

Firrhill Community Council

'Nec Aspera Terrent'

(Undaunted by Adversity)

Minute of Ordinary Meeting of the Council on 25 March 2013
Held in Oxfangs Care Offices, Firrhill Neuk.

Members:

H Levy (Chair)
A Hunter (Vice Chair)
P Wright (Secretary)
L Linn
G Hunter
J Napier (Minutes Sec)

Ex-Officio Members:

E Aitken, Councillor, CEC
R Lewis, Councillor, CEC
J Rust, Councillor, CEC
D Crawford, LBP, Oxfangs Police Stn
G MacDonald, MSP

Visitors

S Duffy
F Gosney

Apologies:

J Rust, Cllr
R Lewis, Cllr
D Crawford, LBP

The meeting started at 7pm. H Levy in the Chair.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

The draft minutes for our meeting held on 25 February 2013 were reviewed. There being no corrections the draft minutes were moved for approval by A Hunter and seconded by L Linn. Approved.

Matters Arising

AOCB - Raised Garden at Police Station

This relates to the work carried out by an elderly resident living in the supported housing scheme at the police station. The Community Council through Cllr Aitken were seeking reimbursement to this gentleman from the City Parks Dept for the money he spent redeveloping the neglected communal garden. Cllr Aitken reported she had received a favourable response from Craig Dunlop. See also Cllr Aitken's report.

Action: Continuation of previous action - Chair to provide Cllr Aitken with copies of the receipts.

Police Report – Operation Cipher

The Community Council agreed at the last meeting to promote this initiative and assist in any way they could and members were asked to bring forward any proposals for consideration. Chair advised that she had attended a recent meeting of the action group for this initiative and the launch would take place at the Tesco Superstore on the 29th April between 12 and 2 pm. Other stores/ shopping centres would also be involved at some point. The aim was to take this initiative to all local

venues and events held between the launch date and the closing date which was the 27th May, such as school/church fairs, etc.

Chair had previously put forward that the Community Council fund and organise a quiz night. This was agreed and a list of local interest groups was drawn up with a view to inviting each to enter a team. The event would be held in the Oxgangs Neighbourhood Centre, subject to availability.

It was also agreed that this should be used as an opportunity to promote the Community Council, its campaign for new elected and nominated members and for greater two-way communication between the local interest groups and the community council.

Action: Chair to check availability of the ONC and suitable dates.

Ward Councillors' Reports – Refuse Collections, Recycling, etc.

Following a lengthy discourse on the subject of refuse collections, recycling and enforcement at the previous meeting, it had been agreed to open this up for wider debate within the community through a public meeting. Chair reported that it had since been agreed at the PNP business meeting to have this subject as a standing item on their agenda. In view of the recognition within this wider forum, reflecting our own concerns on the standards of service and enforcement applicable to waste collection, it was agreed no action be taken in regard to a public meeting at this time.

Noted that a trade waste bin at the Oxgangs Broadway side of the 'Good Companions' has been overflowing for the whole of this past week with black bin bags piled on top of the bin, as well as on the pavement at the side. Many have been burst, and the rubbish - food, etc - strewn across the pavement and road is disgusting. Matter has been reported to the Environmental Wardens.

Cllr Aitken indicated that she is still receiving a number of complaints about the service.

Note: In view of PNP action, accepted that no further action be taken in regard to a public meeting and that the situation will continue to be monitored by members.

Ward Councillors' Reports – Temporary Road Closure – Oxgangs Avenue

This relates to the closure of the Avenue due to flood prevention work, our concern at the lack of notice and apparent lack of provision for Oxgangs residents to connect to the re-routed No's 5 / 16 bus service. The secretary reported that through Gordon MacDonald, MSP, the following info was received from Lothian Buses.

"All the stops on Greenbank Crescent which were being served by the Shuttle Bus had posters attached to them explaining the closure, along with a map of the Shuttle Bus route, and a timetable. On the West-side of the closure (Oxgangs Avenue), the first 2 pairs of stops (those closest to the bridge) had posters displayed that explained the closure and advised passengers to walk towards Greenbank Crescent to board the Shuttle Bus, so they could link-in to the 5 & 16 on Comiston Road. Other stops on Oxgangs Avenue (closer to Oxgangs Rd North) had posters displayed outlining the closure, and advising people to make their way to Oxgangs Rd North in order to board the 16, or an alternative service to make their journeys. All stops on Oxgangs Rd North between Oxgangs Avenue and the Hunter's Tryst roundabout had notices displayed showing the diversion maps for Service 5 & 16, along with the times of the closures, so that any passenger wishing to board a 5 knew that the bus would not be operating on Oxgangs Rd North, and that the 16 would not be operating via Greenbank Crescent."

Lothian Buses maintain that all stops in the Oxgangs area affected by the closure and diversions did have notices displayed in the timetable cases. They also put notices on the LB website with regards to the closure, along with the diversion maps, and this information was also tweeted at the end of last week. The Secretary maintained that not all notices were displayed in the timetable cases; some were high up on the bus stop post. LB responded that they did try to display the information as prominently as possible and it was probably down to space.

In regard to why there was no provision made for a shuttle bus on the Oxfords side of the road closure, it is thought that the primary reason was due to the lack of a safe turning point anywhere in the area west of the bridge, where the road was closed.

