

FIRRHILL COMMUNITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING: 28 SEPTEMBER 2009

Minutes of meeting held at the Colinton Mains Community Centre.

In Attendance: E Barry (Cllr); D Crawford (Oxgangs Police); P Johnston; G Baker; M Donlevy; A Hunter; G Hunter; L Lynn; P Podd; N Tinlin (Fairmilehead Community Council); P Wright; H Levy, J Napier; A Oswald; S Ormiston; M O'Brien

Apologies: E Aitken (Cllr); M Milne; S Liddle

As this was the first meeting after the close of nominations for the Community Council elections (14th September), the Returning Officer, Councillor Barry took the chair to report the results. He advised that the number of nominations received was less than the number of places available thus there was no necessity for the City Council to run an election and that the following persons were duly appointed on to the Firrhill Community Council:

Heather Levy,	Grace Hunter,
Peggy Wright,	Alistair Hunter
Jim Napier,	Martine Milne,
Pauline I Podd,	Susan Liddle,
Lesley Linn,	Steffanie Purves,

Letters confirming their appointment would be sent out shortly.

Cllr Barry after welcoming the new Council advised it was now necessary that they appoint office-bearers and asked for nominations for the following posts.

- Chairperson – H Levy nominated by J Napier, seconded by L Lynn – no other nominations
- Vice Chair – A Hunter nominated by P Wright, seconded by G Hunter – no other nominations
- Secretary – P Wright nominated by A Hunter, seconded by P Podd – no other nominations
- Minutes Secretary – J Napier nominated by H Levy, seconded by P Wright – no other nominations
- Treasurer – P Podd nominated by L Lynn, seconded by J Napier – no other nominations

At the conclusion of the election, Cllr Barry relinquished the chair to H Levy to conduct the first meeting of the new term.

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting: held on the 24th August 2009

Following a short interval for the minutes to be read, they were approved by P Podd, seconded by L Lynn. There were no amendments.

2. Matters Arising:

Colinton Mains Park and Pavilion – Cllr Barry reported that funding has been agreed by the City Council and the work is going out to tender. The work is clarified as the refurbishment and extension of the current building to provide six changing rooms, storage, kitchen facilities and a community room.

Flooding – Chair voiced her concerns that flood prevention work has added to rather than resolved the problem of flooding in the area around the new bridge works on Oxgangs Road North. Cllr Barry advised he had emailed Marshall Poulton, Head of Transport to remind him that it had been agreed to install a lift pump at this location a year ago and that it had still to be installed. Still awaiting a response.

3. Community Police Report: D Crawford

McCarthy Stone Building Site - The complaint regarding their encroachment on to the pavement blocking pedestrian right of way had been picked up by the Police Liaison Officer at Firrhill High School and the matter has been discussed with the site manager.

Mini-motor bike at Firrhill Drive – the owner of the bike has been identified and warned.

Licence renewals - Good Companions Public House - whilst the police had been called to a number of incidents, they were outside the pub therefore the police made no comment when its licence was up for renewal.

The Division has received 423 calls this month to date. 191 of the calls were in the Firrhill beat of which only 15 were reported crimes, which is a relatively low number. The majority of the calls related to non-crime matters such as complaints about neighbours, noise, unlicensed vehicles, etc.

There were two cases of vandalism recorded - a car in Oxgangs Road North (25th) and a flat in Firrhill Drive (3rd). A garden hut was broken into in Oxgangs Street (18th) and also a vehicle (3rd). A person was reported for a drugs offence following a visit to a house in the central area (10th).

There had been one report of a possible bogus doorstep caller. As there had been no other reports in the area the position was not certain. [This turned out to be genuine caller but people should beware of such calls whether on the doorstep, by telephone or email as the following report shows]

The following story, extracted from the Police Newsletter and printed in full, was also reported.

TELEPHONE SCAM

Picture the scene: you're sitting relaxing at home and the telephone rings. Upon answering, a male/female voice with a foreign accent tells you they're a "representative" of BT, and that you're about to be disconnected for an unpaid bill. A demand is made for payment immediately (the going rate seems to be in the £30 range) with the threat that it'll cost £118 to re-connect you later if you don't pay. Even if you dispute that BT is not your provider, you'll be casually but confidently told that your company pays BT a percentage for the line rental.

