

MURRAYFIELD COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Annual General Meeting
held on Tuesday, 6 October 2020 at 6.45pm
by Zoom
Chair: J Yellowlees

Present: A Anderson, R Beavis, R Brown, J Forbes, P Gregson, B Knowles,
N Macdonald, J McDonough, N Oldroyd, M Stevens, H Whaley,
J Yellowlees,
Ex officio: Cllr Gillian Gloyer,
In attendance: 6 members of the public,
Apologies: E Robertson, Cllr Scott Douglas, Cllr Karen Doran, Cllr Claire
Miller, Cllr Jo Mowat, Cllr Alasdair Rankin, Cllr Frank Ross,
Jeremy Balfour, MSP, Miles Briggs, MSP, Ruth Davidson, MSP,
Sarah Boyack, MSP, Neil Findlay, MSP, Alison Johnstone, MSP,
Gordon Lindhurst, MSP, Andy Wightman, MSP, Christine Jardine,
MP.

1. Welcome and Apologies

Apologies were received as above. The Chairman welcomed those in attendance. He explained that the AGM should have been held in May but had been postponed because of the restrictions relating to the Covid-19 pandemic.

2. Order of Business

This was approved.

3. Approval of Minutes of AGM held on 14 May 2019

These were approved.

Prop: N Macdonald, Sec: R Beavis.

4. Chairman's and Secretary's Report

The Chairman had circulated his report by email prior to the meeting. A copy is attached.

5. Treasurer's Submission of Audited Accounts

The Treasurer had submitted the audited Accounts for 2019-2020 by email prior to the meeting. A copy is attached.

The Chairman commented that he would like MCC to spend the annual grant of £842 received from the City Council. He proposed that MCC fund a plaque in memory of Charles H Mackie, a renowned Edinburgh artist who had inspired a biography by former local resident, Pat Clark, and whose studio had stood on Glasgow Road on the site of Murrayburgh House. The Chairman reported that J Forbes had suggested the small section of stone boundary wall adjoining Murrayburgh House as a more appropriate location for a plaque than the modern office building itself.

The Treasurer was happy to support this proposal but said that he was putting together an operational budget for the rest of the financial year and did not want to commit funds to it until he knew what other projects there might be.

J Forbes asked what the installation costs would be in addition to the estimated cost of the plaque (£145). The Chairman imagined that bolts and screws would be required. The Treasurer estimated £50 - £100 for installation.

In answer to a question from R Brown about who owns the wall the Chairman said that he did not know but had contact details for the factor of Murrayburgh House.

It was agreed that he would pursue the installation of a plaque without committing MCC.

R Beavis commented that MCC's small budget made it difficult to come up with projects which would make a real impact on, and engage the interest of, the community. In answer to a question from the Treasurer he said that he thought a sum of the order of £5000 would enable MCC to support local groups and complete projects, such as the Christmas tree on the Old Colt Bridge, which would bring the community together.

P Gregson said that if the refurbishment of the drinking fountain in Roseburn Park got the go ahead, the Friends of Roseburn Park would ask MCC for financial help with that.

R Beavis suggested that community projects and engagement should be an item for discussion on a future Agenda.

J Forbes thought that there was room for both events to promote community engagement and something more permanent such as a plaque.

In answer to a question from P Gregson the Treasurer confirmed that the Christmas tree to be provided by the Council for the Old Colt Bridge will cost MCC nothing and the Council are also to provide lights.

6. Social Engagement Report

The Chairman reported that Hamish Ross had been looking after MCC's website and social media accounts and had submitted a report by email prior to the meeting. A copy is attached.

H Ross had said that MCC needed one of its members to take charge of the social media accounts and the Chairman had approached H Whaley.

H Whaley explained that he was fully committed elsewhere and did not feel he had the capacity to take anything else on. He asked whether MCC wanted to use social media as a broadcast medium only or as a way to ascertain the views of the community. If the latter, there would have to be a mechanism by which MCC could respond appropriately and continue to do so.

The Treasurer felt that social media should be a tool for two-way engagement and outreach to parts of the community which MCC does not currently reach. He suggested bringing someone in from outside, perhaps a media studies or marketing student at one of the colleges, to undertake the role.