There had been complaints from people that they had to pay an additional cost for travelling on the shuttle. In response to this we understood that as it was only meant to connect passengers with other buses on Comiston Road, you would get charged when going on the shuttle bus at this end and then transfer to a 5/16/11/15 with the same ticket. Coming back, you would pay on one of those buses then transfer to the shuttle bus with the same ticket.

Deferred Item – Amenity Notices

Information on the use of Amenity Notices, which are part of the CEC's Planning Enforcement Charter, was circulated prior to the meeting and members requested to give thought of any property or area of land, the condition of which they consider adversely affects the amenity of the area. No suggestions put forward that met the conditions for the application of such Notices but members now aware this type of enforcement action is available. Item noted.

Deferred PNP Reports – PNP Public Meeting / South West Area Board

Reports compiled from the business papers for these meetings had been included in the appendices of the draft minutes. Members were invited to raise any matter in relation to these reports. No matters were raised. Neither meeting had been attended by community council representatives due to travel problems and sickness.

Jan13: AOCB – Colinton Mains Park

The Secretary wrote to Craig Dunlop on 6th March regarding the:

- a) re-instatement of the signs and notice board, taken down during the construction work for the pavilion and left lying at the entrance to the park.
- b) completion of the car park lighting. The park lighting had not been completed due to the construction work. The Pavilion opened on 4th August but no action taken.
- c) damage caused by council vehicles too wide for the width of the park pathways. The grass surface along the edges of these pathways have become well rutted due to vehicles driving on the saturated ground.

A very quick response was received from both Graham Croucher and Craig Dunlop advising that the lighting for the car park and the re-installation of the park signs and notice boards was being chased up. Both matters have been raised before and the lighting should be installed before the end of March and the signs/notice board has been added to the main contractor's snagging list.

Flood Defence Work – Appeal to the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner

This relates to the Community Council's request for information, following its November meeting, which was submitted to the City of Edinburgh Council in December. The request was for information on activities that had taken place since the completion of the flood prevention works in the community council's area. Of the 6 parts to the request only the provision of maps/drawings of the Braid Burn flood works had been received. A further request had been made in January with no response being received. Consequently the Community Council agreed to appeal to OSIC.

The matter had been raised at the last EIT meeting ([report attached as appendix 1](#)) attended by the Secretary, where she had been requested by Tom Dougall, Maintenance Manager, Service for Communities to withdraw the OSIC appeal on the basis that he could provide a more meaningful response. He alleges that the request for information is extensive, unclear and has data protection issues and in order for him to comply with the request the Community Council would have to be

more specific regarding the information it is seeking. The Secretary brings this matter to the Community Council for a decision on whether or not to withdraw the OSIC appeal.

After discussion the Community Council took the view that the appeal should stand on the basis that the City Council did not seek clarification of the request until after the appeal had been lodged and even then has not specified what part(s) of our request is unclear. The Authority has a duty to assist someone who is seeking information from it and the department involved has singularly failed to do so.

***Action:** The Secretary to respond to Tom Dougall advising him that the Community Council has decided not to withdraw its OSIC appeal, where it is considered that the EH13 postal area is too extensive that this be altered to EH13 9 postal area and if he could clarify what parts of the original request that are unclear.*

Membership

Resignation of Treasurer, P Podd and appointment of interim Treasurer

Chair spoke on Pauline's diligent attendance over the years and expressed our appreciation of her more recent involvement as Treasurer.

***Action:** it was agreed the Secretary send a letter to Pauline expressing our thanks and good wishes for the future.*

J Napier agreed to act as interim Treasurer until a new Treasurer could be appointed, which was not expected to take place until after the community council elections in September. He advised that the Treasurer's files had already been handed over by Pauline.

***Action:** J Napier to make the necessary arrangements for the transfer of authorised signatories and for an audit of the accounts to take place.*

Community Council Elections: Appointment of Returning Officer

Advised by Eileen Hewitt, Community Council Liaison Officer for the CEC on 8 March that the first stage in the election process is for each CC was to appoint a Returning Officer and asking for this to be done and the necessary details to be returned to her by 22 April 2013.

The City of Edinburgh Council will approve an independent Returning Officer for community council elections. The independent Returning Officer must not be a current elected or nominated member of the community council and once appointed shall be ineligible to stand for election to the community council.

J Napier proposed that, as Cllrs Barry and Rust had carried out this duty over the past two years, Councillor Aitken be appointed as the Returning Officer for Firrhill Community Council. Seconded by A Hunter and agreed by all members. Cllr Aitken said that she would be happy to perform this role.

***Action:** Secretary to return the completed Returning Officer form to Eileen Hewitt.*

Election of Co-opted Members

A motion to appoint two people who have regularly attended our recent meetings has been submitted to the Secretary by J Napier and seconded by L Linn. Both meet the residential qualification required for eligibility to become an elected member.

The Community Council Scheme as issued by the City of Edinburgh Council in 2009 allows for the filling of casual places/vacancies for elected members between elections when an elected community council member submits his or her resignation. It also allows for a community council to have discretion in regard to filling vacancies between elections. As Firrhill Community Council has never had the full number of elected members there have been vacancies since the previous election. With the resignation of one of our members, we are now reduced to six members which is

half the total maximum permitted membership. As this is the minimum level which allows the establishment of the Council there is a need to try and fill those vacancies.

Motion: "That, subject to their agreement, Sheila Duffy and Francis Gosney 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."

Both indicated their willingness to become members and this was unanimously agreed by all members. 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.