Even if you're not convinced for whatever reason and say as much, you'll probably be given a "demonstration" of their authenticity when you're cut off – no tone, zilch, until you're "phoned" back. This is done by the caller staying on the line at the other end whilst pressing the mute button. You can't dial out but they can hear you trying. Apparently it's the person initiating a call that also terminates it. When you stop trying to call out, they know this, cuts off and calls you back. By now you might almost be convinced.

Of course, the method of payment requested will involve credit card details, or less likely but still possible, via a bank debit card. You can imagine the rest.

You may also have been provided a telephone number beginning 0800 as further proof of authenticity. After hopefully sending him/her packing, and if you're curious, you could dial 1471. You'll find the number won't be recognised.

So ask yourself this question: during any of the above, remembering that you've probably been phoned when off your guard, would you have fallen for it ?

If there's a loud chorus of "No Chance", then just remember who are likely to be the targets – namely the vulnerable and the elderly – or the unwary.

This scam does appear to be genuine and those responsible for calling, it could be assumed, would only need a few people to fall for their deception to make it profitable. Once personal details of

credit and debit cards are obtained, there is nothing in their way then to stop your account(s) being cleaned out.

Please remember that there are people out there just waiting and scheming to take advantage of the unwary. Hopefully, by being aware of this particular scam, you, or someone you know, will not become a victim.

4. Councillors' Report: Cllr Barry

In addition to the issues covered under Matters Arising above, the following items were also reported or discussed.

Oxgangs Avenue, proposed development of St Hilda's Church Site. - Concerns had been raised regarding the junction of this road and the hold-ups caused by vehicles turning right across Oxgangs Road North. He has made enquiries about providing an extra lane at this junction to make it easier for traffic turning left. The planning department are investigating ownership of the land on the opposite side of the road from the former church site.

Hunters Tryst – public meeting (see item 6 below)

There were a number of issues raised relating to the Licensing (Scotland) Act and the sale of alcohol – The Act was seeking to stop the promotion of alcohol and place restrictions on licensees with regard to the sale of alcohol such as limiting the size of glasses, where it can be displayed, etc. Between the cost of re-organising their displays and the added increase in licence fees, a number of shopkeepers had decided not to renew their licence, as it was not worth the hassle.

There were a number areas identified as being rundown and poorly maintained which Cllr Barry agreed to investigate and/or action

Firrhill Drive whilst the street is open to normal traffic it has been left in a state by the flood prevention traffic and a street cleaner is required. Cllr Barry to action

Small area of land that was part of the landscaping at the entrance to the access road into Tesco is in need of maintenance. Cllr Barry to action

Firrhill Crescent – complaints about the state of the shopping precinct. The fire on the building site opposite, which destroyed a new building has caused a delay in emptying the shops as a result this area has remained in use for longer than intended. It is not clear who is responsible for the land – the CEC or Dunedin Canmore.

Proposed Medical Centre – unconfirmed report that parking proposals have not been accepted

5. Treasurer's Report: P Podd

No change from previous report, still having difficulty in arranging a meeting with bank teller re account statements

6. Development of the Hunters Tryst Site

A number of those present at the meeting had interests concerning this item. Notice of the proposal, dated 28 August, had been received from the developer, Dunedin-Canmore (through their agents) of their intention to build a number of houses/flats on this site. Notice was also given that, as part of the necessary public consultation, a presentation of the proposal would be held in Pentland Community Centre on 24 September. The Chair and Secretary both attended and reported on the presentation which consisted of a number of plans showing various options for a development of affordable housing with associated infrastructure.

The primary difference between the options was the number of houses/flats in the development but as there was no written information on what was being proposed there is a degree of

uncertainty. A lack of organisation in the presentation has led to confusion with different people interpreting the information they received differently.

The Chair's basic understanding was of 3 options, varying from 100 to 120 properties in number, The make-up of the housing had still to be determined but they were considering of about 70% social housing or DSS and the remaining 30% part ownership or privately rented to tenants. There were 2 options covering entrances to the estate, either 1 entrance or 2. The allowance for parking was to be restricted to 25% in line with CEC planning standards.

It was also understood that Dunedin-Canmore are still in negotiation with CEC for the land.

Comment was made that despite being next door to Pentlands Primary School, the site is in the catchment area for Oxgangs or St Marks primaries. No information about the replacement of the public pathway between Oxgangs Green and Oxgangs Bank

Concern was raised that the developers appear to have rushed into consultation for a major development, thus starting the clock running, without a clear proposal on which the community can focus and possibly without have acquired the land on which to build. This appears to be acceptable to the planning department but negates the benefit to the community of the new planning regulations.

