

FIRRHILL COMMUNITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING: 17 JUNE 2008

Minutes of meeting held at the Oxfangs Neighbourhood Centre.

Present: H Levy (Chair/Treasurer); A Hunter (Vice Chair); P Wright (Sec); J Napier (Mins Sec); G Hunter; G Lighthouse; L Linn;

In Attendance: Mr and Mrs Leslie; B McNair; J Kerr; Mr Begbie; Mr Gray; P Podd; B Breslin; H Gray; A Newton.
Community Sergeant C Kowalski (Oxfangs Police);
Cllrs E Barry and E Aitken (late attendee because of other engagements).
W Farmer (Dunedin Canmore Housing Association); A Hackland (Hackland & Dore Architects Ltd)

Apologies: B Brand; J Rust (Cllr).

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting: held on the 22nd April 2008

Minute accepted as a true record moved by L Linn and seconded by G Hunter

2. MATTERS ARISING:

- (a) Item 3 – Community Police Report – with regard to the item on CCTV that was scheduled to be installed in May. Whilst this work has not yet been carried out, it was still on the list of jobs to be done.

3. Community Police Report:

Report presented by C Kowalski who is the newly appointed community sergeant at Oxfangs Police Station

The CCTV facility covering the newly refurbished play area at St Mark's Primary School has been successful in identifying a small number of local youngsters who caused yet more damage.

Report of recent crimes include 2 assaults and robberies, 1 domestic house breaking, 1 attempted house breaking and 22 acts of vandalism. The point was made that vandalism is a difficult problem for the police to resolve without help from the public.

In addition to the police report the following items were raised

Neighbourhood Watch – discussion on the need to promote and develop involvement in this scheme throughout the Council's area

The height of speed bumps on local roads – discussion regarding complaints about their height and effectiveness in controlling speed of some motorists. Reported that traffic wardens are trained to use speed cameras and may target Oxfangs Road North and Oxfangs Hill

Reported the lights for pedestrian crossing at Tesco have been out of action for three days and Tesco trolleys are lying abandoned around the area. Tesco run a 'see a trolley – phone this number' scheme in some of their stores. Secretary to check situation for local store.

Colinton Mains Drive – query on legal situation regarding vehicles parked on the cycle lane. Advised that the provision of the cycle lane does not debar people from parking unless stipulation for such was made in the Traffic Regulation Order covering the scheme.

4. Councillors' Report: Cllrs Aitken and Barry

Due to Administration changes, the City of Edinburgh Council now meets on a 3 monthly basis and there have been no meetings since the last report.

With regard to the regeneration of Colinton Mains Park, the problems concerning the receipt of monies from the Applecross – Meggetland project, intended to part fund the next phase of the project (changing rooms), has been resolved and this work is expected to start sometime in 2009. The playing fields are expected to be available for the start of the new football season in September 2008.

5. Presentation: Proposed Development – 1 Oxgangs Avenue

The Dunedin Canmore Housing Association has recently acquired the site that is occupied by St Hilda's Church. This presentation, given by Ms W Farmer and Mr A Hackland, was for the purpose of introducing their initial proposals for the development of the site for housing. It was noted that the site consists only of that part occupied by the now disused church, its manse and car park and does not include the All Nations Christian Fellowship Church that borders on to Oxgangs Place.

The initial proposal is to build 22 x 1 and 2 bedroom flats for the elderly with 2 of the flats specially designed for wheelchair use. Occupants will become housing association tenants. The profile of the building itself is to be a mixture of 2-4-2 storeys to blend in with the height of surrounding properties. The plan makes provision for off-road parking to accommodate six cars.

Concerns were raised about the site being on the corner of a busy road junction and the parking problems in the area. Difficulties may be experienced in picking-up and dropping-off elderly residents due to the inability to park in the street outside the building

6. Treasurer's Report: H Levy

Reported no change in the Community Council's finances to previous report other than an outstanding bill for photocopying. The proposal to purchase a computer for the Secretary, previously agreed by the Council, is also outstanding having been put on hold at the Secretary's request.

