

Northfield and Willowbrae Community Council

Minutes of meeting held on 10th September at 7pm at Northfield and Willowbrae Community Centre

Present: Chair- Gordon MacDonald.
Treasurer - Chris Alcorn.
Engagement Officer - Margaret Bennett.
James Keating, Charlie Wood.

Also Present: Cllr Alex Staniforth, 3 members of the public.

Apologies: Ellie Burroughs, Dave Armstrong, Nick Marshall, Cllr Danny Aston.

1. The Chair gave the apologies above and welcomed all those present. It was noted that two of our members were unlikely to be able to participate in the community council for the foreseeable future. We wish them both well.
2. The minutes of the AGM and meeting on 16th July 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** - PC Morrison was unable to attend the meeting, no report was presented.
 - b. **Lady Nairne wall repair** (MB)

We received no response to the email sent on behalf of the Community council after our last meeting. We did subsequently receive an update via Cllr Aston after asking him to intervene. The council are planning to have the vegetation cleared to allow a proper survey of the wall to determine a plan of action, but no date has yet been agreed for the start of this work. It would appear that neither the community council nor local residents pursuing this issue are being updated directly.
 - c. **69 bus reinstatement** (MB)

An update from Cllr Staniforth during the meeting suggested the bus route is to be presented to CEC Transport & Environment Committee in October. The delay is because of the necessity to restart the tendering process. We have had no feedback on our route suggestions, and do not know if they will be taken into account.
 - d. **Piershill Community Flat** (MB)

Having had no response on this for several months, we were informed the officer we were communicating with had left the council. Update from the person covering their post is that the council is now reviewing an engineering report on the condition of the flat.

At this point there was a general discussion on the lack of engagement from the council with us on the previous three points, and the marginalisation of CCs in general. It was agreed to take the following actions:

- Send an email to the Council CEO, copying ward councillors, highlighting the lack of response on these issues and asking what can be done to improve the council's engagement with CCs. **(MB)**
 - Submit a formal complaint on the council's handling of the Lady Nairne Wall issue. **(MB)**
- e. **EACC** - NM was not present, no update given.
- f. **St John's RC PS street signage** (CW)
The sign is still not repaired. Council officers are meeting with the manufacturers on Sep 17th. Will request an update after that meeting. **(CW)**
- g. **Baronscourt Park** (CA)
Bench still pending due to ongoing Bank Account verification issues and not wishing to incur an invoice we can't pay - see below under Financial. Council has funding for lighting improvements, expected to be in place by spring or summer 2025 . A member of the public raised the issue of park paths becoming slippery with grass cuttings, which are not collected when the grass is cut. Will raise with CEC Parks Manager Scott Thompson **(CA)**.
- h. **LPP Consultation** (MB)
Nothing to report, no response from Portobello High School.
- i. **Place Based Investment** (CA)
We proposed street tree replacement in partnership with Edinburgh & Lothians Greenspace Trust. CEC Housing Committee initially deferred the decision due to the large number of applicants. Government funding now under review, council will not proceed to award grants until funding is clearer in Winter 2024 / Spring 2025.
- j. **Local Place Plan** – (MB/CA)
A brief update was given relating to coffee mornings on August 3rd and planned on October 5th. Flyers related to LPP have been distributed on the back of back of Environment Fair flyers
- k. **Northfield Centenary** (CA)
Event to plant a commemorative tree now planned for October.
- l. **Lillyhill Terrace Notice Board** (CA)
After discussion with the factor of nearby flats, we cannot place the board on the flats wall as would result in the council having to take responsibility for all maintenance on the wall. Looking at other options, site visit planned with Historic Environment Scotland. **CA & GM** to take over from NM on this issue.
- m. **Environment Fair** (MB)
Positive list of attendees. Six banners have been put out round the area, posters have been distributed to shops and public spaces. All schools have been asked to flag the Fair in their newsletters

4. Financial

- a. **Report** (CA)
Financial report for the period of last meeting to date has been circulated by CA. Outgoings since last Community Council meeting in mid-July = £304.22 / Pending £252.88 / Incoming = £0.00 / Available = £3,093.06. Two Pending grants from CEC totalling £3,360 due.
(though c£6,453.06 should be available when 2 CEC grants - for Environment Fair/ LPP & Annual Grant - arrive).
- b. **Bank Account Transfer** (CA)
In progress, but Bank of Scotland very slow. Paperwork re-signed. Concern that we may not be able to pay invoices promptly is holding up some projects, e.g. Baronscourt Park bench.
- c. **Accounts and Annual Report** (CA)

In preparation, it is hoped to be presented to CEC to enable our annual grant to be released once the Financial Assessor has reviewed 2023/24 paperwork..

5. Management

a. Secretarial Duties

On-line Meeting held, some duties have now been re-allocated.

6. Planning

a. Willowbrae Student Accommodation (CA)

The planning application for student accommodation on Willowbrae Road has been approved by the Scottish Government Reporter. There is no further right to appeal. At a recent Cockburn Association Civic Forum, CEC Planning were asked to review their Planning Guidance on student accommodation which they indicated they would. Over the 8 week period since the last meeting in mid-July: 6 applications have been granted / 9 submitted and 7 await decision. Comments submitted on application to erect Apart-hotel at 3 Piershill Terrace.

7. AOCB

a. Cavalry Park

A member of the public raised an issue with anti-social behaviour and parking issues in the area of the car park off Duddingston Road West, next to the playing fields, which are now more heavily used since Edinburgh Leisure took over management. **MB** offered to arrange a site visit and Councillor Staniforth agreed to attend with members of the LPP sub-group committee.

b. Coffee Mornings

Next Coffee Morning is on Saturday 5th October, Northfield Community Centre.

8. Date of next meeting

Tuesday 12th November, 7.00pm at Northfield Community Centre.

Actions

Action	Who
Email to CEC CEO addressing lack of engagement by council.	MB
Complaint on council's handling of Lady Nairne Wall.	MB
St John's RC PS street signage.	CW
Baronscourt Park grass cuttings.	CA
Lillyhill Terrace Notice Board.	CA & GM
Cavalry Park site visit.	MB

Draft B