

MURRAYFIELD COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Ordinary Meeting
held on Tuesday, 14 December 2021 at 7.30pm
by Zoom
Chair: J Yellowlees

Present: R Brown, J Forbes, P Gregson, J McDonough,
E Robertson, M Stevens, H Whaley, J Yellowlees,
Ex officio: Cllr Gillian Gloyer, Cllr Frank Ross,
In attendance: 6 members of the public,
Apologies: A Anderson, R Beavis, D Dawson, N Henderson, B Knowles,
N Macdonald, Cllr Karen Doran, Cllr Scott Douglas, Cllr Claire
Miller, Cllr Jo Mowat, Cllr Alasdair Rankin, Jeremy Balfour, MSP,
Sarah Boyack, MSP, Miles Briggs, MSP, Foysol Choudhury, MSP,
Alison Johnstone, MSP, Angus Robertson, MSP, Lorna Slater, MSP,
Sue Webber, MSP, Christine Jardine, MP.

1. Welcome and Apologies

Apologies were received as above. The Chairman welcomed those in attendance.

2. Minutes of Ordinary Meeting held on 9 November 2021 and Matters Arising

2.1 Christmas tree on the Old Colt Bridge – The Chairman reported that the switching on of the lights on 2 December had been a well staged enjoyable event and the decorations to the tree and the Bridge parapet by the pupils of St George’s School and Roseburn Primary School were equally good. He congratulated everyone involved. He thanked local businesses Scotmid and Buna for their support in providing mince pies and hot drinks.

The Chairman reminded the meeting of forthcoming events on the Bridge – a service by the Church of the Good Shepherd on Sunday, 19 December at 4pm and a performance of Gilbert & Sullivan songs and carols on Tuesday, 21 December at 6 pm.

2.2 Storm Arwen – The Chairman believed that the storm had caused no damage in the local area, but in other areas it had been more damaging than the Beast from the East. He reminded the meeting that power cuts can be reported to Scottish Power by telephone on 105.

2.3 BT Murrayfield

2.3.1 Road closures - The Chairman reported that a local resident had contacted MCC about match day road closures, of which she seemed to have been previously unaware. N Henderson, who attends meetings with Scottish Rugby on behalf of MCC but who was unable to attend the MCC meeting, had provided a summary of the position which the Chairman read out. She explained that the Council closes local roads for every rugby match or other event at BT Murrayfield, but the type and time of closures can differ depending on crowd size. These closures are always advertised in advance on the Council website and social media. The Police officers on duty on the day

are not necessarily aware of the details of the road closures and their timings. The meeting agreed that MCC could help to publicise the list of road closures which the Council publishes, more notices on lamp posts would be helpful and, if MCC had a contact for each affected street, that person could pass on the information to the local WhatsApp or other neighbourhood group.

The Chairman undertook to contact Andy Smith at the Council to ensure that MCC is on the list of contacts for receipt of the road closures information.

A local resident pointed out that there had been autumn test matches on three consecutive weekends and the metal "Road closed" signs had been left on site throughout that time. In the high winds they had been flapping very loudly.

Cllr Ross agreed that the signs should be secured and undertook to take this up with the appropriate Council officers.

2.3.2 Live music - The Chairman reported that N Henderson had confirmed that the live music, which had continued long after some of the autumn test matches had finished, had come from the Murrayfield Hotel and not BT Murrayfield.

2.3.3 Trial of match day parking permits – In the absence of Cllr Douglas, who had undertaken to look into the delay with this, Cllr Gloyer explained that initially it had been decided to await the completion of the Meadowbank redevelopment before undertaking this trial and test the proposal at Meadowbank, Easter Road, Tynecastle and BT Murrayfield concurrently. She did not know what effect the delay at Meadowbank would have.

2.4 Rejuvenating Roseburn – The Chairman thanked Cllr Ross for obtaining confirmation that the Rejuvenating Roseburn project is now fully funded.

2.5 Roseburn Gardens – Cllr Ross had also obtained confirmation that Roseburn Gardens will be made one way during the summer of 2022.

2.6 Roseburn Park – Cllr Ross had reported at the last MCC meeting that he had had a meeting on site with Council officers to discuss options for dealing with the problem of conflicts between pedestrians and cyclists at the corner near the toilet block and Armoury. The officers are to employ lamp post wraps and social media to highlight the problem and are considering the installation of a mirror on the corner of the Armoury.

