

MURRAYFIELD COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Ordinary Meeting  
held on Tuesday, 3 December 2013 at 8pm  
in Murrayfield Parish Church Centre  
Chair: J Yellowlees

Present: W Amcotts, R Brown, G Douglas, J Forbes, V Forbes, S Holland,  
D Huckle, N Macdonald, G McLeod, E Robertson, P Sizeland,  
R Smart, W Spence, J Yellowlees,  
*Ex officio:* Cllr Balfour, Cllr Edie, Cllr Ross,  
In attendance: 10 members of the public, PC Karen Mackenzie, Sarah Boyack  
MSP,  
Apologies: M Crockart MP, M Biagi MSP.

1. Welcome and Apologies

Apologies were received as above. The Chairman welcomed those in attendance. Cllr Balfour, as Returning Officer for the recent Murrayfield Community Council ("MCC") election, intimated that he had received timeous nominations for William Amcotts, Rosanne Brown, Jim Forbes, Stephen Holland, Derek Huckle, George McLeod, Elizabeth Robertson, Paul Sizeland, Walter Spence and John Yellowlees and, as the number of vacancies exceeded the number of nominations, these persons were all duly elected. Local interest group nominations had been received from Donaldson Area Amenity Association for George Douglas and Saughtonhall Community Association for Paul Sizeland and they had been duly elected. Robert Smart's nomination had not been received on time and Cllr Balfour had not received nominations from Murrayfield Parish Church for Norma Macdonald or the Friends of Roseburn Park for Valerie Forbes. The Community Councillors present voted to co-opt these three.

The following were elected to the principal offices of MCC:-

Chairman: J Yellowlees; Prop: R Smart, Sec: E Robertson  
Secretary: E Robertson; Prop: S Holland, Sec: W Spence  
Treasurer: S Holland; Prop: R Smart, Sec: D Huckle.

S Holland informed the meeting that the Model Constitution, which had been revised by the City Council as part of the review of the Community Council Scheme, differed from the previous version in only a few unobjectionable respects. The meeting formally adopted the Model Constitution and Standing Orders, copies of which are attached to these Minutes.

2. Order of Business

This was approved.

3. Sarah Boyack MSP

Sarah Boyack informed the meeting that, as one of the three Labour List MSPs for Lothian, she concentrates on Edinburgh Central, West and Pentlands. She is the Labour spokesperson on Local Government and Town Planning and chairs cross party groups on Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency and International Development. She is particularly interested in the Flood Prevention Scheme, with which she has been involved from the start, originally as MSP for Central Edinburgh.

Sarah Boyack provided an update on her parliamentary work as follows:-

3.1 A five year campaign to rid the City of “party flats” has resulted in new legislation, the adoption by the Council of a new planning policy and the creation of a dedicated Council team to deal with these properties. A successful court action under the new legislation has enabled the Council to take over two party flats in Grove Street;

3.2 A cross party group has been working to improve the system of statutory notices with a view to assisting owners to reach agreement rather than having to resort to a statutory notice with the Council organising and carrying out the necessary work. She is to meet the Minister for Local Government next week;

3.3 She had been concerned by the proposal to close public counters at several Police stations or reduce their opening hours as part of the re-organisation of the Police following the creation of the unitary authority. She was pleased to inform the meeting that South Queensferry is no longer affected by these proposals;

3.4 The proposal to reduce the number of Fire Control Centres to two for the whole of Scotland had caused similar concern. The number is now to be three and she will be meeting the Fire Service to discuss the situation further;

3.5 She referred the meeting to her monthly eBrief on Local Government and Town Planning issues and encouraged participation, as she is keen to improve community consultation and feedback;

3.6 In the past month the Referendum Bill has been passed and the White Paper on Independence published and she expects these issues to dominate the coming months; her blog provides reports on the public meetings she attends and can be used to put questions to her.

