



West End Community Council

Minute of Meeting

7:30pm on the 1st of July 2025 at Ashfield Melville Street Edinburgh and participation via the ZOOM video platform

PRESENT IN PERSON

Community Councillors Paul Hancock (in the chair), Treasurer Douglas McGregor, Planning Convener Graeme Lyall and Gordon Renton, John Young, Richard Spalding, Marta Baur along with City Councillor Joanna Mowat and local residents : Jenny Clarke, William Phillips, Barbara Ross, Cate Howell, Anne Todd, Stuart Adams, Linda Cunningham, Community Councillor Ian Robertson joined the meeting part way through.

ATTENDING VIA ZOOM

Community Councillors attending by way of Zoom were Engagement Officer David Hewitson Isabel Thom and Licensing Convener James Benbow together with City Councillor Margaret Graham, and a local resident Dorothy Johnston

Discussion	Action
<p>1. Apologies Apologies for absence were received from or on behalf of Community Councillors , Roads Convener Hazel Black and licensing Convener James Benbow, MSP Angus Robertson City Councillor Finlay McFarlane, Community Policeman Sonja Kaiser Ferris, and residents Peter Johnston, Adrian Davis.</p>	
<p>2. Minutes from previous meeting The Minute of the walking Meeting held on Tuesday 1st July 2025 was approved with a correction to the requested CCTV location being the junctions of Palmerston Place, Lansdowne and Grosvenor Crescents.</p>	
<p>3. Police Report Discussion on Anti-Social Behavior in Haymarket Yards and Shandwick Place now vastly improved with additional patrols and closure of Haymarket Hub. Paul Hancock addressed the implementation of DNA tagging spray as a tool to combat illegal motorbike activities, particularly in relation to the so-called "balaclava boys." He noted that officers have been trained in this method and mentioned the distribution of leaflets to hotels and B&Bs to warn tourists about motorbike theft. David Hewitson emphasized the importance of being able to identify suspects, especially those who conceal their identities. Bike marking hoping to be held later this year possibly in the station again.</p>	
<p>4. Arising from the previous Minute(s) Public Toilets Paul Hancock provided updates on public toilets, confirming the opening of temporary facilities in two locations and the delay of permanent ones in Portobello. Insights from a meeting with a head of service and Cllr Mowat about public toilets in Haymarket, where they discussed the successful model used by Aberdeen. Cllr Mowat plans to follow up on this conversation to explore potential implementations. David Hewitson expressed thanks to Jo for this potential solution.</p>	



<p>Bin Hubs Paul Hancock highlighted the ongoing consultations about bin hubs, particularly in areas where residents had unclear responses. Cllr Mowat noted that some residents were initially informed about receiving gull-proof sacks but later learned they would receive bin hubs instead, prompting the need for further discussions. Additionally, she discussed concerns about the limited road safety impacts, especially regarding crossing streets without proper infrastructure as opposed to officer concerns, with no reported incidents from the existing paladin locations. Further discussion on bin hubs including mixed model gull proof sack/paladins and garden side siting of hubs. Cllr Mowat was going to speak to officers to have an interim measure of gull proof recycling sacks. Cllr Mowat that on street collection teams additional tech such as a report button has been discussed for flytipping and student clearances, A mechanism which doesn't rely on residents reporting is required. Cllr Margaret Graham undertook to look into why the paladins had not been split between the church and cycle path build out adjacent to the crossing</p> <p>Slippy Pavements. Sample is great - await how this fares over the autumn period before treating all the streets in the west end.</p> <p>Water ponding in Douglas crescent – additional gulley will be most effective rather than reprofiling the whole road surface. Action Cllr Mowat</p> <p>Paul Hancock inquired about the process for adding a CCTV camera in Palmerston Place, indicating that it might involve consulting the police. Cllr Margaret Graham agreed and noted that a recommendation from the police crime prevention officer would be needed. The list of CCTV coverage requirements will be forwarded by Cllr Mowat related to specific areas for her follow-up.</p>	
<p>5. Councillors' Report</p> <p>The City Councillors present considered that all relevant matters had been covered in the course of the evening's discussions, and there was no written report.</p> <p>Cllr Jo Mowat reported that the hearts clock is now fixed following the signing of a new maintenance contract.</p> <p>We note with interest the re-opening of the Filmhouse this week.</p> <p>Heart and Soul Sculpture would appear not coming to the West End, however exact location not actually confirmed as yet. Margaret to follow up with Findlay.</p>	
<p>6. Finance Report</p> <p>The Treasurer's report revealed a balance of £940, with expectations of receiving approximately £800 next month based on population metrics. Douglas is now an account signatory but Hugo account still in progress. Governance of account was discussed. Regular routine payments such as room hire do not require pre-approval, out of the ordinary expenditures a second signatory approval, for a larger amount over £200 usually approved at council meetings if there is time.</p>	