Commented on the increased attendance at this meeting and promoted a discussion on methods of communicating with the community we represent. Targeting areas affected by new business items has been effective for this meeting and should be adopted for future meetings.

Reported that discussions have taken place with Joanne Kerr to develop a Community Council website as a further means of communicating within the community and providing information on local issues

7. Planning Report: J Napier

Report on the Weekly Planning Bulletins for Ward No.08. The period covered is from 22 April to 9 June 2008, during which only 3 applications and 3 decisions related to property within Firrhill Community Council's area are reported in the Bulletins:

- Planning application 01332 has been registered to erect a single storey extension to the rear of residential property at Caiystane Gardens.
- Planning application 01350 has been registered to form a bedroom with dormer window on front elevation of residential property at Oxgangs Farm Loan – application granted.
- Planning application 01451 has been registered to remove a conservatory and replace with a single storey extension at the rear of residential property at Oxgangs Bank.

- Planning application 01505 has been registered mount a bronze plaque on a historic building at Comiston Springs to the rear of Oxgangs Loan. Applicant informed permission is not required.
- Planning application 01612 has been registered to carry out a loft conversion in residential property at Colinton Mains Drive.
- Planning application 01873 has been registered for the erection of a single storey extension at the side of residential property at Oxgangs Road North.
- Planning application 01899 has been registered for the erection of a UPVC conservatory, porch and 1.8m high timber fence at residential property at Firrhill Drive.
- Planning application 01998 has been registered by Tesco Stores, Colinton Mains Drive, to install a lobby enclosure over the existing store entrance.
- Planning application 02016 has been registered to erect a detached garage adjacent to residential property at Oxgangs Road North.
- Planning application 00677 for a garden area-parking bay at residential property at Caiystane Gardens was granted.
- Planning application 01036 for an extension to residential property at Oxgangs Road North was granted.
- Planning application 01046 to erect a UPVC conservatory at the rear of residential property at Colinton Mains Road was granted.

HL reported that Stage 3 of the Oxgangs Re-Development is set to go to the Planning Committee in August. Plans for this part of the redevelopment to include an area for a workshop centre that will enable Oxgangs Care to assist vulnerable families and children. Plans also include an area for the provision of a general store retail outlet.

8. Meeting Reports – P Wright

a) Pentlands Neighbourhood Partnership Funding Panel, 16th June 2008

See attached sheet

b) Pentlands Neighbourhood Partnership Meeting, 18th June 2008

See attached sheet. This report has been added for information purposes but in view of the date, will be included in the agenda for the next meeting.

9. Correspondence

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

- a) Letter from Graham Kitching, SW Neighbourhood Manager, re Nominations for Pentlands N'hood P'ship Funding Panel (dealt with at AGM).
- b) Letter from Christine Doherty, P'ship & Information Manager, re Community Events in Pentlands NP area (announced at AGM).
- c) "Alcohol Licensing in your Community" leaflets to hand out.
- d) Pentlands N'hood P'ship poster for 18 June meeting
- e) City Council Flood Assessment Report (Nov 07).
- f) "Working Capital " magazine: Improving Access to Employment & Training.

- g) “Inside Letting”: Edinburgh’s Link with Landlords + Changes in Local Housing Allowance Scheme.
- h) From Christine Doherty: re first PNP Funding Panel Meeting, 16 June, SW N’hood Office (PW).
- i) “Spokes “ newsletter [to JN].
- j) Notice of Edinburgh Community Reps Network AGM, 18 June, 6.15pm, Nelson Hall Comm. Centre.
- k) From Eileen Hewitt, CC Liaison Officer: Review of Edinburgh CC Scheme, incl. Questionnaire (to be returned by 31 Aug ‘08) to be included in Agenda for July meeting + Code of Conduct for C Councillors [photocopied for each member].
- l) Edinburgh Tenants Federation “Tenants Voice” (May).
- m) Notice & Agenda for Pentlands NP meeting: 18 June, 7pm Clovenstone Comm. Centre.
- n) Scottish Govt. “Consultation on the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 – Amendment Bill 2008.