The Chairman reminded the meeting that speed bumps are not an ideal solution for wheelchair and pram users.

2.7 Pavement repairs at Henderland Road – The Chairman asked E Robertson whether the work currently being carried out by Scottish Gas would leave the pavements, which had been in need of repair for many months, in a better condition. E Robertson replied that she was hopeful of an improvement.

2.8 Flowerbed at Western Corner – The Chairman reported that the local resident who had been looking after this flowerbed and who had asked who owned it, had informed him that MCC's request to Cllr Ross had resulted in the Council's sending three workmen to cut back the large shrubs. They had told her that the Council did not own the flowerbed. The resident now felt able to carry on tending to the flowerbed herself.

2.9 National Railway Heritage Awards 2021– The Chairman reported that the refurbishment of the Coltbridge Viaduct had been highly commended at these Awards.

2.10 Roseburn to Union Canal Link – In reply to a question from H Whaley as to when this link for pedestrians and cyclists would be started, Cllr Ross said that this work is due to follow on from the CCWEL, which is due to start in January or February 2022.

The Minutes were approved. Prop: J McDonough, Sec: E Robertson.

3. Councillors' Reports

3.1 CCWEL– The Chairman welcomed the imminent start of this project and referred to the Council's plans to mitigate the negative effect of the works on local businesses.

3.2 City Plan 2030 – The meeting discussed three aspects of the Council's proposed local development plan, City Plan 2030. The public consultation on the proposals closes at 5pm on Monday, 20 December 2021.

Cllr Ross suggested that MCC comment on the designation of the former tram works site at Pansy Walk as open space and urge re-designation as allotments. The Chairman referred to the introduction of an on-street option for part of the proposed extension of the tramline from Roseburn to Granton which would involve routing the tramline over the Dean Bridge and along Queensferry Road, Orchard Brae and Crewe Road South instead of along the Roseburn Railway Path. His personal view was that the on-street option was not a good one.

The Chairman said that the Friends of Roseburn Park ("FoRP") had discussed the City Plan proposal of obtaining a financial contribution for Roseburn Park from the developers of the proposed residential developments in Roseburn Street and Russell Road which are shown in the City Plan.

J Forbes thought that the proposal for a huge residential development of 7,000 homes to the west of the city ("West Town") merited discussion. The wider implications of such a development had not been thought through. The Roseburn/Murrayfield area would be seriously affected by the increase in traffic and the problem would not be solved by the tram.

Cllr Ross reiterated his view, already publicised in the press, that this development would have a significant impact on the A8 corridor and would need a massive amount of infrastructure for which the Council has no budget. He made the point that the City Plan has not yet been approved.

The meeting agreed that the Chairman would respond to the consultation on behalf of MCC making the points mentioned above about allotments at Pansy Walk, a developer contribution for Roseburn Park and the proposed residential development to the west.

3.3 SEStran Draft Regional Transport Strategy 2035 - As the consultation period does not end until 11 February 2022, it was agreed that a decision on responding to this consultation would be held over to the next meeting.

4. Ellersly Road/Kinellan Road traffic

The Chairman read out an update received from Dave Sinclair at the Council:- "Unfortunately my colleagues in the Transport Contracts and Design (TCD)" team are not able to take forward a combined scheme in the Ellersly Road area at the moment. Their focus and capacity may change in 2022 as more legacy NEP projects are completed and future budgets and Neighbourhood Network priorities are known. Lloyd (Richardson) is preparing a cost estimate for the

suggested Ellersly Road north footpath widening for information purposes. I'll share this with you when it's available.

Andrew (Easson)'s Road Safety team will proceed with their proposals for speed reduction measures in isolation. Implementation during 2022/23 is anticipated.

From recollection the proposed Murrayfield Road crossing ("Ben's Crossing") is currently programmed for implementation in 2024/25. Design work for this would probably commence in 2023/24. It may therefore still be possible for this to be accelerated as part of an approved combined scheme, should capacity to lead on this become available within the TCD team within the next 12-18 months.

I understand the NEP programme will be formalised in 2022 as the budget and scheme assessment criteria are developed. As mentioned in the past, [I would] [MCC should?] continue to engage with the Western Neighbourhood Network to consider what projects may be a priority across the wider area."

