

MURRAYFIELD COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Ordinary Meeting
held on Tuesday, 16 February 2021 at 7.30pm
by Zoom
Chair: J Yellowlees

Present: A Anderson, R Beavis, R Brown, J Forbes, P Gregson,
N Macdonald, J McDonough, N Oldroyd, E Robertson, H Whaley,
J Yellowlees,
In attendance: 10 members of the public,
Apologies: B Knowles, M Stevens, Cllr Scott Douglas, Cllr Gillian Gloyer, Cllr
Frank Ross, Cllr Karen Doran, Cllr Claire Miller, Cllr Jo Mowat, Cllr
Alasdair Rankin, 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. The Chairman thanked a local resident for reporting that the pillar at the foot of Murrayfield Gardens on the east side was no longer sitting straight on its base. **The Chairman undertook to notify the appropriate department at the Council.**

2. Approval of Minutes of Ordinary Meeting held on 15 December 2020

These were approved. Prop: J McDonough, Sec: J Yellowlees.

3.1 Approval of Minutes of Ordinary Meeting held on 12 January 2021

These were approved. Prop: J Yellowlees, Sec: J McDonough.

3.2 Matters Arising

- 3.2.1 Pandemic assistance – The Chairman thanked N Oldroyd for putting together information about sources of help during lockdown and intimated that the MCC noticeboards now carry this information.
- 3.2.2 Six Nations matches – The Chairman commented that the recent Scotland v Wales rugby match at Murrayfield had passed off without spectators and without incident.
- 3.2.3 Christmas tree on the Old Colt Bridge – The Chairman reported that MCC's application for a tree for Christmas 2021 had been approved in principle by the Council. Heather Raeburn is heading a group, which includes N Oldroyd, J McDonough, R Beavis and himself, to organise associated events.
- 3.2.4 H Whaley reported that the small stadium at BT Murrayfield had been completed and J McDonough confirmed that it had been handed over to Edinburgh Rugby the previous day.

4. Community Policing Report

PC Sam Davison had emailed a report prior to the meeting. The Chairman commented that the trends which had been identified in earlier reports had continued.

Across the north west of the city serious violent crime is down by almost 20% and domestic abuse up by just over 10%. The Police continue their efforts to reduce drug harm and target supply.

House breaking is down 58% in Murrayfield and Corstorphine. Break ins to sheds and garages have increased across the city with the focus on stealing pedal bikes. Operation Agora is the citywide Police operation aimed at tackling this.

Theft of motor vehicles, serious road accidents and minor injuries are all down across the city.

Incidents of anti-social behaviour are up owing to enforcement of Covid related restrictions.

On 30 January a vehicle travelling on Balgreen Road hit the “bridge height” warning plate and both the tram and rail bridges. The driver in question left the scene but was traced, charged with Road Traffic Act offences and reported to the Procurator Fiscal.

PC Davison had provided leaflets on shed and garage security and bike security.

5. Councillors' Reports

All of the City Councillors had tendered their apologies. It was agreed that MCC should try to avoid scheduling meetings on the same dates as Corstorphine Community Council which meets on the third Tuesday of every month. **R Brown undertook to check the scheduled MCC dates and make any necessary changes. (See Item 12)**

The Chairman reported as follows:-

5.1 Covid-19 vaccination update – The programme seems to be going well with many people having received the first dose of the vaccine. N Oldroyd added that the rate of vaccination will slow as supply becomes more of a problem. GP surgeries are willing to answer questions in response to phone calls or letters but are extremely busy at present.

5.2 Grit bins in Roseburn Park – The immediate need for these has abated in the wake of Storm Darcy but they are still needed and will continue to be requested.

5.3 Pansy Walk allotments – MCC has received 13 notes of interest and 3 messages of support for the proposal to return the former works depot at Pansy Walk to allotments. At Cllr Ross's suggestion the Chairman had responded to the Good Growing strategy consultation and had promoted the return of Pansy Walk allotments. The Chairman confessed to feeling guilty about promoting allotments over affordable housing but reminded the meeting that, as the site is liable to flooding and close to tram and railway lines, it is not really suitable for housing and that is certainly Cllr Ross's view.