N Oldroyd mentioned Cllr Scott Arthur (Colinton/Fairmilehead) as an example of someone who uses social media very effectively and wondered whether MCC could achieve something similar in conjunction with the City Councillors.

Cllr Gloyer felt that maintaining the same level of engagement with the public as Cllr Arthur achieves could become all consuming, but was amenable to the idea of some form of co-operation among MCC, Cllrs Douglas and Ross and herself.

R Beavis suggested that a list of all the local community groups would be a useful starting point for a discussion on how MCC could support them.

The Chairman pointed out that the Murrayfield Grapevine contains details of many such groups.

R Beavis felt that MCC should hold initial discussions on how to take this forward in private before presenting a range of options at a public meeting. He accepted the Treasurer's suggestion that he stand for the office of Engagement Officer and set up a steering committee to facilitate community engagement, one member of which could take on responsibility for social media.

The Chairman commented that the MCC noticeboards are a valuable analogue resource.

R Beavis expressed a wish to work more closely with the Friends of Roseburn Park and the Chairman reminded the meeting that their AGM will take place on 28 October 2020.

7. Election of Office Bearers

The Chairman reported that MCC would like to appoint a Vice Chairman but would not require a Secretary, as aspects of that role are fulfilled by several people.

Cllr Gloyer took the Chair and the office bearers stood down. Cllr Gloyer reported that all the previous office bearers had indicated their willingness to serve again and asked whether there were any other nominations. In the absence of any further nominations the office bearers were re-elected without a contest as follows:-

Chairman: J Yellowlees	Prop: J Forbes, Sec: R Brown
Vice Chairman: J Forbes	Prop: R Brown, Sec: J McDonough
Treasurer: J McDonough	Prop: J Yellowlees, Sec: M Stevens
Minutes Secretary: R Brown	Prop: J McDonough, Sec: J Yellowlees
Engagement Officer: R Beavis	Prop: J McDonough, Sec: J Yellowlees

Cllr Gloyer congratulated the newly elected office bearers and J Yellowlees took the Chair.

In response to a question from H Whaley Cllr Gloyer confirmed that no formalities were required for him to continue as the nominated representative of a local interest group, his nomination being valid until the next Community Council elections.

The Chairman asked whether there had been any developments in finding a young person to join MCC. R Brown replied that the young person who had agreed to join some time ago had then withdrawn without having attended any meetings. The Chairman felt that it was incumbent on all MCC members to attempt to find a replacement.

8. Any Other Competent Business

There were no other items of business.

A member of the public expressed her admiration of the elegant MCC noticeboard at Roseburn. The Chairman explained that it was the achievement of MCC's former Secretary, Helen Barbour.

9. Date of next AGM and Close

It was agreed that the next AGM would take place on Tuesday, [18 May] 2021.

The Chairman closed the Annual General Meeting.

Minutes approved at AGM of 9 November 2021.

MURRAYFIELD COMMUNITY COUNCIL 2020 AGM
CHAIRMAN/SECRETARY'S REPORT

Our main successes during 2019/20 were on planning applications that threatened the character of the West Murrayfield Conservation Area and environs, and here I want to pay tribute to the hard work put in at home and on the high seas by Jim Forbes. At The Tor, 30 Corstorphine Road a compromise emerged which addressed our concerns about the mass of the development and about loss of trees. At 37 Corstorphine Road we supported rejection of a scheme which was at odds with the historic character of the Lamp Acre, though unfortunately the successor application looks to us insufficiently different and we have restated our concern over greenspace. At 9/11 Corstorphine Road another unsympathetic proposal was seen off, but at 33 Pinkhill the developer's third application was accepted: and redevelopment of Osborn House was granted on appeal as a hotel - though whether that proves viable in the new world that we find ourselves in remains to be seen. We have stayed engaged at 9 Kinellan Road - a location that had reached national prominence before the developer submitted an inaccurate planning application, then proceeded to conduct renewed illicit tree-cutting and nuisance burning - and are now pressing that there should be a full ecological survey of the implications for wildlife.