10.A.O.C.B.

Community Grants Fund Review – Cllr Aitken reported the CEC were setting up an Area Board to look at funding, etc.

Hunters Tryst Primary School – the asbestos removal work has been put out to tender and it is not anticipated that the demolition of the disused school will take place in the near future. The building itself is becoming an eyesore and there are reports of a plague of field mice in the area. Delay is also liable to affect the replacement of the footpath that connected Oxgangs Green and Oxgangs Bank.

Reported that the embankment on either side of the Braid Burn between Colinton Mains Drive and Oxgangs Road North is not being maintained. Also the gate on the C M Drive end of the south embankment, installed for the purpose of stopping people from cutting through this area as there is no exit at the other end, is not padlocked. Cllr Barry to investigate.

General consideration that there is a lot of development work being carried out with the community and there was a need to gain a better perspective of everything that was happening. Cllr Barry was asked if he could obtain a large scale map of the ward in order that a pictorial view of this activity could be provided for the Community Council.

11. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Firrhill Community Council will be held in the Oxgangs Neighbourhood Centre from 7:00 pm on 22nd July 2008.

FIRRHILL COMMUNITY COUNCIL: MEETING REPORT - P WRIGHT

PENTLANDS NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIP FUNDING PANEL: first meeting held on 16 June, in SW N'hood Office, chaired by Christine Doherty and attended by CC reps from Balerno, Colinton (AA), Currie, Fairmilehead, Firrhill, Longstone, Ratho + a rep from EVOC + Cllrs Cairns and Henderson.

The Fairer Scotland Fund has been set up to replace several other funding pots, the five national principles set out by the Scot Govt being:

1. Investment to address the causes of poverty (not its symptoms).
2. Strong emphasis on early intervention for vulnerable individuals/families/disadvantaged communities.
3. Promotion of joint working between local partners.
4. Action on improving employability as key means of tackling poverty.
5. Empowering communities/individuals to influence the decisions made by Comm Planning P'ships.

The Edinburgh Partnership and its partners have agreed their three priorities for investments of the Fund in Edinburgh:

1. An early intervention approach (in the cycle of deprivation)..
2. Improving health and reducing health inequalities.
3. Improving employability.

+ six principles have been agreed to govern the use of the Fund in Edinburgh, in summary:

1. providing easy access services, appropriate to need.
2. allocation of Fund through a strategic and transparent process as part of inclusive p'ship approach.
3. Fund will target areas of need - + individuals in need irrespective of where they live.
4. Fund will be managed locally where this is the most appropriate way of delivering services.
5. Effective and sustainable outcomes should be secured from the outset, including commitments to mainstream support.
6. The Fund will actively support joint working - will be invested in activities/services from any sector which can show it can effectively deliver the agreed outcomes.

The Edinburgh Index 2008 will be used to make funding decisions - much more sophisticated data than Scottish Index - not using just census material so will be updated annually with stats from local govt, Health Service, Police and other national agencies. This Index can pinpoint areas smaller than post-codes, so work can focus on very specific areas of social need across the city.

The documents discussed at our meeting were: "Draft Guidance for the Investment of the Fairer Scotland Fund in Edinburgh", Appendix 4, and "Progress Reports on Transition to the Fairer Scotland Fund": Edinburgh P'ship Board Meetings held on 15 May and 6 June 2008 + List of Projects and their initial allocation of Fairer Scotland Fund Award 2008-09. City-wide, the total amount allocated during this transition period is £3,219,587.50, projects in the West Edinburgh sector being awarded £342,249.

The problem for Pentlands N'hood P'ship is that all of the West Edinburgh projects are based in the SW P'ship area - there's very little crossover of services into Pentlands NP area, so there can be no straightforward funding split. Can we negotiate a joint relationship between the two NPs? We must identify community need and see how this can be funded: partner agencies might be persuaded to put more money into specific needs + many services should still be funded by mainstream providers - the FSF would be used to fill in where there are gaps in provision.