Stuart McKenzie, the Chairman of the Federation of Edinburgh and District Allotments and Gardens Association, thanked MCC for their support. He thought that there were many more local residents in a wide catchment area who would be interested in having an allotment at Pansy Walk and he was trying to get them mapped.

The Chairman thought that the proposal could form the basis of a news story.

Jane Alliston, a Liberal Democrat activist/volunteer, offered to sound out Cllr Gloyer about supporting the proposal.

5.4 Garscube Terrace surface repairs – At the last MCC meeting Cllr Ross had undertaken to inspect the road surface repairs in Garscube Terrace and Wester Coates, but in his absence no update was available.

5.5 Upper Coltbridge Terrace pavement repairs – Cllr Gloyer had advised that the contractor had been back on site on 11 February and would return to correct the trip hazard which had been identified.

5.6 Blocked drains – Cllr Ross is seeking an annual clean rather than a bi-annual one.

5.7 Bin collections – The recent severe weather had resulted in delays in bin collections. N Oldroyd said that she had contacted the Council and the advice was to leave the bins out until they were emptied. It was taking the Council 4-5 days to catch up with the backlog.

5.8 Ellersly Road crossing – J Forbes had good news and bad news. Cllr Gloyer had reported that Ellersly Road has at last been assessed and allocated a “PV2” value which qualifies it for a pedestrian crossing of some kind. Unfortunately there is no budget for this until 2024/25 at the earliest. Cllr Gloyer had suggested seeking Neighbourhood Partnership funding and this is being progressed by the Chairman with the support of Steve Kerr, the Chair of the Partnership board. The Council are unable to commit design resources to new schemes until existing jobs have been delivered, however MCC want to see pavement widening happen before a pedestrian crossing.

5.9 City Mobility Plan – It is expected that this will be approved at the Transport and Environment Committee meeting on 19 February.

Phase 1 of the Scottish Government’s Strategic Transport Projects Review envisages a metro for Glasgow and additional tramlines for Edinburgh. There is a new recognition of the need for improved connectivity between the north of Edinburgh and the south/east. Phase 2, however, will not take place until after the Holyrood elections and, presumably, the end of the Covid-19 crisis.

6. Planning and Licensing

J Forbes reported as follows:-

6.1 37 Corstorphine Road - This case is still with the DPEA Reporter.

6.2 9 Kinellan Road - There has been no new application by the developer and no action by the Planning Department to issue a tree replacement order.

6.3 Westfield Road - Plans for a recently cleared site opposite Sainsburys include student housing, a gym and cinema. The site is outside but close to the MCC area.

6.4 Telecom mast on Corstorphine Road – The Assistant Planner's decision on pre-application notification 20/04512/PA for a telecom installation on the Corstorphine Road pavement at Beechwood Mains was that "planning approval is not required", thus giving the go-ahead. This decision seems to have arisen from a combination of factors:-

- undue haste in processing the application;
- failure to properly consider the effect of partial pavement obstruction on public safety, as urged by MCC and others;
- failure to challenge the applicant's unsupported assertion that pedestrian flow would be unaffected;
- failure to challenge the applicant's position that no other site within a radius of 250 m of the "nominal location" was suitable (four additional sites have been identified that should be considered);
- evident "gaming" of the process by the applicant in (a) using a number of obviously unsuitable alternative sites to imply all alternatives had been considered, and (b) making a last-minute "concession" (a 2 m reduction in

most height) that was irrelevant to the key issue and contradicted the position taken earlier that 20 m was the "absolute minimum".

J Forbes stated that by the applicant's own admission, the proposed ground-level equipment "does not form part of the proposal from a planning consideration perspective". He suggested that, as it is the ground-level installation that creates the problem of pavement obstruction, the applicant should now be required to submit an application for this. It was agreed that, as Cllr Douglas has already raised some of these concerns with the Assistant Planner at MCC's behest, he should be asked to raise the additional concerns noted above.