The Chair has made representation to Dunedin-Canmore for a steering group to be formed. It is not supported at this time but will be given consideration.

The meeting agreed the Secretary write to Dunedin-Canmore asking for specific details of their proposed development in writing, in order to be able to inform the community and ascertain their views.

(See also under Planning Report)

7. Planning Report: J Napier

Report on the Weekly Planning Bulletins for Ward No.08. The period covered is from 20 August to 22 September 2009, during which only 1 decision 2 applications and 1 proposal of application notice related to property within Firrhill Community Council's area is reported in the Bulletins:

- The application for a change of use for the shop premises at 76 Colinton Mains Drive has been granted, retrospectively
- A planning application has been registered to install a run in for car parking with a drop kerb for a house in Colinton Mains Green.
- A planning application has been registered to form dormer windows to the front and rear of a house in Oxgangs Terrace.

The following proposals related to major developments were also recorded over this period, one of which related to a proposed major development within our area:

- **Proposal for a development of affordable housing with associated roads, parking, infrastructure and landscaping, on the site of the Hunters Tryst Primary School, Oxgangs Green (Ref: 09/02224/PAN).** The developer proposed a public consultation event to take place on 24 Sept between 4pm and 6.45pm at Pentland Community Centre with an advert placed in the Edinburgh Herald and Post on 10 Sept 2009. The developer's notice was copied to Firrhill and Fairmilehead Community Councils, local councillors, interest groups/associations and the Oxgangs and Colinton libraries. CEC Planning Department required as part of the consultation exercise place an advert in the Edinburgh Evening News and consult with the Colinton Amenities Association.

- Proposal for a residential development, care home, sheltered housing, community centre and associated access and landscaping works on land adjacent to 132 Glasgow Road, Newbridge.
- Proposal for a mixed use redevelopment to create class 1 retail, class 7 hotel and class 4 business uses at 10 Dock Street, Edinburgh.

8. Meeting Reports – provided by P Wright

a) *Environment and Transport Sub-Group: 15 Sept '09*

Held in Fairmilehead Parish Church. A meeting of the Roads & Pathways branch of the above Pentlands Neighbourhood Partnership sub-group was held before the main PNP event. After consultation at community level, we had each at previous meetings recommended two projects for our own community which we hoped would be taken forward. Mike Avery had taken away these ideas to be 'worked up' - surveyed, designed, etc – and this meeting was held to give us the result of costings. The following will now go forward in Ward 8:

Colinton –

- a) Refurb of steps down from Woodhall Rd to main street, £23,500
- b) Repair of pavement from pharmacy upwards, £28,000 - but this to be done in two phases, the first this year costing £13,000.

Fairmilehead –

- a) Installation of a pedestrian refuge/island on Comiston Road, £14,500
- b) “ “ “ “ “ Biggar Road, £14,500

Firhill –

- a) **Installation of lighting along main path through Colinton Mains Park, £27,000**
- b) **Building of wheelchair ramp on steep path from library to Broadway, £13,700**

Next year, there will be only £50,000 – and £15,000 of that is already ear-marked for Colinton's pavement (2nd phase) – so we must be thinking of projects to bid for which are not too ambitious.

b) *Pentlands Neighbourhood Partnership Public Meeting: 15 Sept '09*

Chaired by Cllr Jason Rust; attended by other PNP Councillors, Council officials, Community Council representatives, and residents.

The theme of this meeting was “Health in the Community”, and the two main items on the Agenda were presentations on:

Proposed Healthy Living Centre at Wester Hailes. There have been various reports about this in the EEN, as well as petitions, but the City Council, NHS Lothian and Prospect Housing Assoc are adamant that this Centre + housing (70) will be built on the derelict one- hectare site at Harvesters Way. There will be landscaped public spaces, pedestrian and transport links will be improved, and it is hoped that footfall to the shopping centre will be increased. No mention was made of which services HLC will include.