Action: *Secretary to advise Eileen Hewitt of the changes in membership*

Publicity Drive for New Members

H Levy, A Hunter and J Napier, met on the 1st March to discuss ways and means by which the Community Council could attract new members. A report of that meeting is attached as [appendix 2](#) with a Motion that *Firrhill Community Council adopt this report and the notes of the Special Meeting held on 1st March 2013 as a beginning for a publicity campaign for new members and accepts the need to source professional assistance in the creation of advertising material that will be effective in this campaign.*

The Motion was agreed and as a starting point for the implementation of publicity drive the following was agreed:

The initial proposal has just been carried out and the Community Council has two new members.

In regard to the proposal on 'meeting structure/frequency' agreed no action to be taken on this, at this time. Agreed to postpone the Annual General Meeting to October and subject to election outcome agree arrangements at this meeting.

Action: JN to develop, get approved and have printed promotional flyers, bookmarks and posters for use during Operation Cipher (29th April) and future events. Provide costs for gazebo/fold down/FCC rubber stamp (to personalise paperwork etc) and t-shirt costs for next meeting. Check with EH (CEC) availability of CC promotional goodies and report back.

Action: AH to draft a colour publication illustrating why there is a need for a Community Council. The aim should be to have this available for issue prior to the AGM.

Action: HL to arrange schedule for presentation boards to be displayed at suitable venues throughout the Firrhill CC area (churches, community centres and schools).

Community Police Report

No police report has been received. Secretary advised that PC Crawford had intimated previously that due to a change in work pattern he would no longer be regularly available to attend our Monday meetings.

Action: *Secretary to write to Inspector Nolan and ask what provisions were being made to maintain contact with Firrhill Community Council.*

To pass on information about crime anonymously, call Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or fill out their secure, encrypted online [Giving Information Form](#).

Ward Councillors' Reports

Councillor Rust

Councillor Rust was unable to attend due to another meeting but did submit a written report which is attached as [appendix 3](#).

Councillor Aitken

Councillor Aitken also provided a written report which is attached as [appendix 4](#) and spoke on item 9 concerning the massive upheaval as the Royal Scots Borderers are moved from Edinburgh to Belfast and the affect this will have on the soldiers and their families, many of whom have set down roots in the city.

The 3rd Battalion Rifles are to be moved from Redford to Dreghorn infantry barracks to replace the Borderers. Cavalry barracks used by visiting troops for the Tattoo look set to be sold off. The headquarters of the 51st Infantry Brigade will move to Redford along with the 5th Battalion Royal Regiment of Scotland from Canterbury to Redford. The move will see the number of troops in the Capital cut by 40 per cent.

Councillor Lewis

Councillor Lewis was unable to attend the meeting but forwarded the following report. It was not received in time for the meeting therefore not discussed.

Reports he is still receiving complaints from constituents about refuse collection, mainly about bins being tagged as lid is left open. Waste team have been investigating these complaints and sending officers out to discuss with constituents.

Enquiry received regarding area of land opposite Tesco, Colinton Mains Drive, next to the Medical Centre, which is covered with rubbish. Was advised in December that this land would be cleared up in new year. This has not happened: further e-mail sent to David Virgo.

Pentland Neighbourhood Partnership Reports

PNP Business Meeting 26th Feb: No report available.

Community Safety Sub Group 4th March

The meeting was attended by Al Hunter and he raised the following safety concerns

1. Road Defects: pot holes appearing in all areas, disquiet about the quality of repairs as some that have been repaired are being filled in with dollops of a smooth material that spreads out in waves and not ironed flat.
2. Braid Burn: paths and edges littered with rubbish and dog fouling. Tesco trolleys still being dumped in the burn and nearby streets. Proposed that there is a need to direct this problem to Tesco's head man, Philip Clarke, as the local manager is not making any effort to stop the removal of trolleys from the store.
3. Cones and barriers left lying around for months after road works have been completed. Constant failures to uplift these items on a city-wide basis must add-up to a substantial replacement cost
4. Oxbgangs Avenue: re project to widen exit into Oxbgangs Road North. Big problem as the utilities under the pavement are of insufficient depth to allow a road to be constructed above them. Would require substantial funding as the utility companies would not pay for the work to be done. Also in this area registered concern about the narrow width of the entrance into the police station and sheltered housing complex which required vehicles to slow right down when turning into this area. It is situated at the bottom of a steep hill with vehicles travelling at speed.
5. Colinton Mains Drive: the development site for the new medical centre is covered in rubbish and the fencing in need of repair. Action required by those responsible for site.
6. Colinton Mains Park: service vehicles churning up the grass along the sides of the paths leaving deep muddy furrows. Action required by those responsible for park and damage.

7. Colinton Mains Drive: vehicles still parking nose or tail to the kerb along the parking bay at the shops resulting in the vehicles restricting the width of the road at this very busy area. Concern has been raised previously about the risk of a serious accident being caused by the practice and it had been agreed that line marking on the road/lay-by would help to alleviate this problem but no action has been taken.
8. Waste Collections: Raised our concerns that whilst bins full and overflowing, streets a mess and in some areas the smell is terrible but the City Council's answer is that it is the fault of those who do not recycle. It is time the City Council revised its procedures and provided the service people are paying their council tax for.

Funding Panel 7th March

No report available.

Environment, Infrastructure and Transport 11th March

Attended by P Wright and report is attached as [appendix 1](#).

NEPs 15th March

Attended by P Wright and her report is attached as [appendix 7](#).

