

Mayfield and Easthouses Community (MECC) Minutes of meeting

6 March 2024 7pm - Meeting held in Mayfield Church

ATTENDEES

Robert Hogg (Chair), Judy Thomson (Treasurer), Stephen Liddell (Planning), Michael Hogg, Cllr Stuart McKenzie, Michael Davidson, Craig Gallier, Cal Haston, K Watson, A Watson, Yvonne Weighand Lyle, T Ferguson.

Apologies

Theresa Morrison, Cllr Peter Smaill, George Jackson, Sharon Hill, Susan Ryan

1. Welcome and Apologies

RH welcomed everyone and noted the apologies (noted above). No issues from last month's meeting minutes, they were approved by CG and RH. It was noted there was a good attendance at the recent climate event held at MAEDT pavilion (approx. 100 people) and around 250 attended the volunteer fair in Dalkeith.

There was a well-attended walk-around at Mayfield Primary School. Many issues were addressed at the time, including consideration to cover the fencing, and potentially involving the school children too. The parents involved were asked to send a list of jobs to Derek Oliver. Consideration will then be given to members of the public undertaking tasks such as painting, door hanging, etc. It is understood that only a minimal amount of money will be spent on the school because it is due to be replaced soon but the current school needs to be safe and hygienic. There will be a public meeting about the new Mayfield Campus organized soon with the developer Kier and Council Officers. CC need to check if the idea of a one-way road rather than cul-de-sac is completely impossible now. Construction traffic was an issue for those present and it was suggested they could use the road by the doctor's surgery.

There was also a site visit to the new Easthouses Primary School, which was very impressive even in its half-built condition. It was felt there wasn't enough communications/awareness of this school as there are questions about catchment, applying and uniforms. Community benefits from Morrisons were mentioned.

The subject of fundraising for new Christmas lights was raised along with some important questions - how would they be maintained and stored, how would they get PAT tested, etc? It was suggested to involve McSence.

2. Police Report Highlights

- RH highlighted some of the issues from the police report, including issues with bikers doing wheelies. It was highlighted that Dalkeith Police Station doesn't hold people; they would be taken to St Leonard's instead. It's been like this for approx. 2 years.
- Chris Howarth from Midlothian Police attended the meeting, on behalf of Community Sergeant Amanda Johnston. He said it may be Ally Livingston that attends the meetings, and they aim to attend once every quarter.
- After confirming that anti-social behaviour is a breach of tenancy in social housing, he went on to say it's worth reporting issues repeatedly if they keep happening. He very much encourages all 'intelligence' from the community. There are various methods such as calling 101/using the Contact form on Police Scotland website (these both require contact details) or calling Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111/using the form on their website (these can be

anonymous). It is very important to include the details of the time and place of the incident.

- He told the meeting about the use of SelectaDNA spray which works by spraying the offender, marking skin and clothing for days, weeks and even months. This greatly increases the chance of conviction; indeed, it has so far been used three times and has resulted in a conviction each time.
- Bonnyrigg CCTV upgrade finished on the day of the meeting and will be coming to Mayfield and Easthouses soon. This project is only to replace like for like rather than extra locations at this time. There was feedback that the quality of the footage is very high. CC would like to have a voice in deciding where cameras are placed but understand that might not be possible with this part of the project. Phase 1 of the project is already paid for (the like for like replacements) but Phase 2 will be for additional cameras, and this is obviously not as certain. CCs are encouraged to contact council with their wishes and requirements for extra cameras so that project could receive priority. There will be a visit arranged for CC soon to be able to see how the CCTV operation works and what it looks like. Chris is the main contact for the CCTV project.
- Action to send video of fly tipping to Chris.
- CC asked for a poster, letter or FB post that can be shared from the Police asking for the intelligence they require and to reassure the community that the police want to receive these reports. For an example, we learned that the recent drug raid in Danderhall (worth £1m) was from community information.
- A very positive effort was described around succession planning. They have a pool of people ready to step in for when people leave. As we have had times where we haven't had a police contact, this is very welcome.

3. Planning

- Scott's Caravan Park development will come to planning committee again this month. SL gave a detailed report about why it is recommended to be refused. CC has been largely supportive of the plan, as have other stakeholder organisations. No environmental impact survey has been necessary but the developer should carry out a new habitat survey as previous one is from May 2021. Health Board said ok but they are getting close to capacity for the area. There is an issue for the Council that the plan is to remove all but 6 trees (125 in total) and replace with 66 new trees. SL reported that half of those trees are ok but the other half are already in very poor condition. There was an issue with land purpose but only 10% of the land is allocated to Economic Land supply and the neighbouring industrial estate is not planning to expend at all. As a brownfield site, it would be classed as a 'windfall' site and the CC has always counted this windfall site in the quotas of housing coming. Originally the developer wasn't complying with contributions but that has changed now. Council Planning have stated there is no need for new housing developments as they already have what is needed.
- The Local Place Plan has been published and is available for a 28-day period of consultation. It is available on CC website, FB and in MAEDT and Newbattle Library and hard copies. Comments have been requested and at the end of the 28 days, all comments will be taken into consideration and final document produced. This will be submitted to the Planning Department by 31st March 2024.

4. Environment

CG had more footage of fly tipping. This will be forwarded to Council and Police.

5. Councillors Report

- Only Councillor McKenzie was present at the meeting.
- The Council budget was mentioned but it was felt that the problem has more likely been passed on to next year rather than being fixed in any way.
- He mentioned the walk around Mayfield Primary School and shared his shock at the current state.
- The previous public toilet in Bogwood Court was raised (not for the first time) and it was agreed we need to find out who the owner is and considering getting it condemned.
- There will be a walkabout around Chester Square on 19th March, all welcome to attend to raise issues.

6. Treasurer Report

- Only outgoing in February was £25 for the cost of getting the two hard copies of the Local Place Plan printed. Huge thanks to Graphic Impressions for their sterling work and support of the Community Council, as usual. Current balance is £7377.99.
- JT believes there are outdated names listed as signatories on our bank account. Permission given from the meeting to investigate the situation and remove any signatories that shouldn't be there. Also add secretary, Theresa Morrison, as a signatory.

7. Community:

- It is recorded that it's been 40 years since the miner's strike. Community is recovering but we have empty shops, a run-down town centre and Mayfield Primary School in a state of disrepair. Positively, the community is very thankful to have McSense in the area.
- MAEDT have successfully secured a defibrillator which will be mounted on the outside of the pavilion. This will be in an unlocked box and available 24/7. There is a risk of vandalism but there will be CCTV focussed on it which will hopefully act as a deterrent to that. There are other defibrillators in the area but none of the others are available out with the organisation's opening hours. Meeting asked for details of where defibrillators are and questioned whether there was a map/list available. It was suggested to contact David McNeill, from Eskbank and Newbattle CC, as he has done a lot of work in this area.
- Yvonne gave an update on the Remembering Together Midlothian project. There are proposals for accessible seating with planting. One location is potentially Easthouses Park.

8. Other Business:

- It has been suggested to fundraise to fix and make improvements to the war memorial in Easthouses. The angel statue needs a wing as it is broken. Consideration should be given to applying for a grant from War Memorial Trust. It was agreed for CC to donate £100.
- RH thanked everyone for attending and the meeting was closed.