

COUNCIL MEETING: 24 AUGUST 2009

Minutes of meeting held at the Colinton Mains Community Centre.

Members Present: H Levy (Chair); A Hunter (Vice-Chair); P Wright (Secretary); P Podd (Treasurer); J Napier (Min Sec); L Lynn; G Hunter

In Attendance: Local Councillors E Aitken and E Barry; Cllr T Buchanan; PC D Crawford (Oxgangs Community Police); Representatives from SW Community Safety Team, A Davies and R Rickis; B Brand; H Johnston; A McBryne; T Gordon; C Tuohy; M-J O'Brien; N Tinlin (Fairmilehead CC)

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting: held on the 27th July 2009

With no amendments the minute was approved as a true record – prop E Aitken; sec: L Lynn

2. Matters Arising:

Colinton Mains Park and Pavilion.

The Chair introduced Cllr Tom Buchanan, Convener, Economic Development, CEC, who had asked to be invited to this meeting to report directly on the action that had been taken following the deputation to the CEC's Executive Meeting held on 25th June 2009.

He reported on a meeting held with the Bank, who are the main creditors for Applecross, to discuss the company's liquidation. The Bank was agreeable to supporting the release of the monies due to the CEC for this community project subject to the legal implications of this action being explored. It was the Bank's view that if agreed the monies would be classed as a gift.

Whilst these negotiations are continuing, the Director of City Development has agreed to cover the shortfall from his budget, in recognition that the funding failure did not lie with the Community.

This arrangement will have to be reported back to the City of Edinburgh Council meeting on the 17th September 2009 but Cllr Buchanan gave his assurance the money would be available to complete the project as agreed.

The Chair thanked Cllr Buchanan for his report and proposed that in view of his positive report, a meeting of the park and pavilion stakeholders should be organised to progress the tendering process by developing a tender document for option 3.

3. Community Police Report: D Crawford

PC Crawford reported that with 161 calls recorded for the Oxgangs beat so far this month it is fair to say it has been a busy month. Reported that the incident in Firrhill Park has been resolved and a person has been charged. Other incidents of note are:

1. A serious disturbance took place outside the Good Companions where a local man was stabbed. Two men have been charged in connection with this incident.
2. There has been an increasing number of complaints about youths riding mini-motes in the woods behind Firrhill Drive. The police know the persons involved and have issued warnings.
3. There was a break-in at the Chip Inn, Oxgangs Road north and a local teenager was been charged with this incident.
4. A person was charged with causing damage within a common stair in Oxgangs Farm Gardens.

5. A female was assaulted in Oxbgangs Avenue. The intent was to rob her and although the police have a suspect in mind, enquiries are ongoing.
6. Carillion are still having problems with vandalism at their sites with heavy plant machinery being damaged by a group of youths

Highlighted the fact that there are still a surprising number of incidents that are the result of residents forgetting to lock their houses cars, sheds and garages or remove valuable property from sight.

Also reported that over the past three years August has been the peak month for “bogus caller” crimes in the Edinburgh area. This is people who turn up on the doorstep unannounced – with the intent to commit theft by distracting you. To prevent this type of crime you should keep your doors locked, even when in the house and always ask who it is before opening the door. Check that they are genuine and if you are unsure – do not open the door.

4. Councillors’ Report: Cllr Aitken

Reported that she was continuing to receive complaints about parents parking at Pentlands Primary School.

Advised that the Community Safety Team were funding the provision of personal alarms for vulnerable elderly. Oxbgangs Care were co-ordinating the distribution to those identified within the local community as being most in need.

Attended a recent meeting on the proposed Health Centre to be built at Colinton Mains Drive. The plans appear to have grown since previous consultations and concerns are that the site may not be large enough for the additional facilities.

Continuing to receive complaints about standard or lack of grass cutting carried out by the CEC Parks Department.

5. Community Safety Team: Presentation – Raymond Rickis

Part of the CEC ‘Services for Communities’ Department, Community Safety Teams (CST) were introduced in May 2007 as a new way of dealing with clean, green and safe issues raised by CEC tenants; residents of private rented properties; owner-occupiers and housing associations. CSTs are formed through a partnership of four different sections, namely:

- Community Safety Officers
- Environmental Wardens
- Community Concierge
- Lothian and Borders Police Neighbourhood Action Unit

The South West Neighbourhood CST whose area of responsibility is the two Neighbourhood Partnerships ‘South-West’ and ‘Pentlands’ cover our area.

