

Morningside Community Council

Minutes of Ordinary Meeting 7:30 pm Wednesday 16 March 2022

Old School House, Morningside Road and Zoom

1. Present

Office Bearers

Chair and Treasurer -Willie Black (WB)

Planning Officer – Goff Cantley (GC)

Secretary – Carol Duncan (CD)

Admin – Rebecca Diggle (RD)

Engagement- Douglas Roxburgh(DR), Moira Gibson (MG)

Members

Moira Gibson (MG), Jennifer Scarce (JS), Theo Spanellis (TS) Caroline Mckinley(CMcK)

Nominated Members

Maciej Malasuk

Ex-officio members

Cllr Mandy Watt

Attendees

Arne Strid, John Robson, Charlotte Bruce, Police Sergeant Mercer.

2. Apologies

Jill Powlett-Brown, Ken Harvey, John Percival, Ben Parker, Cllr Ross, Cllr Main, Daniel Johnson MSP.

3. Police Report

Sergeant Mercer provided an overview of recent local policing activity:

The local Community Team had been focussing on a traffic initiative over the past month, which had three key components:

1. Targeting parking around schools at drop off and pick up - all local schools now have a named local liaison officer and many primary schools are now using road signage shaped like children to increase driver awareness.
2. Speed enforcement – Police teams have been enforcing the 20mph speed limit on key Morningside Roads, including Morningside Road, Morningside Drive and Balcarres Street.
3. Inconsiderate Parking – Police have been handing out literature to those drivers parking in the wrong spaces.

Edinburgh police have been present at the peaceful protests held outside the Russian Consulate.

Sgt. Mercer reminded MCC that the Police frequently see an increase in the number of reports of confidence tricksters in the Spring months and that residents should be wary of anyone uninvited selling door to door. If residents have concerns they should request ID, close the door and call the Police.

The MCC was also advised that the Police are still patrolling Morningside and the grounds of Astley Ainslie at the weekends to manage the reported anti-social behaviour.

Following questions about the rise in the number of people begging in Morningside, Sgt. Mercer noted that only 'aggressive begging' would be considered a crime and that while the Police are aware of residents' concerns unless the begging becomes aggressive the activity is legal.

MCC noted that several residents are concerned that some drivers in the local area are not respecting the new Highway Code rules that request drivers to give way to pedestrians crossing the road, and that the area around Marks and Spencers is particularly hazardous for pedestrians. Residents also expressed their frustration with taxis parking in the Pay and Display bays preventing others from parking.

Cllr Watt advised residents that if they witnessed poor parking by taxi companies then they should take the car registration plate, location, date and time, and contact the Council's licensing department and the taxi company to make a complaint.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

February Minutes – WB noted that there was one amendment required within February's minutes that related to his attendance at the Edinburgh Association of Community Council. The minutes were otherwise approved as a true record without any further amendments.

Air Quality Sensors – MCC noted that the air quality sensors on Comiston Road were due to be replaced but that the details as to what the sensors will be measuring and when the replacement was to happen had yet to be confirmed. Cllr Watt agreed to check with Cllr Ross as to the status of the work.

Open Door Café – WB publicly thanked Open Door Café for the use of their premises in previous years.

MCC Website – No further update, MCC member Caroline McKinley agreed to inquire with the provider as to progress.

MCC Meeting Format – MCC asked for feedback on the community's preferred meeting style (in person attendance Vs hybrid approach of meeting plus Zoom). It was noted that despite some technical and sound issues there was a preference for re-initiating the hybrid format as it allowed greater accessibility and inclusion. It was agreed that April's meeting would return to a hybrid format.

5. Travelling Safely

MCC Travel Survey - Caroline shared the progress of the survey that MCC is creating to find out how people travel to Morningside and the primary purpose of their visit; information that will help evidence MCC's engagement around place-making initiatives. It is intended that the survey will launch in May and that members of the MCC will seek to undertake face-to-face engagement within Morningside as well as making it available online. It was noted that engagement with adjacent Community Councils (Merchiston Community Council) should take place given the overlap of shopping and visitor amenities.

Spaces for People – MCC were advised that the temporary road furniture on Braid Road would remain in place until a TRO has been made. It is intended that a crossing will be established by Hermitage Drive/ Braidburn Terrace but that due to staffing shortages the Council are delayed in their implementation.

Potholes – MCC noted that there were significant pothole issues in the local area that were not being addressed despite being reported. Cllr Watt noted that the Council had increased their budget in this area by £1m to address city wide issues but that they were experiencing procurement issues in relation to awarding the contract to undertake remedial work, which was causing delays.

Quiet Route – Residents were advised that Spokes were organising an Easter treasure hunt on the Quiet Route. Details of which have been posted on the MCC Facebook page.

6. Planning

GC updated the MCC on a number of planning issues:

22/00407/FUL: Installation of 20m street mast incorporating 6 No. antennas, 3 No. cabinets and all ancillary development at Telecoms Apparatus, 30 Metres South-East of 424 Morningside Road: This is a very unattractive planning application, to which an objection has been lodged by the MCC, for the erection of a 20m high Vodafone telecoms mast very close to the Morningside Clock. The details can be seen on the above reference number on the city council's planning online service, but the period for comments closed on 4th March. The Evening News gave useful coverage of this application earlier in February.