<p>7. Engagement Report</p> <p>Cllr Margaret Graham will follow up with the Fringe Society and council departments such as Traffic Regulations etc regarding their policy on sticker, fly posting removal and accountability for those who post them. A report button would be useful.</p> <p>David Hewitson and Paul to meet after holidays. David is proposing to use the development of a place plan to drive engagement.</p> <p>Paul to forward flyer to Jo from Out of Hand</p>	
<p>8. Licensing Report</p> <p>Cllr Margaret Graham will send the licensing guidelines to James for framing his licensing responses in future as over provision policy has now been abandoned as too blunt a tool.</p> <p>Cllr Margaret Graham will contact the person at Murrayfield regarding additional public toilet provision in the area. It was suggested that WECC contact Murrayfield direct as the most productive approach rather than calling in their licence. Jo will put Paul in contact direct</p>	
<p>10. Planning Report</p> <p>Graeme advised his formal objection on WECC behalf to the applications for 24 Canning Street and a balcony in Dean Park. Gordon Renton raised concerns about a garage conversion to bedroom in Atholl Crescent Lane, which could lead to reduced housing for locals and increased traffic in a cobbled lane.</p> <p>Discussion on general policies of WECC to planning applications, each should be addressed in line with planning policy and common sense rather than blanket policies.</p>	
<p>11. Roads Report</p> <p>CCWEL workshop feedback from Ruridgh is still awaited despite follow up from email. Jo Mowat to do a chase up email to him.</p> <p>Gordon Renton discussed the issue of bus idling in St Andrew's Square and other locations, emphasizing the need for a solution to reduce pollution. He proposed that traffic wardens remind drivers to turn off their engines, as this would not require additional enforcement powers. Paul also highlighted the challenges posed by foreign tour companies that may not adhere to local regulations. Enforcement is a key issue, Jo Mowat to feed into process WECC concerns with street enforcement to liase with us. A report button is a preferred solution along with signage in most used idling locations.</p> <p>Paul Hancock discussed the confusion surrounding the new 30 mph speed limit on the Western Approach Road, as the signage still reflects a 40 mph limit. He highlighted the lack of a footpath that prevents safe access to the bus stop near the Leonardo Hotel. Additionally, he mentioned issues with road markings and the need for better enforcement of speed limits.</p> <p>Centre lining in Lansdowne/Grosvenor and Eglinton/Glencairn to be reinstated after recycling.</p>	



<p>Dead tree in Melville Street planting to be replaced, Jo to pass action to Cllr Finlay McFarlane</p> <p>Bollards on Manor Place and Melville Street to be repaired Action Cllr Mowat</p>	
<p>12. Other Business</p> <p>Paul Hancock will compile a directory of email and mobile phone numbers for community councillors to facilitate communication among them. All councillors in attendance agreed that Paul could compile such a list and he will check with those not in attendance.</p> <p>Scottish Water works in Rosebery Crescent revised completion date 21st July. Jo Mowat to confirm with Lewis if a full resurfacing is required after the festival.</p> <p>Bill Phillips raised the awful drainage in Rosebery Crescent Lane from poorly maintained setts, however there appears to be no funds for this. Cllr Mowat agreed to follow up.</p> <p>George street remodelling was discussed, however funding is unlikely despite detailed stage 4 planning going ahead at a cost of some hundreds of thousands of pounds (as Lothian Road).</p> <p>New Hoxton hotel reopening was noted as positive. Issues with noise from AC and weddings will need to be monitored, Noisy AC report goes to environmental, events such as weddings go to licensing.</p>	
<p>13. Future Meetings</p> <p>It was agreed to meet again 5th August at 7.30. All meetings would now continue be held at Ashfield although participation would also be possible via Zoom.</p>	

There being no further business Paul closed the meeting.



