

Tollcross Community Council

Minutes of Meeting on Wednesday 25 November 2015 at 7pm
Tollcross Community Education Centre, 117 Fountainbridge

1. Welcome and Apologies:

Present: Paul Beswick (Chair), Andrew Brough (Secretary), Tim Puntis (Treasurer), Richard Allen, Iain Black, Roger Colkett, Andy Devenport, Michael Lister, Chris McGregor, Liz Summerfield, Ann Wigglesworth. **Police:** PC Jackson, Oxfangs. **CEC Councillors:** Andrew Burns, Joanna Mowat. **Members of the public:** David Liddle, Andreas Wilhelm.

Apologies: Heather Goodare, Nick Munro, Chris Wigglesworth. Cllrs Howatt, Key, Main, Rankin. PC Sacha Ponniah, St Leonards, PC Simon Wotton, Oxfangs. Marco Biagi MSP, Sarah Boyack, MSP

Paul Beswick reminded us that this would be the last meeting of the year. He informed us that Item 4 would be held over to a later date. As there had been some confusion over email addresses, he reminded members to ensure that the Secretary had their correct email addresses.

There were no additional items for the agenda.

3. Police matters – PC Jackson explained that PCs Ponniah and Wotton were not available and although not a Community officer himself, he had been asked to represent them. He reported on the current and ongoing priorities in the area, with focus on ‘legal highs’ and other drugs; house break-ins; the Stay Safe campaign, Road Safety and the 20MPH speed limit in some areas; and preparations for the festive period, with the South Festive Operation coming into force between 1 December and 3 January.

He read a message from Chief Supt. Mark Williams on the Paris attacks (which can be seen in full in the 23 November ‘Police Scotland – Message to Communities’ email via Margret Campbell and circulated by Paul Beswick). To report an immediate terrorist threat, contact the anti-terrorist hotline on **0800 789 321**.

He also reported on the rise in house break-ins in adjoining areas to Tollcross and that Operation RAC continues. He explained the rationale behind the expansion of 20PMH speed limits in those areas of greatest risk, and there followed a discussion about the nature of the difficulties in the way in which limits can be enforced.

There were no reports of incidents of note relating to assaults or hate crimes in the period, but that there had been a cumulative total of over 100 arrests in relation to Operation Austinberg (‘legal highs’ and drug offences) and that a raft of measures continues to be in force to combat the sale, supply and use of ‘legal highs’.

Richard Allen asked for an update on the break-in at the Canal Office earlier in the month.

ACTION: PC Jackson to refer this matter to the regular Community Officers to provide an update.

2. Minutes of Meeting of 28 October 2015 – Acceptance & Matters arising – the minutes of the meeting of 28 October were accepted as correct, subject to one correction:

Item 5: Local matters: ‘refuse bins’ should read ‘trade waste’

Matters arising: Item 6.1: Councillors’ Comments & Questions

Cllr Main’s Report – Item 1 – illegal railings at 3 Panmure Place – the architect and vendor have been informed by CEC to remove these railings by 27 November. Andy Devenport asked about the legality of the railings introduced some time ago next to the former Post Office in Brougham St.

ACTION: Andy Devenport to email the Planning Department and report back to TXCC.

4. Community Fireman – the presentation on fire safety in the home was postponed

5: Local matters

a. Communications sub-group – Tim Puntis reported on the design for the ‘flag banner’ and circulated copies of the design. This was met with very positive comments and his request to be able to go ahead with the design at a cost of £250 for the design-work was agreed unanimously.

On a related communications subject, Andy Devenport mentioned the curved display boards for outside display purposes and also the delay with the TXCC notice-board. Andrew Brough responded that he had proposed several other sites to CEC and was now awaiting a reply from them.

b. Fountainbridge Winter Festival – Community Christmas event with TXCC, FCI and the Grove – Andrew Brough reported that plans were going well, with Jane Jones of the FCI having already done much of the initial planning, and that he would be making a site visit a week on Saturday.

He briefly described the running-order of the event on 12 December at the Grove, from 2-5pm, which would include the local Samba Band, a scrap-store recycled Xmas tree made in situ and to be switched on at 4pm; a piano sculpture and harp playing workshop; craft workshops for children and adults to make Xmas decorations; a talk by the architect of the Wikihouse; and a joint information stall which would be staffed by Paul Beswick, Roger Colkett, Liz Summerfield and Andrew Brough.

Andy Devenport has agreed to provide electric lighting for some of the events, and might need volunteers.

Tim Puntis has agreed to co-ordinate the catering contribution from TXCC to the social gathering following the close of the event from 5.30pm, and asked for volunteers to assist. Iain Black and Michael Lister volunteered.

ACTION: Ann Wigglesworth to make available the display materials to Paul Beswick and Andrew Brough for the event. Tim Puntis and Iain Black and Michael Lister to liaise over the catering.

c. Doors at Tollcross Community Centre – at the AGM of the Tollcross Community Centre Association meeting on 4 November, the problem of the doors to the Centre had been highlighted. Michael Lister said that he would bring this matter up at the next TXCC, in the hope that CEC might be able to assist.

ACTION: Cllr Burns to contact Tollcross Community Centre (Dave Hewitt?) to see how this matter can be taken forward.

d. Lighting at the Drum – Michael Lister reported on the situation at The Drum where there appears to be no dedicated, external lighting. This area has not been adopted by CEC and is owned by Scottish Widows.

