

Firrhill Community Council

'Nec Aspera Terrent'
(Undaunted by Adversity)

Minute of Ordinary Meeting of the Council on 28 March 2016
Held in Oxgangs Care Offices, Firrhill Neuk.

Members:

H Levy (Chairperson)	F Gosney
P Wright (Secretary)	L Linn
S Duffy	J Burt
J Napier (Minutes Sec)	P Valentine
G Duncan	

Visitors:

L McGurk, Resident
S Campbell, Resident
L Supron, Resident

Ex-Officio Members:

E Aitken, Councillor, CEC
R Lewis, Councillor, CEC
J Rust, Councillor, CEC
D Burtles, PC, Police Scotland
Anon, PC, Police Scotland

Apologies:

Cllrs E Aitken, J Rust & R Lewis.
P Valentine

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

Minutes of Previous Meeting

The draft minutes for our meeting held on 22 February 2016 were reviewed. With no corrections the draft minutes were moved for approval by SD and seconded by LL. Approved.

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

Matters Arising

Oxgangs Path Development: The Secretary referred to an email received from CEC Planning Support giving details of the decision for this application, which has been granted. Also, informed by James Harbison, Aldi Agent that subject to the outcome of the 12-week Judicial Review period, Aldi hope to be on site in May. He will send a timeline re demolition, procurement and construction. (See also Correspondence List, item 4)

Firrhill Partnership Centre (Health Centre): The Chair advised there is nothing to report on this application other than the contractors hope to be on site by the end of next month.

Oxgangs Primary School: Further safety issues has resulted in a second closure of the school. Whilst there are no Cllrs in attendance they have sent various e-mails on the closure of this school and others in the city because of those further safety concerns (see App 3 – Correspondence List).

Current position is that Andrew Kerr (Chief Executive) met Directors from Edinburgh Schools Partnership (ESP) to raise the Council's concerns directly. At the meeting he received a commitment from ESP that the three schools closed as a result of the building issues will re-open on Monday 11 April. ESP are aiming to complete the localised remedial works in other schools and repairs to the storm damaged wall at Oxgangs Primary School by the end of the Summer holidays. They are currently in discussion with their construction partners and will confirm in writing if this is feasible and provide a detailed programme of works. The position with individual local schools is as follows:

<u>School/Building</u>	<u>Action</u>
Oxgangs Primary School	Closed on 16 March with pupils relocated until end of term on 24 March. Will re-open on 11 April. Repairs to storm damaged wall to be completed at a later date.
St Peter's Primary School	Closed on 18 March with pupils relocated until end of term on 24 March. Will re-open on 11 April.
Braidburn School	Closed on 18 March with pupils relocated until end of term on 24 March. Will re-open on 11 April.
Firrhill High School	Closed for the morning of 18 March to allow detailed survey to be carried out. School re-opened on 21 March with areas fenced off until localised remedial works can be carried out.

In discussion it was noted that workmen are in the process of repairing the storm damaged wall and this is expected to be finished by the end of the Easter break.

Hope Triangle Health Group: The Chair received information from Cllr Aitken that the Community Development Worker post may be retained on a part-shared basis.

Whilst the Community Council are pleased at this news, concern is also raised about the damage to the service through lack of continuity and experience, particularly if this is to be an annual exercise.

Scottish Parliament Election Hustings: JN acknowledged this development was contrary to the decision of the previous meeting, but in discussion with the Chair it was thought we should still try and organise a husting event for the local community. With a date provisionally booked at Pentland Community Centre, the prospective candidates for the Parties were invited to participate. The SNP, Labour and Conservative candidates all confirmed their attendance. The Lib Dem candidate was attending another husting but the Party were hoping to provide a stand-in. The Green Party have not responded to date and it may be they do not have a candidate in this area.

NHS Community Development Worker: It was reported to our meeting in January that the service provided by this post was about to be lost to the area as it was only funded up to the end of the financial year with no funding allocated for the following financial year. This has resulted in the loss of the worker, Jaqueline Kirkland.

The Secretary wrote formally to our elected representatives, stressing the need for the continuation of this post and Cllr Aitken has had some success. We understand from her that a part-shared post may be funded.

Following discussion, the Community Council would welcome the continuation of this post that has provided essential support to local people. Working in a number of different ways the service has strived to challenge discrimination and stigma, and to promote mental wellbeing across the area. The Community Council acknowledged a part-time service is better than losing it completely, however, there are strong concerns that the budget process adopted by the City may turn the continuation of this post into a yearly lottery, creating a lack of continuity of post holder and certainty or development of service.