Our next steps: * Get more/better info on funding from the next Edinburgh Partnership meeting (20th June); * Find out how many SW organisations cross over into Pentlands; * Find out actual need that must be targeted in Pentlands NP area; * Agree on priorities and identify key principles we'll operate by; * Look at other available funding streams.

FIRRHILL COMMUNITY COUNCIL: MEETING REPORT - P WRIGHT

PENTLANDS NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIP met on 18 June in Clovenstone Community Centre, Chaired by Councillor Jason Rust and attended by City Councillors, nominated Community Council reps, Inspector Lyall from L & B Police, other agencies, and residents in the Partnership area.

1. Partnership Community Plan Development – a report by Christine Doherty, P'ship & Information Manager, compiled mainly with info from Community Council questionnaires. Priority areas for action were also identified from local Community Profiles, Edinburgh Household Survey, and local Community Plans, eg, Oxfangs Community Plan + W Edinburgh P'ship Community Plan, which narrowed issues down to specific geographical areas. The partners, including health, police and City Council depts. are developing a range of community plans and city strategies to tackle key areas of work, and key issues identified by the community can be linked directly to key priorities recognised by partner agencies. Also, the local housing area board is considering its integration into the N'hood P'ship and a steering group has been formed to consider, eg, the group's core activity, a mechanism by which to prioritise project activity across the community, and communication with the NP.

Work streams – main areas to develop as key priorities for local community in first year: Environment and Strategic Planning; Community Safety; Community Facilities & Services; Health; Transport; Education and Employment. The Draft Plan format proposed has four headings for each work stream: Community Priorities; What We Will Do Next; Lead Partners; Targets. The partner agencies will agree their own input into the plans and the tools required to measure progress. Once an outline draft is agreed, there will be more consultation across the NP area with the local communities/interest groups so that all can have opportunity to comment, leading up to the final draft.

2. Walkabout Programme – included Oxfangs, the SfC Housing Officer and Cllr Barry attending. [It was noted that Cllr Elaine Aitken might have attended but walkabout dates were not available in advance as she requested.] Various issues were recorded, eg, Roads, Task Force, BBS, Clarence (lack of response when called), Contractors, and Property Management. Meetings of stakeholders are taking place to try to address these issues. Council officers may be named so that direct contact can be made. Also, walkabouts may be more effective in future with further development and staff training.

3. Post Office Closures – Post Office Ltd will start public consultation on 19.08.08. At least 15 POs in Edinburgh are ear-marked for closure - if one is reprieved, another must take its place - but these will not include the four managed directly by PO Ltd (Frederick Str, St James Centre, Wester Hailes and Morningside). Royal Mail Group must consider financial sustainability and number of customer transactions, urban population living within one mile, and areas of deprivation, among other criteria when making closure decisions. Consultation will last for six weeks (to 23.09.08) and posters/leaflets + address for customers to submit comments will be displayed in POs identified for closure. Royal Mail Group will make closure or reprieve decisions by 7.10.08; changes will be implemented from 10.11.08.

4. New Street Names – The City Council Planning Committee has compiled a report with the purpose of referring the Street Naming Charter to the Neighbourhood Partnerships. Proposals include the building up of a bank of potential street names for each NP area, using established conventions as set out in the Council's Street Naming Charter and interim arrangements for consulting with local ward members. A ready 'bank', using existing criteria + local knowledge, could allow new housing developments to be named more quickly, therefore allowing quicker access to utility connections, etc.

5. NP Community Grants Fund – locally, among the latest round of grants approved, Oxfangs Neighbourhood Centre Association has been awarded £4,970 for coach hire for six summer trips, a large screen, projector, DVD player, speakers, amplifier, and tutors for taster activities at Open Days for the area. Oxfangs Drama Group, for young people aged 12-18 to take part in dramatic activities and learn theatre skills, is awarded £3,676 for expenses connected with performing a play in the Festival Fringe in August, ie youth support workers, food, drink and attendance at three other Fringe shows. Both awards are made under the Social Inclusion theme.

Future Meeting Dates: 26 August, 7 October, 9 December 2008; 3 February, 31 March, 2 June 2009. (These dates are provisional, and venues will be announced later.)