6.5 Alterations in Garscube Terrace – J Forbes agreed with E Robertson that alterations to windows and doors in a number of properties have reduced the uniformity of Garscube Terrace, which is a feature highlighted in the Coltbridge and Wester Coates Conservation Area Character Appraisal. He had checked the Council's online planning portal and could find no planning applications for such alterations since the inception of the portal in 2001. He felt that this was a matter for individual concerned householders, who should use the Council's anonymous online reporting mechanism for suspected planning breaches, and not MCC.

E Robertson disagreed and argued the case for MCC to look after the Conservation Area by notifying the Council of creeping changes which, if not halted, would in time destroy the character of the Conservation Area. She said that she had written to the Council about a recent suspected breach (an outer door which had been changed and did not match the others in the Terrace). The Council had replied that they were not minded to do anything about it.

A local resident, who is active in the Architectural Heritage Society, agreed with E Robertson that the Council should be asked to enforce breaches as they occur. The Chairman referred to the review of the Coltbridge and Wester Coates Conservation Area Character Appraisal which Daniel Lodge at the Council is conducting. There is an embargo on non-essential public consultation during the pandemic, but the review is almost complete and will go out to consultation once the embargo is lifted. The Chairman suggested that the consultation would provide an opportunity for MCC to make representations about preservation of the character of the Conservation Area. E Robertson agreed.

R Beavis asked whether residents are aware that they live in a Conservation Area. R Brown stated that the Property Enquiry Certificate which is routinely obtained as part of a purchase discloses this fact. It was agreed that the consultation would be an opportunity to publicise the Conservation Area and encourage participation.

7. Traffic and Transport

7.1 Parking consultation - The Chairman reported that Project Centre Limited, on behalf of the Council, are undertaking Phase 2 of a public consultation on the extension of parking controls as part of the Council's Strategic Review of Parking. Phase 1 of the consultation took place in late 2019, but Phase 2 was postponed as a result of Covid. Phase 2 of the consultation runs from 15 February to 14 March 2021. Leaflets will be delivered to every property within the Phase 2 areas of Roseburn, Saughtonhall, Murrayfield and Corstorphine. Anyone interested in the proposals is able to view plans online, complete a questionnaire and leave comments on an interactive map on the Project Centre website. There will also be virtual drop-in sessions for each of the areas where attendees can view the proposals, hear in more detail what is being proposed and ask questions.

Jane Alliston encouraged residents to participate.

The Chairman undertook to look at the proposals and circulate his thoughts so that MCC can decide whether to make submissions.

7.2 Crarae Avenue – The Chairman reported that the Council’s Spaces for People team propose to prohibit motor vehicles at the junction of Ravelston Dykes and Crarae Avenue, with exemptions for residents, pedestrians, cyclists, blue badge holders, emergency services, waste vehicles and deliveries. H Whaley added that, while the proposal itself is uncontentious, this is part of the wider problem associated with private schools’ citywide catchments. He suggested that MCC write to the three local private schools (St George’s, Mary Erskine and Stewarts Melville) and ask about their plans to limit the impact of parents driving to their sites and causing difficulties to the community, ask about Active Travel Plans and offer support to encourage more people to walk or cycle to the schools.

E Robertson said that she had worked at two of the schools and lives near the third. The schools are aware of the problems which the parents cause, do want to be good neighbours and do try to change the parents’ behaviour, but seem to have little power to do so. She is convinced that only the Council and appropriate parking restrictions can improve the situation.

The Chairman thought that little could be done until the Covid-19 restrictions come to an end. He asked that before the next MCC meeting some thought be given to other changes which would be beneficial and which MCC could propose.

Jane Alliston suggested that this should be linked to the public consultation on the parking review.

A local resident said that residents are looking for parking controls which will assist them on days when matches are held at BT Murrayfield.

The Chairman and H Whaley referred to one of the aims of the Strategic Transport Projects Review to establish “20 minute zones” within cities where facilities can be accessed locally in order to reduce the need for travel.

