

Midlothian Federation of Community Councils
Wednesday, 20 November 2024
ZOOM Meeting Minutes



Present:

Diane Easton (DE)	Bonnyrigg and District
Ann Stewart-Kmicha (ASK)	Dalkeith and District
Andrew Watt (AW)	Dalkeith and District
Ailsa Carlyle (AC)	Damhead and District
Keith Hamilton (KH)	Danderhall and District
Barbara Mackie (BM)	Eskbank and Newbattle
Richard Horsburgh (RH)	Gorebridge and District
Jacqueline Frankitti (RH)	Gorebridge and District
John Fitzgerald (JF)	Howgate
Judy Thomson (JT)	Mayfield & Easthouses (Treasurer)
Robert Hogg (RH)	Mayfield & Easthouses (Chair)
Paul McGrath (PMcG)	Moorfoot
Sarah Matthews (SM)	Newtongrange
Ken Brown (KB)	Penicuik and District
Helen Blackburn (HB)	Rosewell and District
Chris Gooding (CG)	Roslin and Bilston
Mark Whitham (MW)	Tynewater

In Attendance

Paul Johnson (PJ)	Midlothian Council - Communities Lifelong Learning and Employability
James Blair (JB)	Midlothian Council - Communities Lifelong Learning and Employability

Apologies

Jim Hiddleston (JH)	Roslin and Bilston
Gordon Brown (GB)	Tynewater and District

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

RH (Chairperson) welcomed Community Councillors to the meeting.

2. PREVIOUS MINUTES APPROVAL & MATTERS ARISING

Previous meeting minutes (October)

Proposed: Andrew Watt

Seconded: Chris Gooding

3. COMMUNITY COUNCIL CODE OF CONDUCT

- i. CLLE has received feedback about the forceful tone and nature of exchanges made by a small minority of individual Community Councillors during some recent meetings.
- ii. Those present at this meeting agreed that although discussion may become 'heated', there is acknowledgement that Community Councillors are required to adhere to the Code of Conduct.

Action: Code of Conduct will be highlighted at local Community Council meetings.

4. COMMUNITY COUNCIL UPDATES

Roslin and Bilston

- i. Concerns re perceived lack of representation for Bilston on RBCC had been expressed by some residents. In order to address these concerns, a sub-committee of Bilston residents has been formed.

Rosewell and District

- i. HB advised that RDCC will host BBC Radio 4's programmes 'Gardeners Question Time' and the 'Kitchen Cabinet'.
- ii. RDCC is in the process of distributing its Calendar for 2025. HB highlighted that originally it had circulated approximately 850 copies but due to housing development, it will be circulating around 1200 calendars for the 2025 year.

Tynewater

- i. MW advised that a Christmas Lights 'switch on' event in Pathhead will be held on Friday 23 November.
- ii. The 'Christmas Lights' group has worked in an effective partnership with residents, community groups and local businesses to provide the lights.
- iii. Group members have indicated that they would be happy to support other communities in developing their Christmas Light provision.

Action: If interested, CC's can email: tcchair2020@gmail.com for further information.

5. COMMUNITY COUNCIL FUNDING

- i. PJ (Midlothian Council) highlighted the availability of additional Midlothian Council funding for local community councils to develop initiatives that support their work, for example:
 - exploring and reviewing methods of community engagement and the promotion of community council activities (newsletters, posters, leaflets, websites, design of a logo, noticeboards etc).
 - exploring methods to engage young people and underrepresented groups to attend and participate (hall hire and refreshments for a community event for people to come and find out more).
 - buying in relevant training.
 - supporting the development of the Local Place Plans (LPPs) – either to help facilitate some of the actions and proposals of already registered LPPs or to support the development of future LPPs.
- ii. Requests for **funding up to a max of £500 will be considered.**
- iii. The application form and a copy of the latest accounts should be sent to **grants@midlothian.gov.uk** by **Friday 13th December** 2024.
- iv. ASK enquired as to whether a list of the funding awards is available.

**Action: MFCC members to submit applications for funding by 13 December.
PJ will check and then circulate the list of funding awards.**

6. RESILIENCE FUNDING – NATIONAL CENTRE FOR RESILIENCE

- i. The National Centre for Resilience is offering grants of up to £500 to Scottish Community Councils to develop local resilience plans that address natural hazards such as heavy snow, landslides, high winds, and other disruptive events, thereby enhancing their local community's preparedness and response to natural hazards.
- ii. Funding can be used for operational costs.
- iii. See further information here: *Funding - The National Centre for Resilience*, email: nationalcentreforresilience@glasgow.ac.uk, or phone: 01387 702007
- iv. The deadline for applications is **31 January 2025**.

Action: If wishing to apply for funding, CC's to submit applications by 31 January 2025

7. SCHEME FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMUNITY COUNCILS IN MIDLOTHIAN

- i. PJ provided an update on the progress of the revision of the scheme.
- ii. A report had been presented to Elected Members at a 'special meeting' on Tuesday, 12 November.
- iii. A final consultation stage is required before the revised scheme can be approved by Elected Members.
- iv. It is anticipated that the final scheme will be presented for approval at a 'special' meeting immediately before the April meeting of Midlothian Council.

Amendments to be made.