Community Police Report

The Chair welcomed the two officers to the meeting and invited PC Burtles to give a report on police activities within the Firrhill Community Council area for the last reporting period.

Incidents noted were a robbery that took place in Oxgangs Road North, an attempted murder in Oxgangs Bank (both of which have been solved) and three recent break-ins that took place in

Colinton Mains Road, Firrhill Drive and Oxfangs Terrace. There have been no reported cases of theft, hate crimes or drug abuse. There has been no increase in youth crime in the area.

Please note, written reports are no longer provided by Police Scotland, therefore inaccuracies may occur.

Item raised at the meeting

Complaint regarding a dangerous dog

At our meeting in October last year the CC received information regarding a local dog owner using his dog in acts of aggression towards his neighbours. As a consequence of actions taken, a "Dog Control Notice" was issued to the owner. Recent reports indicate he is still waging a campaign of aggression and complaints by neighbours are not being dealt with effectively by the Authority.

After discussion it was agreed to seek to resume the meeting held on the 29th September 2015, which led to the instigation of the notice.

Action: Chair to action.

Community Policing Team

Ward 8 comprises 3 Beats, PF56 (Fairmilehead, Buckstone, Swanston), PF57 (Oxfangs, 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 Oxfangs 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](#).

Members Reports

Community Safety Action Group: 29th February (PV)

A report of this meeting held at Oxfangs Neighbourhood Centre is attached as **App.1**

Referring to parts of the report concerning dog fouling and the tracking system adopted by the City, members voiced their displeasure at the lack of results obtained. All agreed the pavements in Oxfangs, Firrhill and Colinton Mains are an absolute mess. It is difficult to avoid the mess, especially at night with the street lighting being less effective during the early evening, when first switched on.

Noted the procedure now is to spray-paint around each lot of poo - and sometimes leave a notice adjacent to it. The poo is not lifted and continues to form a hazard to small children playing in the streets, park and open spaces in the area. Members do not consider the policy to be effective and view it as ineffectual in resolving the underlying problem of ignorant dog owners who are not prepared to clean up after their dogs.

It was acknowledged that environmental wardens under the present arrangements have a difficult job. Their presence in the area for a couple of hours a week is hardly likely to be effective in catching the culprits. Equally, residents are not likely to risk confronting dog owners in case of repercussions.

Whilst there is currently legislation (Control of Dogs Order 1992) which requires dogs while on a public highway or place of public resort to have a collar with the name and address of the owner inscribed on it or a plate or badge attached to it and new legislation is requiring dog owners in Scotland to ensure their pets are microchipped, these measures are not for the purpose of dealing with dog fouling.

It was agreed the Secretary should write to Gail Dickson expressing our discontent with the current system and ask what evidence there is to show that it is in fact, effective.

Action: Secretary to write to Gail Dickson, CSAG.

South West Area Board: 17th March (JN):

Report of meeting held on 17th March at South West Neighbourhood Offices. Received a rundown from Debbie Herbertson¹ regarding staff changes and pressures within the SWNO. Working arrangements for housing officers are under review. Under consideration is a proposal to allocate one housing officer to every 200 properties with an overall responsibility for all matters concerning their maintenance and tenancy. Thinking behind the proposal is that tenants will have only one point of reference and get to know their housing officer. There may be other reasons.

Main business was the list of proposed NEP projects. The SW Area Board have to make a decision on which projects should be carried out during the next financial year. Information has been circulated to members prior to the meeting and the matter is now up for discussion.

Ref: Firrhill CC Area: Proposed NEP Projects 2016/17 (**see App 2**).
Neighbourhood Environment Programme (NEP) (background information)
NEP Process & Timeline

Projects:

1061 – 32-34 Oxfangs Avenue – soft landscaping drying green – no estimated cost

Drying area and access routes are in a state of disrepair (proposed 2014/15)

Support the project as this has been a long term decline of the site due to lack of ownership.

1124 – Pentland Neighbourhood – tree planting – estimated cost £10,000

To increase the number of trees in the Pentlands area and reduce grass-cutting

PV put in a request to replace a fallen cherry tree removed from the corner of Oxfangs Place and Avenue earlier this year and also a dead tree at the opposite corner of Oxfangs Place and Drive.

The response has been that there is no capital budget for new tree planting and the proposal lacks detail as to where the tree planting will take place although I do believe Craig Dunlop has a list of sites for replacement and suggested new planting should funds become available.

