

COUNCIL MEETING: 28 AUGUST 2007

Minutes of meeting held at the Colinton Mains Community Centre.

Present: G Lighthouse (Chair), P Wright (Sec), L Linn, G Hunter, A Hunter, H Levy, B Brand, J Napier (MinSec).

In Attendance: E Aitken (Cllr), E Barry (Cllr), D Crawford (LBP),

Apologies: S Dalgleish, M Jarvis, J Rust (Cllr).

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting: held on

Approved by P Wright and seconded by A Hunter.

a) Matters Arising

(i) Planning Application for development of Garage site on Oxgangs Road North

Reported at previous meeting McCarthy and Stone had withdrawn their planning application to build a block of flats for the elderly on the site of the old petrol station at Oxgangs Road North. Secretary had been in touch with the company since and advised the application went to appeal and had been successful. As a condition of grant the company are to upgrade the pedestrian crossing located on Oxgangs Road North near its junction with Colinton Road.

This information conflicts with that contained in the application details recorded in the CEC Planning Bulletins. E Aitken will make enquiries about the history of this item.

2. Motion – Community Council Membership

The Secretary read out the following motion, which had been submitted in writing on 3rd July 2007, by J Napier and seconded by L Linn.

Motion: “That G and A Hunter be co-opted as members of the Firrhill Community Council in accordance with The City of Edinburgh Scheme for Community Councils, Section 9.0 Casual Vacancies for Elected Representatives.”

The motion was unanimously agreed.

As the appointments meet the rules set out the City of Edinburgh Council Scheme for Community Councils, the above co-opted members will have the same rights as all other elected representatives.

3. Police Report – D Crawford

Police Constable Crawford reported on the crimes carried out within the community during the month of July. Vandalism continues to be an ongoing problem with a further report of the outside play equipment being vandalised at St Mark’s Nursery making this the fourth time within the year. The continuation of the vandalism is prompting the School to take action, which may assist the Police. Discussion took place on the causes and consequences behind such actions but no conclusions were reached.

Incidents reported to have taken place within the community were:

- a) On the 1st, a fire-raising took place at shop premises in Oxgangs Crescent. Enquiries to trace the known culprit are ongoing;
- b) On the 3rd, a youth was charged with damaging a car in Oxgangs Hill;

- c) On the 11th, a male was charge with a vandalism outside Scotmid;
- d) Also on the 11th, another person was found in possession of drugs at Oxfangs Avenue;
- e) Between the 12th and 13th, an attempt was made to steal a car in Oxfangs Road North, whereas another vehicle was removed from Colinton Mains Road;
- f) Between the 14th and 15th entry was gained to a property in Colinton Mains Crescent;
- g) On the 14th, a person was charged with taking possession of property previously stolen from a break-in to a garden hut in the Colinton Mains area;
- h) On the 16th, a youth was charged with an assault in Oxfangs Road North. Later in the month, the same youth was charged with another 2 assaults and 2 breaches of the peace and breaches of the peace.
- i) Between the 27th and 29th, two vehicles were damaged whilst parked in Oxfangs Farm Drive.
- j) During the same period a third vehicle was damaged as it passed the vennel area in Oxfangs Avenue. No culprits have been found for those incidents.

If anyone has information relating to any of the above they should contact Oxfangs Police Station.

Members were also advised to be aware of a type of crime that is on the increase and involves thefts from elderly women who appear to have been targeted in supermarkets. The modus operandi being that the victim is distracted by a female of East European origin whilst an accomplice carries out the crime by stealing either the wallet from the victim's handbag or the handbag itself.

PC Crawford also informed the Council that he had recently attended a meeting on street closures and it was intended to close to vehicle traffic that section of Oxfangs Crescent between Firrhill Drive and Oxfangs Avenue along the length of the former high flats building site. The footpath in the same area along the side of the Braid Burn will also be closed for health and safety reasons. Pedestrian access will still be maintained along the pavement on the opposite side of Oxfangs Crescent to the building works. The closure to take place from 31st October 2007 and will be long term.

Concern was again raised regarding the nighttime gathering of young people on the footpath that runs along the side of the burn between Colinton Mains Drive and Oxfangs Road North.

After giving his report, PC Crawford left the meeting to carry out other duties.

4. Treasurer's Report – H Levy

The new Treasurer reported that all outstanding matters related to the hand-over of business and banking transactions had now been resolved. Details of accounts will be attached to the next minute of meeting.

5. Planning Report – J Napier

Reported that very few applications had been submitted in the Firrhill area over the last two months and that in general for the greater Fairmilehead – Colinton ward, applications had related to renovations/extensions to domestic property.