In relation to Item 3.5 Jim Forbes referred to MCC’s recent involvement in two planning applications in relation to which it was felt that the community’s views, as expressed by MCC, had been ignored. He expressed concern about the integrity of the planning process. G Douglas explained that the second application for the Ellersly Road development, which was substantially different from the original, had been treated by the Planning Department as a mere amendment with a consequent reduction in timescale, advertising and opportunity to comment. R Smart detailed his reservations about the appeals process, to which Cllr Ross responded.

Sarah Boyack conceded that the requirements of the Town & Country Planning (Scotland) Act 2006, which calls for more upfront consultation by developers, has the effect of prolonging the application process and can make it difficult for the public to keep track of the progress of an application. She reminded the meeting that, if planning permission has been granted in contravention of the Local Plan after objections from the local community, the Scottish Government can be asked to call in the application for further scrutiny.

Sarah Boyack advised that, if MCC wished to comment on an application, a verbal presentation to the Planning Committee would have more impact than a written submission.

A member of the public asked whether the SRU had planning permission for a new sound system, as he had noticed an increased volume of music before the last rugby match against Australia. He was told that the music emanated from the bar outside the Stadium. **Cllr Balfour** explained that the bar had a separate licence subject to different conditions from the Stadium. He **undertook to convey the comments on noise to the Licensing Board.**

4. Community Policing Report

PC Karen Mackenzie from the Community Policing team based at Corstorphine Police Station reported as follows:-

4.1 The Police have responded to the seasonal increase in house breaking with high visibility foot and mobile patrols and have had some success in identifying the culprits;

4.2 They have continued to make regular visits to licensed premises and to work with the Community Safety and Environmental Wardens to minimise any issues;

4.3 She cautioned against leaving valuables on display in vehicles and leaving unlocked cars unattended even for a few minutes, e.g. while defrosting windscreens;

4.4 In response to the question raised with her colleague by P Sizeland about setting up a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme, she referred him to the relevant website for information and draft documents and confirmed that the Police do not have to be involved in the setting up of such Schemes;

4.5 She confirmed that her colleague, PC Sinclair, is dealing with MCC's request for cycle road markings and she hoped to be able to report some progress at the next MCC meeting.

D Huckle asked about the use of cones to control traffic on international rugby match days. Cllr Balfour explained that the cones are used to control parking in the vicinity of Murrayfield Stadium only when a match is expected to attract a full capacity crowd.

D Huckle expressed concern about cyclists who are not sufficiently visible or who cycle dangerously. PC Mackenzie confirmed that the Police do speak to such cyclists if they have the opportunity to do so. Cllr Ross confirmed that the last West Edinburgh Neighbourhood Partnership ("WENP") meeting had identified the conduct of cyclists in the Murrayfield/Roseburn area as a priority issue.

V Forbes and a member of the public raised concerns about restrictions on residents accessing their homes on foot or by car during and after matches at the Stadium. **PC Mackenzie undertook to feed these comments back to the Events Planning Team.**

In a discussion on the availability of alcohol Cllrs Balfour and Edie confirmed that each Council has its own policy and, while drinking alcohol in the street is banned in Glasgow, Edinburgh's policy is that such a ban would prevent bars and cafes from having outdoor tables.

A member of the public confirmed that at the last meeting of Roseburn residents with the SRU, the SRU had confirmed that Celtic Football Club had approached the SRU about using the Stadium for some matches next year, but nothing had as yet been agreed.

