

Firrhill Community Council

'Nec Aspera Terrent'

(Undaunted by Adversity)

Minute of Ordinary Meeting of the Council on 22 February 2016

Held in Oxgangs Care Offices, Firrhill Neuk.

Members:

H Levy (Chairperson)

P Wright (Secretary)

S Duffy

J Napier (Minutes Sec)

G Duncan

F Gosney

L Linn

J Burt

P Valentine

Ex-Officio Members:

E Aitken, Councillor, CEC

R Lewis, Councillor, CEC

A Murdoch, PC, Police Scotland

M Mawson, PC, Police Scotland

Visitors:

L McGurk, Resident

G McDonald, MSP

J Kirkland, CDW

Apologies:

J Rust, Councillor, CEC

S Campbell, Resident

H Levy, G Duncan

The meeting started at 7pm.

In the absence of the Chair, it had been agreed Cllr Aitken would act as chairperson for this meeting. Cllr Aitken welcomed everyone and advised that Cllr Lewis and G McDonald had given notice that they would be slightly late in attending and would also have to leave early due to other meetings.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

The draft minutes for our meeting held on 25 January 2015 were reviewed. With one correction the draft minutes were moved for approval by LL and seconded by PV. Approved.

Action: Min Sec to publish on website and send copy to CCLO(CEC)

Matters Arising

Landscaping in front of sports pavilion at Colinton Mains Public Park: See under Cllr Lewis's report.

Oxgangs Path Development: See under Cllr Aitken's report.

Firrhill Partnership Centre: Funding Shortfall - See under MSP's Report

NHS CDW Post: Actions from last meeting

Community Police Report

Cllr Aitken welcomed Officers M Mawson and A Murdoch to the meeting, inviting them to give a report on police activities within the Firrhill Community Council area for the last reporting period.

Unfortunately, written reports are no longer provided by Police Scotland. Items noted was a recent assault and attempted robbery involving a man on the pathway that crosses over the open space between Oxgangs Road North and Oxgangs Street. In January there were two housebreakings and

also another robbery in Oxbgangs Road North (which has been solved). There has been no increase in youth crime in the area.

Community Policing Team

Ward 8 comprises 3 Beats, PF56 (Fairmilehead, Buckstone, Swanston), PF57 (Oxbgangs, Firrhill), and PF58 (Colinton, Bonaly) with two Council Funded Officers, PC 4179E Graeme Howie and PC11550 Sonja Kaiser.

The Community Policing Team leader for the wider area is Inspector Liz Duthie. The CPT consists of 5 teams of community-facing police Constables led by a Sergeant, and the emphasis will be on community working in a bid to solve local issues.

Should you wish to contact the Community Policing Team, you can do so by email at EdinburghCPTColintonFairmilehead@Scotland.pnn.police.uk or by telephoning the new national non-emergency number **101**. You can also follow them on twitter @PentlandsPolice.

If there is anything in particular that you wish to bring to their attention, please get in touch. Partnership working requires participation.

Police Surgery: Wednesdays between 1700 and 1800 hours at Oxbgangs Library.

Warning about doorstep callers: don't sign up with, or give money to, anyone who cold-calls, i.e., anyone you haven't arranged to call. Say NO and report them to Police Scotland Tel: 101 or the City Council's Trading Standards Tel: 0131-529 3030.

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

MSP Report (G MacDonald)

Since the constituency office closed at the end of September there has been a substantial amount of upheaval as staff had to be relocated back in to the parliament complex. The focus has been on ensuring the service to constituents has remained as efficient as before and in order to do so we had to stop producing the monthly report. This would have had to stop anyway as MSPs are not allowed to issue reports from January 2016 due to the May elections.

Firrhill Partnership Centre.

I raised a question to The Cabinet Secretary for Infrastructure, Investment and Cities (Keith Brown)¹ to find out the value of projects under construction or development in the Edinburgh area under the hub south-east Scotland programme. In response there are currently, 15 projects with a total value of £192.6 million under construction or development.

Confirmation was given that the Firrhill partnership centre is part of the £25 million allocated from the capital projects budget for the Lothian National Health Service bundle and that construction is expected to start in 2016 with a construction period estimated to be around 18 months. It is also expected that the Scottish Government will pick up the tab for any shortfall in financing the project.

