



**Minutes of Meeting, 7 pm on 4th June 2020.**

**Held by video-conference due to Covid-19 social distancing restrictions.**

**Community Council (CC) Attendees:** Brian Wailes (Chair), Robin Barclay (Secretary), David McNeill (Treasurer), Mo Price, Jane Wailes, Christina Harley, Alan Symon, Krissy McKale

Elected Representatives: Cllr. Peter Smaill

**Midlothian Council Liaison:** Paul Johnson

**Apologies:** Cllr. John Hackett

**Welcome and Apologies.** Brian Wailes (Chair) welcomed everyone to the meeting; apologies were received from Cllr John Hackett.

**1. Approval of Minutes and Matters Arising.**

The Minutes carried forward from 6<sup>th</sup> February were proposed for adoption by Mo Price and seconded by Alan Symon. The Minutes of 5<sup>th</sup> March were proposed by Alan Symon and seconded by Robin Barclay. Because of the unusual circumstances of the 5<sup>th</sup> March meeting and the arrival shortly thereafter of the Covid-19 pandemic crisis and implementation of local responses, matters arising were not considered.

**2. Finances Statement.** Treasurer David McNeill summarised the difficulties with the Royal Bank of Scotland in changing the account signatories to himself and the Chair. These issues had meant that ENCC had not received the £10,000 emergency funding issued in late March to each community council for expenses incurred in local responses to Covid-19 measures, including provision of meals, shopping and volunteer expenses. Paul Johnson confirmed that that funding could still be transferred if required. However, as no requests for help had come to the central response team from ENCC ward and no volunteers had been called upon, the only Covid-19 related expense incurred so far was for printing costs for leafleting within some of our neighbourhoods. It was agreed that we

request £1,000 of that fund to cover current and future Covid-19 related expenses, on the understanding that the unused £9,000 would be available to other community councils, some of which had considerable expenses.

£393.77 is being sent to One Dalkeith, being the remainder of the amount temporarily received by ENCC on their behalf. This was from Tesco's Bags for Life fund at a time when One Dalkeith was unable to receive the funding.

**3. Review of ENCC informal working meetings to implement Covid-19 resilience.**

ENCC councillors have communicated extensively by email over the implementation of Covid-19 resilience and by regular informal Zoom video-conference meetings. These have taken place almost weekly since early April and have sometimes included elected representatives and/or Joy Godfrey from the Covid-19 resilience sub-committee. These are informal meetings and have not been minuted, but a note summarising them is appended to these Minutes.

**4. Planning.** ENCC has objected to the proposed changes to planning consent by Dandara, to alter the style and increase the number of houses at their development off Lasswade Road.

Community Councils have been advised to be particularly vigilant regarding unwelcome

planning applications at this time, particularly since the requirement for community consultation by applicants has been temporarily suspended during the Covid-19 crisis.

No new information on Place Plan implementation has been forthcoming from Midlothian Council (MLC) Planning or the Midlothian Federation of Community Councils, (MFCC). Nor is it known if Scottish Government deadlines on implementation will be extended. Paul Johnson said that it was the intention of MLC to support and work with communities on Place Planning implementation, but the disruption on schedules and staffing by the Covid-19 crisis response was considerable, and such matters had been put on hold temporarily.

It was agreed that ENCC should establish a Planning subcommittee and interested residents should be recruited, along with any other individuals with appropriate skills. Community councillors and recruits should become familiar with the online RAMP app to monitor planning, and training should be sought from its local author and/or former community councillors when feasible.