ACTION: Cllr Burns to pursue this matter with Scottish Widows.

e. Brandfield Street – Traffic management et al – Liz Summerfield reported on the meeting, hosted by StayCity, that had taken place on 16 November and had been attended by Cllrs Burns and Hinds and Sarah Boyack, MSP, among others. Although the meeting had appeared to be positive, there were many issues that had to be addressed. Cllr Burns said that Mike Avery, manager of the SWNP, would pursue these actions, but that it would take many months for these issues to be resolved.

Liz intimated that residents were making enquiries about legal protection of rights to family life under Scottish and European Human Rights legislation.

David Liddle drew attention to the upheaval and real distress that have been caused by ongoing issues at Brandfield Street, but paid tribute to Cllrs Burns and Hind, Sarah Boyack and StayCity for taking forward these issues.

6. Councillors' Comments & Questions – Cllr Burns informed the meeting that he had attended the Brandfield St meeting, and that the greater part of his Ward 9 correspondence has continued to be concerned with outline planning applications in the area, viz the north side of Dundee Street.

He reminded the meeting that the online budget consultation for 2016-17 (and into 2018-20) was still open (www.edinburgh.gov.uk/budget) and had been extended by one week to 17 December. He said that the budget itself would not be set until 21 January and urged as many individual/organisational/institutional submissions as possible. He also alerted the meeting to the 'You said –We did' section of the website.

ACTION: all members to participate in the consultation.

Cllr Mowat explained that she had little to report on this occasion in the way of matters relating to Tollcross.

In the absence of Cllr Corbett, Andrew Brough read a short report that he had submitted:

1. The Re-Union petition has reached over 200 signatures and would now qualify to go forward to the Petitions Committee
2. Cllr Corbett was continuing to push for 'mean-time' use of long-term unoccupied sites and that this remained important for community-based projects in the area
3. He had recently met with Tollcross Community Centre and would be exploring alternative sources of funding to support the Adult Learning Project in the area
4. He had recently met with Planning Officer to feedback community concern over the scale of the development for the vacant site on Springfield West.

There followed questions about several matters:

Budget Consultation – it was felt that the website does not make it easy to zero-in to areas of specific interest, and that a simplified design would be more user-friendly.

ACTION: Cllr Burns to feed this back to CEC IT Department.

Recycling of plastics – there was general confusion about which plastics were now to be included, the possible phasing out of red and blue boxes in certain parts of the city and the desirability to increase the number of green top bins. Cllr Mowat explained that many more plastics, including ‘hard plastics’, were now capable of being recycled.

ACTION: Cllr Burns to send Andrew Brough a leaflet about recycling for general distribution.

Clarence, on-line reporting and accessibility of on-line reports – Andy Devenport questioned the justification for Clarence to collect un-necessary caller data when callers reported street lighting matters. He pointed out that three street lights were regularly out on Lothian Road, with similar problems at Grindlay St Court and Bread St Lane.

Liz Summerfield asked if CEC reports could be made available as on-line documents, so obviating the need to download large files.

ACTION: Cllr Burns to attend to these matters.

7. Planning – Paul Beswick reported, for information, that an application for a large student block in the neighbouring Gorgie/Dalry area has been submitted.

He also reported that he had submitted a response to the Draft Revised Student Housing Planning Guidance, and believed that the Council was making the same mistakes by continuing to rely on the Census Data Areas, and would be submitting a response to the Scottish Government’s Review of the Planning System, under the heading of Community Engagement.

There followed the sempiternal discussions about student numbers and the provision of student accommodation; overall use of land in the city centre; how objections to planning applications may be ‘relevant’ but were rarely considered to be ‘material’; that planning policy was not pro-active, but reactive, and so on...

Paul reported that the application for extra residential moorings on the Canal had been approved.

Change of use application – St Kentigern’s Church (Planning Permission 09/03320/FUL) – to become a restaurant and 31 student residencies. Outline permission had been approved in 2009, and this was a re-submission.

PAN Exhibition – Mercure Hotel, Gardener’s Crescent, 9 December, 2.30pm-7-30pm
Hotel development at Dewar Place/Torphichen St –

Although not located within the TXCC area, but given its close proximity, TXCC has been consulted about this proposal.

ACTION: all members to attend this PAN.

8. Licensing – Roger Colkett reported that there were no substantive new applications, but only applications relating to change in off-licence opening hours to allow access for children to such premises.

9. Reports in addition to those written – Paul Beswick thanked those members who had been submitting reports on their activities when representing TXCC on outside bodies. He suggested that short reports were preferable to lengthy ones, and he again reminded members of the importance of adhering to the official view or position of TXCC when representing TXCC on such outside bodies.

Andrew Brough intimated that he would be drawing up a list of those outside bodies and organisations whose meetings TXCC councillors attend.

ACTION: all members to send Andrew Brough a list of those outside bodies and organisations whose meetings they attend.

10 AOCB – Ann Wigglesworth informed the meeting that a sign to the Canal had recently been erected on Home St/Lochrin Place.

Cllr Mowat said that the Chairs of other neighbouring Community Councils met regularly to discuss matters of common interest and perhaps Paul Beswick would be interested in participating. Paul answered that this was of interest to him, and that TXCC was already embarked on a similar initiative organised by Liz Summerfield. Liz explained that she was making links with not just other neighbouring Community Councils, but also with Residents' Associations, local community groups, etc.

Andrew Brough reported that the AGM of EACC would take place on Saturday 28 November.

The meeting closed at 8.55pm.

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 27 January 2016 at 7pm, Tollcross Community Centre