Reluctant to support the project at this time as we think other projects are a higher priority.

1125/

¹ SW Housing and Regeneration Manager

1125 – Oxgangs Grove – refuse handling – estimated cost £2,500

Provide an enclosure for recycling bins (proposed 2014/15)

Project not supported as it may create difficulty for vehicles to empty containers. It may also lead to dumping of loose material. This area suffers from wind swept refuse becoming trapped in the many fences that have been recently erected. As residents do not take ownership, it regularly falls on Environmental Services to maintain the area.

1189 – 1-7 Oxgangs Place – fencing – initial estimate £12,000 (proposed 2015/16)

To fence off open space to stop dog fouling and kids looking in windows

Do not support the project at this time.

1293 – 40 & 52 Oxgangs Brae – refuse handling – no estimated cost (proposed 2015/16)

To provide space to accommodate the recent introduction of new recycling bins.

Do not support the project. The increase in recycling containers is a burden all householders have to face. Do not consider it appropriate to use this fund for this purpose. The Cleansing Department should perhaps consider introducing a grant system along with suitable plans, accessible to all citizens, who wish to improve the exterior aspect of their home currently marred by an ever increasing collection of refuse bins.

1342 – Oxgangs Avenue/Crescent – footpath – estimated cost £8,000 (proposed 2016/17)

To repair footpath damaged by tree roots and now forming a trip hazard

This hazard has been consistently raised at Estate Walkabouts and therefore is not a recent issue. It is disappointing the City now put safety at the same level as environmental improvements, however, as this is a very real hazard to vulnerable people who live in the area, we consider this project should be put top of the list.

Action: *JN to advise Sandra McLeod, SWNO of Community Council's comments regarding list of proposed NEP projects for 2016/17.*

Oxgangs Broadway: Raised Pavement

Secretary reported that she has been approached by three different residents in Oxgangs & Col. Mains regarding the raised step along the pavement outside the top level of shops at Oxgangs Broadway. It is a deep step down to the pavement - quite difficult for people with short legs and/or disabilities to get up and down anyway! - and the edges are crumbled away. The shop owner contacted the Council and was told the raised step is the responsibility of the shop owners.

Asked Cllr Rust to make enquiries on our behalf and we have received a response from Andy Smith, Environmental Services Development Officer. The Council do not know who exactly owns this strip of land along the front of the shops but suspect it may be the shop owners.

He provided two plans showing the Housing & Estates Land and the Adopted Road, which indicate it is not Council maintained. If we want more detailed information, then this can be sought through Estates Research.

Secretary proposing that this be added to the list of proposed NEP projects, either as part of the Housing Land list or the Roads and Footways list.

Action: *Secretary to get clarity on status of walkway*

Lighting /

Lighting in Colinton Mains Park (phase 2)

Item 18 of the Correspondence List reminded the Secretary that she had received an email from Andy Edwards, South West Area Roads Manager, early last year, regarding the NEPs and Colinton Mains Park and confirming that the plan was to carry out this phase later that year. The Secretary asked if there had been any development on this matter.

JN indicated the item came under the EIT Action Group and not the South West Area Board, which he was reporting on. Acknowledged he attends both PNP Action Groups but did not have the information to hand.

Action: JN to get an update on this project

Treasurer's Report

There have been no transactions carried out since our last meeting and the balance remains at £4,539.80. Treasurer has agreed the insurance payment from our grant, no change from last year.

Correspondence

A list of correspondence is attached as **App. 3**

A.O.C.B.

Community Council Elections

The Chair referred to the recent input she had received on the elections which were due to take place this year. One of the tasks we have to do is to nominate a returning officer. It was agreed to nominate Cllr Elaine Aitken.

Action: Secretary to notify the CCLO

81 Colinton Mains Road

Concerns raised about a recent planning application (15/03567/FUL) to erect a single storey extension to the side and rear of the property. The application was granted with the following conditions:

1. A screen fence 1800mm high shall be erected along the north boundary of the property for the depth of the original building and thereafter maintained in said position.
2. Details of the flat roof of the side extension to be submitted and agreed by the planning authority prior to the commencement of works on site.

Reasons:-

1. In order to protect the privacy of adjoining neighbours.
2. In order to enable the planning authority to consider this/these matter/s in detail.

The permission relates to the proposal for the ground floor side and rear extension only. Drawings 01 - 05, represent the determined scheme. The reason for this decision is that the proposal complies with the development plan and whilst it does not fully comply with non-statutory guidance, the proposal, subject to the condition stated, will not adversely affect the character and appearance of the property or surrounding area or neighbouring residential amenity.