J Forbes said that he was moderately optimistic for once, as the update did not say that nothing could be achieved before 2024/25 at the earliest and there was at least the possibility of bringing things forward. Andrew Easson had said that a site investigation would not be commenced until Spring 2022. Rob Cormie had responded and Cllr Douglas had also offered to pursue this with A Easson. An update from Cllr Douglas when he was next available would be appreciated. J Forbes resolved to keep up the pressure on the Council to deliver the improvements and said that any help which the three local Councillors could give would be appreciated.

The Chairman welcomed the commitments to prepare a cost estimate for the Ellersly Road improvements and proceed with speed reduction measures on Kinellan Road.

J Forbes said that he planned to email Lloyd Richardson to suggest that the cost estimate might include reconfiguration of the junction with Kinellan Road to provide a narrower, squarer entry, ideally with a raised table, to discourage entry to Kinellan Road at speed. Adding this to the pavement widening would be less expensive than undertaking two separate projects.

5. Planning and Licensing

J Forbes reported as follows:-

5.1 9 Kinellan Road – He had lodged a detailed objection on behalf of MCC citing 13 grounds of objection. In total 61 objections to the current planning application had been lodged and represented a good example of community engagement. If the application is recommended for approval, it will have to go to Committee and MCC will have another opportunity to make representations. A resident of Kinellan Road asked whether the number of objections would influence the Development Management Sub Committee ("DMSC"). Cllr Gloyer thought that it would, particularly if a large proportion came from neighbours. J McDonough reported with regret that his experience of the planning application for 37 Corstorphine Road, which had attracted 150 objections of which 87 were from neighbours, was that the number of objections did not make a huge difference.

Cllr Gloyer said that she had submitted a request to address the DMSC when the application is considered.

5.2 37 Corstorphine Road - The DPEA Reporter had requested comments from the applicant and from the Council's Planning Department on the question of the significance or otherwise of NPF4 (Fourth National Planning Framework issued by the Scottish Government for consultation but not yet in force) to the proposed development, specifically with respect to flood risk. Both parties responded to the effect that under policy 13 of NPF4 the development would be approved.

MCC had not been consulted on this question and the deadline for submissions had passed. However, in collaboration with J McDonough he had prepared a draft "further representation" by MCC making the case that the development would not be permissible under NPF4. The meeting approved the submission of the further representation to the Reporter on the understanding that it might not be accepted.

At J Forbes's invitation M Stevens reported as follows:-

5.3 22 Haymarket Yards – The planning application for student accommodation has been withdrawn because of concerns about amenity raised by the owners of Apex House.

5.4 Elgin House, 20 Haymarket Yards – The Donaldson Area Amenity Association's main concern about the proposal to replace the existing office building with a new larger one and a new hotel was about hotel guests having pedestrian access to Balbirnie Place. This is now less of a worry as the hotel is to be closer to Haymarket. Of more concern is the scale of the proposed development, which would be six times the size of the existing building.

5.5 Osborne House – This property is being advertised for sale with planning permission for redevelopment as a hotel plus the adjoining piece of land which is currently leased to Company Bakery and for which there is no planning permission. It appears that the developer may prefer to sell without doing the planned redevelopment.

J Forbes reported further as follows:-

5.6 Floodlighting adjacent to Henderland Road – The application was withdrawn by St George's School on 9 December. The School has acknowledged its failure to consult neighbours before submitting the application and promises not to repeat this failure if and when a new floodlighting application is proposed. This and the fact that the School has also acknowledged that there are issues with parking are seen as positive developments.

E Robertson thanked J Forbes and others who had commented on or objected to the application for their efforts.

5.7 65 Ravelston Dykes Road – This application for a proposed extension to a listed building is currently "awaiting decision". MCC's submission raised concerns about inadequate information on tree destruction in a Conservation Area; this has not so far been rectified.

5.8 Abinger Gardens woodland – He had received no response to his letter urging replacement planting of trees. A recent walk past had revealed that the woodland is in need of regeneration. It is a rare piece of woodland and is referred to in the Character Appraisal for the Coltbridge and Wester Coates Conservation Area. J Forbes expressed the view that it would be inconsistent with the Million Tree City policy to allow this woodland to deteriorate further.

