

MURRAYFIELD COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Ordinary Meeting
held on Tuesday, 31 August 2021 at 7.30pm
by Zoom
Chair: J Yellowlees

Present: A Anderson, R Brown, D Dawson, J Forbes, P Gregson,
B Knowles, N Macdonald, J McDonough, N Oldroyd, E Robertson,
H Whaley, J Yellowlees,
Ex officio: Cllr Scott Douglas, Cllr Frank Ross,
In attendance: Steve Kerr, Chair of the Edinburgh Association of Community
Councils, 4 members of the public,
Apologies: R Beavis, M Stevens, Cllr Karen Doran, Cllr Gillian Gloyer, Cllr
Claire Miller, Cllr Jo Mowat, Cllr Alasdair Rankin, Jeremy Balfour,
MSP, Sarah Boyack, MSP, Miles Briggs, MSP, Foyso 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 everyone to the last MCC meeting of the summer.

2. Minutes of Ordinary Meeting of 29 June 2021 and Matters Arising

2.1 N Oldroyd confirmed that she had conveyed to Scottish Rugby the view that the measures put in place for the Lions v Japan rugby match had been excessive. Scottish Rugby had responded to the effect that the Event Planning and Operations Group had required the measures in order to provide extra space for social distancing. There had been no response to her complaint about the removal of normal parking at short notice.

2.2 The Chairman read out an email from Heather Raeburn, who was unable to attend the meeting, about the Christmas tree planned for the Old Colt Bridge. She has received a positive response from the Council about the provision of a tree with lights, an underground socket for the tree lights and lights on the Bridge. Heather has begun liaising with St George's School about decorations for the tree and will contact Roseburn Primary School about decorations for the Bridge. She will also begin inquiring about school choirs to perform at the lighting ceremony, provisionally scheduled for 1 or 2 December, and will contact Church and other local community groups to see whether they would like to be involved in events on the Bridge. Heather is open to approaches from any other interested groups.

2.3 The Chairman reported that MCC had been contacted by the Council about vegetation at Abinger Gardens which was overhanging the Corstorphine Road pavement and obscuring the bus lane sign. R Brown had put the Council officer in touch with the Abinger Gardens Residents' Association.

2.4 The Chairman reported that anyone who wishes to be tested for Covid-19, but has no symptoms, can attend the unit in the rear car park of Hearts' Tynecastle stadium between 10 am and 5pm until 5 September.

The Minutes were approved. Prop: J Yellowlees, Sec: J McDonough.

3. Issues for which MCC input is sought

3.1 J Forbes reported that on 26 August he had attended a two hour workshop on **the Council's draft 2030 Climate Strategy**. The Strategy document runs to 76 pages and the executive summary to 21 pages. The online consultation on the Strategy is open until noon on 12 September 2021. The aim of the Strategy is to enable the City of Edinburgh to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2030. He felt that the lengthy document on this complex subject was jargon ridden and lacked funding proposals. It was clear that implementation of the Strategy will involve a major lifestyle change and be financially burdensome to all. J Forbes worried that the political will on the part of both the Scottish and UK Governments which will be required to achieve the Council's vision for zero emissions by 2030 is lacking.

The Chairman asked whether MCC should respond to the consultation. It was decided that the subject was so complex that meaningful comment at a local level was not currently feasible. H Whaley suggested that as proposals are worked out over the next 20 years it will become possible to look at the subject in more detail.

Cllr Ross advised the meeting that the following significant initiatives are already under way:-

(1) Over the past 9 months the Council has been engaging with its workforce of 18,000 employees, who come from as far afield as the west side of Glasgow, Dundee and the Borders, with a view to establishing working patterns which increase working from home and reduce commuting by 50%.

(2) That morning he had attended an event hosted by the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce at which presentations were given by 5 companies who have signed up to the Climate Strategy and are taking action – Forth Ports Authority, Robertson Group, Edinburgh University, Royal Bank of Scotland and Edinburgh International Festival.