On CCWEL, notwithstanding our giving two days to a hearing with reporter Mike Croft and holding a cycle-count carried out by volunteers for MCC, he simply dismissed concerns about the Traffic Regulation Order but a further one will be required if in the face of intense local opposition Stanhope Street has to be made one-way in order to accommodate an additional crossing on the A8. Scottish Ministers approved the Redetermination Order, and work is expected to begin next year.

With a viewing platform that had divided opinion seen off, Rejuvenating Roseburn was on hold, but the year's nastiest surprise proved to be the arrival in December of a street trader selling Christmas trees on the Old Colt Bridge whom it seemed everyone was powerless to stop! We are grateful to the City Council's John McNeill for his subsequent efforts to help us prevent a repetition, and are pleased that our application for the space has been unopposed.

Other traffic issues that regrettably failed to progress were pavement-widening on Ellersly Road and a pedestrian crossing for Murrayfield Road, where the City Council reached the untenable position that a proposal that had been warmly embraced by the politicians was rejected by officers as not meeting the technical criteria. We shall be watching out for progress from these projects' inclusion in the Project Bank of the Western Edinburgh Neighbourhood Environmental Programme, if there is to be one, and are aware that there is now a fast-moving scenario citywide on the Spaces for People programme in order that socially-distanced active travel options may be delivered in the post-pandemic "new normal".

A familiar theme returned when we heard from flood prevention manager Gordon McOmish about how the City Council manages its new defences completed two years ago. Baird residents brought to our attention how there may be unfinished business until their side of the river can enjoy the same protection as that enjoyed by the Scottish Rugby Union.

We were glad to see repairs carried out to the Coltbridge Viaduct that carries the Roseburn railway path across the Water of Leith, and were delighted to be able to publish on our website a walking guide by Rosie Bell to Coltbridge and Roseburn, a perfect antidote to these challenging times.

Happiest moment of the year undoubtedly was the inauguration of the splendid new The Message Must Get Through mural on the Armoury Building. The Friends of Roseburn Park are to be congratulated also on their fundraising for the conversion of the old toilet-block into a cafe - what they need now is someone to operate it. We were pleased to support an application to inscribe the Armoury in the Park as a War Memorial with the War Memorials Trust, and welcome the investment in upgrading two pitches at the Park which was a condition of the planning permission granted to Scottish Rugby for the new mini stadium on the back pitches at BT Murrayfield for Edinburgh Rugby. The Police took on board our concern about anti-social behaviour on match days at BT Murrayfield, and agreed that instead of reciting statistics their reports to us should in future provide a narrative about trends and themes.

We addressed the vexed question of overhanging vegetation by devising our own standard letter for handing out to householders.

At the autumn election we bade a fond farewell to three stalwarts, our first chair and later planning spokesperson Robert Smart, treasurer Stephen Holland and secretary Helen Barbour, welcomed the return of Liz Robertson and said hello to new members Nikki Oldroyd and Jim McDonough, who is already our treasurer. We are managing without a secretary, the key role of minute-taking being performed with continued aplomb by Rosanne Brown, and the new role of an engagement officer for now has been filled by Hamish Ross managing our website, but as he says in his report we would all be very pleased if there was a volunteer to take over management of our Facebook and Twitter accounts.

Our programme of meetings has of course been interrupted by national events. Instead of gathering here in December, some of us went along to the General Election Hustings in Corstorphine. Then from April onwards our meetings fell victim to the lockdown, during which both our splendid new noticeboard at Roseburn and the older one at Western Corner carried instead progress reports on the main issues noted above until we took to Zoom for our meeting on 1 September.

In May we noted with regret the passing of Derek Huckle, who had retired as our Vice-Chair in 2016, having proved a doughty champion of our causes at the Western Edinburgh Neighbourhood Partnership and elsewhere and on a personal level shown strong support.

Community Councils exist not so much to do things as to ensure that they get done, and I want to pay continuing tribute to our City Councillors Gillian Gloyer, Scott Douglas and Lord Provost Frank Ross for their patient supportiveness and for being willing to give up their evenings for us. I am grateful to my fellow Community Councillors for their unfailing help and cheerfulness. And in the lockdown I have found out how much I missed the engagement with the members of the public, whose stimulating interaction gives a positive momentum to our proceedings.