



Northfield and Willowbrae Community Council

Minutes of Meeting
Tuesday 12th March 2024 at 7.00pm at Northfield Community Centre

Present

Community Council Members: Gordon MacDonald (GM)(Chair), Nick Marshall (NM)(Secy), Chris Alcorn (CA)(Treasurer), Margaret Bennett (MB) (Engagement), James Keating (JK) (Minutes), Charlie Wood (CW)
 Councillors: Cllrs Alex Staniforth (Cllr Staniforth) and Danny Alston (Cllr Aston)
 Police Scotland: AnnaMorrison, Gareth Steering
 Two members of the public
 Apologies: Dave Armstrong (DA)(Vice-Chair), John Nisbet (JN), Ellie Burroughs (EB), Francis Devlin (FD), Cllr Joan Griffiths, Cllr Ian White

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	AP/RESPONSIBLE
1	Welcome and Apologies	
2	Minutes of previous meeting (16th January 2024)	
(a)	The minutes were approved (proposer NM; seconder MB) Matters arising (numbering as in last meeting's minutes) below.	Noted
(b)	2.1 (f) Cllr Aston has pursued the issue of the Lady Nairne wall repair and is working with Jackie Timmons, head of shared repair service to collate Information on the affected properties. It was pointed out that all relevant information has been in the Council's possession for over two years and that the cost of repair is increasing all the time.Cllr Aston will follow up.	Cllr Aston
(c)	2.2 CA set out anti-social issues with the Royal High Primary School (reports of smoking/vaping and had set fire to the play area). More information in the Police Report below. The RHPS has been asked what money was necessary for the security light but reply from School Business Manager has not been received. This will be followed up by CA.	CA
(d)	2.2 CW reported that St John's Primary had informed him that it was not possible to get the spares (including a new pole) required to repair the signs around the school. The council is responsible to undertake these repairs. CW will follow this up.	CW

	2.2 CW reported an update from the council that the replacement sign is not compatible with the existing pole. They are now looking again at repair options. CW will follow this up.	
(e)	2.3 Donation of £300 made to NCC for Environment Fair 2023 day hire of Community Centre.	Noted
(f)	2.6 The Community Council submission to Historic Environment Scotland Holyrood Park consultation in December 2023 will be followed up with HES Staff in May.	CA
(g)	3 (a) The application for change to signatories on the Bank of Scotland account has been processed.	Noted
(h)	3 (c) The Meadowfield grant has been transferred to Diana Dodds and survey results forwarded to GM. It needs to be confirmed that the results have been uploaded to the NWCC website.	GM
(i)	3(d) A Community Grant application for £3200 has been submitted for a new bench and replacement access bollard in Baronscourt Park. CA met the CEC Park Manager and subsequently a representative from Morrisons (Asset Manager or Shop Manager) at end January. A location, bench type (metal) and quotation of £1,750 has been agreed. It was deemed the bollard was too expensive. The CEC lighting engineer has provided a quotation of £22k for the lighting + £3k for environmental (bat) survey. However, there isn't any money in the CEC capital budget for lighting this financial year. Morrisons are considering whether to pay half the cost if the rest of the funding could be secured through grants (possibly Paths for All). CA has emailed Morrisons for an update but not received one, will contact them again. Cllr Aston requested a copy of the email from Scott Thompson outlining the costs.	CA
(j)	5(c) Democracy Matters 2 consultation submissions have been formalised and submitted to the Scottish Government on 27th February.	Noted
(k)	The proposed student accommodation at Willowbrae Road will likely come to the CEC Planning Sub-committee in a couple of months as Cllr Aston has called it to committee and CA has agreed to attend and speak on behalf of the Community Council.	Cllr Aston
3	Police Report	
(a)	There are still issues with anti-social behaviour including a child drumming behind the community centre and a lot of noise complaints had been received. The police have tracked him through the school and reached consensus with him that he would bring a mat to dampen the drum.	Noted
(b)	There have been issues in the Willowbrae area of an unauthorised trader selling second hand cars and using resident spaces and private underground car parks spaces. There is an	Noted