Planning Applications Report

Details of planning applications within the Firrhill CC area and proposals for major developments within the City area for the period from our last meeting are attached as [app. 5](#).

Correspondence

All members had been provided with this list (26 Feb to 21 Mar) prior to the meeting, and printed updates to 25 Mar were handed out by the Sec at the meeting. (attached as [app. 6](#))

A.O.C.B.

1) A Hunter asked about the issue of the clouds of steam issuing from Braid Burn School which he had reported several months ago. P Wright said that she'd contacted SW N'hood Office at the time, and her e-mail had been passed on to Scientific Services, but there had been no feed-back from them. Cllr Aitken volunteered to take this up.

Action: Secretary to trace original e-mails and forward to Cllr Aitken.

2) Cllr Aitken and Firrhill CC Secretary had individually sent e-mails to Environmental Wardens re litter spilled all over pavement from trade waste bin outside Good Companions, and shop fittings left on Oxgangs Bank pavement behind newsagent's shop.

3) Scottish Parliament Tour: members still interested in a tour being arranged.

Action: Chair to organise

Date, Time and Venue of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on **22nd April at 7.00 pm**.

Venue: Board Room in the Oxgangs Care Offices, 12 Firrhill Neuk.

The meeting ended at 9.30 pm.

Environment, Infrastructure & Transport (EIT) Group Meeting

Held in South West Neighbourhood Office, 11 March 2013

This Pentlands Neighbourhood Partnership sub-group meeting was attended by Council officials, Community Council reps, and chaired by D Bewsey, Colinton Amenity Assoc.

Tom Dougall, CEC, was introduced re Braid Burn Flood Defences Issues, following complaints by residents in the Firrhill Community Council area which Firrhill CC had taken up. T Dougall and D Bewsey had just done a fact-finding walkabout, and Tom had come to this meeting to talk about his findings and report back on the letter sent by the Secretary of Firrhill CC to CEC's Flood Defences Dept.

Blocked Drains. There are many drains – some there before the works began - leading into the burn but, because Colinton Mains is so flat, there can be hardly any gradient on them, meaning that water doesn't easily run through, and this leads to problems with silting-up. There are three pipes together in one 'headwall' through the playing field (a huge water storage area) which have a pump at Tesco's. The burn is cleared and all pipes inspected twice a year, but more often if problems are reported.

Oxgangs Road North: The bridge – and, therefore, the road on either side - had to be lifted, creating a drainage problem which was not there previously, and so pumps were installed. Walls were built on either side to hold up the raised road and contain as much water as possible. Residents were consulted and have been communicated with since. A pump was installed in the field opposite residents who said that they now had water coming in to their property because of the changed road camber, and this should operate automatically when water reaches a certain level. Re the wall between their properties which they say holds water within their gardens: according to Mr Dougall, the Council wanted to erect a fence or hedge between the two gardens, but the owners insisted on having a stone wall for privacy.

Braid Burn & Path: The flood defence works were designed for a 1 in 200 yrs flood [Scottish Water sewers are 1 in 30 yrs]. Sensors/depth gauges will shortly be put in the burn which will automatically send messages to mobile 'phones. As the Braid Burn is so urbanised, flood storage at reservoirs is said to make little difference. The grassed area of banking is not much higher than the burn bed, especially at the path where the large puddle is a problem. Also, where areas have been reinstated the natural drainage will have gone, and new grass roots may take some time to become effective, but drainage should improve soon. Stewart Farquhar's engineers looked at raising the path slightly, and perhaps putting in a French drain. However, although puddle water might run down this, in times when the burn is really high water could equally come up the drain! Another problem in altering that part of the path might be a 'double-dip', where the 'ponding' problem is just moved to the next part of the path. The situation will be monitored over the next few months and put on the EIT Agenda in September. NB: Tom Dougall said that, during consultation on the works, high embankments with paths along the top were suggested by the Council. This was flatly turned down by residents, who were worried about people seeing into their homes, and so walls were constructed instead.

Garden in Colinton Mains Rd: This was reported as being very badly re-instated, with rubble and lime. Mr Dougall said he hadn't heard of this complaint but would look into it.

FOI Request: 1) Complaints are logged, but no list exists so it would be very difficult and time-consuming to make a list now. Also, some complaints will be covered by Data Protection Act. Also, EH13 area is too large, and requests for info need to be more specific. 2) There are a huge number of reports, which would cost around £2 each to look out. Data Protection Act might apply to reports as well, eg, photos in houses. Only reports are at Greenbank Road; Oxgangs Rd North engineer did not

do a report, only a design re pump in playing field opposite. One complainant there says she has lost her pre-construction survey. 3) Plans/ designs/maps of flood defence construction work were e-mailed to us, as requested.

Other Agenda Items

1. Local Transport Strategy Survey: complaints - a) leading questions were asked – just questions they wanted answered, and no space for other views. b) insufficient time to answer.
2. City-wide Transport Forum, 2nd meeting, was attended by D Bewsey. Off-topic: trams bylaws and condition of roads. Issues to be explored: integrated ticketing; air quality; Sunday parking; controlled parking zones; speed limits.
3. Streets Cleanliness: there is a new taskforce manager for SW; doing a two-week survey. Lack of waste bins was discussed; in short supply at Council; old-style concrete bins have now all been removed. [I reported that the one at the pavement beside Colinton Mains BC & new pavilion has not been replaced but is badly needed because of all the fast-food shops at the end of Oxbgangs Rd North and no other bin on this long stretch of road.]
4. Sustainability 2020 Group has re-started; J Carrie reported that this includes members from Transition groups and Changeworks. As no invitations were sent to N'hood Partnerships or Community Councils, Graham Budd will ask Nick Croft how they can feed into this forum.
5. Transport: lack of accessible transport in Pentlands area; N Tinlin reported no feed-back from Lothian Buses re bus access from outlying areas to Healthy Living Centre (now nearly completed) at Wester Hailes, and NHS Lothian seemingly had never thought of it. Lothian Buses might have considered this more favourably if the plans for new housing there had gone ahead with the prospect of more passengers.

