

**Tollcross Community Council**  
**Minutes of Meeting of Wednesday 25 January 2017 at 7pm**  
**Tollcross Community Centre, 117 Fountainbridge**

**1. Welcome and Apologies –**

**Present:** Andrew Brough (Chair), Liz Summerfield (Secretary), Paul Beswick (Treasurer); Fiona Allen, Richard Allen, Roger Colkett, Andy Devenport, Michael Lister, Katy McGhee, Chris McGregor, Ann Wigglesworth. **CEC Councillor:** Cllr Andrew Burns. **Police:** PC Simon Wotton (Oxgangs). **Members of the public:** David Liddle, Andreas Wilhelm, Anne Wimberley. **Apologies:** Iain Black; Cllrs Corbett, Key, Main, Mowatt.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, wished everyone a good Burns' Night, and invited PC Wotton to present his report. There were no additional agenda items tabled.

**2. Declaration of interests – none**

**3. Police Matters –**

PC Wotton explained that following the introduction of the new policing model in September 2016, negotiations about which officer or officers from the three police areas that converge in Tollcross should attend the TXCC meetings and that it was likely that in future there would be only one officer in attendance. He then spoke to the matter of crime figures for the Fountainbridge area for the previous two months (circulated in hard-copy to the meeting). He noted that the figures for the period indicated a relatively quiet few months and that this was to be welcomed. There had been a higher number of assaults and alcohol-related crimes of violence over the Christmas season, but a reduction in drink-driving offences compared to previous years; greater resources had been focussed in reducing anti-social behaviour in the area and that since the end of last summer some of these problems had been dispersed and that continuing efforts on a more community-focussed service were being made, particularly in conjunction with Dunedin-Canmore Housing Association. Cllr Burns said that the extra resources committed to these problems has resulted in a huge difference being made in the area. PC Wotton intimated that the first major review of the new policing model was to take place on 26 January

There followed questions about the desirability for Police Scotland to send an officer or officers able to report on crime figures for the whole community council area, but it was pointed out that with upcoming ward changes, Tollcross would now belong to the City Centre ward and that this would pose new reporting anomalies. There were also questions asked about damage to windscreen wipers of a car parked at Lonsdale and an apparently abandoned, clamped car in Tarvit Street.

The Secretary asked PC Wotton for advice on a personal issue, who took particulars from her and said that he would report back to her.

#### **4. Minutes and matters arising from meeting of 30 November 2016 –**

##### **a. Correction –**

**Item 3. Police Matters** – The following sentence was to be added: ‘A member of the public made an enquiry of the Police and of Ruth Davidson about the progress of an investigation into an alleged hate crime, but neither the Police nor the MSP were in a position to assist.’

##### **b. Matters arising –**

##### **Item 7. Councillors’ Comments –**

**Cllr Mowat – Stair Lighting** – Andrew Devenport related that he had contacted the CEC for information about lighting. In response to his initial enquiry, he was provided with a Glasgow phone number for a private facility service, and when later referred to the Legal Services Enquiry team of CEC, was told that they were unable to provide him with any information.

**ACTION – Andy Devenport to email Cllr Burns who will follow this up. Andy Devenport to then circulate Cllr Burns’s reply to TXCC councillors.**

##### **Item 7. Councillors’ Comments –**

**Cllr Main – Bins** – there followed some discussion about contradictory old and new labels on bins and whether items for recycling had to be separated, but it would appear that all recyclable waste (save glass) can now be placed in new bins.

**Cllr Main – Thornybauk** – Ann Wigglesworth reported that the bins there had now been removed and that she would email Cllr Main on behalf of TXCC to thank her for arranging this.

On the related matter of the condition of bins, Fiona Allen pointed out that a number bins had broken pedals and were facing out the wrong way, etc. She offered to make a note of their location and condition and would pass this information to Ann Wigglesworth for her to report this to Cllr Main.

**ACTION – Fiona Allen and Ann Wigglesworth**

#### **5. Local matters –**

**Hustings** – the Chair spoke to the matter of Hustings for the May Council elections and it was accepted that this would be a welcome means of assisting the public to engage with prospective candidates for seats in the new City Centre Ward. The date of Wednesday 12 April was suggested, as were various possible venues – Edinburgh College of Art, Novotel, Central Hall, Lauriston Centre, Tollcross Community Centre. Publicity was also discussed, it being important to publicise the event as widely as possible, via Edinburgh Evening News, Edinburgh Reporter, through twitter and facebook and posters displayed locally.

## **6. Reports –**

**a. Health –** Chris McGregor spoke to the matter of the winding-up of the Edinburgh Health Forum, paying tribute in particular to Heather Goodare and the amazing work that had been done by Heather and other members of the EHF. Chris asked whether it was felt that TXCC should have a role to play in the matter of health issues in the area, and if so how to develop this responsibility and how to participate. There followed a discussion about various health-related matters that are of concern in the area, e.g. air quality and pollution, alcohol and drug misuse; the existing network of health agencies, e.g. Edinburgh Integrated Joint Board, Scottish Health Council; and the ways in which TXCC might contribute to or participate in the work of these agencies. It was suggested to find out how other Community Councils, Neighbourhood Partnerships and EACC approach health issues and to report back to the meeting.

**ACTION – Chris McGregor to liaise with Andrew Brough**

### **b. Tollcross Street Audit and Living Streets Edinburgh Group –**

Michael Lister updated the meeting on the outcome of the Street Audit that had taken place in October 2015. The South-Central Neighbourhood Partnership Manager had responded in February 2016 to say that some of the issues would be addressed though capital funding that had been identified for those purposes. However, on the question of A-boards, there had been no progress. One CEC official reported that ‘CEC were not minded to review their 2010 guidance, but as council transformation progresses and as they move into the new localities operating model, the teams of road inspectors and environmental wardens will make sure that the current guidance is being adhered to across the city.’