The proposal takes over a lot of the garden that would have belonged to the 1st floor flat. No objections are recorded in the planning portal information.

Date, Time and Venue of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on **25th April at 7.00 pm** in the Board Room in the Oxfangs Care Offices, 12 Firrhill Neuk. The meeting ended at 9.00 pm.

Community Safety Action Group meeting 29th February 2016

Copies of the current Local Community Plan 2014-17 were distributed.

All local complaints involving community safety should be sent to the CSAG via the CCs so they can be monitored by Veronica Wright, Gail Dickson, Police Scotland and Elaine Aitken.

Dog fouling complaints are monitored for the Dog Fouling Tracking System; residents to be encouraged to report incidences. Social media messages to relevant groups are monitored.

Priorities are Waste and Litter.

The Council are going through another period of re organisation; Gail Dickson will be moving to Environmental Services. There will definitely be a reduction in staff in Community Safety; more to follow at the next meeting in May. Gail used to have 6 staff and now has 5. They receive 200 complaints a month.

The Park Smart initiative re parking at schools discussed. Buckstone Primary participated in this. A joint one is planned for all three local primaries- St Marks, Pentland and Oxfords.

Litter- Clean for the Queen discussed. An email sent to all CCs from Justine asking for participation locally with organised events which the Council would assist with (i.e. removing the litter).

Siting of new litter bins discussed. These can only be placed where council vehicles can access them for emptying.

Aggressive cycling discussed. Incidences in Colinton Dell have ceased.

Police report: Sgt Chris Richardson was present along with a local PC. Their main priority is break-ins and there is now a dedicated housebreaking police team in Edinburgh again. Incidences of break-ins are less than they were at this time last year. A number of people have been charged and are being jailed; an average of one culprit being caught per day. Bail checks are being carried out on persistent offenders. Some are on curfew, with checks being carried out at their homes multiple times per night. There are 3 officers using pushbikes along the Canal and at Wester Hailes.

Youth Tracking System: Three youths are currently being tracked in Ward 8 (our area); one for stone throwing and another for abusive behaviour (didn't catch what the other one had been up to!) There is a current nuisance problem at Oxfords House. There is an officer dedicated to the YTS enabling information to be updated immediately, along with good teamwork with Social Services.

Dog Fouling Tracking System: There were 80 complaints in January, 117 in February. The patrols are carried out early morning and at tea time, for 30 to 45 minutes at a time. They rely upon being given information on the culprits, the dogs, times and places. There are three areas of High Impact currently, including Gorgie Road and Stenhouse. Former High Impact areas (or Hotspots) have had zero complaints following their being prioritised.

The more complaints there are, the higher priority that area will be given, **so keep complaining!** An increase in our area has been observed by the local wardens. It is 95% luck whether or not the culprits can be caught.

Firrhill CC: Proposed NEP Projects 2016/17

At the South West Area Board meeting on 17th March, the South West Neighbourhood NEP Project proposals were handed out for consultation. The full document covers both the Pentland and South West Neighbourhoods areas. The table below lists only the proposed projects within Firrhill Community Council's boundary. As there are only 8 proposed projects in the Pentlands list, it can be seen that the majority are in our area. The bracketed dates reflect when they were added to the list of projects. The community council can add new projects to the list but the purpose of this consultation is for the council to make their recommendations on which proposal should be taken forward this year.

Location	ID	Est £	Aims
32/34 Oxfangs Avenue – drying area	1061		To relay path to, and restore, the drying area for tenants use. (2014/15)
Pentland Neighbourhood	1124	10,000	Increase the number of trees in the area for relaxed grass cutting. (2014/15)
Oxfangs Grove – refuse handling	1125	2,500	To provide an enclosed area to contain the recycling bins in situ. (2014/15)
1-7 Oxfangs Place – fencing	1189	12,000	Fence grassed area with appropriate gates allowing access (2015/16)
40 & 52 Oxfangs Brae	1293		Create a secure area to keep new bins (2015/16)
Oxfangs Avenue/Cres – corner paving	1342	8,000	Install new footpath after tree works are undertaken to eliminate trip hazard. (2016/17)

The other two proposals relate to refuse handling at Hillview Cottages and North Street, Ratho, both with an estimated cost of £5,000.

The Neighbourhood Environment Programme (NEP) is designed to get residents involved in making decisions for local environmental improvements, allowing local people to have a say on how these Council budgets are spent.