The mast comes with a series of metal cabinets, close to an existing telecoms mast and its three cabinets. These proposed cabinets would obstruct the erection of the Morningside Christmas tree, or be damaged by the tree, if it can still be erected, as it will extend some distance over the cabinets.

The proposed 5G mast and cabinets will serve 2 providers. 5G masts cannot be incorporated into existing masts. The adjacent existing mast is a shared "EE" and "Three" installation. The large installation across the road beside the Bank of Scotland serves O2. This collection of masts represents all four of the main telecoms network suppliers.

A meeting with Vodafone's representatives has been arranged for Thursday 17th March.

Draft National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4): The public consultation closes on 31st March 2022. There is a useful summary of what this document is about, prepared by the Law Society of Scotland, and it is available here: <https://www.lawscot.org.uk/members/journal/issues/vol-67-issue-01/planning-towards-2045-the-npf4-roadmap/>

Short Term Lets: On 23rd February, proposals were approved by the planning committee to designate the City of Edinburgh Council area as a short-term let (STL) control area. The proposal follows a consultation with the public as well as industry bodies. Most respondents to the consultation were in favour of a control area, with 88% supporting the principle of it, and 85% supporting the entire City of Edinburgh Council area to be included.

The designation cannot come to effect without the approval of Scottish Government. A request will be submitted to the Scottish Government requesting that the new powers are implemented in the whole of the Edinburgh area. If the government agree with this approach, and the new legislation is implemented in the city, it will require residential property owners wholly letting a property which is not their principal home as an STL in the local authority area, to apply for planning permission for a 'change of use' to a short-term let.

Short-term lets of private rooms or shared rooms where the property is the only or principal home of the host will not be affected by the control area requirement. This allows for house swaps at holidays and also for the host to let out the entire property when on holiday or working away, provided the property remains their only or principal home.

3 Cluny Avenue planning application reference 21/03278/FUL 22/00451/FUL: This planning application is a resubmission following the withdrawing of the previous application to convert a double garage to a small modern house. This application converts the garage into a two-storey workroom above a garage, bringing the new structure forward to the front elevation of the adjacent large house. The application has been strongly

opposed locally and an objection has been lodged in MCC's name in support of the residents, as the application is contrary to the objectives of the Conservation Area and very much the kind of development that the Morningside Character Appraisal seeks to avoid. Comments were required by 11th March.

Pizza Express at the former Braid Church: Pizza Express held a meeting in their Morningside branch on 22nd February at which Pizza Express representatives were showing plans for their refurbishment of the premises and the introduction of outdoor dining areas around the front of the building. Residents expressed some concerns about noise from external dining, but Pizza Express stated that they expected the outdoor facility to be used mainly by families who would be away by around 8pm. Various statutory consents will need to be pursued.

Entrance to Craighouse Estate from Craiglea Place: A local resident raised concern at the dilapidated condition of the entrance to the Craighouse Estate. Edinburgh Council confirmed that the ownership rested with Quartermile, who later agreed to initiate repairs to the gate pillar and gates. The council is to review the bin collection situation as there is currently a regular unsightly mess from overflowing refuse.

Protected Trees - Edinburgh Council has published a new policy on "Applying to do work to Protected Trees". An application to do work will now have to be "validated by dedicated tree technicians before allocating it to a tree officer". It sounds more complicated but more professional. Householders are reminded that trees that have "Tree Preservation Orders" and trees within Conservation Areas require formal approval to any significant work. A tree is defined as having a trunk diameter of 75mm or more when measured at 1.5m above ground level.

7. Financial position

WB noted that there was no significant update from last month where the balance was reported as £2, 437. There were two outgoing this month, which include £40 for data protection, and £90 for two month's meeting venue hire.

WB noted the need to organise new 3rd party insurance now that MCC plans to carry out more activity.

8. Correspondence

Planters for Quiet Route – CD noted that she was in the process of applying for funding to pay for three planters to be placed on Braid Crescent. These will be cared for by local residents and will hopefully enhance the appearance of the Quiet Route.

20 minute neighbourhood – CD noted that the Cockburn Association offer a talk on the concept of 20 minute neighbourhood around the world and that this may be something we could request to be delivered at the MCC.

AOCB

A number of AOCB were raised:

- JS noted an issue within their tenement regarding the stair being blocked by abandoned furniture. MCC advised that residents liaise with the community team of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to understand what promotional material may be available to advise tenants of their obligations to protect fire escape routes.
- AS noted that the communal bins on Belhaven Terrace had been missed off the collection route for several weeks. Cllr Watt explained that this was due to an error in the re-programming the refuse collection routes and that it should now be rectified.

- Residents queried the posters that had been placed on Belhaven Terrace and Balcarres Street relating to changes to parking and whether they would now need to pay for permit spaces. Cllr Watt advised residents would be receiving a letter from the Council shortly to set out the changes.
- TS noted that following previous discussions he had been asked to check 3 carbon footprint apps and that he would provide more detail at a later meeting, but felt the WWF footprint app was a good first step and free to use.
- MCC queried the status of the planned Morningside Park upgrade as no further information had been heard from the Council since the information was shared last year. Cllr Watt agreed to look into it.
- Residents queried the availability of wrap around care for the new Canaan Lane Primary School as no provision has yet been announced. Cllr Watt agreed to look into it and report back.

Date of next meeting

Wednesday 20 April at 7.30pm. The meeting will be hybrid and accessible both through Zoom and at our live meeting downstairs at Open Door.

(Rebecca Diggle, Admin)