Cllr Ross said that, if every individual did something towards reaching the zero emissions goal, a significant combined effect would be achieved.

The Chairman mentioned that the Council has recently appointed Marian Marsh as Travel Plan and Monitoring Officer to encourage staff to travel sustainably and to lead by example and encourage citizens to travel sustainably too.

3.2 **The Chairman** reminded the meeting that Cllr Gloyer had suggested that the Council had avoided the real issue about carbon emissions by restricting the proposed **Low Emission Zone** to the city centre, thus concentrating the most polluting vehicles in the peripheral areas such as Roseburn. He had responded to the online public consultation in a personal capacity and **would draft a response on behalf of MCC**.

3.3 The Chairman referred to the **recent flooding at Corstorphine Road** where the drainage system had been overwhelmed by the volume of surface water. This had caused much local concern. He reported that Gordon McOmish, the Council's Flood Prevention team leader, had met local residents and SEPA had forwarded an email from one resident to their senior flood risk hydrologist for comment.

Cllr Ross said that he was aware of a number of recent localised flooding issues and had asked for gullies to be checked and cleared, but there was still much to be done. He was hoping to have a meeting with Scottish Water to discuss the lack of investment in expanding drainage capacity from Drum Brae to Roseburn.

The Chairman mentioned flooding issues at Coltbridge, which had been raised by A Anderson and were being pursued by Cllr Douglas, and Glendevon. The resident who was concerned about Glendevon was not at the meeting, but was understood to have pressed the Council to inspect the affected locations.

4. Councillor's Report

4.1 Planning application for floodlighting at St George's School – The Chairman reported that J Forbes had lodged an objection on behalf of MCC based primarily on Conservation Area concerns. Cllr Ross refrained from commenting as that would bar him from sitting on the Development Management Sub-Committee, should he be required to do so, when this application is considered.

The Chairman reported that the School had issued an apology about the lack of consultation with residents. See Item 6.5.

4.2 Controlled Parking Zones ("CPZs") - Cllr Ross confirmed that the proposals for CPZs will not be progressed until after the Council elections next year. He thought that the message that one size does not fit all was finally getting through and hoped that the Council officers would consult further and produce more tailored proposals.

The Chairman congratulated D Dawson and others for their success in marshalling local opinion in Saughtonhall.

4.3 Road safety around Roseburn Primary School ("RPS") - The Chairman reported that he had emailed Cllr McInnes after the last MCC meeting but had so far received no response.

Cllr Ross said that he had received confirmation from Daisy Narayanan at the Council that the School Streets measures previously agreed with RPS are now going ahead. There are 5 crossing patrols attached to RPS, two of which are staffed. The Council is recruiting for a third. The other two posts are vacant and so far no one has applied. In answer to a question from H Whaley he confirmed that an applicant can apply for a particular crossing and it is advantageous to have someone who lives locally.

Cllr Ross undertook to feed back to the appropriate team the fact that the crossing outside the Murrayfield Bar had been manned in one direction only, a discrepancy which the CCWEL should cure by removing the central island.

4.4 CCWEL and Rejuvenating Roseburn – Cllr Ross confirmed that the Finance Committee has not yet approved the contract for the CCWEL but a final revised tender should be received in time for approval at the October meeting of the Finance Committee. He was confident that funding for the associated Rejuvenating Roseburn project was in place.

4.5 Road safety in Kinellan Road and Ellersly Road – J Forbes thanked Cllr Ross for obtaining the data from the speed monitoring which had been carried out in Kinellan Road during one week in late May and in Ellersly Road during one week in mid June. He also thanked local resident Rob Cormie for his efforts in raising this issue.

