



West End Community Council

Minute of Meeting

7:30pm on the 8th of January 2026 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 Community Councillors Gordon Renton, Martin Young, Richard Spalding, Martha Baur, Hazel Black along with City Councillor Margaret Graham and local residents, Barbara Ross, Stuart Adams, Collette Grant, Michael Atkinson, Kate Whitehead, Dave MacIntyre, Fiona Searle, Dave McIntyre.

ATTENDING VIA ZOOM

Community Councillors attending by way of Zoom were Licensing Convener James Benbow , Isabel Thom together with City Councillor, Joanna Mowat, Finlay McFarlane and a number of local residents including Adrian Davies, Jenny Clarke, Caroline McGrain, Mike Birch, Peter Dunlop

Discussion	Action
<p>1. Apologies Apologies for absence were received from or on behalf of Community Councillors Ian Robertson John Young Graeme Lyall and City Councillors Claire Miller, Hal Osler, MP's Christine Jardine and Tracy Gilbert, MSP Angus Robertson,</p>	
<p>2. Minutes from previous meeting The Minute of the Meeting held on 4th December 2025 was approved with one requested correction from Gordon Renton</p>	
<p>3. Meeting Summary: Generated by Read AI and corrected by PH The January 2026 session of the West End Community Council began with Paul Hancock addressing corrections to the previous month's minutes, particularly regarding market profits from which Gordon Renton asked for his name to be removed. The discussion quickly shifted to the reconstruction of public toilets, with Councillor Margaret Graham suggesting that visitor levy funds could be utilized. Hancock expressed frustration over the prolonged wait for the King's Council opinion, which has been pending for nearly a year, and proposed filing a Freedom of Information request if no updates were received soon. The group decided to await Graham's follow-up before taking further action. Updates on local infrastructure were provided, with Hancock announcing that revised plans for bin hubs would be available shortly, including proposals to address rat running issues. He also mentioned the absence of a place plan meeting in December due to scheduling conflicts, with the next meeting set for the following Thursday. Joanna Mowat expressed her disappointment regarding an applicant's appeal to the director of the Development Planning Authority, which would delay the decision-making process on a local application. Hancock raised concerns about the removal of an economic impact report for a development project, advocating for increased community engagement with the press and local authorities.</p>	



The condition of local streets was a significant topic, with discussions on small infrastructure projects aimed at improving pedestrian safety. Hancock highlighted specific areas needing attention, while Councillor Finlay McFarlane encouraged the submission of project requests for funding. The need for better crossing points and signage was emphasized to enhance safety in high-traffic areas. Additionally, updates on licensing indicated a quiet month, with Mowat discussing a new database for short-term lets and HMOs, and Hancock addressing local break-ins and financial updates.

Concerns regarding waste collection disruptions were raised, particularly due to the holiday season and changes in collection routes. Mowat noted that the city is working to restore normal operations despite capacity issues. The potential use of mobile CCTV to monitor waste problems was proposed by Peter Dunlop.

Hancock also discussed vandalism of apple trees near the cathedral, suggesting community engagement to report suspicious activity. The need for improved public safety measures, including better lighting and CCTV along Bishop's Walk, was highlighted, with Hancock announcing his intention to resign after ten years, paving the way for new leadership within the council.

Chapters & Topics:

Discussion on Public Toilets and King's Council Opinion

Gordon corrected the minutes from the previous meeting, clarifying his stance on market profits. The conversation transitioned to the public toilets, where Cllr Margaret Graham indicated that visitor levy funds might be allocated for their reconstruction. Hancock expressed frustration over the prolonged wait for the King's Council opinion on the matter.

* Public Toilets and King's Council Opinion

Bin Hubs and Gull-Proof Sacks Update

Paul Hancock reported on the progress of the bin hubs, indicating that revised garden site plans will be shared soon, incorporating CCWEL rat running proposals. He noted that a briefing for the West End Community Council and the Garden Associations are expected in the next couple of weeks. Cllr Finlay McFarlane discussed the gull-proof sack situation, highlighting that a trial period will be implemented to assess their usage in Eglinton.

Update on Place Plan and Planning Reports

Paul Hancock addressed the absence of a place plan meeting in December and confirmed that the next meeting will focus on communication strategies for the West End. He invited attendees to contribute ideas for the upcoming comms plan. Additionally, he noted that there was no planning report available due to Graham's absence.

* Capsule Hotel Application and Appeal Process

Update on DPA Appeal Process

Joanna Mowat discussed the implications of the applicant's appeal to the DPEA, indicating that the Council's decision-making process has been bypassed. She highlighted concerns about missing information, particularly regarding a transport assessment, and mentioned that the DPA will determine the outcome, which may take until March or longer due to the scale of public objections.

