

Midlothian Federation of Community Councils
Wednesday, 18 December 2024
ZOOM Meeting Minutes



Present:

Diane Easton (DE)	Bonnyrigg and District
Suzanne Ross (SR)	Bonnyrigg and District
Ann Stewart-Kmicha (ASK)	Dalkeith and District
Andrew Watt (AW)	Dalkeith and District
Ailsa Carlyle (AC)	Damhead and District
Richard Horsburgh (RH)	Gorebridge and District
John Fitzgerald (JF)	Howgate
Judy Thomson (JT)	Mayfield & Easthouses (Treasurer)
Paul McGrath (PMcG)	Moorfoot
Ken Brown (KB)	Penicuik and District
Helen Blackburn (HB)	Rosewell and District
Chris Gooding (CG)	Roslin and Bilston (chaired the meeting)
Mark Whitham (MW)	Tynewater

In Attendance

Paul Johnson (PJ)	Midlothian Council - Communities Lifelong Learning and Employability
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Apologies

Barbara Mackie (BM)	Eskbank and Newbattle
Keith Hamilton (KH)	Danderhall and District
Robert Hogg (RH)	Mayfield and Easthouses

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

CG (Chairperson for the meeting) welcomed Community Councillors to the meeting.

2. PREVIOUS MINUTES APPROVAL & MATTERS ARISING

Previous meeting minutes (November)

Proposed: RH (Gorebridge)

Seconded: HB (Rosewell)

Matters Arising

i. Flood Prevention Officer

- Midlothian Council is currently engaging with an agency and anticipates that an experienced flood officer prevention officer will be commence employment in January 2025.
- Currently flooding risks and prevention is looked at by the wider team as overall coverage - so concerns are not overlooked.

3. COMMUNITY COUNCIL UPDATES

Bonnyrigg and District

- Held the AGM in October
- Now has a full complement of Office Bearers
- Suzanne Ross (Secretary) will be the BDCC representative attending MFCC meetings.

Dalkeith and District

- Planning Committee appeared to have neglected responses from community groups when discussing a Battery Storage facility planning application.
- The town has experienced episodes of anti-social behaviour that has led to Christmas decorations in the town centre being damaged.

Damhead

- Traffic Lights at the Hillend Junction are now in operation.
- Completed the second of 2 'Hit Squad' events. Local people cleared pathways and hedgerows along the Old Pentland Road.
- The initiative has had a huge impact on pedestrian safety, with people now able to safely use the footways along the route.

Danderhall and District

- We are hoping to host an 'open meeting' early in the New Year with our Danderhall councillors, Colin Beattie our MSP, and Kirsty McNeill our MP in attendance, to discuss local resident's concerns regarding the lack of progress/ delay in addressing the shortage of primary school and secondary school places in our area.
- In the Shawfair Masterplan going back to 2014, there was provision for 2 new primary schools and 1 new secondary school.

- iii. The secondary school was originally scheduled to open in 2024/25. This has apparently been put back to 2027/28, the situation regarding the (lack of) the new primary schools remain unclear.
- iv. Both Danderhall Primary and Dalkeith High School are operating close to full capacity, which raises the prospect of local children being bussed out to more distant locations if the shortage of school places is not urgently addressed.
- v. ASK highlighted that on page 628 of the agenda of the Midlothian Council meeting (17 December) indicates that "Edge Analytics have been appointed to review all school pupil roll projections. The output of this exercise will be used to inform the Dalkeith/Shawfair Education Solution".

Eskbank and Newbattle

- i. At the AGM on 12 December, Barbara Mackie, stepped down from position of Chairperson & acting Secretary.
- ii. At the AGM, Brian Farrell was voted in as the new Chair, and David McNeill was re-elected as Treasurer.
- iii. Until a member can be elected to the role of Secretary, there was agreement that the duties of Secretary will be shared amongst members. There will be further discussion at the ENCC meeting on 13 February 2025.
- iv. Two new members were elected at the AGM.

Gorebridge and District

- i Local residents have been having issues with Persimmon Homes who, in the course of housing development, have blocked footways and removed trees.
- ii The situation has improved of late.

Howgate and District

- i There has been a series of landslips on the B6372 (Pomathorn Road).
- ii Repair work will mean that the road will have to be closed when the work begins in early 2025.

Loanhead

- i No update

Mayfield and Easthouses

- i No update

Moorfoot

i. Proposed Torfichen Wind Farm and Community Benefits - discussion.

- The Community Council had been approached by a resident with considerable experience in how community councils have used community benefits arising from wind farms.
- We also heard from Foundation Scotland about how they might become involved at an early stage in setting up a fund design.
- Moorfoot has objected to the proposed Torfichen Wind Farm and has been most reluctant to speak of these benefits. However, Community Council members have agreed that it would be better to be prepared and have plans in place.

Newtongrange

- i No update

Penicuik and District

KB highlighted that the **Penicuik Heritage Regeneration Project**, which has been in operation for 6 years from 2018 to 2024, has come to end. The initial budget of £3.4m obtained was increased to £5.1m by the end of the project.

Achievements have included:

- i 28 historic building grants have been awarded.
- ii 2 vacant buildings brought back into use with 4 flats and 2 retail/commercial units.
- iii Project has assisted 3 other building improvement schemes.
- iv 20 shopfront improvement grants have been awarded.
- v 400 plus community engagement, training and education initiatives have been delivered.

Rosewell and District

i Radio 4 Shows

RDCC hosted 2 very successful Radio 4 programmes, 'Gardeners Question Time', and 'the Kitchen Cabinet' with 200 people attending each event. See here for information - [Rosewell Neighbourhood Group | Facebook](#)

ii. Christmas Fayre

Held a Christmas event. 50 children from the village received a gift.

