



### Minutes of Meeting, Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2022 at 19:30, remotely via Zoom.

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**Community Council (CC) attendees:** Brian Wailes (Chair), Jane Wailes, Robin Barclay (Secretary), David McNeill (Treasurer), Alan Symon (Depute Chair), Mo Price, Brian Farrell, Christina Harley, Joy Godfrey, Andrew Matheson, Rebecca Lewis.

**Elected Representatives:** Cllr Stuart Mackenzie.

**Apologies:** Cllr Peter Smail.

**Welcome & Apologies:** Brian Wailes (Chair) welcomed all. Apologies were received as above.

This meeting followed on from our AGM and some reference will be made to topics presented there.

**1 Approval of Minutes:** the minutes from meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> December were proposed by Christina Harley and seconded by Jane Wailes. It was noted that Luska Jardine is happy to attend meetings to take a provisional minute which Robin Barclay (Secretary) said will be of great help in his production of a draft minute of meetings for approval at subsequent meetings.

**2 Matters Arising:** None not covered in matters on the agenda.

**3 Finance:** David McNeill had presented our annual finances in our AGM. The account's balance had not changed since his last report, with sufficient funds to cover the cost of refurbishment of our noticeboard at Eskbank Toll and provision of a new noticeboard at Newbattle Abbey Crescent, and the cost of production of a newsletter in 2022 to be distributed to all households in our ward. David and Alan will finalise the selection of the noticeboard at Newbattle Abbey crescent, and that should be ordered. The Eskbank Toll noticeboard has been taken down and is undergoing refurbishment in Alan's garage. David has applied for the running-costs grant for 2022.

**4 Planning Matters:** Robin Barclay reported that Peter Arnsdorf (Senior Manager Planning Sustainable Growth and Investment, Midlothian Council) had presented at the December MFCC meeting (a copy of his presentation will be circulated with the minute of that meeting), and that Planning are waiting on the guidelines that they anticipate the Scottish Government will publish early in 2022 before beginning to engage with Midlothian's Community Councils on the production of Place Plans for their areas which when approved by Planning will be incorporated into Midlothian's new Local Plan. Meantime the Scottish Government's consultation on their new Planning Framework (NPF4) remains open until March 31 and any individual or group can submit comment. That consultation can be found [here](#) (link).

Robin Barclay had noted at our previous meeting that Planning Application 20/00869/PPP (Outline planning permission for business park (class 4) and associated works on Land At Sheriffhall South Gilmerton Road Dalkeith) submitted by Melville Nurseries was not called in by Elected Members, therefore Planning is minded to grant, subject to the applicant entering into a suitably worded legal agreement and complying with a number of relevant conditions.. Since ENCC (and neighbouring

Community Councils) had objected, we should contact Planning to try to determine whether the conditions imposed by them mitigate the aspects of the application we had objected to

Cllr Stuart Mackenzie stated that it has been approved that Brian Farrell will be invited to attend the briefing of Councillors by consultants on the preliminary report on feasibility of improvements around Eskbank Toll, to represent ENCC at that forthcoming meeting. Brian should expect an invitation presently.

Emma Hay (Planning Officer, Planning, Sustainable Growth and Investment Service, Place Directorate, Midlothian Council) has drafted a new version of the Eskbank & Ironmills Conservation Areas Character Appraisal and Management Plan and has offered to brief interested parties. We will contact Dalkeith and District Community Council to arrange a joint briefing since the Conservation Area overlaps both wards. This is likely to be conducted via Zoom.

We are disappointed with the response by Mr Jim Gilfillan, Consultant, Policy & Road Safety, Corporate Resources, Midlothian Council which essentially approves the road layout submitted in plan 21/00746/DPP (Erection of 6 dwellinghouses; formation of access road and car parking and associated works at Land East of Glenarch Lodge Melville Road) where we had concerns that the visibility splay for access on to Melville Road between two blind corners was inadequate for the actual speeds of many vehicles on that road where the speed limit is often exceeded. We speculated whether a site visit was ever made, let alone a speed survey, as despite what is permitted by the regulations according to the given speed limit it is obvious that those conditions are not adhered to. We do note that that response recommends extension of street lighting down Melville Road to that site.