5. Councillors' Report

Cllr Ross reported as follows:-

5.1 He has spent a lot of time since the end of October dealing with the aftermath of the fire at the Corstorphine Youth & Community Centre; the staff have had to be relocated and alternative venues found for 38 community groups;

5.2 He had already mentioned the priority to be given to cyclists' behaviour by WENP;

5.3 His surgeries at Roseburn Primary and Saughtonhall Church Hall had been attracting increasing numbers of people.

Cllr Edie reported as follows:-

5.4 He had been told by the Community Safety Team that the owner of the Paradise Sauna at Roseburn wished to give up the business, but it had re-opened pending the appeal against its closure. The Council have “washed their hands” of saunas and intend to leave their regulation to the criminal justice system; Cllr Balfour added that the NHS, Police and Trading Standards all have powers to intervene in certain situations;

5.5 A test run of a tram to Haymarket had been carried out late on 2 December; he thought that the trams would assist the flow of people on rugby match days;

V Forbes, R Smart and a member of the public all commented on the new arrangements at Haymarket. It was noted that the new “shelter” outside the Station provides no shelter. Cllr Balfour confirmed that leaving Haymarket Station on foot inevitably involves crossing the tram tracks. He and Cllr Edie informed the meeting that there will be taxi ranks at the end of Dalry Road and Rosebery Crescent. The new hall at the Station will be opened on 11 December.

There was further discussion of the Paradise Sauna and the fact that it had attracted little adverse comment throughout many years of operation. E Robertson advocated a system of licensing and regulation of saunas with regular health checks for the workers, as is in place in some other European cities.

6. Flood prevention update

Cllr Ross reported that he had attended a stakeholder engagement meeting to discuss the Flood Prevention Scheme on 23 September. It had been poorly attended. Of the stakeholders invited only Murrayfield Ice Rink, Murrayfield Stadium and Roseburn Primary School had been represented. V Forbes pointed out that the Friends of Roseburn Park had not received an invitation. The meeting had discussed the work carried out at the reservoirs, the completion of Phase 1, the availability of £19.9m for Phase 2 and the funding deficit of £5.1m. The meeting was tasked with identifying additional funding and reducing the deficit by cutting back on the level of defence provided by Phase 2. Cllr Ross undertook to provide MCC with a copy of the notes of the meeting. Five actions had been agreed:-

1. A presentation was to be given to MCC,
2. A note of the meeting was to be circulated to all parties invited to the meeting,
3. A Stakeholder Working Group was to be set up,
4. An exhibition was to be held for local residents and
5. A further meeting on 2 December was to be advertised.

Cllr Ross had enquired why none of these actions had been completed and had been told that the Council officers responsible had either been off sick or had left the Council.

In response to questions from the floor Cllr Ross went over the history of the Flood Prevention Scheme – the fact that the original funding had not been split between the different phases of the Scheme, the overspend on Phase 1, the expectation of finding other funds for Phase 2 and the current need to modify the proposals for Phase 2.

A member of the public pointed out that local residents have been waiting for the Scheme for nearly 14 years.

Cllr Ross was asked about the timetable for Phase 2. He estimated that, on the basis that the Stakeholder Working Group will be set up in January 2014, the design and consultation process will take 5 months and the procurement

process 6 months, there will be “shovels in the ground” in 15 months’ time and the work will take 3 to 4 years.

Cllr Balfour informed the meeting that the overspend on Phase 1 will be discussed by the Transport and Finance Committees of the Council in January and he hoped to update MCC at MCC’s January meeting. The meeting requested that an officer of the Council also attend the next meeting to discuss the Flood Prevention Scheme.

Cllr Balfour left the meeting.

V Forbes reminded Cllr Ross that she had emailed him about the retaining wall in Roseburn Park which was broken in two places and subsiding. He replied that he had forwarded her email to Dave Sinclair at the Council who was looking into this.

7. Approval of Minutes of Ordinary Meeting held on 10 September 2013

These were approved. Prop: J Yellowlees, Sec: D Huckle.

8. Matters Arising

8.1. *Refuge Island in Ellersly Road*

In Cllr Balfour’s absence G McLeod provided an update on this issue. See Item 8.2.

8.2. *“Get it Sorted Together” Campaign*

G McLeod reported that he had attended a meeting with Dave Sinclair and Dan Rae of the Council on 22 October 2013. He confirmed that work is under way to construct a pedestrian refuge in Ellersly Road between Kinellan Road and the Capability Scotland premises.

