

MURRAYFIELD COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Ordinary Meeting
held on Tuesday, 8 March 2016 at 7.30pm
in Murrayfield Parish Church Centre
Chair: J Yellowlees

Present: R Brown, G Douglas, J Forbes, V Forbes, S Holland,
E Robertson, R Smart, J Yellowlees,
Ex officio: Cllr Balfour,
In attendance: 16 members of the public, PC Steve Neill, Sgt Mark Wylie,
James Ogilvie, Saughtonhall Community Association,
Apologies: W Amcotts, D Huckle, N Macdonald, P Sizeland, Cllr Edie,
Cllr Ross, Margaret Laing, City of Edinburgh Council, Michelle
Thomson MP, M Biagi MSP, Sarah Boyack MSP, Cameron
Buchanan MSP.

1. Welcome and Apologies

Apologies were received as above. The Chairman welcomed those in attendance and asked those who had issues to raise with the City Councillors to do so at the stage of Councillors' Reports, rather than waiting until the end of the meeting.

2. Order of Business

This was approved.

3. Community Policing Report

The Chairman asked the Police representatives to introduce themselves. Sgt Mark Wylie explained that he is the Corstorphine and Murrayfield Community Sergeant, who has taken over from Sgt Annicea Madine. His colleague, PC Steve Neill, had previously been with the Prevention, Intervention and Partnerships team and had taken part in the crime prevention seminar, which the Police had held in Murrayfield Parish Church Hall on 29 February and which about 30 people had attended.

3.1 PC Neill reported as follows:

3.1.1 On the Murrayfield beat (Roseburn/Ravelston/Wester Coates) there had been 20 recorded crimes, 3 of which had been solved. There had been 8 housebreakings (5 to dwellings and 3 to non-dwellings), 3 thefts, 3 incidents of vandalism, 2 Road Traffic offences and 4 other incidents.

3.1.2 On the Corstorphine beat (Saughtonhall/Riversdale/Balgreen) there had been 29 recorded crimes, 13 of which had been solved. There had been 5 house breakings (4 to dwellings and 1 to non-dwellings), 2 thefts, 3 incidents of vandalism, 2 assaults, 4 Road Traffic offences and 13 other incidents.

3.2 PC Neill described some of the recent house breakings. In South Beechwood a kitchen window had been smashed, but no entry to the property had been gained. In Clermiston Road a small window beside the front door had been smashed, entry gained and items stolen. In Riversdale Road a ground floor sash window had been forced and jewellery, cash and a laptop taken. In Murrayfield Gardens a ground floor sash window had been forced and a 46" television and a Land Rover stolen. In Roseburn Maltings 2 garages had been broken into and 3 bikes stolen and in Wester Coates Gardens, while the owners were on holiday,

a garage door had been forced but nothing had been taken and entry to the house had not been gained.

3.3 PC Neill reported that the Police had received several calls from members of the public who had seen vehicles containing 3 or 4 people wearing balaclavas driving about. Several “high end” stolen vehicles had been recovered in nearby streets and their use in future burglaries prevented. He urged members of the public to report any vehicles parked in their neighbourhood, which they do not recognise and which arouse suspicion, to the Police.

PC Neill reassured the meeting that there are a number of Police teams and special Police operations still actively involved in combating house breaking and the Police are working with the Procurator Fiscal to try to ensure that the culprits are kept in prison.

3.4 Sgt Wylie reiterated the advice given at the crime prevention seminar. He advised making outbuildings secure to prevent the theft of tools which could be used to break in to a property and stated that rear patio doors and sash windows are particularly vulnerable. High end vehicles are often stolen to be used in several burglaries on the same night and then abandoned. He advised taking car keys upstairs at night. Sgt Wylie reminded the meeting that the Police offer a property inspection of at least an hour to give a home owner advice on domestic security measures. This can be arranged by emailing Corstorphine Police station, or calling 101 to arrange an appointment.

A Roseburn resident reported that, when she had been putting her car away in the garage at the back of her block of flats, she had been alarmed to see someone unfamiliar loitering nearby. She had phoned the Police and they had come and checked the building and found nothing, but the incident had unnerved her. Sgt Wylie advised that in a similar situation she should knock on a neighbour’s door or phone a neighbour or even pretend to be on the phone. Changing her daily routine would also be a good idea. He thought it would be worth asking the Crime Prevention team to carry out a security check on the building and produce a report which she could pass to the factor.