	enquiry ongoing. The perpetrators know the law and are using every loophole possible to continue dealing possibly through Gumtree or Facebook Marketplace. Residents have been advised to phone 101 and take photos of vehicles which look out of place and parked for several days. This has been happening in other locations around the east side of Edinburgh including Musselburgh. Another individual is operating a similar unauthorised business in Lady Nairne.	
(c)	Some cars' windscreens and side mirrors are being scratched on Paisley Drive. It is believed to be revellers on the weekend damaging vehicles on their way home from the pub. Public recommended to report these incidents to the police.	Noted
(d)	The 'No Entry' sign at the top of Paisley Drive is often obscured by vehicles parking in front of the sign so the police can't enforce the 'No Entry' rule. More visible road signs being installed so that traffic offences can then be prosecuted.	Noted
(e)	Anti-social behaviour (e.g. setting fires) has been reported at Royal High Primary School. Police are in contact with Head Teacher and Building Manager. They believe it needs proper lighting and CCTV installed. Apparently, the school secured funding for this last year but it hasn't been installed yet (see also f).	Noted
(f)	There are traffic issues at drop-off and pick-up times at Parsons Green Primary School. The 'No Entry' sign is temporary and it is in the CEC Traffic Plan to install a flashing sign at Parsons Green Primary School.	
4	Financial Matters	
(a)	Financial Update At the last meeting in January 2024, the balance was £3,482.07. The outgoings since have been £1,844.11 (key expenses related to the Democracy Matters 2 Consultation, Local Place Plan, Donation to Northfield Community Centre for the Environment Fair) and incomings has been £205.00 (Scottish Government 'Impact funding' grant for DM2 consultation). The available Balance as of 12/03/24 is £1,842.96. See Northfield & Willowbrae Community Council: Treasurer's Report - March 2024 for more details.	Noted
(b)	Upcoming Costs- Insurance and Duddingston Direct There is an annual community council insurance cost of approximately £90/year and an annual cost of advertising in 'Duddingston Direct' local magazine. These costs are to be confirmed and paid.	CA
(b)	Annual Grant It is believed that this grant from CEC is due in April and is approximately £1,000. This is to be confirmed.	CA
(c)	CEC Place Based Investment Programme Fund	Noted

	CEC Place Based Investment Programme Fund - this is a fund for larger projects aimed at improving the local environment, for projects in 2025/26. See Item 7 for further details on the proposed 'Greening Northfield & Willowbrae: Street Tree replacement project'.	
(d)	<p>Local Place Plan</p> <p>LPP Working Group had estimated a budget of approx. £500 to deliver this piece of work. However, the printing costs for the leaflet were higher than expected (£720.00) and the postage costs were £458.72 (Royal Mail distribution for N&WCC mail shot to 5,500 households). The total costs were £1178.72. Approval of these costs was sought from all CC members prior to expenditure and formally proposed at the meeting by JK and seconded by GM.</p>	Noted
5	Management Matters	
(a)	<p>Secretary's Role</p> <p>The following was agreed at an internal meeting on 13/02:</p> <p>Members to take turns at minute-taking. Meeting team (minute-taker plus chair and vice-chair) to produce agenda (start 2 weeks before mtg, publish 1 week before meeting); plus chase up actions from previous meeting, plus bring some printed copies of key documents to meeting. This will be developed ahead of next meeting. MB to take over liaison with CEC and CA to take over booking meetings and dates arrangements.</p>	Noted
(b)	<p>Communications Group</p> <p>An approach towards document storage and email type ownership was agreed at an internal meeting on 12/02. The use of a Project/Task Management software has been trialled, but it is felt further work is required to develop this approach.</p>	Noted
6	Engagement	
(a)	<p>Local Place Plan- Overview & Progress To Date</p> <p>The Local Place Plan Subgroup (EB, MB, CA, NM) has met twice to plan activities.</p> <p>Outline Programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - participatory events with residents - Jan-June - produce first draft for comments - early Sept - Community Council consider final version - October - Submit final version to CEC - November <p>Main actions to date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - divided NWCC area into 3 consultation areas - (a) Meadowfield, Lady Nairne, Duddingston Village; (b) Willowbrae & Piershill; 	Noted