A discussion of possible improvements to Roseburn Old Bridge was postponed to the next meeting.

8.3. *Signs to show right of way at St George’s School*

E Robertson confirmed that St George’s School accept that there is a right of way through the School. She reported that the Right of Way Society, whom she had contacted, are keen to document the right of way, but are not interested in pursuing the erection of signs, since the right of way is not being obstructed. She had also contacted the cycling group Spokes, but had had no response from them. Cllr Balfour had contacted the School and was willing to discuss the matter further with them, if MCC wished to pursue the erection of signs. G McLeod thought that Spokes should pursue the matter and pay for any signs. A member of the public suggested that a sign directing the public to the entrance to the cycle track would be appropriate, but that the access through the School need not be advertised, as local residents know about it. It was agreed to continue this matter to the next meeting.

8.4. *Roeseburn Park toilet block and cricket square*

This was not discussed.

8.5. *Pansy Walk re-opening*

W Spence reported that he had spoken to one of the contractor’s men and had been told that the Walk was to re-open on 3 December.

8.6. *Corstorphine Hill pedestrian access*

G McLeod reported that, as part of the same meeting, he had carried out a site inspection with the officials named at Item 8.1 and Dan Rae had since confirmed that the Council own the strip of land between the

dry stone wall along Ravelston Dykes Road and the trees belonging to Murrayfield Golf Club. **R Smart had undertaken to speak to the Golf Club about the possibility of installing a path there.**

8.7. *Public right of way Murrayfield Gardens/Campbell Avenue*

G McLeod reminded the meeting that this path belonged to the owners of 73 Murrayfield Gardens; MCC, through the offices of R Smart, had tried to have this path improved 5 or 6 years ago, but the owners were not prepared to co-operate; the house had recently been sold; Cllr Balfour had confirmed that the Council would be prepared to buy the path for a nominal sum and, after its improvement, be responsible for its upkeep. G McLeod had tried, so far without success, to contact the new owners.

8.8. *Commuter parking restricting access to The Maltings*

The Chairman noted that the member of the public who had raised this issue at a previous meeting was not present. S Holland reminded the meeting that the 18 months, which the Council had said it would take them to install yellow lines at the “pinch points”, had not yet expired and he suggested waiting until then before pursuing this matter further.

8.9. *Overhanging vegetation*

J Forbes pointed out that, if vegetation is not cut back now, the overhanging will be worse next year. He is in regular contact with Clarence about the vegetation in Ellersly Road and Cllr Balfour has said it will be dealt with.

G McLeod complained about vegetation between the traffic lights and the bus stop at Western Corner and a member of the public complained about the leaves which have accumulated at the bus stop at Roseburn near the Bank of Scotland.

8.10 *Bins blocking entrance to Caledonian Lodge*

A member of the public confirmed that the bins, about which Caledonian Lodge had complained, had been moved away from the Lodge entrance and are now on the road, and not the pavement, of Roseburn Gardens.

9. Planning and Licensing

R Smart reported that he had looked at 8 planning applications, none of which was significant. He understood that dialogue continued between the developer’s planning consultant and the Planning Department regarding the vacant site at 8 Kew Terrace. A member of the public noted that the site is currently being used for the sale of Christmas trees.

R Smart reported that, following consultation, the Scottish Government have made some modifications to the National Planning Framework and Policy.

G McLeod asked whether planning permission had been obtained for the demolition of a bungalow on the north side of Belmont Gardens. P Sizeland confirmed that the demolition had caused some disquiet among local residents and had prompted a site visit from the Cockburn Society. R Smart replied that he was not aware of a planning application having been submitted in respect of this property.

R Smart reported that there were no licensing issues of note.

The Chairman was obliged to leave the meeting at 10pm and the agenda could not, therefore, be completed.

10. Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday, 14 January 2014  
Subsequent meetings: 25 February, 1 April and 13 May 2014.

Minutes approved at meeting of 14 January 2014

for approval