8. Friends of Roseburn Park (FoRP)” update

In the absence of B Knowles P Gregson reported as follows:-

8.1 New benches and BBQ slabs - Neighbourhood Partnership funding will support 3 new benches and BBQ slabs. The missing bench beside the footbridge from the Medical Practice is to be replaced by the Council when Covid restrictions permit.

8.2 Sakura Project - FoRP have been in contact with Walking with the Wounded and they are interested in helping to plant the cherry trees. WWTW help ex-servicemen suffering trauma back into work through volunteering. Project dates will be firmed up in late summer.

8.3 Drinking fountain – detailed design and development work and applications for funding are ongoing.

8.4 Two extra cherry trees that are part of the Ian Shiels Memorial will be planted w/c 22 February, weather permitting.

8.5 Walking Guide - work is currently in progress.

8.6 Western Playing Fields drainage works – 4 completed tenders have been received. Work on a 28 week contract is likely to start in early Spring.

A local resident said she had noticed that 6-8 trees beside the path between the ice rink and the Saughtonhall bridge, which had been planted as part of the flood protection works, had not survived and needed replacing. She was aware that they are outside the FoRP boundary and wondered whether MCC could promote their

replacement. **The Chairman undertook to take photographs and contact the City Councillors.**

Sponsoring a tree in memory of a loved one was suggested as a possible solution and P Gregson suggested that B Knowles be asked about this. He felt that such a proposal would require extensive advertising. The Chairman thought MCC could help with that.

9. Treasurer's Report including update on micro-projects

J McDonough reported that there had been no change to MCC's finances.

He was keen to progress the following micro-projects:-

9.1 Peploe plaque - the Chairman reported that Roseburn Shoe Repairs, which are currently shut, had estimated £145 for this. The Treasurer said that, if possible, he would like to spend the money before the end of the current financial year.

9.2 Milestone plaques – J Forbes reported that he and John Riddell had agreed wording for these but he wanted to check with the engraver that the plaque would not look too crowded. He has a contact at Beechwood Mains through whom he can pursue owners' consent. The Chairman understood that Daniel Lodge who was handling the Conservation Area Review would also respond to a request for consent to a plaque.

10. Social Engagement including Grapevine

R Beavis reported that he had been comparing the Murrayfield Grapevine with other similar publications across the city. He thought that the Grapevine was a quality publication but lacked the news items, reports from elected representatives, planning content and readers' letters which other publications such as the Currie and Balerno News carry. He expressed a desire to contact the Grapevine team to discuss improvements.

Jane Alliston expressed reservations about this proposal, explaining that the Grapevine is a small directory advertising business. They had run an advertisement about the Roseburn and Murrayfield Village Blether Facebook group*, which she had set up, free of charge, but could not normally be expected to undertake community engagement on a non-commercial basis.

P Gregson suggested that, if someone were to take on responsibility for organising additional content, the Grapevine might be prepared to publish it.

R Brown offered to introduce R Beavis to the Grapevine team and it was agreed that he would proceed cautiously.

*Link to the Roseburn and Murrayfield Village Blether Facebook group:-

<https://m.facebook.com/groups/811367866089976/?ref=bookmarks>

11. Any Other Competent Business

11.1 The Chairman commented that a number of businesses were awaiting the end of Covid restrictions in order to open/reopen in Roseburn – Dine restaurant, Colts (former Murrayfield Bar) and a German kebab shop.

J Alliston had heard welcome rumours of a French bakery.

11.2 The Chairman asked whether the planned Holyrood elections are likely to take place in May and whether it would be possible to hold hustings in any form. J Alliston said that there was to be an all-party meeting at Holyrood the following week and more would be known after that. She felt sure that all candidates would be keen to conduct canvassing in one form or another.

11.3 P Gregson reported that City Fibre are carrying out extensive work in Riversdale Crescent.

12. Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday, 30 March 2021

Subsequent meetings: **11 May (please note change)**, 29 June, 31 August 2021.

Minutes approved at meeting of 30 March 2021.