

Wednesday 16 April 2025 ZOOM

Meeting Minutes

**PRESENT:**

Suzanne Ross (SR)	Bonnyrigg and District
Ann Stewart-Kmicha (ASK)	Dalkeith and District
Andrew Watt (AW)	Dalkeith and District
Constance Newbould (CN)	Damhead and District
Barbara Mackie (BM)	Eskbank and Newbattle
Richard Horsburgh (RH)	Gorebridge and District
Robert Hogg (RH)	Mayfield & Easthouses (Chair)
Judy Thomson (JT)	Mayfield & Easthouses (Treasurer)
Andrew Hudson (AH)	Moorfoot and District
Helen Blackburn (HB)	Rosewell and District
Chris Gooding (GC)	Roslin and Bilston

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Ellen Scott (ES)	Midlothian Council – Cabinet Member for Education, Children & Young People
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**APOLOGIES:**

Paul Johnson (PJ)	Midlothian Council - Communities, Lifelong Learning and Employability
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**1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

RH (Chair) welcomed Community Councillors to the meeting. Usual agenda was paused and RH welcomed Councillor Ellen Scott to the meeting. **Councillor Ellen Scott**

- Ellen's background was working for the University of Edinburgh, and she has been a volunteer/activist in Gorebridge for many years.
- Ellen has attended Parent Councils and Parent/Teacher Associations across the county and is facilitating other elected members visiting schools to discover them for themselves. There is some really great work happening in schools but often estate issues take over from learning and teaching. • Ellen admits she doesn't have any real 'power'. Education is part of Education Department's remit, and the buildings are part of the Place directorate and remains quite separate. Any real 'power' is within Council meetings, particularly BTSG (Business Transformation Steering Group).
- Ellen has a keen interest in Developer Contributions – how they are gathered and allocated. She admits the formulae to work out future needs for schools is not an exact science, particularly predicting the need for Additional Needs places. Information can be viewed from more than one angle to get different results.
- Some school roll information is classed as sensitive as developers are involved in discussions. Planners and Developers are negotiating over the contributions that will go to education. These figures might not take into account birth rate and migration.

- Federation is frustrated about the use of the term 'Commercially Sensitive', particularly concerning education. Better, clearer communication is requested. It was noted that Edinburgh Council has released their school roll numbers.
- Cllr Scott was asked to determine a deadline for these negotiations. Both Councillors and the Federation need to apply pressure to increase contributions from developers. Request for 'league table' of developer contributions across Scotland – how does Midlothian place? It was agreed that Midlothian Council should have the stronger hand because developers want to build in Midlothian. There should be less negotiating and more demanding.
- Concern shown about maintenance of current schools. Councillors are requesting reports about condition of schools and Place directorate are using categories to try to show progress. Communications should be improved about sources of finance for maintenance and for new schools so that people could be more informed about why a new school is being built in a nearby area while the local school isn't being maintained.
- Capacity is an additional concern for some schools, mentioning accommodation, sustainability, support for ASN and staffing levels. Schools should only be operating at 90% capacity for the sake of the core facilities.
  - Ellen mentioned the importance of aligning the school day for the digital campus. It is possible for a pupil to attend classes at other schools and work towards the SCQF (Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework: <https://scqf.org.uk/>). It is acknowledged that school league tables don't necessarily show the full story as they don't take the framework into account with foundation apprenticeships, etc.
- Ellen was thanked for her time, and she offered to come back to the meeting anytime in the future. Fiona Robertson has also said she is willing to attend Federation meetings if required and requested.

## **2. PREVIOUS MINUTES APPROVAL & MATTERS ARISING**

The minutes from the last meeting in March were unavailable at the time of the meeting so it was agreed to carry them forward to the next meeting for approval.

## **3. COMMUNITY COUNCIL UPDATES**

- Gorebridge intends to follow up on communication from Mayfield and Easthouses about the Crawlees Road in agreement for the need for a new traffic survey to be carried out.
- New school campus in Mayfield has been agreed at Council level but no developer signed to contract as yet so no start date and more references to 'commercially sensitivity'.

## **4. SCHEME FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMUNITY COUNCILS IN MIDLOTHIAN (2025) (INC. UPDATED DOCUMENTATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMME).**

This has been passed at Council. CLLE are preparing training associated with that.

**5. MFCC REPRESENTATIVE ON THE COMMUNITY PLANNING WORKING GROUP**

Federation is yet to identify a representative for this group. CG asked if the meeting might be on Fridays as he could make it then. Ask PJ to find out the details.

**6. EDINBURGH AIRPORT NOISE BOARD**

AW had emailed a report. Main issues are ongoing. Members encouraged to publicise a public meeting of Edinburgh Airport Consultative Committee at on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2025 at 10.30am in the Novotel at Hermiston Gait. It is possible to attend as an observer and may be of interest to people.

**7. CARE FOR PEOPLE MEETING**

Last meeting was cancelled, next meeting will be on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2025.

**8. COMMUNITY PLANNING**

Next meeting on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2025 at 10am on Teams. There is concern about 'bots' being used in meetings to provide AI feedback on the meeting. Data ownership and save locations are being discussed and a guidance paper to come out. ASK mentioned assessments for how effective community planning is. Also, no company to run the Citizen's Panel currently.

**9. PLANNING**

No response as yet to the communication to Planning department from Federation about MLDP2.

**10. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES**

JT mentioned Met Office resilience training, more information here:

<https://www.communitycouncils.scot/events/met-office-resilience-training-metoffice-information,-products-and-services2>.

A question was asked if food waste recycling is still happening as hardly ever food waste bins out and those that do are not collected. CN to speak to Matthew Kelly, Group Manager - Recycling and Greenspace – Neighbourhood Services, Place.

[matthew.kelly@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:matthew.kelly@midlothian.gov.uk)

**11. MIDLOTHIAN TRAFFIC ROADS & PATHS**

JT apologised once more for the missed MTRaP meeting at the start of the week.

Another meeting will be organised as soon as a doodle poll has been completed.

20mph signs going up in phases across the county. There have been concerns/objections and effort should be put in to find out the detail of the objections to be discussed at MTRaP meeting. Wayne Clark has 7 objections for which he may be able to give the details.

## 12. AOCB

Boundaries meeting – 21<sup>st</sup> April. Ask PJ if this can be rearranged.

Consultation for school's admissions policy has been extended to 2<sup>nd</sup> June, encourage residents to engage. Also, consultation about the redevelopment of the ground floor of Midlothian House – again encourage engagement where possible. One other consultation is about Housing Strategy.

An idea was raised that there should be an equivalent group/meeting to MTRaP for school repairs, etc. An equivalent report about repairs that Alan Heatley presents to MTRaP would be gratefully received.

JT asked for agreement to renew the Federation website (funding is already in place and requested for next year). Agreement was given.

On a related subject, an email has been sent to Midlothian View as actioned at the last meeting and members are happy to publish our papers on our own website.

JT confirmed the bank balance has been transferred to RBS from Bank of Scotland, due to monthly fees, and the old account has been closed.

Midlothian View – Letter re CC and use of the site has been sent. CC's provided with an email address for articles to be forwarded to.

## 13. NEXT MEETING ON WEDNESDAY, 21 MAY AT 7PM, ZOOM LINK

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82853389592?pwd=Z2e4GPDhm4FdXhbqVOMOfwe2BCgb1e.1>

**Meeting ID:** 828 5338 9592

**Passcode:** 261576