Read AI Output from Zoom recording covering the first 90 minutes (free plan)

WECC July 2025 Meeting
Tue, Jul 1, 2025

Summary:

The meeting commenced with technical difficulties experienced by Paul Hancock and Dorothy, who struggled with audio and video settings. After troubleshooting, the issues were resolved, allowing the meeting to proceed with Paul welcoming attendees and addressing absences. He prompted introductions, which fostered familiarity among participants, and subsequently presented the minutes from the previous meeting.

After confirming there were no significant omissions, the minutes were approved. Paul then shared a police report detailing improvements in security measures and a reduction in antisocial behavior in specific areas, while also noting ongoing issues in others.

Paul discussed the implementation of DNA tagging spray to identify offenders involved in illegal motorbike activities, citing a successful case where DNA evidence from 1967 was still applicable. David Hewitson contributed insights on the difficulties of identifying suspects in disguises. The status of public toilets was also addressed, with temporary facilities opening in two areas and delays noted for permanent installations in Portobello. Paul recounted discussions about providing public toilets in Haymarket, inspired by a successful model from Aberdeen, and expressed intent to pursue this further despite recent challenges.

The complexities surrounding the implementation of bin hubs were highlighted, particularly the mixed responses from residents regarding previous consultations. Paul expressed frustration over road safety issues, emphasizing the need for better mechanisms to report waste collection problems, especially during student clear-outs. He also raised the need for an additional CCTV camera in Palmerston Place, suggesting police involvement for its installation, and mentioned sending a list of CCTV needs to Cllr Margaret Graham for action.

Concerns about pollution from bus idling in St Andrew's Square were raised, with Paul suggesting that traffic wardens remind bus drivers to turn off their engines. He also noted the inconsistency of speed limit signage on the Western Approach Road and the necessity for a footpath to enhance pedestrian safety. Discussions included the abandonment of the over-provision policy in licensing, with a focus on five objectives for assessing applications.

Paul proposed contacting Murrayfield for additional public toilet provisions and raised objections to two planning applications based on privacy and architectural concerns. The meeting concluded with discussions on local issues, including the maintenance of the council's clock and the presence of stickers and fly-posting, with Cllr Graham agreeing to address these matters with the Fringe Society.

Chapters & Topics:

Technical Difficulties and Introductions

Paul Hancock and Dorothy faced challenges with audio and video connectivity at the start of the meeting. Dorothy was unable to hear others and had issues with her headphones, leading to some confusion. After troubleshooting, they managed to resolve the technical problems, allowing the meeting to continue.

Introduction and Police Report



Paul Hancock began the meeting by noting the absence of several members and encouraging attendees to introduce themselves. After confirming the identities of all present, he moved on to the minutes from the previous meeting, which he stated had been compiled with contributions from various members. The minutes were approved without further comments.

* Police report and community safety updates

Discussion on Anti-Social Behavior and DNA Tagging

Paul Hancock addressed the implementation of DNA tagging spray as a tool to combat illegal motorbike activities, particularly in relation to the so-called "balaclava boys." He noted that officers have been trained in this method and mentioned the distribution of leaflets to hotels and B&Bs to warn tourists about motorbike theft. David Hewitson emphasized the importance of being able to identify suspects, especially those who conceal their identities.

Public Toilets and Community Updates

Paul Hancock provided updates on public toilets, confirming the opening of temporary facilities in two locations and the delay of permanent ones in Portobello. He shared insights from a meeting with a head of service about public toilets in Haymarket, where they discussed the successful model used by Aberdeen. Hancock plans to follow up on this conversation to explore potential implementations.