As a general policy he would like to see the Council insist that a developer who is felling mature trees be required to fund 10 new trees somewhere in the city for every tree that is to be felled. This would help to compensate for the loss of carbon capture provided by mature trees.

6. Police Report

The Chairman reported that PC Sam Davison had returned from his COP 26 duties and had provided a brief report, the main point of which was that Operation Close Pass had been carried out in Balgreen Road and Roseburn Street and most drivers had passed the plain clothes cyclist safely. A speed check in Roseburn Street had found a good adherence to the speed limit near Roseburn Primary School.

7. Friends of Roseburn Park update

In the absence of B Knowles P Gregson delivered her report as follows:

7.1 The cafe project has gone out to tender and some tenders have been received. They are currently coming in over budget but he was hopeful that there was room for negotiation.

7.2 A further 2,000 bulbs have been planted in the Park, mostly around the new play area beneath the beech hedge. The outer perimeter of the beech hedge has been mulched. The inner side has yet to be weeded and mulched.

7.3 The compost in the five planters at the Armoury has been renewed and suitable plants rescued and retained.

7.4 The Sakura Project is ongoing and the cherry trees are awaited.

7.5 FoRP has received a proposal to revamp the quiet reflective area adjoining the old play area.

8. Treasurer's Report

8.1 Finances - J McDonough reported that there had been no transactions in November and the cash balance remained at £2,135. He expected to have expenditure of £230-250 in December on the plinth for the Mackie plaque, the art supplies for the banner on the Old Colt Bridge and the annual fee for web hosting and support services.

8.2 Micro projects – The Chairman reported that he and J Forbes are pursuing a proposal for a plaque at Ravelston Elms, which was occupied successively by two sculptors, Pittendrigh Macgillivray, whose statue of Gladstone is in Coates Crescent Gardens, and Pilkington Jackson, whose most famous sculpture is the equestrian statue of Robert the Bruce at Bannockburn. The owner of the Elms is happy to have a plaque on the outer wall, but of brass rather than stainless steel. The Chairman is seeking an estimate for this.

The other proposal is for a plaque to commemorate the horse drawn tram which for a number of years terminated at Coltbridge near the former railway bridge. The owners of the Bathroom Shop have declined to have a plaque on their white wall and it is now proposed to seek the Council's consent to a plaque on the bridge opposite the milestone plaque. The Council has requested a method statement and risk assessment and the Chairman will take that forward with J Forbes's assistance.

J McDonough sought suggestions for other micro projects.

9. Social Engagement

The Chairman advised that the next issue of the Murrayfield Grapevine will report the unveiling of the Mackie plaque on 10 November. This event had also been covered well by the Edinburgh Reporter, as had the Kinellan Road planning application. In reply to a question from the Chairman as to who reads the Edinburgh Reporter H Whaley said that it has a good following online.

The Chairman had received no response from St George's School to his letter suggesting that engagement with MCC could form a project for some of their students.

10. Any Other Competent Business

10.1 The Chairman reported that Steve Kerr, Chair of the Edinburgh Association of Community Councils, is pursuing through the Edinburgh Partnership an agenda for Community Council reform. S Kerr had attended a previous MCC meeting to make a presentation on this. The Chairman hoped to meet S Kerr in the New Year to find out more about it.

10.2 Two residents of Murrayfield Court in Western Gardens explained that in recent weeks the residents had been experiencing problems caused by vans and other vehicles associated with the Tor development parking in the street. The congestion which this caused prevented the Council's bin lorries from gaining access to the Court's car park where the communal bins are kept. The fact that emergency vehicles would be unable to access the street also constituted a health and safety issue. Another resident of Murrayfield Court had complained to the Tor developer, AMA, and the situation had improved, but only for a short time. The Chairman had also copied AMA into his correspondence with the residents but the developer had not responded. One of the residents acknowledged that not all the vehicles belonged to AMA. She said that imposing parking restrictions on one side of the street would help to alleviate the problem. J Forbes recommended making a complaint of obstruction to the Police. The Chairman undertook to raise the issue with PC Sam Davison and copy the two residents into his email.

11. Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday, 18 January 2022

It was agreed that recent Covid-related developments made a return to face-to-face meetings inadvisable for the time being.

Subsequent meetings: 22 February, 29 March 2022.

Minutes approved at meeting of 18 January 2022.