Another local resident complained about a large vehicle which had been parked for some time near his property in Roseburn Gardens. Its bodywork was in a very poor condition and he wondered whether it had a valid MOT. He was advised by Sgt Wylie that he could check whether the vehicle was registered and had an MOT on the VOSA (now DVSA) website. The Road Traffic Police can inspect vehicles at the roadside, issue warning notices and remove vehicles. They usually wait one month after expiry of the road tax before taking enforcement action.

PC Neill reminded the meeting that photographs of suspicious vehicles and people are helpful to the Police.

S Holland asked the Police representatives whether they thought that Neighbourhood Watch schemes are useful. Sgt Wylie thought that they are and said that there was advice available online. PC Neill conceded that the number of Neighbourhood Watches had declined since the Police stopped being actively involved in them 2 or 3 years ago, but that they could be of value and were best organised on a street by street basis. It was also helpful to the Police to have a single point of contact for a neighbourhood.

4. Councillors’ Reports and Issues for Councillors
Cllr Balfour reported as follows:-

4.1 The Council's SNP Group had met that evening and had elected Cllr Ross as Leader.

4.2 Planning permission had been granted for the redevelopment of the former Capability Scotland buildings in Ellersly Road. The same developer is redeveloping the former Ellersly Hotel.

4.3 The Council's Transport Committee will decide this week on the introduction of Sunday and evening parking charges in the City Centre.

4.4 Work on Phase 2 of the Flood Prevention Scheme has now begun in Roseburn Park and will take 18 months. A new play park will be provided and the Park will be reinstated. Facilities for football and cricket will continue during the work.

4.5 Failure to empty refuse bins on time continues to be a problem in certain parts of the local area and the Councillors have asked for a report on the issue.

4.6 The Council's Budget was passed at the end of January. The Council aims to reduce staff numbers by 2,000 by the end of the current financial year and it is hoped that this target will be achieved largely through voluntary early retirement. Some redundancies are possible.

J Forbes asked what percentage of the Council workforce 2,000 represented and was told by a member of the public (P Gregson) that the total workforce is 17,000. Cllr Balfour expressed his personal view that the Council is over staffed and the loss of 2,000 jobs would not have a negative impact on front line services.

4.7 Part of the Meadowbank Stadium complex is to be sold for redevelopment as housing and flats. The Stadium will be demolished in the spring or early summer of 2017 and new sporting facilities constructed in its place.

4.8 The St James Centre is about to be demolished. Redevelopment of the site, which includes the Scottish Office building and the Thistle Hotel, will take 4 years.

4.9 The Electoral Commission has now completed work on the proposed changes to the ward boundaries and is submitting its recommendations to the Scottish Ministers, who should announce their decision after the Scottish Parliament election in May. Any boundary changes will come into effect before next year's Council election.

A member of the public asked whether the reinstatement of Roseburn Park after the flood prevention works could include a play park for small children as well as provision for older ones. V Forbes explained that no final decision has been taken regarding the play park and the Friends of Roseburn Park ("FORP") will carry out a consultation with Roseburn Primary School, local residents and Murrayfield Community Council ("MCC") as to what should be provided.

Another member of the public asked who FORP are and whether they are elected. He was told by V Forbes that FORP was formed to look after the interests of Roseburn Park because no one else appeared to do so. Another person added that FORP is a registered charity. Reports on its activities can be found in the Murrayfield Grapevine. There is also a website.

The Chairman reminded the meeting that FORP is to give a presentation on its plans for Roseburn Park to the next MCC meeting on 19 April.

The Chairman showed Cllr Balfour a recent photo of the bins at the foot of Roseburn Cliff. In response to comments about the increasing number of bins and enquiries as to who owns them, **Cllr Balfour undertook to investigate.**

P Gregson, Chairman of FORP, stated that he understood that the funds set aside for the Roseburn play park had become a casualty of the Council's Budget cuts. Cllr Balfour replied that the funds had been transferred to St

Margaret's Park in Corstorphine because they could not currently be used at Roseburn on account of the flood prevention works. He was sure that other funds would be found when the time came for the Roseburn play park to be reinstated.

5. Outcome of Roseburn-Haymarket Cycle Route Consultation

5.1 The Chairman commented that the Council officers in charge of the Roseburn to Leith Walk Cycle Track proposals had not attended the previous MCC meeting or the current one. Cllr Balfour explained that the officers are considering the results of the recent public consultation. He and his fellow Councillors are pushing for the officers' report to be submitted to the May (sic) (7 June) meeting of the Transport Committee, but he felt it was more likely that the report would not be ready until the (30) August meeting. The officers will not be able to update an MCC meeting before they have shared their report with the City administration and Councillors. The Chairman pointed out that some of the officers, including Allan Hutcheon, are leaving the Cycle Track project. Cllr Balfour did not think that production of the report would be affected.

