

West End Community Council

Minute of Meeting

7:30pm on the 2nd of March 2021 on the ZOOM video platform

Present: Dr Gordon M Wyllie (Chair), Ian Robertson (Vice-Chair), David Duncan (Secretary), Isabel Thom (Planning), Martha Baur, Gordon Renton, Paul Hancock, City Cllrs Joanna Mowat and Karen Doran and local residents David Hewitson, Ian Woollen, Peter Black, Jenny Clarke and Benoit Culioli.

Discussion	Action
<p>1. Apologies</p> <p>Apologies were received on behalf of Treasurer Alex Milne, City Councillors Alistair Rankin and Hal Osler and local resident Linda Cunningham.</p>	
<p>2. Minute of meeting held on the 2nd of February 2021</p> <p>The Minute of the meeting held on 2nd of February 2021 was approved, subject to noting Paul Hancock's clarification that he had received the Police report on behalf of the WECC rather than the West End Facebook Group, and his comment that in relation to the Spaces for People discussion was disappointing.</p>	
<p>3. Matters arising</p> <p>(a) Slippery pavements – in order to advance matters Cllr. Jo Mowat wrote again last week and escalated this issue to the Head of Service stressing that a permanent fix is required rather than a temporary solution. Mr Hancock suggested the consultants should be asked to advise their insurers that there is a potential claim, and further commented that Douglas Crescent had more gritting than any other street in Edinburgh.</p> <p>(b) Street Lighting – Cllr Mowat advised that adverse weather conditions had impeded work on the lights by the tramline. This had been re-scheduled for next week under instruction to let her know if not done by 15 March.</p> <p>Paul Hancock noted that a lamp post is missing from the tram people's register, Identified through a lack of an asset number on the post.</p> <p>Isabel Thom advised that Douglas Crescent is due to have "heritage" lighting installed in the near future.</p>	<p>JM</p> <p>JM</p>
<p>4. Police Matters</p> <p>No report was received for the meeting. The WECC had been advised by Police Scotland that a representative could not was not available to attend , it was thought that a possible shift change might be the cause.</p>	



<p>5. Enforcement of Sale Conditions</p> <p>Obligation to have public toilets at Morrison Street development.</p> <p>Cllr Jo Mowat had been advised by the Legal Department that the legal duty had been transmitted as reported by Council Officers. A report is due to be issued to the City Councillors regarding the matter of public toilet provision. As the site had since been passed into other hands, the Chairman enquired if it was known whether the obligation had been included in the two subsequent title transmissions, Cllr Mowat undertook to enquire and revert on this.</p> <p>Gordon Renton referred to the risk to public health caused by the necessity of persons relieving themselves in the street and/or in private and semi- private spaces such as closes, especially in the current pandemic. Paul Hancock thought that the provision of Superloos might provide a temporary answer, and a site for one at the West End existed on the widened corner pavement adjacent to Ryrie’s public house, where it would be possible to connect with necessary serviced. A report on public toilet provision due to be considered by the City Council and Mr Hancock enquired whether he could see the forthcoming before the Council votes on it.</p> <p><i>Cllr. Karen Doren joined the meeting.</i></p>	<p>JM</p>
<p>8. Councillors’ Report</p> <p>Cllr Doran referred to the work she has been doing with colleagues on issues such as cab-licencing, and City Mobility plans and the possibility of organising another walkabout in the West End area.</p> <p>Paul Hancock said that the Facebook group had been rather negative regarding the George Street proposals - no trees, too much hard standing, not like a Parisian boulevard.</p> <p>Cllr Doran explained that as per the World Heritage plan trees were not historically appropriate, although she as an ambassador for the Woodland Trust would have been in favour of more trees.</p> <p>Cllr Mowat, referring to the heritage view point, said that George Street had intentionally been designed to be a street swept by the wind; how do you stay true to the nature of the street; what is the purpose of George Street, and how will displaced traffic affect the surrounding vicinity?</p> <p>Mr Hancock expressed concern that Edinburgh might end up with another bleak area like Festival Square, and that George Street had become a place you park rather than one you travel through.</p> <p>Isabel Thom sought clarification regarding railings and bollards. Cllr Doran referred to the corner of Magdala and Douglas Crescent where the railings had been knocked down and urgent reinstatement is required from a safety point of view.</p>	
<p>9. Communications – website & noticeboard</p> <p>Paul Hancock introduced Peter Black and Benoit Culioli who had volunteered via the West End Residents Facebook group to redo the WECC website. Currently Mr Hancock is working on a draft text and engagement strategy for this, which might offer possibilities</p>	<p>PH</p>