Each part of the Community Safety Team offers its own specialist skills towards resolving problems raised or caused by members of the community and co-ordinate their actions through monthly meetings. They also liaise with other partners, such as the CEC, Police, Social Work, Fire and Rescue Service, Community Learning and Development, Community Safety, Children and Families, etc., to identify and prioritise action areas.

Their purpose is to promote and co-ordinate actions to resolve problems within communities caused by anti-social behaviour and where possible their aim is to do this in a harmonious manner such as through diversionary work with young people, etc. Were such actions are unsuccessful they have the powers to seek legal action to impose restraining or banning orders where necessary.

A rundown of various local issues acted upon within the community was given and the performance outcome of these actions.

6. Treasurer's Report: P Podd

There is no change from last month, as bank statements are still awaited therefore no up-to-date figures available. An appointment with the bank is pending to resolve this.

Transactions:

1. The Church let has been paid
2. The photocopying account is to be split – one account for 2008 and one account for 2009. These are still awaited.
3. Purchase of a printer is still being discussed.

7. Meeting Reports – P Wright

a) Pentlands Neighbourhood Partnership Business Meeting, 28 July 2009

Firrhill Health and Social Care Centre – reported more services going in than originally planned. An update on the project indicated that the relocation of the South Central Community Health Team from the Royal Edinburgh Hospital was under consideration, there was an agreement, in principle, to extend the car park and discussions were taking place with Tesco on additional parking space. The additional facilities would add a third floor to the building.

Summary of items discussed at the meeting is attached as appendix 1.

8. Local Planning Applications Report: J Napier

Report on the Weekly Planning Bulletins for Ward No.08. The period covered is from 22 July to 13 August 2008, during which only 1 decision and 1 application related to property within Firrhill Community Council's area is reported in the Bulletins:

- A planning application to build an extension to the rear of a house in Colinton Mains Green was granted.
- A planning application has been registered to carry out alterations and extension to a house in Oxbgangs Road.

The following proposals related to major developments were also recorded over this period:

- Development for new medicine for the elderly facility, associated landscaping and access arrangements at the Western General Hospital, Crewe Road South
- Change of use from agriculture to leisure and recreational on Green Belt Land 13 metres northeast of 1-3 Hallyards Road, Edinburgh. CEC Planning Dept are specifying that a public meeting must take place and be advertised at least 7 days before it takes place. The local community councils to be consulted and served a copy of the proposal and any updates and similarly for local residents associations, local CEC councillors and the airport.
- New building development consisting of 102 x 2 and 3 storey houses and flats plus new road and environmental improvements at 1-5 Hyvot Terrace. CEC Planning Dept are specifying the the Neighbourhood Partnership and local CEC councillors be notified
- Transport interchange development on Green Belt Land 426 metres northwest of 113 Glasgow Road. The CEC Planning Dept have taken the view that the proposed

development will affect a wide population therefore further consultation required and are suggesting a public meeting be held at Waverley station and press releases/adverts be used to cover areas outwith Edinburgh

9. 5 Point Concordat

Item raised by Secretary for discussion: arises from item 3 in the list of correspondence below relating to Customer Focus Group meetings organised by the CEC, City Development, Planning and Strategy Department. Meetings take place about every 6 months with the aim of gaining new ideas and perspective to improve service delivery and culture change. At the last meeting the Department presented a proposed concordat as a way forward to getting better understanding between developers, community councils and the CEC. Whilst the concordat is not binding the Department are nevertheless keen to know whether stakeholders are in agreement with its general principles so it can be put into practice. Also keen to receive amendments and comments on the concordat and draft guide on how to get the best out of community engagement.

The relevant papers were delivered to members before this meeting.

A general discussion took place on the new planning arrangements for national and major developments and the requirement for developers to consult with community councils and other stakeholders prior to registering their plans. Whilst it was considered that the Concordat was vague on the methodology and that the Planning Department or the developer controlled the resources available to community councils, the general intent expressed was supported. Secretary to respond that the Community Council supported the 5-point Concordat

10. Community Council Elections

Members are reminded nominations for the Community Council starts on 31 August and closes 14 September 2009. Nomination papers can be obtained from the Councillor Barry who is the Returning Officer for this community or direct from the CEC website www.edinburgh.gov.uk/communitycouncils or www.edinburghnp.org.uk.