5.2 The Chairman invited P Gregson to speak about the relaunch of his Petition against the West Coates Cycle Track in favour of NCR1. P Gregson informed the meeting that the first petition had collected 2,600 signatures and had been delivered to Cllr Hinds. He felt that, as the Council's decision on the cycle track was to be delayed, there was a danger that the petition would be forgotten. He had decided to relaunch it and hoped to get 5,000 signatures, i.e. most of the rest of Roseburn. He had crowd funded sufficient funds for new flyers and posters and needed volunteers to deliver these. He reported that Cllrs Burns and Hinds were in favour of the cycle track, Cllr Ross had signed the petition against it, Lothian Buses and Living Streets Edinburgh Group were now against it, the Police were being "tricky" about it, the Ambulance Service were not worried by the proposals and the Fire Service looked as though they might come out against the cycle track. P Gregson referred to the issue of blight affecting business premises on Roseburn Terrace. He explained that tenants were reluctant to take on or renew leases there because of the uncertainty over the cycle track proposals.

P Gregson reported that he had written to all the candidates in the forthcoming Scottish Parliament election. He intended to attend the Holyrood Hustings to be held by the cycling group, Spokes, at St Bride's Centre on 21 March and urged others to do the same. He had also written to all the Community Councils in Edinburgh and was aware that the West End Community Council opposed the cycle track proposals.

G Douglas reminded the meeting that Cllr Balfour had in the past emphasised the effectiveness of individual letters of objection.

The Chairman invited a local resident, Henry Whaley, to address the meeting.

H Whaley informed the meeting that he is a keen cyclist, who cycles to work and and takes his children to school by bike every day. He was of the view that persuading people to use buses and bikes and walk instead of driving was of paramount importance. He referred to the fact that the existing cycle route zigzags, is hard work and is dangerous where it encounters the tram tracks at Haymarket. He was in favour of the proposed new route through Roseburn, which would be protected from the traffic by a kerb and provide a breathing space between the shops and the buses. He felt that, if proper cycling facilities were provided, people would use them.

R Smart expressed the view that disproportionate emphasis is being given to cyclists compared with pedestrians and that widening the pavements at Roseburn would be more beneficial than the proposed cycle track.

Cllr Balfour reminded the meeting that all of these points had been made before and suggested that the discussion be moved on.

6. Flood Prevention Scheme, Phase 2 – Commencement of Works

V Forbes reported that felling of the trees in Roseburn Park has begun. A large oak tree has been recovered from a neighbouring garden and is to be used to create a sculpture for the Park.

In reply to a question from a member of the public she confirmed that the roots of the felled trees will also be removed. Felling had taken place early to avoid the nesting season. Nesting boxes had been put up.

E Robertson reported that she had read of Councils in the north of England planting trees and shrubs in the hills above areas vulnerable to flooding in order to soak up ground water. Cllr Balfour stated that the reservoirs above Edinburgh are owned by the Council and can be used to regulate the volume of water in the rivers in response to weather forecasts.

The Chairman intimated that the next local clean up of the Water of Leith will take place on 24 April at 10.30 a.m.

P Gregson reported that work on the gas main near the Murrayfield Medical Practice had been delayed.

7. Changes to Recycling and Waste Service

This had been discussed.

8. Approval of Minutes of Ordinary Meeting held on 20 January 2016

These were approved. Prop: S Holland, Sec: J Forbes.

9. Matters Arising

9.1. *Line markings at the Roseburn Terrace, Roseburn Street, Russell Road junction*

R Smart reported that the painting of the new markings had been delayed, but should be done in 1-2 months. He hoped to see a plan of what was proposed before work was begun.

9.2. *Replacement of Roseburn bike stands*

The Chairman reported that Allan Tinto of the Council is procuring new cycle racks.

9.3. *Maintenance of drains and gullies*

R Smart reported that this issue had been raised at the recent walkabout which he had undertaken with Dave Sinclair and Margaret Laing of the Council and it should be dealt with in 10-14 days.

9.4. *Grant funding to preserve and maintain the stonework of houses and garden walls of properties adjoining Donaldson's College*

R Smart reported that he had photographed these properties. He proposed applying to the West Edinburgh Neighbourhood Partnership ("WENP") for a grant to enable MCC to carry out this work to Conservation Area standard and suggested using the same stonemason as had been used in connection with the pillars at the foot of Murrayfield Gardens.

G Douglas confirmed that some of the trees and shrubs in the grounds of the College have been cut down. The redevelopment involves an extensive replanting scheme.

