



West End Community Council

Minute of Meeting

7:30pm on the 4th of December 2025 at Ashfield Melville Street Edinburgh and participation via the ZOOM video platform

PRESENT IN PERSON

Community Councillors David Hewitson (in the chair), Treasurer Douglas McGregor Secretary Paul Hancock, and Gordon Renton, John Young, Martin Young, Richard Spalding along with City Councillor Joanna Mowat and local resident Linda Cunningham, Barbara Ross, Fiona Searle, Dave McIntyre, Anne Tod, Kirsten Stalker, Peter Johnston.

ATTENDING VIA ZOOM

Community Councillors attending by way of Zoom were Roads Convener Hazel Black together with City Councillor Margaret Graham, and a number of local residents including John Craig, Stuart Adams, Peter Chalmers

Discussion	Action
<p>1. Apologies Apologies for absence were received from or on behalf of Community Councillors Martha Baur and Isabel Thom, City Councillor Claire Miller, Finlay McFarlane, MP's Christine Jardine and Tracy Gilbert, MSP Angus Robertson, local Residents Gordon Wiley, Cate Howell, Finola Quinn, Ian Halley,</p>	
<p>2. Minutes from previous meeting The Minute of the Meeting held on 6th November 2025 was approved</p>	
<p>3. Meeting Summary: The discussion began with Paul Hancock reiterated the group's objections to the Atholl Crescent developments, particularly highlighting the developer's failure to provide promised traffic information. Hancock also reported an increase in crime as noted by the Neighbourhood Watch, urging attendees to take precautions during the holiday season. Additionally, he mentioned that the council is still awaiting advice on the construction of public toilets, with no updates from the recent culture and community committee meeting. Martin Young elaborated on the restart of hotel construction and there was a general discussion its implications for public toilets in the area, expressing disappointment over increased cleaning responsibilities at St. Mary's Cathedral. David Hewitson raised concerns about the lack of community consultation regarding changes to local bus services. The need to address transport issues was further discussed, with Hazel emphasizing the importance of gathering input to draft a letter regarding public transport accessibility and the removal of bus stops. They also mentioned upcoming consultations related to tables and chairs in public spaces. Traffic management changes in Douglas Crescent were another focal point, with Douglas McGregor discussing how rerouting could negatively impact residents in Eglinton Crescent. He advocated for improved pedestrian crossings and addressed issues with slippery pavements, while Hazel proposed reducing the width of certain junctions for safer crossings. Stuart pointed out the increased bus traffic during tram</p>	



repairs, suggesting this should be considered in road safety discussions. The group agreed to gather more information on these safety concerns and potential solutions for the next meeting.

Hancock expressed significant concerns about the high density of beds in Atholl Crescent developments, drawing on negative experiences from previous projects in other cities. He proposed issuing a press release to raise awareness of the situation, with Graeme Lyall supporting this sentiment. The discussion highlighted the community council's commitment to addressing over-tourism and its impact on local neighborhoods.

David Hewitson also confirmed the schedule for future meetings and Gordon Renton raised concerns about the high costs for local craftsmen at the Christmas market, advocating for a mix of local products and potential subsidies for artisans. The meeting concluded noting the need for further surveys to address increased noise levels in the community.

Chapters & Topics:

Updates and Reports

Paul Hancock addressed the meeting by listing several apologies for absence and confirming the availability of previous meeting minutes. He highlighted ongoing objections to the Atholl Crescent developments and mentioned that the developer had not yet provided requested traffic information. Additionally, he noted an uptick in crime reported by the Neighbourhood Watch, urging caution during the holiday season.

- * Updates on the Atholl Crescent developments and related planning applications.
- * Ongoing concerns regarding crime rates and community safety measures.
- * Discussions about public amenities, specifically the construction of public toilets and their accessibility.

Hotel Construction and Community Concerns

Martin Young addressed the recent restart of hotel construction and its implications for public toilets, noting that legal issues regarding responsibility for foundations may still need resolution. Paul expressed disappointment about funding for St. Mary's Cathedral, which has increased cleaning demands. David also highlighted community concerns over changes to bus services, emphasizing the need for better consultation with local stakeholders.

- * Upcoming political events and community engagement opportunities.
- * Traffic and transportation issues, including bus stop removals and their impact on the community.

Discussion on Transport Issues and Consultations

Paul Hancock prompted Hazel to investigate transport issues and draft a letter re bus stop to the traffic commissioner, emphasizing the need for input from others. Graeme Lyall raised concerns about the removal of bus stops and its impact on public transport usage. Hazel noted that there may be a consultation early next year regarding outdoor tables and chairs, and they discussed the reopening of small transport schemes for local improvements.

Traffic Management and Road Safety Discussions

Douglas MacGregor expressed concerns about traffic rerouting in Douglas Gardens, emphasizing the negative effects on residents in Eglinton Crescent. The meeting discussed the need for improved road safety measures using the small projects fund, including better pedestrian crossings and addressing slippery pavements. Hazel



suggested reducing the width of certain junctions to enhance safety for pedestrians. Stuart added that the increased volume of buses during tram repairs should also be considered in road safety discussions.