Parliamentary Committees

Serve on two Committees:

- Economy, Energy and Tourism Committee: its current business is an inquiry into the Economic Impact of the Creative Industries, looking specifically at the Scottish TV and film industry and the video games sector and what more can be done to support their growth and contribution to the Scottish economy.

¹ Meeting of the Parliament 07 January 2016, Hub South-east Scotland Programme

- Education and Culture Committee: its current business covers National Performing Companies; College Reforms; BBC charter renewal and the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Bill amongst other things

Renewal of the BBC Charter.

The current 10-year charter runs until the end of 2016. It is expected the next charter will be published by the UK Government later this year, before coming into force on 1 January 2017.

For the first time, the Scottish Parliament has a formal role in this process and contributing to the development of the next charter. The formalisation of our role is an important step and will enhance the BBC's accountability to people in Scotland. We want the BBC to be relevant to people in Scotland and have a long term future in Scotland. We also want the BBC to do more to support BBC Scotland's in-house production arm and the creative industries in Scotland.

In order for these aims to be realised, we make a number of recommendations on the accountability and scrutiny of the BBC, in the following areas:

- Transparency of licence fee settlement
- Information on the BBC's services and spending in Scotland
- Governance and regulation of the BBC
- Length of charter period
- Decentralising expenditure
- Decentralising commissioning

To ensure there is greater decentralisation of decision-making, commissioning and budgets to Scotland.

Ward Councillors' Reports

Councillor Lewis

Sports Pavilion Landscaping:

This relates to the area in front of the pavilion at Colinton Mains Public Park and adjacent to the church grounds. Cllr Lewis reported that he had eventually got agreement as to who would take responsibility for maintaining this area of ground and action would be taken. Sec advised that a work squad from the city council had attended and tidied up the area, covering the ground with bark to suppress the weeds.

Cllr Lewis was asked if there had been any discussion on the question of finding a viable solution to the maintenance problem at this location. He confirmed it had been discussed but council officers had concerns that if it were put back to hard standing it would end up being used for car parking. The concerns of the council officers were noted but this has to be balanced against the concerns of the community about this prominent area becoming an eyesore through cut-backs in the level of maintenance carried out by the Authority.

Report on Waste Collection Service:

Maintenance of Stair Lighting:

Councillor Aitken

Aldi Development

Reported that now the legal issues have been agreed the sale has to go to a judicial review period of 12 weeks and the sale should be completed in May. Aldi then hope to proceed without any undue

delay, with the demolition starting as soon as possible. Aldi will also then provide an update on timings.

A judicial review is a type of court proceeding in which a judge reviews the lawfulness of a decision or action made by a public body. The review period is the time within which a challenge can be made against the decision of the local authority to issue the permission for the development.

Following complaints about the deteriorating state of the Social Work building, the windows will be checked and boarded up. In discussion it was noted that the disused buildings are causing concern within the community due to vandalism and the risk of fire-raising.

Refuse Problems

Complaints about missed collections are still being made. Unfortunately, it is the same residents' collections being missed. Communal bins in Oxfangs Street and Loan and bins in Spruce Way are among the many affected. I continue to ask for the necessary steps to be taken to prevent any re-occurrence.

Hunter's Tryst Site

Hopefield Partnership are about to lodge a Proposal of Application Notice (PAN) for residential use. This is required because it is a major development with over 50 units. A 12-week consultation period will follow.

Oxfangs Primary School

Storm Gertrude caused damage at a number of our schools, the worst of which was Oxfangs PS. The school was then closed for a number of days while structural engineers and health and safety officers were on site assessing the damage. Some further problems have been identified and I've asked for a briefing on the works proposed and contingency plans should this happen again.

Holocaust Memorial Day

This was held in Firrhill HS this year. It was organised by teacher Sheila Watson and the Edinburgh Interfaith Association. Pupils from Firrhill and Braidburn were involved in speeches, poetry reading and musical performances, all of an excellent high standard. The main speakers were Ziggi Shipper and Mukesh Kapila who gave remarkable testimonies of the Holocaust and Darfur genocide.

Hope Triangle Health Group

Sadly, Jacqueline Kirkland will leave her post towards the end of March. I am discussing the retention of the post with the Interim Localities Manager.

Dog Fouling

There have been problems again in Firrhill Neuk and Oxfangs Crescent so I have requested patrols by our Environmental Wardens.