<p>of sharing content regarding parks at Coates and Atholl Crescents, Water of Leith and the Haymarket construction site. He is also working on a submission for inclusion in the Murrayfield Grapevine.</p> <p>Separately to the WECC website the idea of having a WECC Facebook page was being explored. This would be useful for quick surveys and engaging with members of the local community via the messaging system.</p> <p>Mr Black then spoke about the new draft website, which will be hosted on the tried and tested Wordpress platform. The website will feature lots of images, some from the current site and some new ones. Having the website hosted on the Wordpress platform will make updating content and performing maintenance much easier than the current platform.</p> <p>Isabel Thom had been speaking to her daughter, Morag, who was in a small IT company in Edinburgh, and had an input into the website about to be superseded. She had some reservations over email storage capacity. This was something Mr Hancock was able to clarify for her.</p>	
<p>10. Finance Report</p> <p>Treasurer Alex Milne had emailed ahead of the meeting advising that the balance in the Community Council's favour stood at £1293.67</p>	
<p>11. Planning Report</p> <p>Planning Convenor Isabel Thom spoke to her attached report, referring to particular points of interest, which included Morrison Street, Melgund House, the plan for the Moving Image and Rosebery House.</p> <p>Regarding CCWEL, nothing further had emerged from Sustrans.</p> <p>There had been no further developments on the Quaich Project</p> <p>Mrs Thom also referred to an important consultation out today on festivals mounted in the city. Councillor Jo Mowat will send Paul Hancock a link so he can circulate it.</p> <p>Mrs Thom had attended a Community Council Planning Training event, which covered Covid 19, website planning pages and local "Place Plans".</p> <p>An application for 23 Manor Place to be converted to an alcohol venue was of especial interest to local resident James Benbow. He and his neighbours have serious concerns about the application and have lodged objections to the proposals to create a hotel with 7 bedrooms and tasting rooms, all in order to promote a distillery and entertain buyers, operating as a business beyond office hours which may be in breach of several ECC Planning Policies. It was agreed that the WECC would write to the Planning Department to object.</p> <p>Gordon Renton voiced concern regarding the proposed conversion of accommodation at the Backpackers Hostel to studio flats. Isabel Thom advised that the top floor is already flatted and that the planning application is for the first and second floor, turning the Backpackers section into flats.</p> <p>A carpark off 11 Manor Place is reverting to garden use</p>	<p>JM</p> <p>IT</p>

<p>On the topic of traffic, it was mentioned that Google Maps appears to be directing users down Douglas Crescent as a means of leaving the City Centre quickly. Road constrictions are forcing higher levels of road traffic through residential streets.</p> <p>This topic will be a separate Agenda item in next month's WECC meeting.</p>	
<p>13. Dates of next meetings</p> <p>6th April, 4th May, 1st June, 6th July, 2nd September, 5th October, 9th November</p>	<p>GMW/DD</p>

There being no other competent business, Dr Wyllie closed the meeting.

Appendix 1. Police Report provided to and distributed by Paul Hancock.

OFFICIAL

Hi Paul,

Apologies for not getting back to you earlier. I was off for a period of sickness followed by annual leave, and was unable to get a report to you in time.

Hopefully this is not too late to be of relevance, however.

With regards to the anti-social behaviour in basements, we have had a couple of incidents of people drinking there, and one of a small fire being set (not enough to provide any danger to the building). Our advice to residents and businesses would be to ensure that the gates are locked and that the area is free from any items that could be used for shelter or which could be burned. Obviously, if there are any such instances, let us know at the time, and we will certainly look to send a resource to deal with it.

With regards to the rat run at Douglas Crescent, we deployed officers to that location with the speed gun, and a number of motorists were stopped and spoken to for going slightly above the speed limit. Unfortunately the majority of persons stopped were local residents, however the issue wasn't particularly pronounced on the two occasions we were there. If this issue gets worse, we can consider reattending there, however at the moment it does not appear to be significant enough to warrant regular directed patrols. I have spoken with a local resident there who raised the issues to us, and advised that it may be beneficial to contact Edinburgh Council to discuss the road layout and any possible traffic calming measures they could implement.

With regards to the loss of keys or any other property, it's just a case of making a lost report over the phone to police or in person at a station. If the items are then handed in, provided the description is detailed, we should be able to match them and reunite them with the owner. In respect of found property, it can be handed in to any police station and it will be recorded.

There isn't much we can do about alarms going off during power outages unfortunately, but most premises will have an alarm box on the wall that give an indication of the company that maintains the alarm. This might allow an opportunity for a call to be made to them and they will likely hold details of the key holder for the premises who could be contacted to come out and deal with it.

Obviously, we deal with alarm calls on a case by case basis, and if there was reason to believe that anything untoward had taken place, we would of course investigate and check the security of the building. Unfortunately we don't hold any details of the key holders on our system however.

I am still in the process of trying to pull this new format for our newsletters together, however it is taking longer than expected as it may be taken on as the format used across the division as opposed to just our own area, so I've had to do a bit more in the way of consultation. I look forward to getting this to you soon.

If you need anything else, please let me know.

Kind Regards,

Cameron

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