The Council is looking for new members and publicity material is being obtained from the City Council.

Agreed the members present should actively promote involvement in the community council to those they consider may be interested and pass on the election material whenever and wherever the opportunity arises. Publicity material will be handed in for display in local public buildings, shops and other premises where the public have access.

11. Correspondence

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

- 1) "Inside Letting" (Edinburgh's Link with Landlords), Summer '09.
- 2) Edinburgh Community Representatives' Network: Minutes of AGM on 08/07/09.
- 3) City Development Planning (Edinburgh Guidance):
 - a) Commenting on Planning Proposals (Apr '09) booklet;
 - b) Minutes of Customer Focus Group Meetings: (i) Developers & Agents (17 June); (ii) Community Groups (23 June);
 - c) Draft Guide for Community Groups: How to get the best out of community engagement on planning proposals;

- d) Community Engagement on Planning Proposals 5-Point Concordat + Questionnaire (to be returned by 31 August). [Draft Guide + 5-point Concordat photocopied and given to members to read pre-meeting.]
- 4) Edinburgh Civic Forum: Minutes of Meeting held on 16 June + Notice & Agenda for meeting, Tuesday 15 September, 4.30 pm, in Business Centre, City Chambers. Agenda includes Current Planning Issues (Report by John Bury, City Council) and Enforcement of Planning Decisions (Case Study).
- 5) Diana Potter (by e-mail attachment): Minutes of Environment & Transport Meeting.
- 6) "The Community Councillor" – Journal of the Association of Scottish CCs.
- 7) Edinburgh Planning Guidance: Gardens & Designed Landscapes – Draft for Consultation. A survey, commissioned by City Council, part-funded by Scottish Natural Heritage, has identified gardens and designed landscapes of local and regional importance, and includes detailed research of 48 prioritised sites. Public comment is being invited; a summary of consultation responses will then form part of the final report to Planning Cttee in Dec 2009. Documents available to view at
http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/internet/Council/CEC_have_your_say or
Planning & Bldg Standards Reception, Waverley Court, 4 East Market Street
Comments: by e-mail to naturalheritage@edinburgh.gov.uk - or by letter to Frances Jarvie,
Principal Planner Built & Natural Heritage, G1 Waverley Court, 4 East Market Street,
Edinburgh, EH8 8BG.

12.A.O.C.B.

None

13.Date and Venue of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Firrhill Community Council will be held in the Colinton Mains Community Centre on Monday, 28th September 2009 at 7pm.

PENTLANDS NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIP BUSINESS MEETING
Held on 28 July '09 in City Chambers

Summary of items discussed at meeting which may be of interest to FCC Members:

1. Cllr Jason Rust will retain his position as Convener. It was decided that there should now also be a Vice Convener but, as only half of our Councillors were in attendance, this can be decided amongst themselves at a later date.

2. Reports tabled (arising from Council/other meetings):

a) Review of N'hood P'ships - first approved by Council on 8 March 2007 as "Advisory Committees to the Council" - do not have delegated powers to hold budgets but can have influence over locally-managed services (develop local accountability) + the Council and partner services. * The Scottish Community Empowerment Action Plan (Scottish Govt & CoSLA, March 2009) recognises that active communities engaged in decisions made on public services affecting them - can sometimes be the best way of tackling issues, with public agencies helping to support and develop opportunities to do so. * Edinburgh's approach to this: N'hood Management decentralisation of services, managed and delivered locally, including devolvement of resources, budgets, decision-making - + NPs, which can develop Local Community Plans, identifying local issues and agreeing priorities. Sub-groups were formed with the aim of developing and delivering activities to meet the priorities. N'hood P'ship Boards are accountable to the communities, with Comm. Councils playing their part. * The key services decentralised in this way: * Street Cleaning; * Grounds/Open Space Maintenance & Parks; * Libraries; * Housing Management; * Community Safety/Anti-Social Behaviour. * Budgets for most of the SfC (Services for Communities) have been devolved to N'hood Managers, with N'hood P'ships advising on spend. Also, as previously reported, £3.2m from Housing & Roads capital budgets has been top-sliced to create a N'hood Environmental Programme (NEP) budget for the 12 N'hood P'ships to bring about improvements in their communities [in our area: lighting for Colinton Mains Park + wheelchair access between library & Oxfangs Broadway being "worked up", but whether either of these will be progressed will not be known until September]. Improvements to be made: * Performance Reporting: scorecards being developed to focus on key services and outcomes being delivered in the area by Council and its partners; will enable NPs to advise on where improvements might be made and, if necessary, advise on re-alignment of resources. * SfC are looking at how N'hood Managers can work more effectively with other local service providers. * N'hood P'ship meetings should be streamlined; one way is to delegate more tasks to sub-groups and encourage partners to lead on sub-group work programmes. * All Council Depts should find ways to maximise their input and commitment to NPs.