	<p>(c) Southfield/Northfield/Mountcastle) and planned participatory events focussed on each area (and considering extra events)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - put up posters advertising forthcoming events - 1 st event was 10 Feb in NCC with 12 participants; 2nd event at Parsons Green School on 13 March with 5 parents and 6 kids - drafted information note on LPP - contacted council and others to inform and enlist support as may be needed - developed questionnaire based on Scottish Government Place Standard Tool and used this for participation events - set up online version of Place Standard questionnaire for use at outside of events - set up section of NWCC website to provide access to key documents and online questionnaire, and dedicated email address LPP@northfieldandwillowbrae.org.uk) - organised a leaflet drop to all residents with information about LPP and the community council. 	
(b)	<p>Local Place Plan- Next Steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MB will run an event for pupils at PG School w/c 18th March - will incorporate relevant comments from Coffee Mornings and DM2 meetings into draft LPP <p>Will use 'Duddingston Direct' April edition to promote discussions in future.</p>	MB
(c)	<p>Community Coffee Mornings in 2024</p> <p>Next one will be held on 6th April.</p>	MB/NM/CA
(d)	<p>Community Flat in Piershill Square West</p> <p>A number of residents who have attended DM 2 Consultations and Coffee Mornings believed that re-opening the flat as a Community Hub would be beneficial to the area.</p> <p>A visit was arranged with the Housing Officer, Cllr Aston and MB but unfortunately, they couldn't enter the flat as the lock had been tampered with. The council were planning to sell the flat, but agreed to delay this while the CC consulted the local community. MB has organised a petition which can be signed at the local newsagent and is also visiting residents in both squares, seeking ideas from the community as to how it could be used. MB and Cllr Aston will meet with the Housing Officer in early April to review progress.</p>	MB/Cllr Aston
(e)	<p>The No. 69 Bus</p> <p>Since the last meeting, it has been announced that CEC budget intended to issue a tender to reinstate this route though it may not be referred to as the No 69. It was noted that the current proposed route is missing key stops along Northfield Broadway e.g. chemist, library, doctor's surgeries. All political parties support the reintroduction of the bus route.</p>	Cllr Aston/ MB

	<p>The next steps are to consult the community then the route will go out for tender. Cllr Aston believed the consultation should start imminently. It was recommended that the route should be circular which would allow passengers to go to doctor's surgery and Morrisons, chemists, etc. Cllr Aston to seek more information on proposed route and consultation timescale with the CEC Public Transport Team.</p>	
(f)	<p>Environment Fair It was agreed that it will be held on the 21st September 2024 and will be an opportunity to further consult the Community on the draft LPP.</p>	Noted
7	Greening Northfield & Willowbrae: Street Tree replacement project	
(a)	<p>Background</p> <p>Funding for this project would be applied for from the CEC 'Place Based Investment Programme' (PBIP) fund.</p> <p>Potential street tree planting relates to existing green spaces and soft verges where trees are missing and not new, costly street trees inserted into pavement surfaces where the location of utilities and services could be an issue.</p> <p>A survey of possible locations for new street trees across the community council area was undertaken in January & February 2024. Many of the streets within the community council area were designed and planted with street trees, but over the years many have been removed and not replaced.</p> <p>This project would contribute to Edinburgh's '<i>1 Million Tree City</i>' initiative – i.e.; CEC estimate c700 000 in City, but need 250,000 more trees planted across the City by 2030 as part of contribution to City's Net Zero target - helps absorbing CO² and water, replacing ageing street trees and providing shade.</p> <p>The potential locations of all trees would be agreed with CEC Parks & Greenspace (& Housing Services - if necessary, and several Factors).</p> <p>All locations will need to be checked for Services (hence some may be discounted). CEC Parks & Greenspace have offered to undertake this aspect.</p> <p>If utilities locations rule out any verges or areas, then there is scope to re-allocate those standard trees to Meadowfield Park</p>	Noted

(as requested by survey of c500 residents & children in Autumn 2023).

Street trees issues have been raised at several of the N&WCC 2023 'coffee mornings'. In some instances, residents would need a letter / site meeting about proposed trees in verges near their house to allay fears about obstruction of views or maintenance. This can be undertaken by N&WCC (CA) & E&LGT officer (see below).