Discussion on Local Community and School Provision

The meeting discussed the need for a balanced approach to local amenities, specifically mentioning the impact of short-term lets and hotels on the community. He highlighted the difficulties families encounter regarding school provision, noting that Borroughmuir is the closest school but is often considered inaccessible. Hancock also pointed out that other nearby schools are already at capacity, complicating the situation further.

Community Development and Urban Planning Discussion

Paul Hancock addressed the need for community input to the place plan, particularly regarding the reuse of buildings and green spaces. A more detailed city center plan that could differentiate between various areas, allowing for tailored development strategies. Hancock also mentioned the importance of including local needs, such as a new music block, in the place plan.

Community Engagement and Data Analysis Strategies

Paul Hancock emphasized the importance of engaging the community by distributing information through a newsletter and social media. Hazel raised the need for an audit of existing resources to understand the current mix of accommodations and services, highlighting gaps in data. The group is considering collaborating with a planning consultancy for data mining and visualization.

Updates on Atholl Crescent Objection and Planning Process

Paul Hancock provided an update on the objection to the Atholl Crescent development, emphasizing the technical details that were overlooked in prior submissions. Stuart mentioned that the developers have submitted new information, including an economic study, but Paul remained unconvinced by its claims. They discussed the timeline for assessing the objections, suggesting that a planning meeting would likely occur in January due to the volume of submissions.

Discussion on Local Development and Community Concerns

Paul Hancock expressed apprehension regarding the proposed high density of beds in atholl crescent hotel development, citing past issues in Dublin and Barcelona as cautionary examples. He suggested issuing a press release to highlight the economic impact of the proposed 599 beds, which he felt had not been adequately covered by local news. Graeme Lyall echoed these concerns, questioning the rationale behind approving such a large project while smaller ones faced rejection. Martin Young agreed to issue a press release regarding the view of the community council

Monthly Meeting Schedule and Walking Meeting Discussion

Paul Hancock outlined the schedule for upcoming meetings, stating they will take place on the first Thursday of each month, except for January. He mentioned the potential for a walking meeting in June and noted that it should not be scheduled on the first Thursday in May due to his prior commitments. Additionally, he is exploring options for pro bono accommodation.

Concerns Over Christmas Market Pricing and Local Craftsmanship

Gordon Renton discussed the exorbitant fees local craftsmen face at the Edinburgh Christmas market, citing a leather worker from the Highlands who felt disappointed by the experience. He noted that while some vendors are making significant profits, the



market should include a variety of local crafts to enhance the overall experience rather than focusing solely on commercialism.

- * Concerns about high costs for local craftsmen at the Christmas market.
- * The impact of market dynamics on pricing and sales for local vendors.

Noise Concerns and Community Engagement

The meeting addressed community noise concerns, highlighting that the Council recent assessment indicated a rise in noise levels at the Hoxton. He pointed out that the next steps involve conducting further surveys to pinpoint the exact sources of the noise. Hancock also mentioned the significance of tonality in noise evaluation, which could affect permissible levels.

Action Items:

- * Paul Hancock will chase the developer for the outstanding traffic information that has not been provided despite previous promises.
- * Cllr Margaret Graham will find out from Councillor Jenkinson regarding the responsibility for the blocked gullies that have been handed over to the city council.
- * Hazel will figure out who the traffic commissioner is and send a letter regarding the bus stop issues affecting the community.
- * Hazel will prepare a report for the next meeting with suggestions regarding the treatment of slippery pavements.
- * Paul Hancock will contact a planning consultancy to pursue assistance with data mining and visualization for community planning.
- * Jo Mowat will follow up on the concerns raised by the leather worker regarding the high costs associated with participating in the Christmas market.
- * Paul Hancock will send an email to community councillors regarding the reception organized by a Labour Party member for the upcoming elections.
- * Cllr Jo Mowat will follow up on why there is no detail on short term let licence applications to allow us to comment effectively

Key Questions:

- * What is the status of the planning application for the Atholl Crescent developments?
- * What measures are being taken to address the uptick in crime reported in the area?
- * What is the timeline for the completion of the hotel construction that has recently restarted?
- * What measures can be taken to ensure local craftsmen are not priced out of participating in events?
- * What is the current status of the noise level survey being conducted by Hoxton?

13. Future Meetings

It was agreed to meet again on the Second Thursday of each month

Thu, 08-Jan-26, Thu, 05-Feb-26,
 Thu, 05-Mar-26 Thu, 02-Apr-26
 Thu, 07-May-26 Thu, 04-Jun-26
 Walk about Thu, 02-Jul-26 Thu, 06-
 Aug-26 Thu, 03-Sep-26 Thu, 01-
 Oct-26 Thu, 05-Nov-26 Thu, 03-
 Dec-2

with the meeting of 4th June to involve a perambulation of the local area. All meetings would now continue be held at Ashfield although participation would also be possible via Zoom.

There being no further business David Hewitson closed the meeting.