b) Pentland Hills Regional Park and L & B Police Joint "Responsible Camping" Initiative meeting on 24 June '09. This was brought about by anti-social behaviour and vandalism (including starting fires not under control; cutting down trees/branches; leaving litter, tents and other damage to site; fly-tipping; drunk/disorderly behaviour; theft from motor vehicles) at Bonaly and other North Pentland Hills sites - a particularly bad year for this, with concerns being raised by community and individuals re feeling intimidated by irresponsible campers. Dealing with damage caused is a big drain on Ranger Service resources, but it has no powers (must rely on education, information and advice) and enforcement may be necessary. Community Beat Officers for Currie and Colinton/Bonaly confirmed that charges could be brought; if all incidents are reported, a strong case could be made for increased police resources. Also, Fire Service is regularly called out to deal with small fires (stats requested). Offenders could come from quite far afield - not necessarily local. Ranger Service, L&B Community BOs, and MOD Police should work together; visit known hot-spots and share knowledge of when antisocial behaviour is likely; they have access to internet social networking sites as well as youths who might use these sites to arrange meets; secondary schools might be approached by Ranger Service - try to promote responsible behaviour + (with police support) point out likely consequences of

camping irresponsibly. Also, Pentland Hills Regional Park Manager will request that matter is raised at a future Pentlands NP meeting to increase community awareness of the issue and of joint approach being taken.

3. Sub-Groups: Diana Potter reported on the progress of these. Briefly: a) Funding Panel - has discussed and made recommendations (to PNP) on many Community Grant Fund applications since its inception; has had first training session on Fairer Scotland Fund Commissioning Process; improving employability in PNP area is a priority. Environment & Transport Group: has discussed many local issues; has put forward ideas for using N'hood Environmental Programme Budget to improve local areas; next step is to look at priorities on Local Plan. Health & Employment Group: more key officers and health officers need to be involved. Oxfams Action Week feedback is very positive; a good model. Community & Safety Group: already good working practices, e.g., Neighbourhood Action and Youth Action Teams. Youth groups need to liaise across boundaries. South West Area Board: half-way through review, eg, bringing in Community Councils; they can do consultation work.

4. Information update by rep. from NHS Lothian: (a) Healthy Living Centre, Wester Hailes (Health & Social Care + Children & Families) - delay in ratifying site – AWG (builders) want it at Westside Plaza (AWG land is leased from Council) but NHS + City Council prefer Harvesters Way (working in conjunction with Prospect Housing) and NHS would even be willing to build Centre themselves. A lot of mis-information has been spread about this Centre, but press release is being prepared for Evening News with correct info. It is proposed that the architects attend the next PNP meeting, (b) Firrhill Health Centre: design may have to be changed as there are now more demands for space within it; at least four more groups than planned want to move there; there's also a funding issue. Any more news will be brought to Firrhill CC.

5. Proposed Development of Colinton Polo Fields: Council's Planning Dept must present its own report in response to Enquiry Report. Pentlands NP can get involved, acting as conduit with local community re planning application. Environment & Transport sub-group will keep tabs on this. Alex Stewart said that evidence was not presented to Reporter at Local Plan Enquiry; Local Plan Report has inconsistencies; evidence collected by Colinton Amenity Assoc. has not been taken into account. (CAA has twice previously had to gather evidence and support to keep Polo Fields from being built on by developers and so is concerned about possible change of area's status.)