6. Meeting Reports – G Lightheart and P Wright

a) City of Edinburgh Community Councils Executive Meeting

The Chair reported that the main business of the meeting had been to discuss changes to community access to school facilities but had been overtaken by the recent report in the news

of proposed school closures. The Executive had tasked two of its members to investigate the proposals and report back.

b) Neighbourhood Partnership Business Meeting: 13 Aug 07

The Secretary indicated this was the first proper business meeting of the new Neighbourhood Partnership (NP). She reported that Cllr Jason Rust was appointed Convener and the name adopted for our NP was 'Pentlands'. The Colinton Amenity Assoc formally requested membership, which was granted. NP Development/Training Programme dates for the remainder of '07 were circulated.

Community Grants - some in the pipeline from the last LDC meeting had been awarded (including £3,164 for Oxfangs Drama Group) and totalled £7,273. Two applications totalling £7,572 were awarded on 13 August, while others (£10,972) were recommended for continuation. [Considering that the Fund for Pentland Hills/Colinton & Fairmilehead opening balance was £57,630, it seems that this could be used up very quickly]

With regard to the funding awarded at NPs, Cllr Elaine Aitken asked about Community Councils which are represented on two or three NPs because of boundaries: how many slices of how many cakes would they get? There seems to be no rule laid down as yet, but it is expected that this will 'even itself out' and problems might only surface when a NP's budget gets very low.

One of the main topics for discussion at future meetings will be 'NP priorities': key objectives; key partners; delivering objectives – re employment, children & young people, health, safety and the environment.

Local issues:

H Levy raised the matter that funding for Oxfangs & Firrhill Community Development post has run out with no word of the contract for the development worker being renewed. Intend to apply for a Community Grant.

P Wright asked when the long-promised 20 mph speed limit for this community will be implemented – the speed bumps in the "safer routes to school" part of Oxfangs Road North are useless. Date of next meeting: 9 October.

7. Correspondence

The following correspondence has been received since the date of the last meeting:

- a) *SEPA; Public Consultation on proposed alteration to L&B Area Waste Plan. Plan available on SEPA website*
- b) *Copy reply from Tom Dougal (CEC) in answer to Secretary's letter to R McCafferty, Bridges and Flood Prevention Manager, re Mr and Mrs Linn's complaint about their garden re-instatement. Councillor Barry offered to follow it up.*
- c) *SEPA View Magazine for Summer '07*
- d) *"Working Capital" – CEC 'Joined up for Jobs' magazine*
- e) *"Inside Letting" – Edinburgh's link with Landlords*
- f) *Queensferry and District CC Annual Report*
- g) *Notice re first Neighbourhood Partnership Meeting, 13 August 2007, plus feedback information from the NP Induction Days.*
- h) *Services for Communities: 5 leaflets to hand out re services to be managed locally through Neighbourhood Partnerships.*

- i) *Waste Recycling Environment Ltd (WREN) Annual Report '06 (projects, grants, etc. through Landfill Communities Fund)*
- j) *Children and Families Service Improvement Plan, Executive Summary 2007 – 2010*
- k) *Dates for Neighbourhood Partnership training in (1) Standards for Community Engagement; and (2) Understanding and Using Community Profiles*
- l) *Scottish Water letter re involvement with TIE and contractors in diverting water mains and sewers along proposed tram route.*
- m) *Association of Scottish Community Councils: National Member Survey '07 plus Newsletter.*
- n) *Edinburgh Tenants Federation: "Tenants Voice" newsletter*

8. AOCB

a) Pentland Community Centre

A new full-time worker has recently been appointed which should benefit the work being carried out within the Centre.

b) Association of Community Councils

GL concerned about the aims of this group, which tends to be a learning forum rather than a representative one.

c) Pentland Primary School: Footpath

HL indicated concern at the apparent decision not to re-instate the public footpath that runs past the former Comiston now Pentland Primary School. Residents who live to the northeast of the school use the footpath to access shops, medical centre, library, church and community centre, which are located in the opposite direction. Further information is to be sought prior to next meeting.

d) Tesco Community Day

Local community groups had been invited to participate in a community day at the Store and promote their activities. The Secretary had arranged for the Community Council to be represented and obtained support from the CEC Community Council Liaison and Development Officer. The event took place on Saturday 11th August and appeared quite successful although its value and objectives may need to be assessed prior to any future event.

9. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Firrhill Community Council will be held in the Colinton Mains Community Centre on Tuesday 25th September 2007 at 7:00pm.