The contract to undertake the tree planting would be overseen by Edinburgh & Lothians Greenspace Trust (E&LGT: <http://www.elgt.org.uk/> i.e.; a non-profit making charity), who have procured such projects across the city before with CEC and other community bodies and have a track record of supporting community greenspace aspiration. Recent examples of street trees planted by E&LGT at Sleigh Drive in Craigentiny and CEC at Paisley Avenue.

It was confirmed that planning permission is not required for planting a tree though it is sometimes required for cutting a tree down.

E&LGT in-house landscape architect would specify the appropriate tree for the location, prepare the overall contract specification and Bill of Quantities, release the Tender to suitable landscape contractors and assess returns, award contract and oversee implementation & monitoring, to the satisfaction of CEC Parks. (Approx c£320 per tree, triple staked, ties and mesh guard @ c400+ trees = c£120,000 bid to PBIP fund, incl. E&LGT Fee).

Initial queries with CEC Parks Manager and E&LGT CEO & Project Officer and CEC PBIP Administrator, indicate this project could be supported for 2025/26. Planting could then occur over Winter 2025 / Spring 2026.

Criteria for PBIP application: support of Community Council + 1 Ward Cllr and initial A4 Form for CEC Committee to consider application in Summer 2024.

In addition, the Baronscourt Park path lighting was suggested as an additional N&WCC project for a PBIP submission as there was no limit to the number of schemes or limit on cost a CC could submit to CEC. To secure Paths for All funding for the path, a delivery vehicle is required to be in place before making a submission.

(b)	<p>Approval Cllrs Ashton and Staniforth approved the proposal and Cllr Griffith had indicated her support via email. It was acknowledged that NWCC may not get all the funding requested as other Edinburgh CCs may apply for the £1.2M funding available.</p> <p>It is the Housing, Work and Homelessness Committee at Edinburgh Council who approve applications and Cllr Whyte may be ineligible to support.</p>	Noted
(c)	<p>Next Steps It is believed that the CC would not have to manage the project but would be a member of an oversight/steering group of the project. It is believed that the E&LGT may obtain the grant rather than the CC as the Trust would let any contract to a landscape company.</p> <p>CA is meeting CEC Parks and E&LGT on 13th March and may invite them to the next CC meeting.</p>	CA
(d)	<p>Acknowledgement Thanks were made to CA for the significant work undertaken to date and the level of detail in the proposed funding application. It was felt that the minor cost for consultation and information of affected residents and neighbours should be included in the bid.</p>	Noted
8	Planning	
(a)	<p>Applications Over the last 12 week period 5 applications have been granted and 4 refused (2 of which the Community Council objected i.e. Iceland security fence + STL at 13PF3 Piersfield Grove) by CEC; another 17 were submitted to CEC, but didn't warrant comment from N&WCC.</p>	Noted
(b)	<p>Short Term Lets 6 STL planning applications were made with one objection as it did not meet CEC criteria. CA presented the draft NWCC STL policy, requesting comments from members. Once finalised, it will be placed on the NWCC website.</p>	CA, GM
(c)	<p>Dedicated Planning NWCC Email Address New planning dedicated email address to be set up by GM for CA to allow responses from CEC & others related to planning issues to be sent to CA direct.</p>	GM
(d)	<p>Proposed student accommodation at Willowbrae Road The proposed student accommodation at Willowbrae Road will likely come to the CEC Planning Subcommittee in a couple of months and Cllr Aston has asked for it to go before the</p>	Cllr Aston / CA

	committee and CA agreed to attend and speak on behalf of the N&WCC.	
(e)	<p>16 Church Lane House Extension</p> <p>NM raised that Duddingston Conservation Society have registered their objection to this on the grounds that it's a grade B listed building in a conservation area and that the extension is huge and out of keeping with the existing building. A more recent amendment to the planning app was made. Any representation needs to be made before the end of March. CA will use his professional experience to assess the application and let the DCS know whether there are legitimate grounds to object.</p>	CA
9	Any other competent business & Public Forum	
(a)	MB reminded all community councillors to send her any comments on the draft response to the new Council Scheme for CCs by 15th March at the latest.	Noted
10	Date of Next Meeting	
(a)	Tuesday 14 May 2024.	Noted