S Holland informed the meeting that Donaldson's College is on UNESCO's hit list.

9.5 *Bus shelters*

In relation to Item 6.4 of the Minutes of the previous meeting S Holland reported that, shortly after that meeting, Graham Atkins had arranged for a temporary bus shelter of older design to be installed at the stop on Princes Street opposite Castle Street (stop PX). He asked that MCC's thanks for this prompt action be minuted.

10. Roseburn Action Plan

Prior to the meeting Margaret Laing, Team Leader, Environmental Wardens, West Neighbourhood Team, had sent her apologies and emailed the following update on the Roseburn Action Plan:-

- **Reinstatement of bike stand on Roseburn Terrace**

Email received from Allan Tinto, Transport Officer. He can confirm that the cycle rack that was removed at the bus stop is due to be reinstated. He also proposes to replace the existing cycle rack outside the shoe repair shop on Roseburn Terrace, and install new cycle racks at Tesco at the same time. He would propose to have these installed before the summer as part of a large scale cycle rack installation he is currently procuring.

- **Road markings at Roseburn Junction**

Dave Sinclair has received a further email dated 27 January 2016 from Alexa Armstrong expressing concern regarding the lack of road markings at the junction of Roseburn Terrace, Russell Road and Roseburn Street.

Dave Sinclair has responded to Alexa on 27 January 2016 thanking her for her email and mentioning that he is aware of the urgent nature and can confirm that he is trying to arrange the resources as soon as reasonably possible. As soon as he has a committed resource he will ask his team to respond to Alexa directly.

Updates from issues raised/noted at 20 January 2016 meeting

- **Debris left over from Xmas Trees, and general litter at Roseburn Cliff**

Area cleaned, resolved 22 January 2016

- **Bag containing duvet at Coltbridge Avenue, next to recycling containers**

Area cleaned, resolved 22 January 2016

- **Abandoned contaminated brown wheeled bin on pavement at Roseburn Cliff**

Noted bin removed, resolved 23 January 2016

- **Newspaper recycling container at Coltbridge Avenue – requires to be emptied, overflowing**

Area clear, resolved 9 February 2016

- **Large green domestic bins at Roseburn Gardens – the new recycling phase has been introduced in this area, and new stickers have been stuck to the existing large recycling bins, but residents are unsure what to put in them**

The new mixed recycling bins accept the same materials as the green wheelie bins. Any new recycling bins going out now will be mixed recycling, and the existing packaging bins will be changed over in the next (financial) year.

Waste visited 9 February 2016. Mixed recycling stickers put on one, already on the other. This explains what goes in, but for clarity these bins accept: paper, cardboard, plastic bottles (including lids) pots, tubs and trays, tins and cans, aerosols, juice cartons and foil.

- **BIFFA Waste Services - Notification of a possible abandoned BIFFA 360 litre bin at Roseburn Cliff. Request for removal.**

Abandoned bin removed on 25 January 2016

Other

- **Dog fouling at Roseburn Park & Speeding Cyclists issues – rescheduled to 16 March 2016**

Environmental Wardens carrying out a joint operation with Police Scotland on 16 March 2016.

Issues raised during walk about with Robert Smart, Margaret Laing & Dave Sinclair on 18 February 2016

- **Blocked Gullies - Murrayfield Gardens, west side of street, Campbell Avenue and corner of Murrayfield Avenue and Corstorphine Road**

Update email received from Stuart Smith, Roads Engineer advising that the routine gully cleaning route that includes these streets is due to be scheduled within the next two weeks.

They are currently routine cleaning gullies in the West Neighbourhood area and there are only a few routes left to complete. The gullies in the streets referred to were last cleaned on cyclic routine cleaning routes on 17/7/14. Several gullies in Campbell Avenue were cleaned following reports that they were blocked on 19/10/15. Most gullies in Edinburgh are currently cleaned routinely at least once every 18 months. However, across the city there are a number of gullies that are designated as 'sensitive'. These gullies are given this designation because, if they become blocked, they may cause localised flooding and become a risk to road users. These gullies are cleaned on routine routes twice a year (in late autumn, after the leaves have fallen from the trees and in early summer, prior to the heavy rains storms that can occur in July and August).