5. **Active Travel & Roads.** ENCC had received two emails from residents regarding speeding traffic on Dalhousie Road and Lasswade Road. Similar complaints had been circulating on the Bonnyrigg Road Neighbourhood WhatsApp Group and one resident had complained to Cllr. Hackett. ENCC has established an Active Travel & Roads sub-committee chaired by Alan Symon, assisted by David McNeill and residents Andrew Matheson, Ian Archibald and Michael Aubertel. This sub-committee will look at new approaches to finding solutions to the worsening problems of speeding traffic and traffic volume on these roads. It was agreed that as soon as physical meetings can once again take place, representatives from Midlothian Council, Elected Members and the Police be invited to a joint meeting to take action on this. Meantime, we encourage any

resident with an interest in helping with these issues to get in touch.

It was also noted that Scottish Government Spaces for People funding had been made available to Councils through Sustrans, to implement temporary measures to promote active travel during the Covid-19 crisis. Despite the fact ENCC had only been made aware of this shortly before the deadline, it was agreed to support submissions to Midlothian Council made independently by Andrew Matheson, in collaboration with Dalkeith resident Chris Matson. It was understood that further submissions for temporary measures may be considered at a later date.

6. **Council Membership and Recruitment.**

Following recent resignations, ENCC currently has 8 community councillors out of a possible 15 maximum. Paul Johnson advised, prior to our next AGM in December, that ENCC could recruit up to 7 new members, who must qualify for membership through residency, but that new (co-opted) members may not vote on the co-option of further new councillors. We can also recruit associate members with appropriate skills or experience of benefit to ENCC, who need not necessarily be residents. It was agreed that it would be desirable to have a more representative, geographical and age spread of new members. We invite anyone who is interested in any issue in, or aspect of, this community to contact us about getting involved as an individual, a sub-committee member, an associate or a co-opted member. We are few, and we need help.

7. **Communications.** Secretary Robin Barclay established a website in late March which is now the channel for the publication of all ENCC documents and communications. Linked to that website, new email addresses have been established for ENCC communications, office bearers and any ENCC councillor who wishes one. The website is at <https://eskbanknewbattlecc.org> and the general email address is [mailbox@eskbanknewbattlecc.org](mailto:mailbox@eskbanknewbattlecc.org). The

website has been particularly useful in conveying information relating to the Covid-19 crisis, and specifically the local implementation of responses by Midlothian Council and its help centre, as well as for volunteers to register. Articles and information for possible publication on the website are welcome via the above email.

Covid-19 resilience volunteers and moderators for the local neighbourhood Covid-19 resilience groups have been added to the ENCC's mailing list.

ENCC received funds from MLC in early March to cover the production of newsletters. However, owing to recent resignations, a new Communications sub-committee needs to be set up to consider further newsletter production and distribution.

8. **Any Other Business.** ENCC received a complaint regarding antisocial behaviour by groups of youths, and are aware of many similar complaints by residents alarmed by intimidating behaviour, vandalism, setting of fires and rowdy non-socially distanced assembly by such groups in recent weeks. It was agreed ENCC should write to Chief Inspector Arron Clinkscales, Midlothian Area Commander, to find out what action is being taken. We also need to clarify the status of community policing in our area.

David McNeill had seen a suggestion that fast food outlets, especially drive-throughs, could be encouraged to stamp the vehicle registration numbers of customers on their takeaway food and drink containers, so that those could be traced if discarded as litter. This could make a considerable contribution to the community as a means of discouraging littering, as fast food containers are the major source of casual littering in our area. David resolved to find more information on this initiative.

Overhanging branches from gardens adjoining pavements are impeding pedestrians at several locations, which is causing problems

for pedestrians striving to maintain social distancing during Covid-19 measures. We were reminded that it is Midlothian Council's responsibility to enforce that residents keep trees, hedging or other plants in their gardens clear of pavements adjoining their property. Complaints should be made to Midlothian Council.

9. **Next Meeting.** The ENCC's next scheduled meeting will be on **Thursday September 3 at 7pm**, as meetings are not held in July and August.

If social distancing measures are still in place, the meeting will be held on Zoom, and we will once again invite prior submissions by residents.

We will continue to meet informally to respond to any situations that develop and will consider submissions by residents at any time. Relevant information will be published on our website.