Peggy Wright, Firrhill Community Council Rep.

Report : FCC Special Meeting 01-03-13 (J Napier)

This meeting was organised as a consequence of an anticipated reduction in elected members which could result in the Firrhill Community Council being dissolved. The aim of the meeting is to present to the Community Council for their consideration, a list of actions that should be taken from now until the nomination period in September, which would assist in attracting new people as elected members.

A secondary aim will be to use this exercise for the purpose of developing a list of contacts, that is, people in the community who would be willing to communicate with the Community Council on a regular basis on issues which are up for consultation or matters that concern them. Whilst keeping data protection in mind, there is a need for the Community Council to have evidence of such communications in order that it can be produced as and when required.

In order to continue functioning, Firrhill Community Council needs to promote itself, the work it does and the value in keeping it as a community resource – and – to broadcast this across the community over the coming months up until the election. If successful it needs to continue to use the lessons learnt to develop its relations with the community.

The attached notes of our meeting lists proposals for development and action. Other than the one identified in the notes, our first action should be to ensure we have good quality advertising material to hand-out. If necessary we should seek professional assistance. We need people to read and understand the issues involved.

Notes from FCC meeting: Friday 01-03-13 (H Levy)

Agenda- group created the agenda for the afternoon, key topics were:

As an initial action, two new people (S.D & F.G) have shown an interest in the activities of the Community Council by attending our recent meetings. They should be invited to become co-opted elected members and that this should be put to them prior to the next meeting so that it can be put on the agenda and formally endorsed.

Recruitment- to use Operation Cipher, school & church fetes to collect names and promote the FCC, A.G.M & Election. Expand on the book that AI has created which highlights FCC activity. Make up the Boards for display. Create an A5 flyer with FCC details and how to contact us and a tear off slip for people to complete. Ask E.H for CC promotional goodies. After gathering all contacts invite them to AGM and do a consultation on how they want to be involved. Create a single sheet A4 newsletter type to promote what we have done e.g sports pavilion, gp's, flood defences, hope triangle, planting, orchard, deputations, PNP/Sub groups, the first ever gathering of community groups to go over Roles & Responsibilities, make a pack up with ALL the newsletters in them and keep the full colour newsletter for the annual report in June.

Meeting Structure/frequency- Every two months have a single issue item on the agenda & target people of interest to attend. The agenda should be set from these discussions. Have a business meeting in between.

Communication- Create a word doc Register themed either by topic or street. Invest in a gazebo/fold down/filing cabinet/FCC rubber stamp (to personalise paperwork etc) and investigate t-shirt costs?. Create a calendar of events and Action Plan.

Can I suggest that instead of the usual agenda in March we use that meeting to pull all this together. In hunting through folders I found the book mark I designed we could use that instead of the A5 flyer and a Word search that Kirsty created for us, we never used it.

Councillor Jason Rust's Report

I have been involved in lengthy meetings of **Pupil/Student Support Committee** where we have been reviewing all out of catchment placements and prioritising places. The Committee meets in private and parents will have the right of appeal. Needless to say schools such as Pentland Primary continue to be an extremely popular parental choice.

I have arranged for food waste containers to be uplifted from **Oxgangs Place** where residents had repeatedly advised the department they did not want them, but the Council had previously failed for removal and they consequently became used for dumping.

Along with Jim Napier and Jackie Laird I attended the **Oxgangs Services for Communities Walkabout**. A lot of ground was covered from Oxgangs Crescent/Drive up to Oxgangs Street and finishing in Oxgangs Broadway. The area generally seemed in much better condition litter-wise etc. than on some previous walkabouts.

I have been following up with the Education department various issues in relation to Primary School Swimming on behalf of parents at **Pentland Primary School**.

I seconded a motion at Full Council requesting that the standardisation of **day care charges** be postponed to allow for budgetary considerations for organisations, given the very late notice given. This was approved.

I seconded another motion at Full Council requesting that the penalty/enforcement charges for **side waste/top-hatting** be rescinded while refuse service collection levels remained unacceptably poor in parts of the city. Unfortunately this was defeated by the Administration.

I have taken up various issues arising at **Oxgangs Neighbourhood Centre** Management Committee.

I have arranged for roan pipes to be fixed at the sheltered housing in **Oxgangs Brae**.

Refuse collection problems continue to take up a lot of time across our area.

Tonight I am attending the **South West Communities Forum** meeting at Currie to discuss the local development plan and I will report back to the Community Council.