Please note, on occasion, a gully that has been cleaned can block again within a short period of time. Usually this is due to plastic bags, rubbish or debris from building/road works entering the gully. Also, some gullies have detritus from trees such as leaves and small branches lying on top of the gully grating and in the road channel (gutters) which often stops water from entering the gullies, and causes water to pond even though the gullies are working. It is a street

cleansing function to clean detritus from the road surface. A reactive service is also provided, which deals with reports of blocked gullies and road flooding incidents. You can report such issues by contacting the CLARENCE service using the freephone number 0800 23 23 23 or via the Council's website, "Report Environmental Problems" section using the following link:-

https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/forms/form/21/en/report_a_problem_with_a_road_pothole_pavement_rainwater_storm_drain_or_street_light

Possible future NEP Projects to be noted on the Murrayfield Community Council Action Programme.

- Possible NEP Project to have a 'pedestrian safe' area at the corner of Murrayfield Avenue and Corstorphine Road
- Installing an 'island' in the middle of the road in Roseburn Terrace for pedestrians crossing from the north side of Roseburn Terrace to the south side of Roseburn Terrace, i.e. from the Dental Practice to Roseburn Bar.

Other

- **Road markings and relocation of waste containers at Coltbridge Avenue/Murrayfield Place**
Dave Sinclair – to look at revising any existing TRO at Coltbridge Avenue/Murrayfield Place with regard to road markings for losing parking spaces and for relocating recycling containers sited at present at Coltbridge Avenue. To also look at road marking for relocating black domestic container from Coltbridge Avenue to outside no 12 Murrayfield Place.
- **Biffa Trade Waste Containers blocking the public highway Roseburn Cliff/Terrace**
Mags Laing has contacted Biffa for possible removal/relocation of existing 2 trade bins blocking the public highway at Roseburn Cliff/Terrace.

10.1 R Smart elaborated on the walkabout with Dave Sinclair and Margaret Laing referred to above. He understood that John Berry had taken over from Dave Sinclair as the person in charge of transport and roads.

10.2 R Smart referred to the proposal for a "pedestrian safe" area at the corner of Murrayfield Avenue and Corstorphine Road, which could be achieved by closing the minor road on either side of the main road, so that pedestrians have to cross only two lanes of traffic instead of four. He proposed instructing a landscape architect to draw up plans and applying to WENP for a grant to cover the cost of the necessary work.

R Brown suggested that it would be sensible to await the result of the cycle track consultation before spending money on a scheme which would be rejected if the cycle track goes ahead.

10.3 R Smart expressed the view that the right turn from Roseburn Terrace into Roseburn Street is a major problem and pedestrian safety would be improved by the installation of an island in Roseburn Terrace between the dental practice on the north side and the Roseburn Bar on the south side. A local resident felt that this would make it difficult for large vehicles to negotiate the right

turn. H Whaley pointed out that the proposed cycle track involves a crossing without an island at that location.

G Douglas informed the meeting that the Donaldson Area Amenity Association, in its submission to the cycle track consultation, had proposed that a red light camera be installed at the junction.

V Forbes and others felt that reinstating the traffic lights at the end of Russell Road would improve the situation.

11. Planning and Licensing

R Smart lamented the grant of planning permission for the redevelopment of the former Capability Scotland buildings in Ellersly Road.

He reported that there had been some minor domestic planning applications which caused him no concern.

12. Traffic and Transport

It was agreed that there were no further topics to discuss.

13. Any Other Competent Business

13.1 The Chairman reported that he had noticed a sign for a CCTV camera at the eastbound bus stop on Roseburn Terrace and asked where the camera was situated. No one could confirm having seen a camera. **Cllr Balfour undertook to investigate.**

13.2 A member of the public reported that the extended Controlled Parking Zone ("CPZ") is working well in Murrayfield except outside Numbers 28-36 Coltbridge Terrace, where cars are now regularly parked and obscure visibility at the bend in the road. The situation is worse than it was before the extension of the CPZ. It is being monitored by St George's School, some of whose staff are thought to park there. G Douglas suggested that the Police representatives be asked for their view at the next MCC meeting.

13.3 R Brown mentioned that N Macdonald, while tendering her apologies for the current meeting, had asked whether MCC would be holding the usual Hustings event before the Scottish Parliament election in May. There was general agreement that such an event would be a good idea. R Smart said that previous such events had been well attended. They had been organised jointly with Murrayfield Parish Church and had been chaired by one of the local Ministers.

G Douglas proposed that N Macdonald be asked to contact the Church Secretary to try to arrange a date and secure a Minister's services. R Brown mentioned that she was not sure that N Macdonald had intended to undertake organising the event herself. S Holland pointed out that the election is only 7 weeks away and speakers would have to be found.

14. Questions from the Floor

There were no further questions from the floor.

15. Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday, 19 April 2016

Subsequent meetings: 31 May (including AGM) and 19 July 2016.

Minutes approved at meeting of 19 April 2016.