Bin Hubs and Road Safety Discussions

Paul Hancock highlighted the ongoing consultations about bin hubs, particularly in areas where residents had unclear responses. He noted that some residents were initially informed about receiving gold-proof sacks but later learned they would receive bin hubs instead, prompting the need for further discussions. Additionally, he raised concerns about road safety, especially regarding crossing streets without proper infrastructure.

* Waste management and recycling strategies

* Traffic and road safety issues

Discussion on CCTV Installation and Traffic Monitoring

Paul Hancock inquired about the process for adding a CCTV camera in Palmerston Place, indicating that it might involve consulting the police. Cllr Margaret Graham agreed and noted that a recommendation from the police crime prevention officer would be needed. Hancock also mentioned sending a list of CCTV requirements related to specific areas to Graham for her follow-up.

Addressing Bus Idling and Pollution Concerns

Paul Hancock discussed the issue of bus idling in St Andrew's Square and other locations, emphasizing the need for a solution to reduce pollution. He proposed that traffic wardens remind drivers to turn off their engines, as this would not require additional enforcement powers. Hancock also highlighted the challenges posed by foreign tour companies that may not adhere to local regulations.

Road Safety and Infrastructure Concerns

Paul Hancock discussed the confusion surrounding the new 30 mph speed limit on the Western Approach Road, as the signage still reflects a 40 mph limit. He highlighted the lack of a footpath that prevents safe access to the bus stop near the Leonardo Hotel. Additionally, he mentioned issues with road markings and the need for better enforcement of speed limits.

Licensing and Planning Updates

Paul Hancock addressed the licensing review and the decision to abandon the over-provision policy, with Cllr Margaret Graham supporting the shift towards using five objectives for application assessments. Hancock also raised concerns about the need for additional public toilet provisions



in the West End, particularly in relation to events at Murrayfield. He suggested contacting Murrayfield directly to address these concerns constructively.

- * Licensing and over-provision policy changes
- * Public toilet provisions during events

Community Council Updates and Treasurer's Report

Paul Hancock emphasized the importance of creating a directory for community councillors to improve communication, while ensuring compliance with data protection regulations. He raised concerns about a garage conversion in Athol Crescent Lane, which could lead to increased traffic. The Treasurer's report revealed a balance of £940, with expectations of receiving approximately £800 next month based on population metrics.

- * Directory of contact information for community councillors.
- * Funding allocation timeline and current financial status.

Updates on Local Issues and Community Engagement

Paul Hancock raised concerns about the maintenance of the council's clock and the proliferation of stickers in the West End, prompting a discussion with Cllr Margaret Graham about the need for a removal policy. Cllr Graham confirmed that she would address the issue of sticker removal with the Fringe Society during her upcoming meeting. Additionally, she provided updates on the reopening of the Filmhouse and the expansion of summer street activities.

- * Community engagement in the place plan development.
- * Statue relocation from Hunter Square.

Action Items:

- * Paul Hancock will forward the police report to the members of the council.
- * Paul Hancock will follow up with the relevant head of service regarding the conversation about public toilets in Haymarket.
- * Paul Hancock will ask officers about the possibility of interim solutions for recycling sacks while waiting for bin hubs.
- * Cllr Margaret Graham will send the licensing guidelines to James for framing.
- * Cllr Margaret Graham will contact the person at Murrayfield regarding additional public toilet provision in the area.
- * Paul Hancock will compile a directory of email and mobile phone numbers for community councillors to facilitate communication among them.
- * David Hewitson will follow up with the Fringe Society regarding their policy on sticker removal and accountability for those who post them.
- * Paul Hancock will check with Findlay about the status of the statue relocation from Hunter Square.

Key Questions:

- * What is the status of the police report that was supposed to be shared?
- * What measures can be taken to address the issue of idling buses in the city?
- * How can the community council ensure that public toilet provisions are adequate during events at Murrayfield?
- * What is the timeline for the next funding allocation to the community council?
- * Is there a removal policy for stickers and labels associated with the festival?

Notepad:

- * No notes