- i. At the meeting on 12 November, 3 elected members had made suggestions for amendments.
- ii. PJ has made edits and will circulate the revised draft for consideration and comment by MFCC members.

Complaint Policy

- i. One of the suggested amendments related to the current Community Council Complaint Policy.
- ii. In addition to the current 2-stage process, a third stage (an external review) has been added.
- iii. The revised policy will be circulated for consideration and comment by MFCC members.

**Action: PJ to circulate revised Scheme and Complaint Policy
MFCC members to review documents and advise PJ of any comments or proposals for amendment.**

8. ROADS AND FOOTWAYS CAPITAL EXPENDITURE, CO-PRIORITISATION INITIATIVE

- i. PJ informed MFCC members that at the last MTRaP meeting there had been agreement that this initiative would be repeated for the 2025-2026 financial year.
- ii. Residents for each Community Council area will be encouraged to submit suggestions for 2 footway schemes and 1 carriageway scheme.
- iii. Highlighted that this will be for Capital expenditure – that is 'planned' and goes towards resurfacing roads and footways.
- iv. PJ (Midlothian Council) has circulated a proposal for the initiative to MTRaP and MFCC members.
- v. Deadline for submissions is Monday, 13 January 2025.

**Action: MTRaP and MFCC members will discuss at their Community Council meetings.
Community Councils will submit suggestions by 13 January 2025.**

9. GOREBRIDGE LIBRARY – POTENTIAL CLOSURE

- i. RH (GDCC) raised awareness that due to roofing repairs being required, there is uncertainty about the future of the building.
- ii. In addition to Library services, staff provide a range of other services. The building is a local 'warm space' for example.
- iii. Those present agreed that the issue should be closely monitored, and any further updates be brought back to an MFCC meeting for further discussion.

10. EDINBURGH AIRPORT NOISE BOARD

- i. AW had emailed his report earlier in the day.
- ii. He provided a short review of the report.

11. MIDLOTHIAN LARGE GRANTS REVIEW GROUP COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE

- i. SM (NGCC) had been the CC representative on a group that has been reviewing the Midlothian Large Grants project. SM informed MFCC members that she is having to step down from her role.
- ii. SM highlighted that it is an important role and one that ensures that local communities are able to have a voice and influence service delivery.
- iii. Meetings are held using Microsoft Teams, generally between 9.30 – 11.30.
- iv. RH thanked SM for her work on the group.

Action: MFCC members to discuss with their local Community Council members to see if they would be prepared to be the MFCC representative on the Large Grants Review group.

12. CARE FOR PEOPLE MEETING

- i. JT (M&ECC) will forward minutes of the last meeting when she has received them.

13. COMMUNITY PLANNING

- i. October meeting has been cancelled.
- ii. Next meeting will be in December.

14. PLANNING

- i. ASK advised the group that the RAMPS portal is once again in operation. This system supports residents to access notifications about planning matters.

15. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

- i. No report

16. INFRASTRUCTURE ISSUES

- i. No report

17. MIDLOTHIAN TRAFFIC ROADS & PATHS

- i. The next meeting will be on Monday 25 November
- ii. An officer from the Roads Team will attend the meeting to provide an update about the progress of the 'A7 Urbanisation' project.

18. A.O.C.B.

i. Appointment of Flood Risk Officer

- AC (Damhead) enquired as to whether Midlothian Council has a member of staff who is responsible for monitoring and managing Flood Risk in the county.
- There was a suggestion that a member of staff had been, or is in the process of being, recruited.

Action: PJ to check and let AC know.

ii. Meeting Midlothian Council Planning Officers.

- RH and others present had met with Midlothian Councils Planning Officers
- Those present at the meeting highlighted the value and benefit of holding the meeting and expressed their appreciation of Planning Officers making time to meet and share information.
- The meeting had led to members benefitting from a deeper understanding of work of Planning Team and how that is reflected in planning considerations and decision-making processes.
- There was recognition that a balance is required in terms of potentially too much Housing development, with the requirement for providing housing for Midlothian's families and young people who will need places to live.

iii. Improvement Service – Planning Survey

- Some members have received an email from the Improvement Service with a request to complete a Planning Survey.

Action: PJ will circulate the survey for members to complete if they wish to do so

iv. Letter on behalf of MFCC re Budget considerations

- RH happy to be signatory.
- The letter will be sent to the group leaders of the political parties.
- RH thanked CG (RBCC) for collating responses from MFCC members and composing the letter.

v. Neighbourhood Services Service Delivery

- MW (Tynewater) highlighted a perceive degradation of service delivery by the Neighbourhood Services Team in the Tynewater area.
- RH advised that if there are concerns then they could contact Matthew Kelly (Group Manager - Recycling and Greenspace – Neighbourhood Services) – matthew.kelly@midlothian.gov.uk.

vi. MFCC Bank Account

- JT (MFCC Treasurer) advised that the MFCC Bank account had been transferred from Virgin to the Bank of Scotland (B.O.S).
- B.O.S. have advised they will be starting to charge for the use of their services.
- Those present at the meeting agreed that JT investigate other potential providers and provide recommendations for alternative providers.

Action: JT to investigate potential providers and advise MFCC members of her recommendations.

19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 18 December – Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84074718280?pwd=NJLbf3HamTPVKFd7II2geRBsJYelac.1>

Meeting ID: 840 7471 8280

Passcode: 757773.