

Northfield and Willowbrae Community Council

Minutes of meeting held on 16th July at 7pm at Northfield and Willowbrae Community Centre

Present: Chair- Gordon MacDonald.
Secretary - Nick Marshall.
Vice-Chair - Dave Armstrong.
Treasurer - Chris Alcorn.
Engagement Officer - Margaret Bennett.
James Keating.

Also Present: 8 members of the public.

Apologies: Ellie Burroughs; Charlie Wood; Cllr Danny Aston; Cllr Alex Stanniforth; Cllr Joan Griffiths.

1. The Chair gave the 5 apologies above and welcomed all those present.
2. The minutes of the AGM and meeting on 14th May 2024 were formally approved, proposed by MB and seconded by CA.
3. Minutes of last meeting on Tuesday 16th March - Matters Arising:
 - (a) **Police Report** - nothing available.
 - (b) **Lady Nairne wall repair** - MB had reminded council officer involved, but still no reply and expressed this was most disappointing and disrespectful of CEC towards the Community Council.
 - (c) **ASB at Royal High PS** - CA had spoken to the nursery manager again, but still not clear what outline costs to School for additional lights or cameras suggested by the police.
 - (d) **St John's RC PS street signage** - CW had reported previously that this sign should have been installed by mid-May, but not yet in place at time of May meeting.
 - (e) **Baronscourt Park** - While grant received for installation of bench, it had not been progressed till Bank Account verification matter resolved to allow invoices to be paid timeously – see below at (h).
 - (f) **Holyrood Park consultation** - CA had raised with HES Manager and he responded that HES Board was due to consider consultation report at end of August and it should be released in September.
 - (g) **Bank Account signatories** - CA had visited Portobello Bank of Scotland and also spoke to Call Centre and been given instructions for changes to signatories process to include JK, GM, DA, NM who were progressing forms. CA to meet former Treasurer and Co-Treasurer JN, FD to get them to sign removal.
 - (h) **Financial Matters** - CA submitted Treasurer's Report for period since last meeting: Outgoings = £0.00; Incoming = £0.00; Available = £3,397.28; Due to receive annual CEC grant in August and also £2,600 grant from CEC for Environment Fair and LPP. Ongoing issue with Bank of Scotland to release Card readers and cards to other CC members to allow for 2nd verification to Treasurer's on-line invoice payments. Commitments of £329.12 e.g.; for Insurance, One.com subscription, Room Hire. DA mentioned £75.00 contribution to hire of Portobello Town hall for General Election hustings.
 - (i) **Engagement** - MB had followed up initial positive reply from Portobello HS (PT Modern Studies) but session had not occurred before holidays. Coffee mornings held on Saturday 8th June had c8 people attending. Next session due Saturday 3rd August, 10am -12.00 at the Community Centre. MB also considering official complaint to council re lack of action on Piershill community flat.
 - (j) **69 Bus re-instatement** - the service had been put out to tender by CEC and due to report back in July.
 - (k) **Street Tree replacement** - no update other than numerous applications to CEC Place Based Investment Programme, including N&WCC for street tree replacement, due at Housing Committee in late August.
4. **Local Place Plan (LPP)** - MB updated on progress. As of mid-July, 86 on-line questionnaires had been completed. Coffee mornings related to the LPP were held on 13th April and 8th June. At Environment Fair on 21/9 there is an intention to put up a display of what people had shared and encourage more views. Related LPP earlier walkabouts at Lady Narine, Piershill and Northfield had been helpful. NM mentioned link to LPP questionnaire is on Community Council website and also recent consultation on Seafield Regeneration. JK stated he still had the LPP Questionnaire to hand-out to local businesses on Portobello Road.

5. **Northfield Estate Centenary** - DA indicated this had occurred during pandemic as community would have had plans to celebrate it. The Edinburgh Reporter had carried a double-page spread in 2021 about early Northfield with a lot of research mentioned. Mr Coleman, resident of Northfield Circus who had been on the LPP walkabout, mentioned it had been completed in 1924. He has a sapling from the ancient Birnam Oak grown from 2022 and he was willing to donate it to planting in the Circus open space. **CA** to organise a site meeting with CEC Parks & Greenspace Manager & Mr Coleman to assess best location and suitability and possibility of a related information board, subject to separate grant being raised. Mr Coleman offered to visit residents with letter explaining the project. Other Community Cllr, EB, lived in nearby Northfield Crescent and as an urban planner, to be asked for comments. Suggestion that writer of Reporter article be asked to give a talk sometime about Northfield Estate. **CA** to progress.

6. **Information Board at Lilyhill Terrace** - original location on railings by flats scuppered by Factor requiring community council to commit to maintain railings in perpetuity. Other option is sink posts in ground at Lilyhill Tce where path into Holyrood Park, but likely costs due to pavement. HES own adjacent wall. **NM & CA** to meet Martin Gray, HES Manager or a Ranger on site and suggest swop with HES Noticeboard. Fall back option would be to use remaining CEC committed funds for a noticeboard at Parsons Green Primary School.

7. **Environment Fair** - NM related it is to be held on Saturday 21st September and occupy whole of Northfield Community Centre. Main Hall organised slightly differently from 2023. Outside, Repair café, police cycle marking and HES Rangers with mini-beast hunt. Also music and theatre in café area and tea, coffee & cakes by Portobello Time-bank. In Green Room, a LPP display and opportunity for people to contribute more comments and also see info about local businesses. MB was intending to photograph all local businesses for display.

The Fair has two aims: 1) inform people about environmental issues that effect this area and 2) encourage people to come together and get involved in local activities. This year hope to encourage local businesses through information provision and encourage people to buy local. NM indicated keen to have help and people could get in touch via the Community Council Secretary e-mail address. MB outlined the feedback from last year's Fair was that few people came before Noon and that a lot more activities for children and parents were needed. She was collecting bric-a-brac for a stall with proceeds to go to Community Council costs. Confirmation also that Asian Ladies would provide a jams and chutneys stall and Henna painting and St Margaret's House craft workers were attending.

8. **Planning matters** (mid-May - mid-July) - CA related that for proposed student accommodation at 229 Willowbrae Road, the developers appeal to Scottish Government's Reports Unit website indicated that decision was being finalised and target date was 21.8.24 . Three Short Term Lets applications at Balieyfield Road, Piersfield Grove and Southfield Place had all been refused. 2 applications, one of which the community council had commented on at Willowbrae Road, had been withdrawn.

AOCB - members of the public raised the recent Portobello Beach pollution incident? DA mentioned the new Labour MP had already raised this with SEPA and also written to relevant Scottish Government Minister. It had been an election issue and Fergal Sharkey had visited Portobello Beach.

MB proposed sharing out Secretarial duties. Agreed a separate meeting to be held on this issue before next community council meeting.

MB mentioned great to see so many members of the public attending the community council (CC) meeting and that CC elections in 2024 had been delayed due to proposed new CEC Community Council Scheme on how CC operate. Northfield & Willowbrae CC can have up to 14 members and it is really important to have a range of people, especially young people, join the CC as after covid, membership had been particularly low.

9. **Date of next meeting - Tuesday 10th September, 7.00pm at Northfield Community Centre.**