Councillor Elaine Aitken's Report

1. Operation Cipher will be launched on Monday 29th April. A number of events are planned and a full programme will be issued shortly.
2. Unfortunately, refuse collections continue to cause problems:
 - Food waste collections have been missed.
 - Some communal bins (Oxgangs Loan especially) are still being missed.
3. I've raised complaints about dog fouling and litter in Oxgangs Broadway again.
4. Residents have requested a handrail in Oxgangs Farm Drive because of problems experienced by elderly residents in wet and icy conditions.
5. I had hoped that the flood prevention work at Firrhill Drive would be completed by 16th March so that the hedge laying in the Hope Triangle could proceed. Both were delayed by poor weather.
6. The Braidburn School Education Scotland (formerly HMIE) inspection report was considered at the Education Standards Sub Committee (South West), attended by the Head Teacher and Chair of the Parent Council. We congratulated the staff and parents for the improvements made and for working in partnership to provide enhanced learning opportunities and experiences for the children,
7. The Refurb Group for Pentland Community Centre has been awarded a grant from WREN (Waste Recycling Environmental Limited) towards the works being done this summer. This means that they have nearly achieved their target.
8. The Youth Engagement Forum met last week to discuss duplication of remit with the Youth Providers' Group. This will now be taken to the providers' next meeting and the minutes and information distributed to the forum members.
9. Jason Rust and I met with Philip Hammond, Secretary of State for Defence, to discuss the future plans and raise concerns expressed by army personnel and partners.
10. I'm discussing possible refurbishment of Comiston Wellhouse (listed building) with Scottish Water. I've requested that a more permanent railing be installed to try to reduce vandalism.
11. The Hope Triangle Health Action Group held a Development Day with workshops focussing on wellbeing, environmental issues and domestic abuse. A development plan will now be prepared for consideration.
12. Four members of the group attended the Scottish Government Consultation on the new strategy for Suicide Prevention and Self Harm Reduction on Thursday 28th February. A local consultation event will be held on Monday 15th April at 1pm in Oxgangs Neighbourhood Centre.
13. Pentland Community Safety Sub Group met on 4th March. Al Hunter will feedback on the priorities set for the next three months.
14. Oxgangs Central Residents Association is holding its AGM on Wednesday 24th April at 7pm in Colinton Mains Church.
15. Dennis William's shop at Oxgangs Broadway celebrated its 30th anniversary on 21st March. A Healthy Breakfast was also held at Pentland Primary School when all the pupils had the opportunity to try porridge, cereal, yogurts and fruit.

Report on Weekly Planning Bulletin

25 February 2013

Application 13/00397/FUL for a temporary planning application at Craiglockhart Reservoir for a temporary telecoms mast already in situ under emergency powers at Craiglockhart Reservoir, Oxbgangs Road North, Edinburgh.

Proposal of Application Notices for the City of Edinburgh

Ward A02 – Pentland Hills: 13/00481/PAN for a proposed residential development including demolition of existing buildings at Craigpark Quarry, 1 Craigpark, Ratho, EH28

No decisions related to Ward A08 – Firrhill CC area.

4 March 2013

No applications or decisions for Ward A08 – Firrhill CC area

Application 13/00504/ADV for advertisement of the following types: 7 fascia non-illuminated signs at Tesco, 10 Colinton Mains Drive, Edinburgh, EH13 9AH (Colinton area)

Proposal of application Notices for the City of Edinburgh:

Ward A17 – Portobello/Craigmillar: 13/00562/PAN for a proposal to erect 200+ new detached and semi-detached terraced dwellings and apartments and ancillary works at land 335 metres southwest of 103 Newcraighall Road, Edinburgh.

11 March 2013

Application 13/00561/FUL for a proposed rear extension of house at 49 Colinton Mains Green, Edinburgh, EH13 9AQ.

Proposal of application Notices for the City of Edinburgh:

Ward A04 – Forth: 13/00646/PAN for a renewal of planning permissions in principle (10/01273/PPP and 12/00357/PPP) for development of affordable housing and housing for sale with associated landscaping and public realm at sites adjacent to Muirhouse Parkway, Pennywell Road and Ferry Road, Edinburgh. Regeneration Masterplan: Pennywell /Muirhouse/Pennywell Road.

No decisions related to Ward A08 – Firrhill CC area.

18 March 2013

No applications or decisions for Ward A08 – Firrhill CC area

Proposal of application Notices for the City of Edinburgh:

Ward A02 – Pentland Hills: 13/00672/PAN for a proposed redevelopment of long standing brown field site with approx 170 new flatted and housing units at land 90 metres west of 95 Harvesters Way, Edinburgh.

Ward A11 – City Centre: 13/00726/PAN for student residential accommodation and ancillary uses at 31 Abbeyhill, Edinburgh, EH8 8EL.

Ward A16 – Liberton/Gilmerton: 13/00813/PAN for a development of an anticipated 54 no. new dwellings designed to be suitable for older people, along with associated access roads, car parking and areas of both hard and soft landscaping at site 60 metres east of 21 Moredun Park Street, Edinburgh.

Correspondence List

By e-mail: all messages forwarded to members with this facility; some transferred to website where appropriate.