- iii. Investigating setting up an Allotment\Community garden project and is currently in discussions with the Crown Estate.
- iv. Developing a recycling project.

Roslin and Bilston

- i Chairperson, Chris has met with Damhead CC to explore opportunities to work together.
- ii Roslin Development Trust has obtained charitable status and has plans to consult with villagers in the New Year and elect Trustees.
- iii Bilston Community group arranged a Christmas Lights 'Switch' on and Market which was well supported.
- iv The long awaited Roslin Pump Track is coming in Spring 2025 to the Park.
- v Bilston's Community noticeboard will be installed next year.
- vi Changes to our Constitution, including permission to use electronic banking, were passed at an EGM in December.
- vii An application has been submitted for £500 grant to assist with communication & accessibility.

Tynewater

- i No update

4. 2024 AGM MINUTES

- i. PJ had circulated the minutes on 2 December along with the Equalities presentation.
- ii. PJ requested that MFCC members advise him if any edits or amendments are required.

5. SCHEME FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMUNITY COUNCILS IN MIDLOTHIAN & COMMUNITY COUNCIL COMPLAINT PROCEDURE AND GUIDANCE FOR COMMUNITY COUNCILS

- i. As discussed at the November meeting, PJ had sent the documents in December.
- ii. Need to have final MFCC changes by 1 March to be able to send documents to Democratic Services.
- iii. PJ advised MFCC members that Stage 2 of the current Complaint Procedure requires a panel of Community Councillors to be convened and asked for suggestion as to how this should be done. Those present agreed the following. Those present suggested that the appropriate course of action would be to:
 - Send out an email to MFCC members asking them if they would be prepared to join a panel.
 - In the interests of confidentiality there would be no mention of the Community Council concerned, and the panel would not include anyone from the Community Council concerned.

- The panel would consist of 3 people.
- The Chairperson and the Community Council Liaison Officer would consult to agree who, from the responders, would be on the panel.
- The Chairperson of MFCC may wish to be on the panel.
- Once the panel had been formed, information relating to the complaint would be shared.
- An initial meeting would be held on Zoom.
- The panel would then review the information provided by the complainant and carry out an investigation of the complaint.
- The CCLO would not be involved in the investigation but with their agreement, would be able to provide some support to the panel.
- iv. Need to review the document – would it be best to have a meeting?
- v. Are there any amendments or edits to be made to the Complaint procedure?

Action: MFCC members to review documents and advise PJ of any comments or proposals for amendment.

6. COMMUNITY COUNCILS – COMMUNITY ACTIVITY RISK ASSESSMENTS

- i. PJ has/will circulate a template for Community Councils to use when undertaking Litter Picking and other activities.

7. SCHOOL ROLL PROJECTIONS

- i. PJ had requested information from a colleague who had indicated that school projections are not published.
- ii. There was a suggestion that a Freedom of Information request could be submitted, or Elected Members may be able to obtain the information.
- iii. ASK noted that the Council may be waiting for 2022 census information due to be published in the near future.
- iv. ASK will circulate a link to an interactive Map that shows census data.
[Census Maps - Census 2022 data interactive, NRS](#)

8. EDINBURGH AIRPORT NOISE BOARD

- i. AW had emailed his report earlier in the day.
- ii. He provided a short review of the report highlighting information relating to Night Flights and the Noise Action Plan.

9. CARE FOR PEOPLE MEETING

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

10. COMMUNITY PLANNING

- i. A report from the Community Planning conference event was discussed.
- ii. The CLD Strategic Plan (presented to Midlothian Council on Tuesday 17 December) was discussed.
- iii. A paper authored by Annette Lang (Midlothian Council) and Lesley Kelly (MVA) was presented to the meeting. The paper highlighted concerns relating to the voluntary sector groups receiving 1 year funding and its impact on the voluntary sector being able to effectively provide services.

11. COMMUNITY PLANNING WORKING GROUP

- i. Although Gordon Brown (TWCC) attends meeting at the moment he has indicated that he would like to step down.
- ii. CG (RBCC) advised that he may be able to attend meetings on behalf of MFCC but would like further information about what is involved.
- iii. Chris can be contacted on chrisgooding57@hotmail.com.

11. PLANNING

- i. No Report

12. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

- i. No Report

13. INFRASTRUCTURE ISSUES

- i. PJ advised that consultations for the A7 Urbanisation Project will be held in late January or early February 2025.
- ii. ASK highlighted the invitation to the Natural Flood Management (NFM) implementation on the River Esk workshop, circulated to MFCC members on 13 December.

14. MIDLOTHIAN TRAFFIC ROADS & PATHS

- i. The next meeting will be on Monday 20 January.
- ii. Community Councils will be encouraged to submit suggestions for 2 footway schemes and 1 carriageway scheme.
- iii. Deadline for submissions is Monday, 13 January 2025. Submissions will be discussed at the MTRaP meeting the following week.
- iv. Matt Kelly (Group Manager - Recycling and Greenspace – Neighbourhood Services) will join the meeting.
- v. Community Council members are welcome to join the meeting.

Action: Community Councils will submit suggestions by 13 January 2023.

15. A.O.C.B.

i. Travel to School

Concerns were expressed about the length of time some young people were spending when being transported to and from home and school, with some of them being on coaches or in a taxi for up to 3 hours each day.

iv. Children attending Salters Gate school and those from rural villages are the most affected.

v. This also has an impact on their ability to attend after school activities.

18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Zoom – Wednesday, 15 January – Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86507716748?pwd=sGGVFDt8lahN5SbmxKcCfxtMYj2OmK.1>

Meeting ID: 865 0771 6748

Passcode: 055733

Approved 15 January 2025