J Forbes reported that the data confirmed that the 20mph speed limit is widely ignored. It also disclosed much higher traffic volumes than he expected – 4,352 vehicles on Kinellan Road in the relevant week and 66,000 on Ellersly Road. Fewer than 25% were driving within the speed limit and, more worryingly, a significant number were travelling at speeds in excess of 30 mph and 40 mph. Dangerous speeds were recorded at all times of the day, not just rush hour. He hoped that now that there is data which confirms the extent of the problem, the push for pedestrian safety measures (traffic calming in Kinellan Road and pavement widening in Ellersly Road) will make progress.

Rob Cormie pointed out that the data will have changed since May/June as a result of the schools returning and the lifting of Covid restrictions.

J Forbes said that the Road Safety and Active Travel Group have placed both streets on a list for site investigation and asked Cllr Ross to clarify what that means. Cllr Ross said he understood that the Police will be involved and recommendations should be forthcoming.

The Chairman undertook to invite someone at the Council who can explain how the outstanding Neighbourhood Network projects are to be completed to the next MCC meeting.

4.6 Overgrown traffic island at Balgreen – Cllr Ross confirmed that this had been dealt with and he had received an assurance that the traffic island will be maintained twice a year.

4.7 Pansy Walk allotments – Cllr Ross confirmed that there had been no progress here and it would have to await the recovery of Council services from the Covid-19 pandemic. He intended to raise it again in the context of COP26.

5. Edinburgh Partnership Improvement Plan

Steve Kerr, Chair of the Edinburgh Association of Community Councils, reported that he had had an initial meeting with Council officers. The broad agenda had included discussion on community empowerment, advocacy and governance and reform of Community Councils, including a scheme to encourage wider diversity and to extend the membership of Community Councils to include people with specific expertise. There was a general feeling that Community Councils should be involved in the process of policy making rather than being consulted once a policy had been formulated. He anticipated a follow up meeting with Council officers with a view to producing a paper for submission to the next Board meeting of the Edinburgh Partnership on 21 September followed by an implementation plan for the final Board meeting of the year on 14 December. **S Kerr undertook to forward the discussion paper for circulation among MCC members** and was keen to receive feedback.

On the subject of climate change S Kerr reported that the Council is considering emulating Copenhagen which has established a task force comprising community councils and representatives of local and national government to run pilot schemes in different areas of the city to show citizens how they can reduce their carbon footprint.

The Chairman gave two examples of small scale successes which have a wider impact – guerrilla gardeners in Danderhall and a 14 year old boy who is campaigning for the reinstatement of a local railway station in Northamptonshire.

6. Planning and Licensing

J Forbes reported as follows:-

6.1 37 Corstorphine Road - The Arup report and the decision from the DPEA are still awaited.

6.2 22 Haymarket Yards - An application for full planning permission for student flats has been lodged. The deadline for comments is 17 September 2021. It has been confirmed that there will be no direct access from the development to Devon Place. MCC will, therefore, defer to the West End Community Council ("WECC") in relation to any further comment.

6.3 Demolition of Rosebery House – MCC will also defer to WECC in relation to the application for the demolition of Rosebery House and the construction of a significantly taller office building.

A member of the public with a background in architecture commented that in response to the climate emergency existing buildings should be retained and maintained, rather than demolished, and the embodied energy in them used. Maintenance work should also come before any energy efficiency measures.

6.4 Telecom installation at Beechwood Mains - No further communication has been received in response to MCC's observation of factual error in the Transport Officer's report suggesting that the proposed telecom installation on the Corstorphine Road pavement would not cause an unacceptable obstruction. It is assumed the installation will go ahead.

6.5 Floodlighting at St George's School - MCC's objection to the proposed floodlighting of sports pitches adjacent to Henderland Road was submitted by the deadline of 9 July. Of 32 public comments submitted (including MCC's), 30 objected to the proposal. The application remains "awaiting assessment".