1. Strategic Planning, CEC: Workshops on Edinburgh's new Local Transport Strategy, issues for review – parking, supported bus services, air quality, speed limits, integrated transport.
2. Cllr Jason Rust: refuse collections – clarification on Council rules re over-filled bins.
3. Gordon Macdonald MSP: message from Lothian Buses Schedule Dept re FCC Sec's complaints about poor display of diversion notices at bus stops + Oxfords Ave and surrounding residents, especially disabled, being isolated as not able to access shuttle bus at Greenbank. [Suggestion of bus along Oxfords Ave up to Hunters Tryst not feasible: no safe turning place at roadworks end.]
4. 'Changeworks' re Scots getting together for cheaper electricity.
5. Lothian & Borders Police Board News for January '13.
6. Gordon Macdonald MSP: media release re ban on open display of tobacco products, and sales from vending machines, to be introduced in Scotland on 29 April '13.
7. Andy Edwards: spreadsheet of Neighbourhood Environmental Projects (NEPs) proposed for Ward 8 re EIT meeting on 15 March [see FCC Sec's separate report on this meeting].
8. H Levy: Hope Triangle Health Group public engagement event to feed into Scot Gov new strategy on preventing suicide and self-harm: Oxfords N'hood Centre, 15 Apr, 1-4 pm.
9. Gordon Macdonald MSP's March Newsletter.
10. Planning Aid for Scotland's 'Scotland & Offshore Renewable Energy: community work-shop (open to all): 10 Apr, 6.00-8.30 pm, Riddles Court, 322 Lawnmarket, Edin.
11. Jim Napier: signed up for FOI Training Session/Free Workshop, 6 Mar.
12. Jim Napier: photos of notices still lying beyond new pavilion.. Sec. notified C Dunlop & G Croucher, Parks Officers [replied that this job has been put on main contractor's snagging list]. Sec. also referred to lighting at car park still not installed [Cllr Richard Lewis: this will be done by end of March] + park machinery too wide for paths and making deep ruts on either side of paths [Craig Dunlop will look at possible options to avoid this].
13. Eileen Hewitt 'Meet the Funders' Event: public drop-in, 29 exhibitors, 18 Apr, 1-4 pm, in Assembly Rooms, 54 George Street.
14. Graham Budd: papers for Pentlands EIT Group, 11 Mar [see Sec's report on meeting].
15. H Levy: complaints from residents re being charged on 'free' Greenbank shuttle bus.
16. L Baxter, NHS Lothian: 'Living It Up' initiative for anyone. Register by end of March at <http://livingitup.org.uk/wp-login.php?action=register>
17. H Levy: Minutes of Hope Triangle Health Group's inaugural AGM.
18. Cllr Jason Rust re letter received by CEC from Maj. Gen. Nick Ashmore: no long-term defence use for part of Redford Barracks. The MOD is looking at other possible uses for the site, including forthcoming Reserves review. Defence Infrastructure Org. is invited to meet with Council's Working Group to get more info.
19. CEC's Services for Communities re Review of Neighbourhood Partnerships to strengthen & develop the role of NPs in delivering better outcomes for communities. Additional session confirmed: 26 March, 6-9 pm, in Business Centre, City Chambers. Survey questions at: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/S/MM262F5>

20. Cllr Jason Rust: essential runway maintenance at Edinburgh Airport means 'planes flying over this area at night until end of March.
21. SW Neighbourhood Office re Proposal of Application Notice for Craigpark Quarry, Ratho. Public exhibition in Ratho Community Centre, 12 April, 2-8 pm.
22. E Hewitt re Community Councils Elections: nominations 2-23 Sept '13; elections (if more than max. number nominated for any CC) in October. Publicity costs for city-wide campaign will be met by City Council. Each CC to appoint a Returning Officer before 22 April.
23. G Macdonald MSP: press release re illegal dumping; witnesses should contact environmental wardens 0131 529 3030 (also to arrange bulk uplifts by Council) or e-mail env.wardens@edinburgh.gov.uk
24. G Macdonald MSP: media release re 'Bedroom Tax', seen as a direct attack on disabled and vulnerable Scots who will lose benefits unless they move to smaller homes, even though very few are available as Council lets and renting privately would be more expensive.
25. Cllr Elaine Aitken: update on treatment of roads & pavements by gritters & mini-tractors.
26. Cllr Andrew Burns: Council Leader's Report for March '13.
27. G Macdonald MSP's Annual Report; 34,000 copies delivered in his constituency.
28. E Hewitt re Insurance for Community Councils.
29. Keegan & Pennykid re alternative CC insurance cover to above.
30. CEC Traffic Orders: amended 24hr waiting restrictions for Oxfords Bank, where library vehicles need entry/exit.
31. Tom Dougall, CEC Flood Defences, asking for FCC's FOI request to be retracted.
32. G Budd, SW N'hood Office, re FCC Sec's request for waste bin removed from pavement at new pavilion/bowling club on Oxfords Rd North to be replaced.
33. Information Commissioner for Scotland: our appeal for them to look into the lack of response to our FOI request re flood defence work complaints etc has been given go-ahead.
34. Jim Napier: copy of his e-mail to SW N'hood Office re lack of gritting at steep corner where Oxfords Farm Drive meets Oxfords Rd. North and down to bus stop: insufficient space for mini-tractor to operate, so he suggested that operator could grit that part using gloved hands [forwarded by Graham Budd to Winter Weather Team].
35. J Lockhart: report circulated on review of CCs Scheme will be withdrawn at 14 March Council meeting – now to be considered at a special meeting on 2 May. Public comments on the Scheme can still be made to community.councils@edinburgh.gov.uk between 18 Mar & 12 Apr. Website: www.edinburgh.gov.uk/communitycouncils
36. G Budd: reply to J Napier re request for info on SW Area Board meeting, 12 Feb, which Jim was unable to attend as Firrhill CC's rep.
37. Cllr Lewis: 'Recycling Message is Hitting Home.' Recycling has increased and thousands of tonnes less waste are going to landfill. Advice given at: www.edinburgh.gov.uk/waste
38. J Napier/H Levy: notes from FCC Business Meeting, 1 March.
39. S Kaur: confirmation of FCC Sec's request for hard copies of N'hood P'ships review.
40. E Hewitt: food waste recycling being rolled out to further 35,000 flats/tenements; for general info: www.edinburgh.gov.uk/recycle

