COUNCIL REGISTRATION WITH ICO

- i PJ advised that as per national good practice guidance, *all* Community Councils are required to comply with the Data Protection Act because they process personal data as defined under the Act.
- ii He also advised that Community Councils should be registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).
- iii **For further information** - see page 42 of the Good Practice Guidance in the *Policies* section on the [MFCC website](#) for further information).
- iv The *Policies*, section contains a Midlothian Community Councils Data Protection Guidance document.

8 TORFICHEN WIND FARM PROPOSALS

- i** As highlighted in the Moorfoot CC update, objections to the proposed Wind Farm will be submitted.
- ii** Those present, highlighted that the blades on the proposed turbines are so large the development will be visible from many locations across the County.

9 EDINBURGH AIRPORT NOISE BOARD

- i** AW (Dalkeith) circulated a report to MFCC members on 20 December.

10 CARE FOR PEOPLE MEETING.

- i** JT (Mayfield and Easthouses) had previously circulated a CFP report.

11 COMMUNITY PLANNING

- i** At the last meeting, discussion had included the following topics, Cost of Living Taskforce and National Equally Safe Strategy.
- ii** There had been a presentation on local heat and energy efficiency strategy.
- iii** 772 young people had responded to a Midlothian wide survey on living in Midlothian.
- iv** Kevin Anderson (Executive Director – Place) updated the group on the City Deal initiatives.

12 PLANNING

- i** RH (Chairperson) encouraged members to check the weekly planning list.

13 ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

- i** ASK highlighted that a River Esk flood protection scheme is being implemented in Musselburgh. Noted that this may have an impact in Midlothian.

14 INFRASTRUCTURE

- i** Sherrifhall grade separation – no decision has been made.

15 MIDLOTHIAN TRAFFIC ROADS & PATHS (NEXT MEETING, 22 JANUARY 2024)

- i** RH highlighted that Wayne Clark (Service Manager – Road Network and Transport) has move to a promoted position. Wayne had been very supportive of the work of the group. A new representative will be introduced at the next MTRaP meeting in January.
- ii** A report on progress of Capital Works Schemes has been circulated.

- iii Midlothian Council had facilitated a demonstration of the Pothole Pro (PHP) machinery and had received good feedback from MFCC and MTRaP members who had attended the demonstration.
- iv A question was posed as to whether statistics re the use of the PHP are being collected and could be published.
- v Midlothian Council has a road line marking team in place. It is anticipated that this will lead to improved service provision.

16 A.O.C.B.

i Midlothian Management Structure

- Noted that it would be helpful if a diagram showing the Management Structure of the Council is available on Council website.

ii Contact Centre Responses

- Concerns were expressed that when residents make an enquiry via the contact centre they are not automatically updated on the progress of the enquiry.

iii Email from Midlothian Member of the UK Parliament

- A number of members had expressed dissatisfaction with an email received from Owen Thomson MP, highlighting the work he had been involved in. Members had proposed that a letter on behalf of MFCC, should be sent to the MP.
- RH noted that it is important to maintain good relations with all representatives. However, there may be a requirement to remind political party representatives that local Community Councils and MFCC members must remain politically neutral.
- Place available on the Midlothian Climate Action Hub – circulate to Community Councils to see if they have a representative that could attend meetings.

iv Midlothian Licensing Forum

- Licensing Forum have not met. PJ (Midlothian Council) will contact colleagues to find out when the next meeting is expected.

17 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

January 2024, 7:00 – 9.00 pm (Zoom)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85893696530?pwd=Q1ExWVJOMjk1QW1JbThVdjJtNHhpUT09>

Meeting ID: 858 9369 6530

Passcode: 257126