6.6 65 Ravelston Dykes Road, proposed extension to listed building – He had submitted an objection on behalf of MCC to this proposal, focusing on the removal of trees within the West Murrayfield Conservation Area. Of 80 public comments submitted (including MCC's), 72 objected to the proposal. The two applications (LBC and full planning) remain "awaiting assessment".

7. Police report

7.1 The Chairman reported that the main point to be taken from the Police report, which was in a new shorter format, was that only hate crime had increased. The Police held two Operation Close Pass days in Corstorphine in July. A plain clothes cyclist was deployed and drivers who passed too close to the cyclist or were guilty of speeding were stopped. As an alternative to prosecution drivers were offered a "chat on the mat". H Whaley explained that the mat was used to demonstrate the desired passing distance, which is at least 1.5 metres. Operation Close Pass will come to Murrayfield in September.

7.2 N Oldroyd reported that she had asked PC Sam Davison to investigate an incident in the kebab shop on Roseburn Terrace on 24 July in which she had been involved. She and another woman had become trapped at the back of the shop when a fight broke out. She complained that the staff had taken no action to protect their customers and she had been obliged to phone 999. The Police had arrived in 10 minutes. She understood that PC Davison planned to visit the shop and make the staff aware of the actions which they should have taken.

The Chairman proposed asking PC Davison to highlight this incident in his next report.

8. Friends of Roseburn Park update

B Knowles reported as follows:-

8.1 A Cafe Steering Group has been formed to progress conversion of the former toilet block to a café with public toilet. Work is in progress compiling tender documents to be issued in October.

8.2 Planning on the refurbishment of the drinking fountain continues.

8.3 The drainage and re-seeding works on the western playing fields are now complete. A Kickstart Weekend had been organised for 4th/5th September.

J McDonough detailed the programme of activities involving all sections of the Wanderers' club and a number of visiting clubs. He stressed that the Weekend was designed to be a community event.

P Gregson added that the Friends of Roseburn Park would have a gazebo at the Weekend showcasing the Friends' activities to encourage new members.

8.4 Trees and planters in the Park continue to be looked after and watered as and when required.

9. Treasurer's report

J McDonough reported that the opening balance at the start of July was £1,699.13. Income in the form of the annual grant from the Council of £842.70 and expenditure on the two milestone plaques of £220 resulted in a closing balance of £2,321.83.

He thanked John Riddell for his work in organising the plaques at Beechwood Mains and Roseburn railway bridge and intimated that the Charles Mackie plaque would soon account for a further £110 of expenditure.

The Chairman reported that the milestone plaques have generated interest from the Scottish Local History magazine and are to be featured in a forthcoming book by Bruce Keith.

The Chairman mentioned that J Riddell had proposed renovation of the railings on Corstorphine Road opposite Ormidale Terrace as a possible project. The Treasurer was not keen to pursue that at present.

10. Social Engagement

In the absence of an update from R Beavis the meeting discussed the desirability of encouraging a young person to join MCC. **E Robertson undertook to promote this idea to Craigmount High School.** A notice in the Grapevine magazine was proposed.

A member of the public who has teenage children expressed the view that the MCC meetings do not move sufficiently fast to interest young people. N Oldroyd added that the Grapevine would not reach the target age group, their main focus being social media.

The Chairman thought that someone interested in politics, local government or journalism might find MCC of interest.

J McDonough suggested challenging a specific age group (under 25) to come up with a project or discussion document and offering a prize. Others thought the age limit could be a little higher.

The Chairman undertook to give the matter some thought and urged everyone to do the same.

11. Any Other Competent Business

N Oldroyd tendered her apologies for the next meeting on 5 October, explaining that she was getting married on 4 September and would be on honeymoon. Her MCC colleagues gave her and Ross their warm congratulations and best wishes.

There was no other competent business.

12. Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday, 5 October 2021

It was decided that the next meeting would be held on Zoom and the return to in-person meetings looked at again then.

Subsequent meetings: 9 November and 14 December 2021.

Minutes approved at meeting of 5 October 2021.