Street Lighting

I have reported faulty lights in Colinton Mains Road down to Colinton Mains Drive

Letter Re Community Council Elections

At the last meeting, it was suggested at an information event on this matter that a letter would be sent to every household in Edinburgh about the processes for the elections. This appeared to be a change in protocol and an expensive exercise. I contacted the election team to clarify this. A letter would only be sent out to every elector in a community council area if the election is contested. This is where there are more candidates nominated than there are places on the community council.

The letter performs the same function as a polling card does at, for example, local government elections.

Pentland Neighbourhood Partnership CSAG

The next meeting is on Monday 29 February 2016 at Oxfangs Neighbourhood Centre at 6pm. Any issues can be raised by your representative, Pauline Valentine.

The increase in housebreakings will be raised. At a meeting with Inspector Duthie, she confirmed that the housebreakers were again aiming for performance cars and re-emphasised the need for car keys not to be left in sight of letterboxes. She advised residents to be extra vigilant and report any suspicious activity to the police.

Scottish Parliament Hustings

Fairmilehead Church is planning to host a Hustings event on Wednesday 27 April.

Issue raised at meeting:

Member reported that there was a lot of broken glass on the footpath along the Braid Burn between Oxfangs Road North and Colinton Mains Drive.

Action: Cllr Aitken arranging for clean-up.

Members Reports

Planning Report (JN):

JN reported that it had been a very quiet spell with only 2 decisions recorded in the weekly planning bulletins over the period for Firrhill and they were:

- Application 15/04250/FUL for the proposed erection of an extension to rear of property at 76 Oxfangs Bank has been **granted**.
- Application 15/03358/FUL to widen existing driveway with a drop kerb (in retrospect) at 100 Colinton Mains Road has been **refused**.

The only other planning issues to report is in regard to the former Hunter's Tryst Primary School site at Oxfangs Green is an update received from Graeme McGartland, Acting Principal Project Manager, Estates Services, to the effect he is expecting the PAN to be submitted by Hopfield Partnerships anytime now.

Environment & Transport Action Group Meeting 1st Feb 2016 (JN):

Action Updates on: Edinburgh Living Landscape
 Friends Group Updates
 Canal Delivery Board

Discussion on: Supported Bus Services *(Item 9, under Correspondence List)*
 Community Transport

We received a copy of a Transport Briefing (and questionnaire) dated 01/02/16, which expresses the Council's need to reduce spending on supported bus services over the coming years and the T&E Committee are expected to decide in March how this will be achieved. Depending on decisions made at that Committee, the contracts for some existing bus services may change, and any contracts which are renewed might be subject to small changes to improve the service. In addition, for all contracts, operators will be encouraged to submit 'alternative tenders', including accepting other operators' tickets. The consultation closes tomorrow

In addition to the Secretary circulating this to members, I put the information on the website but as far as I am aware there has been no response.

Action: some members had not submitted their completed forms. Min Sec to send them electronically before closure of consultation.

Treasurer's Report

There have been no transactions carried out since our last meeting and the balance remains at £4,539.80

Correspondence

A list of correspondence is attached as Appendix 1

A.O.C.B.

Colinton Mains: Post Office

The Secretary reported on changes to be made in the Post Office at 82 Colinton Mains Drive to make it a "new-style local branch" of PO Ltd, using Government investment.

Changes will include removing the existing serving kiosk and the wall behind to make a completely open-plan space. The new service points will be at the wall on the right (where leaflets etc are just now) as you enter the shop. The shop will be closed for around one week for the refurbishment. Longer opening hours will mean stocking a wider variety of retail goods to make it economically viable, but it will not be known what these will be until the new owner takes over.

Details of why these changes are being made, and what post office services you can still use (or not use), are on leaflets available to pick up at Colinton Mains PO.

Any comments are welcomed by Post Office Ltd up to 11th March in any of the following ways:

- Post: FREEPOST Your Comments (all that needs to be written on the envelope);
- e-mail: comments@postoffice.co.uk web: postofficeviews.co.uk

Note: the unique code for this branch is 124824.

Election Hustings

At our last meeting it had been generally agreed to organise an election hustling in the community. Cllr Aitken reported Fairmilehead Parish Church were organising a hustling to take place on the 27th April, time still to be confirmed. In view of this and the shortening timescale in which to organise such an event it was agreed not to action our previous decision.