41. E Hewitt: article from Morningside CC re their involvement and experience of the Pre-Application Consultation process with the Craighouse Development.
42. T Dougall: summary of Firrhill/Colinton Mains issues discussed at EIT meeting, 11 Mar.
43. J Napier's clarification on Amenity Notices: planning authorities have power to serve a Notice on the owner/lessee/occupier of land adversely affecting amenity of the area.
44. Cllr Rust's apologies to FCC: attending Local Dev'ment Plan meeting at Juniper Green.
45. E Hewitt: Edinburgh Garden Partners looking for willing gardeners to support elderly and/or disabled garden owners and share the produce. Tel: 0131 220 5067 or look on their website: www.edinburghgardenpartners.org.uk
46. E Hewitt: draft response of Leith Central CC to planning concordat consultation.
47. J Napier re installation of telecom mast and cabinet at junction of Oxfangs Farm Drive and Redford Rd (a shared telecoms site).
48. f. by H Levy from Edinburgh Community Health Partnership. Info Bulletin 42 (on the website)
49. f. by H Levy from Edinburgh Community Health Partnership: CoSLA's 'Stop Loan Sharks' Campaign: to be promoted in the media, in bus shelters and washrooms. Report in confidence: Tel 0800 074 0878. Info at www.stoploansharks.org.uk. (on the website)
50. Cllr Lewis: info on 'Something for All the Family & All Weathers this Easter'.
51. Invitation from SW Edinburgh Communities Forum at Juniper Green, 25 March, re Green Belt pressures in SW of city. [Cllr Rust attending and will report back]
52. E Hewitt re national 'Its Your Neighbourhood Scheme' for voluntary groups 'cleaning up and greening' their local area. For info and to register go to website: <http://www.beautifulscotland.org/about-its-your-neighbourhood.asp>.
53. Cllr Rust's report for FCC Meeting
54. "Your Edinburgh": organisations should check their record details and update if necessary at www.youredinburgh.info.

By Post

1. E Hewitt: timetable for Community Council elections & form re Returning Officer.
2. Letter for Information Commissioner for Scotland re our FOI request (33, above).
3. 'Health Link', Spring '13: NHS paper for distribution to members.
4. CEC: Booklets 'Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas' and 'Guidance for Householders'.

Ward 8 Neighbourhood Environmental Programme (NEP) Projects

Meeting held in SW Neighbourhood Offices on 15th March 2013.

This meeting was attended by Cllr Elaine Aitken,; Ward 8 Community Council reps; and Lloyd Richardson, Prof. Officer. It was Chaired by Dr Andrew Edwards, SW Area Roads Manager.

As previously for NEPs, Pentlands Neighbourhood Partnership has been divided into the two Wards, 2 & 8, with half the annual PNP budget for 2013/14 going to each. For the Colinton & Fairmilehead Ward this means the same £42.5k that Pentlands Hills will get + we have extra this year because widening the junction of Oxgangs Ave/ Rd North has been deferred (see below). The 14 projects put forward for consideration had already been distributed, but Dr Edwards was able to give us extra information on some of those, so that discussion could take place.

Oxgangs Ave Junction: due to test holes showing utility companies' cables and pipes just below the pavement and grass, the road can't be widened until these are all located and re-sited to a greater depth - from some distance away, in the case of pipes. Prices are starting to come in for this removing and re-siting or renewing work, which is estimated to total around £150k (one gas pipe alone is costing £39k!), and that's before any actual road works and costs of traffic management are taken into account. So this project will be kept in the system for now, while engineers will look at other possible options to alleviate traffic build-up at this junction. [I also pointed out that parking between the bus stop (on the east side) and just short of the junction adds to the problem, and this will be looked at.]

Below are the possible projects in our community which were discussed:

Oxgangs Ave Re-surfacing - from works now completed at the Greenbank end to just short of the above junction: note that this is a capital investment project, financed by the main roads 'pot' of money, and does not come from the NEPs local budget. This also applies to the carriageway re-surfacing at Oxgangs Path.]

Oxgangs Path: footways improvements required do come into the remit of the NEPs budget.

Colinton Mains Park Lighting (Phase 2): from around St Mark's PS, along the path parallel to the burn, to the playground or new houses at Firrhill. This proposal will be looked at by the Professional Officer for feasibility and possible cost.

Oxgangs Place: re-surface carriageway. While potholes have been filled in from time to time (two dangerous ones in the past few weeks), it would benefit from being completely re-surfaced. This would be costly but could perhaps be done in two phases.

Other local projects for which there was not enough detail, as neither the Parks Officer nor Cllr Lewis, who had proposed them, were in attendance: Entrance improvements at Colinton Mains Park; Braid Burn – Oxgangs to Firrhill – access improvements; Oxgangs Gdns roadway. Also, the footpath at Pentland Community Centre will be looked at again to determine its condition.

We will meet again at the end of April when full details should be available and final decisions can be made on projects to get the go-ahead in our community, in Fairmilehead, and in Colinton.

Peggy Wright, Firrhill Community Council Rep.