Firhill Partnership Centre (previously called Health & Social Care Centre): this, again, was a power-point presentation, but with no handout. However, I have been forwarded a copy of the presentation and have compared it with the one given by Robert Aitken at our Community

Council meeting exactly a year ago. There is virtually no change: in NHS Services SC Community Mental Health Team replaces Minority Ethnic Health Inclusion Project; in Council Services, Day Centre for “up to 25” Older Persons has been firmed up at 18. So why are they now saying that **the building will require a third floor?**

The only reason I can see: in the “**One Year On**” part of the presentation, Item 1 is - **Relocation of South Central Community Health Team from REH is under consideration.**

Also, **One Year On:**

- Agreement in principle that site area can be extended by re-alignment of school access road to allow 55 on-site car parking spaces. [But – remember that this entrance to Oxgangs PS was aligned that way for good reason in the first place; + what about the bus stop, which has already been moved?]
- Dialogue with Tesco to use superstore car park. [But - their car park is virtually full most of the time already.]
- Building will require a third floor.
- New Hubco to be established early 2010 for developing joint Council/NHS premises in the community.

Next Steps

- Accommodation Schedule to be finalised late 2009.
- Approval of Business Case by City Council & NHS Lothian – early 2010.
- Hubco likely to take on project in April 2010.
- Community input into planning process essential: new regulations for major developments.
- Completion date target: mid-2012. [This has slipped from 2011 a year ago.]

Colinton Mains Park Pavilion

Following on the Pentlands NP meeting of 2 July, when H Levy presented a report on the June Stakeholders’ meeting, and Cllr Rust tabled a Motion re Applecross going into administration and the City Council not having received the £200k, as per Section 75 agreement, towards this Pavilion: a Report dated 20 August by Dave Anderson, Director of City Development, was included in the documents for this meeting on 15 Sept. This report summarised the situation, including the fact that a claim form had been submitted by the City Council to PriceWaterhouseCoopers, the receivers, and discussions were underway with bankers. To date PWC had not been able to say how long it would take to conclude the claim process or whether it would be successful. However, at a Council meeting on the morning of 15 September it was confirmed that, whatever the outcome of these negotiations, Opt.3 for the pavilion (refurb + extension) would definitely go ahead.

Community Grants Fund

As previously reported after PNP meeting of 2 June ’09, **Oxgangs Drama Group** had applied for £5k to fund a film and radio project; this was amended to £3,400 at the meeting. Subsequently, another funding application had been successful, so the CGF one was withdrawn. Since then, a new application was made for £1,720 to support the additional cost of overtime for existing workers over the project’s two weeks + contribute to transport costs. The Funding Panel agreed to this, and the group has been awarded the £1,720.

New Community Councils in Pentlands NP area: Wester Hailes and Juniper Green.

9. Correspondence: Secretary

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

1. Eileen Hewitt: publicity materials for Community Council Elections
2. City Development Dept: Public Realm Strategy – Consultation. Documents can be viewed on Council’s website www.edinburgh.gov.uk and search Draft Public Realm Strategy, or at Planning & Building Standards reception area at Waverley Court, 4 East Market Street. Comments by Monday 19 October to Gina Bellhouse, Principal Practitioner, Business Centre G1, Waverley Court, 4 East Market Street, Edinburgh EH8 8BG.
3. Proposal of Application Notice. Applicant: Dunedin Canmore Housing Assoc. Site: former Hunters Tryst Primary. Development: affordable housing with associated roads, parking, infrastructure and landscaping. Public Consultation: 24 September '09, 4 pm – 6.45 pm, in Pentland Community Centre, Oxgangs Brae.
4. Booking Form & info on seminars for N’hood P’ships all-day Conference, 30 September, in Hib’s Stadium. [H Levy and P Wright attending]
5. Publicity posters and leaflets re Community Council election from E Hewitt.
6. NHS Lothian: “Health Link” newspaper (distributed at meeting).
7. L & B Police Call Grading Protocol: info sheet from Keith Seaton, Oxgangs Police Station (distributed at meeting).
8. Diana Potter (by e-mail): Notice & Agenda of PNP Environment & Transport sub-group, Mon 5 Oct, 7 pm, in SW N’hood Office, + Minutes of 3 Aug.

10. A.O.C.B.

- a) Notice has been received of the following annual general meetings:
 - Pentlands Community Centre 7-10-09
 - Oxgangs Care 26-10-09
 - Oxgangs Neighbourhood Centre 03-11-09
 - Colinton Mains Community Centre 18-11-09
- b) Oxgangs Care’s Friday Coffee Group are holding a Halloween High Tea on 29-10-09, in place of their normal event.
- c) The Association of Scottish Community Councils are holding their Annual National Conference at the Scottish Parliament on 14th November 2009. Chair and Vice-Chair attending

11. 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, 26th October 2009 at 7pm.