It was noted that the signage to be erected in Tesco's car park is to indicate car charging points which will be installed, and we will make no comment on that Planning Application.

Christina asked whether MFCC will make comment on the Scottish Government's consultation on NPF4, and whether ENCC should ask for that to be put on the agenda of their next meeting. She expressed reservations as to whether Midlothian's Planners will provide adequate help and training to Community Councils in 2022 for timely production of Place Plans.

We have heard that it is likely that there will be a consultation by Midlothian Council on refurbishment of Jarnac Court. While it lies in DDCC ward, Eskbank and Newbattle are part of Dalkeith municipality and many of the services essential to residents represented by ENCC are in Dalkeith town centre, so we expect to be asked to respond to this consultation. Although we do have frequent communications and good relations, we used to have stronger links with DDCC where a representative of each community council sat in on the other's meetings. Since we share many common interests we should explore closer liaison with DDCC. We note that the initiative to establish the One Dalkeith development trust came jointly from DDCC and ENCC, and maybe there needs to be a wider, 3-way conversation over matters affecting Dalkeith municipality which all have some interest in.

**5 Roads, Traffic & Road Safety.** As stated above it was confirmed that Brian Farrell of ENCC will be invited to attend the forthcoming data-gathering assessment for Eskbank Toll when that is presented to Councillors next week. It was suggested that ENCC members hold an informal meeting to discuss both Roads and Active Travel after Brian has attended this meeting and bring any discussion points to our next meeting. A suitable time and venue should be sought by exchange of emails.

Brian has also attended the recent MTRAP meeting where one of the discussion points was the location and status of grit bins. He has looked into the record and status of bins in our area and has noted discrepancies which he will advise Road Services of. He also notes that Midlothian Council has

a supply of larger “neighbourhood” bins that can be used to replenish smaller bins or supply grit for direct use and will ask that one be located on Lasswade Road to serve there and the side roads nearby

**6 Active Travel:** Alan Symon and Andrew Matheson said that nothing much had happened recently to report on. Brian Farrell said that at the last MTRAP meeting it had been decided that while there was little to report there (and it had been under consideration to remove this from the agenda) it had been decided to keep it on the agenda. MTRAP is expected to get an update on the A7 urbanisation where it is hoped cycleways will be accommodated. Brian has done a rough sketch of a cycleway network proposal which he will share by email. Cllr Mackenzie drew our attention to a [consultation on active travel by Midlothian Council](#) (link) which has just been announced and will run until 25<sup>th</sup> of February. Andrew, Brian and Alan will discuss an ENCC response to this, but individuals are encouraged to respond personally. This could be discussed at the informal meeting of ENCC proposed above (Roads/Eskbank Toll). We note that apart from Councillor Mackenzie’s welcome update we had not been informed of this consultation by any other source and regard this as yet another example of the lack of timely communication of relevant information by Midlothian Council officials to Community Councils.

**Environment:** Joy Godfrey has produced an extensive summary of activities and interactions with ERIG for 2021 which is included in the annual report submitted for the AGM (still to be completed and published on our website – soon – a link will be provided. Robin). She will attend the next ERIG meeting and briefly summarise that prior to the publication of the draft minute on [MSP Colin Beattie’s website](#) (link). Joy will revive a Facebook page that she initiated to provide information and interaction on River Esk matters with residents and supply a link once that page is updated. She also stated that participants in ERIG (e.g. SEPA, Scottish Water) who say they do not have answers to hand to questions but will find information on follow-up seldom supply that information subsequently. This is an argument for supplying questions in advance of meetings and being persistent in seeking answers.