Path at Oxfangs Ave./Oxfangs Cres.

Concern at condition of this path creating a shortcut across the corner between the two streets. Tree roots have lifted the paving slabs creating a very uneven walkway and trip hazard. Cllr Aitken to action.

Date, Time and Venue of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on **28th March at 7.00 pm** in the Board Room in the Oxfangs Care Offices, 12 Firrhill Neuk.

The meeting ended at 8.45 pm.

Correspondence List

By e-mail, forwarded to members where possible:

1. Julie Dickson, confirming receipt of Oct '15 approved Minutes sent by J Napier.
2. Jim Napier, from Planning Bulletin: application by Aldi to erect illuminated site entrance sign; illuminated wall-mounted sign on gable end of building, and poster casement boxes on posts at St John's Parish Church Hall. *Permission for illuminated signage applicable to the new store.*
3. Cllr Lewis: update from Craig Dunlop re removal of weeds at Park Pavilion by 15 Feb [done, and bark laid round shrubs, on 8 Feb.] *See Councillor's report*
4. J Dickson: redesign & re-launch of CCs website www.communitycouncils.scot, including CC location finder and live Public Information Notices.
5. Gordon Macdonald MSP: constituency office now closed and staff back in Parliament complex; apologies for being unable to attend FCC meetings, and confirming that Firrhill Partnership Centre (Health & Social Care) is part of NHS Lothian's £25m partnership bundle with construction expected to start in 2016. *See MSP report.*
6. J Dickson: link to CC Development & Support Programme info on Neighbourhood Partnership website, including '[How to Apply for a Grant Workshop](#)'.
- 7 Council Leader's Report for Feb: including Council's budget balanced, and Council's commitment to build 8,000 affordable homes will be matched by its Housing Association partners, so 16,000 homes to be delivered over 10 years.
8. Cllr Rust re application by owner at 12 Firrhill Drive to purchase land adjacent to his property for additional garden and possible home extension: approx 270 sq metres on Parks & Greenspace Account, and Dept. is raising no objection. *Community Council have no valid objections.*
9. Scott Neill: Questionnaire on Supported Bus Services, to be in by 23 Feb for scrutiny by Pentlands NP Environment & Transport Action Group; No 18 Service applies here [forwarded to and photocopied for members]. *See Members' report.*
10. P Valentine re fallen cherry tree reported by her at corner of Oxbgangs Cres/Avenue [bottom of trunk and roots have now been put back in hole; remainder of tree removed]
11. J Dickson: Minutes of Licensing Forum meeting held on 19 January '16.
12. Firrhill CC's 'website builder': two messages received, both concerning classes at Colinton Mains Community Centre. *CMCC webpage updated.*
13. J Dickson re Cockburn Association's next Civic Forum Meeting: 8 March, 4.30-6.30 pm, City Chambers. *Noted.*
14. J Dickson re Community Paths Grant Fund: individual grants of up to £1,500 to help community groups improve, maintain and promote their local paths; support and technical help given, also training courses to learn essential skills. Tel 01259 218 888 to discuss ideas, or communitypaths@pathsforall.org.uk. *Discussed at meeting but no paths within area identified.*
15. Cllr Aitken in response to Firrhill CC letter re removal of funding for NHS Development Worker at Oxbgangs: she has contacted David White, Interim SW Localities Manager for Health and Social Care to discuss the implications and ascertain what can be done, possibly through locality working. *See previous minutes under Community Development Worker.*

Cllr Rust: confirms that lack of written evidence/outcomes is a problem when it comes to making a case for funding. He will also contact the NHS.

16. CCs 'Clean for the Queen' request from Lord Provost's office for communities to make a special litter-picking effort for the Queen's 90th birthday. This is being done throughout the UK, and the main weekend suggested is Friday 4 to Sunday 6 March. *Noted.*

By Post

- 17 Post Office Ltd: re changes to Post Office at 82 Colinton Mains Drive as a result of programme of modernisation throughout the PO network; will become open plan, with more retail, but most current PO services will be retained. [P Wright has collected leaflets for members and will give a short verbal report at our CC meeting]. *See under AOCB.*

For more information on any of the above, please contact Firrhill Community Council Secretary:
peggy.wright@live.co.uk Tel: 0131 531 9796