There are two types of NEP projects: one for improvements to local roads and footpaths; and the other for improvements to areas of council housing. In both the local community plays a significant role in deciding where this money is spent.

We are currently discussing the ones relating to improvements in areas of council housing.

The table below lists NEP projects carried out in 2015/16

Firrhill Drive - fencing	1054	10,273.12	Completed
Oxfangs Sheltered Housing	1116	21,871.18	Completed
Cockmylane - footpath	1181	27,646.74	Contract Awarded to Premier 1
Oxfangs Broadway - Planters	1325	2,916.56	Housing Asset Management checking under £25k quotes and approving cost

Correspondence List

By e-mail, forwarded to members where possible:

- 1 J Napier: transport questionnaires from two FCC members emailed by him to Scott Neill, SW Neighbourhood Office.
- 2 Traffic Orders: CEC's proposed amendments to city-wide 20mph Order.
- 3 CCs Development & Support Programme info is on Neighbourhood Partnerships website, **including recent session on 'What Needs Planning Permission'**:
<http://www.edinburghnp.org.uk/community-councils/community-council-support-and-development-programme/>
- 4 CEC Planning Support e-mailed decision letter received by Firrhill CC Sec for Application 14/03807/FUL re Aldi development: 'Planning Consent Granted'.

Also, from James Harbison, Aldi Agent: providing the 12-week Judicial Review is completed with no hitch, Aldi hopes to be on Oxgangs site in May. He will send Sec a timeline re demolition, procurement and construction.
- 5 June Dickson, EVOC: SW Locality Document re CEC and Health & Social Care Partnership shifting to a localities model from 1st April; document shows info re our locality area + a list of Third Sector and other partner contact details.
- 6 Cllr Burns: Council Leader's March Report, including report being considered by Cllrs on investment needed for new Meadowbank complex; funding package for shops, new homes, restaurants, cinema and 5* hotel at St James Centre (demolition to begin in May for completion in 2020). Also: Be Able Service to open in Oxgangs, working with older people for 14-16 weeks to improve mobility and confidence in everyday tasks, and offer support to people with early stages of dementia.
- 7 P Valentine: report for FCC on Community Safety Action Group meeting [photocopied for members at meeting].
- 8 Various TTROs for this area re installation of superfast broadband.
- 9 EACC Treasurer requesting acceptance of £284 quote for new website: for components only, as David Bewsey, EACC Sec, is setting it up in his own time without charge [Firrhill CC Sec e-mailed acceptance].
- 10 Sec's e-mail to Cllr Rust re local complaints about condition of steps + no handrail at new bakery on upper stretch of Oxgangs Broadway shops. He took this up, but response

from Environmental Services Development Officer indicates that these shopkeepers are responsible for maintaining the raised pavement and steps.

- 11 Election Hustings: Pentland Community Centre, Thurs 21st April, 7-9 pm.
- 12 Oxbang PS, Braidburn & part of Firrhill HS: various e-mails from Cllrs Rust, Aitken and Lewis re closure of these schools (and others in the city built around the same time) because of further safety concerns regarding their construction following recent gale damage to Oxbangs PS [on our meeting Agenda].
- 13 CCs Meet the Funders Drop-in Event: 12 May, 5pm-8pm, Waverley Court, 4 East Market Street; 20+ exhibitors; no booking needed. <http://www.edinburghnp.org.uk/about-nps/funding/meet-the-funders/>
- 14 Elections: if you have recently moved home, or are not sure if you are on the electoral register, 'phone Registration Office on 1031-344 2500 by 18th April.
- 15 Scott Neill: March Pentland Digest – articles and info updates from this NP area.
- 16 Alcohol Focus Scotland: new toolkit 'Alcohol Licensing in your community: how you can get involved' has been developed to help people raise concerns about the impact of alcohol in their local community, explains how the licensing process works in Scotland, and assists people who want to get involved. All info is on AFS's website, and their next meeting is on Wed 13 April at 10 am in the City Chambers.
- 17 Cllr Rust to Firrhill CC Sec in reply to her email re bins not emptied in Oxbangs Street, reported by Sheila Duffy: he will take this up.
- 18 Dr Andy Edwards, SW Roads Manager re guidance for Ward 8 NEPs 2016/17 process. Projects submitted by CCs etc between 1st & 31st March will be visited and scored by officials before being ranked and voted on, but only 1-2 can be chosen for action [also see inclusion of this in J Napier's photocopied report on SW Area Board NEPs].

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