Rebecca Lewis (Buglife and Riverfly on the Esk coordinator) reported that the Riverfly on the Esk group (which is a citizen science project which monitors river health from prevalence of invertebrates in their samples at various sites along both North and South Esk as well as the combined Esk between Dalkeith to its mouth in Musselburgh) now has 26 local volunteers including 2 of Midlothian’s Councillors (recruited following her presentation to them). Recent presentations can be found (? Links ?) and their Facebook page [@riverflyontheesk](#) has information on recent activities. They have been recognised by SEPA as reputable body feeding relevant data into UK databases. New volunteers are always welcome and training will be provided. This group will provide information on the health of the Esks and capture any changes, and ENCC is pleased to support them.

Christina Harley reported that Scottish Water attended in December in response to the leak of raw sewage flowing down Newbattle Road (between the Ancrum Road and Abbey Road junctions) and found that a buried trap may have been faulty, causing the overflow and back-up problem. They believe they have resolved it. Christina has identified a contact at Scottish Water who she can ask for if further contact is needed.

**7 Communications:** Christina and Jane have had an initial meeting on the production of a Newsletter and will work on collection of articles for it, aiming to produce a more image-rich (less text balance) than the previous edition. Robin Barclay said he was happy to do the “typesetting” using templates made (on Adobe) for the first edition, prior to printing. The volunteer list for distribution may still exist (and will help engage the community in some action for ENCC).

Robin Barclay said he had made some subtle alterations and upgrades to the ENCC website but a major clear out of old material and provision of new is needed. He suggested starting a new section, on the Environment (that already exists as a post/news category) in consultation with Joy and Rebecca.

With regard to the new noticeboard at Newbattle Abbey Crescent it was suggested that its internal background colour be green to blend in best with its surrounds.

**8 AOB:** A third (and maybe fourth) signatory for the ENCC bank account is needed in case of the absence of one of the two (existing) signatories as two signatories are required on any cheque issued. Christina volunteered to become one. We should investigate implementing on-line banking as MFCC have recommended it and there is no legal obstacle according to Midlothian Council. It may require a change to our constitution.

We note that parking charges will be reintroduced in Dalkeith in early February. Residents have complained that they have been unable to access short-term parking in Dalkeith because spaces have been occupied by long duration parking.

Christina asked if we could try to involve resident youth in ENCC activities. Rebecca stated that the local "Student Voice" may be a way of reaching out to them. Joy recommended Midlothian Youth Platform, and also using Phil Bowen's online newspaper Midlothian View. Alan expressed some concern that we might have to turn down any approach by interested young people engaged through the above if they aren't residents of ENCC ward. Christina suggested driving youth participation in Community Councils more widely across the region through MFCC, and that could be a suggestion for their agenda for a forthcoming meeting.

We have identified a lack of defibrillators in our ward (the nearest appears to be Kings Park) and we need to explore provision (funding) siting and recording/publicizing of locations. There may be some in our ward (e.g. Tescos) that are not recorded. 24-hour access (and an electricity supply) may be issues for location and funding. David suggests approaching Eskbank Trading and Brian W suggests using that as an example from which we can learn, to acquire others. There is no community owned (Council) property in this ward where they could be affixed except Highbank Care Home, which will soon be replaced by facilities at Bonnyrigg. The possibility of affixing to lamp posts was suggested.

**9 Date of Next Meeting:** the next meeting will be Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> February at 6:30 pm in the Boardroom of Edinburgh College. We will attempt to provide remote access via Zoom for anyone uncomfortable or inconvenienced by meeting face-to-face and supply codes to invitees.

NOTE: Since our January meeting the guidance on Coronavirus has changed again and permits us to meet at Edinburgh College under what rules the College operates at that time. You will probably require a facemask for moving around the building but not in the meeting, and we (ENCC) would be reassured if you would test yourself by LFT before attending our meeting.

The meeting closed at 8.55 pm.