Discussion on Local Development and Community Projects



Paul Hancock discussed the removal of an economic impact report and the implications of redacted financial numbers in a local development application. He emphasized the need for the community to communicate effectively with the press and local authorities to ensure their concerns are heard. Joanna Mowat supported this by advising that all objections and relevant information should be submitted to the reporter.

- * Communication Strategies for Community Engagement
- * Traffic Improvement Program for Small Projects

Discussion on Local Infrastructure and Small Projects

Paul Hancock raised concerns about the state of several streets, including the need for surface interventions in areas like Douglas Crescent and coach parks. Cllr Finlay McFarlane supported the idea of submitting requests for small projects, highlighting that improvements could help residential streets move up the priority list for funding. They also discussed the importance of addressing issues like algae buildup and icy pavements to ensure safety for pedestrians.

Licensing Updates and Community Reports

Paul Hancock noted minimal licensing activity, highlighting an entertainment license application for a choir and a short-term let on Grove Street. Joanna Mowat provided an update on a new database aimed at enhancing information on short-term lets and HMOs, indicating that improvements would gradually extend to all licensing categories. Paul also shared concerns about local break-ins reported by John Young.

Waste Management and Community Engagement Updates

Paul Hancock discussed ongoing waste collection problems, attributing them to missed holiday collections and changes in routes. Joanna Mowat confirmed that the city is working to resolve these issues and highlighted the need for better capacity management. Peter Dunlop suggested deploying mobile CCTV to monitor waste issues, while Hancock noted that the introduction of new bin hubs is still a year away.

Discussion on Vandalism of Community Apple Trees

Paul Hancock highlighted ongoing vandalism of apple trees planted by the cathedral, with Margaret Chatterley proposing that the community be encouraged to report any vandalism. Cllr Finlay McFarlane shared a past experience from Inverleith Shiloh, where community involvement helped reduce antisocial behavior. The discussion also touched on the possibility that dog walkers might be inadvertently involved in the damage.

- * Vandalism of apple trees and potential community solutions.

Discussion on Public Safety and Community Improvements

Paul Hancock discussed the potential benefits of installing CCTV and enhancing lighting along Bishop's Walk to improve public safety. Cllr Finlay McFarlane indicated that while the transport department may not fund CCTV, lighting improvements could be supported if they promote active use of the area. The conversation also touched on the inadequacy of current lighting and the need for better tree management in the community.

- * The need for improved lighting and safety measures in public spaces.
- * Discussion on the effectiveness of CCTV in public areas.

Community Concerns and Council Updates

Paul Hancock reported that Anne Todd had contacted him about unresolved CCTV issues related to antisocial behavior in Lansdowne and Grosvenor Crescent. Joanna



<p>Mowat added that she would chase up the matter and also mentioned a break-in at a shed on Grosvenor Crescent.</p> <p>Gordon Renton expressed his desire to resign from his position after 10 years of service to allow new members to take on official roles. David Hewitson and all thanked him for his long service to the community council.</p> <p>Other issues raised under any other business were</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">* The status of broken bollards along the cycle path.* Bin Collection Issues and Community Feedback* Ongoing issues with the broken bins and the need for a reporting mechanism. <p>Action Items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">* Cllr Margaret Graham will follow up with the legal department to obtain information regarding the King's Council opinion on public toilets.* Paul Hancock will draft a Freedom of Information request once Cllr Margaret Graham provides an update on the King's Council opinion.* Hazel Black will draft a letter regarding the local traffic improvement program for small projects to be submitted by the 25th of January.* Joanna Mowat will check on the progress of the new database for short-term lets and provide an update during the next meeting.* Margaret Graham will check with Councillor Jenkinson about the handover of blocked gullies from CC Well to the gullies department.* Margaret will follow up on the project regarding Rory's equipment and coordinate with Steve tomorrow to address the issue.* David Hewitson will inform Margaret Chatterley about the discussion regarding vandalism of the apple trees and the various suggestions made during the meeting.* Jo Mowat will contact the local chief inspector and the new Community inspector regarding the shed that was broken into at 20 Grosvenor Crescent.* Richard Spalding will compile a list of locations of damaged bollards along the cycle path and contact the head of assets to address the issue.* Finlay McFarlane will ensure that a report button for broken bins is included in the bin hub project. <p>Key Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">* How can the community council ensure that the public toilets issue is addressed?* What is the timeline for the revised garden site plans related to the bin hubs?* What actions are being taken to address the issues with the bin collections?* What is the process for the appeal regarding the capsule hotel application?* What is the current status of the CCTV request for Lansdowne and Grosvenor Crescent?	
<p>13. Future Meetings</p> <p>It was agreed to meet again on the Second Thursday of each month</p> <p>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</p>	



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.	
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There being no further business David Hewitson closed the meeting.

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