On the matter of A-boards, Cllr Burns suggested that if people were to contact the Council with their concerns, they would be attended to.

**c. AirBNB –** Liz Summerfield reported that she had been unable to find out anything about CEC regulations concerning this matter, and circulated an extract from the City of Amsterdam’s regulations. Given the way in which AirBNBs are changing substantially the nature of the city centre, there followed a discussion about the need for the Council to exercise its power to require AirBNB landlords to apply to make their businesses into HMOs and to licence such businesses. On the related question of a ‘tourist tax’, Cllr Burns noted that at present Councils in Scotland do not have powers to charge such a levy and that legislation from the Scottish Parliament is required, and that there is all party support within the CEC for this. Andrew Brough referred to a forthcoming meeting on the subject of ‘party flats’ and AirBNB to be chaired by Andy Wightman MSP.

**ACTION – Andrew Brough to write to Andy Wightman expressing our concerns about AirBNBs, and to ask how community councils can engage with this matter and if a delegate from TXCC can be invited to attend his group. (With copy to Ruth Davison MSP.)**

**d. German Village –** Liz Summerfield spoke to the matter of the application for a ‘German Village’ beer festival to take place in Princes’ St Gardens West in May/June 2017. In addition

to TXCC members' concerns about running beer pipes through St Cuthbert's graveyard, parking, the use of public space for private profit and policing, she expressed unhappiness about the short period of 10 days for objections to be submitted. Responses to the application were to have been submitted by 22 January, extended to the following day, but in any event the feeling was that TXCC would not be in favour of this beer festival, which is planned to take place on the first weekend in June.

## **7. Councillors' Comments –**

**Cllr Burns** – in terms of local issues, Cllr Burns reported that the bulk of his correspondence continues to be concerned with planning matters. He also spoke about the roadworks on Dundee Street and the completion and anticipated opening of the new Boroughmuir School in August 2017.

On city-wide matters, he intimated that the CEC would have its City Budget meeting on 9 February at which the new Council Tax would be set. For properties in Bands A-D, the rise would be capped at 3%; Band E would rise by 10%; F by 15%, G by 20%; and Band H by 25%. He reminded the meeting that this additional revenue would be staying local and that monies raised from Council Tax accounts for between 18-19% of overall funding. In real terms, CEC would see a cut of 5.2% in its central grant.

**Cllr Corbett** – the Chair read the following report that Cllr Corbett had submitted in his absence and in which he emphasised that he was happy to follow up any queries:

**Fountainbridge** – despite lots of planning activity, on the Fountainbridge brewery sites, they remain as undeveloped brownfield sites. Over the next couple of weeks he plans to push further on the housing model which has been put forward (the rents are far too high in the model at present); on the potential community and social enterprise use of the area earmarked as cultural quarter; and on the delivery of the district heating pledge. He added that he would want to ensure that there is a strong community voice in that.

**Stair lighting** – this is a major concern, particularly over the winter months. In last year's budget, the Green group rejected the proposal to remove the maintenance service; instead, they proposed it stay but be recharged. Since the service stopped in the summer they have floated the idea of a third party / social enterprise provider. Meantime, he has been referring individual queries to specific information or potential contractors, and would welcome feedback.

**Viewforth** – he attended petitions committee this week to speak on the petition brought by parents at the new Boroughmuir High School on the dangers posed by continuing to have a through road at the bridge at Viewforth. As a result of the petition a report will now go to the March meeting of Transport and Environment Committee which calls for the original transport assessment to be reviewed and, specifically for impact on the wider area and any mitigations to be taken into account in looking at options. He does not believe it is safe or wise for the bridge to be open to traffic when 1200 young people are going along St Peters Place.

**AirBnB and other short term holiday lets** – he has submitted a motion to Economy Committee asking for a thorough assessment of the scale of such letting in the city along with impacts such as displacement of permanent homes and amenity within stairs with high levels of short term lets AND looking at what other cities do across Europe and options for regulation. He thinks this covers the kind of questions posed by the note in the papers. His Green MSP colleague Andy Wightman colleague is hosting a round table on it at the Grassmarket Centre on 10 February.

**Bin collections** – the cluster of flats at 39-43 Gardner’s Crescent seems to be causing some difficulty for the waste service over the last few months; so he has asked the Head of Waste to investigate further.

## **8. Planning –**

Paul Beswick reported on two major applications. On 16/05400/LBC, the proposed demolition of the gate-house and walls and railed area at the old Royal Infirmary on Lauriston Place, he reported that Historic Environment Scotland was required to give its permission for the demolition of listed buildings and had already submitted a very substantial objection to this proposal.

On 17/00168/FUL, the application for 10-storey blocks of flats behind the old Infirmary, he suggested that TXCC ought to object to the view from Lauriston Place being compromised.

### **ACTION – Paul Beswick**

On the question of planning-related matters, Roger Colkett had attended a Planning Democracy meeting at which Marion Williams of the Cockburn Association had spoken. He referred to the ‘Equal Rights of Appeal’ which has been firmly ruled out by the Consultation panel on the reform of the Planning System. (See January 2017 Newsletter of the Cockburn Society circulated at meeting.) Given that Paul Beswick on behalf of TXCC has already submitted a major representation to the Consultation, it was felt appropriate to register our concern about this decision.

**ACTION – Roger Colkett to submit an objection about the removal of the ERA from the recommendations of the Consultation.**

## **9. Licensing –**

Roger Colkett reported that Hooter’s Bar had submitted an application to vary its licence to extend the hours during which amplified music can be played. Given the reduced amenity that will result for local residents, he proposed to submit an objection.

### **ACTION – Roger Colkett**

## **10. Reports other than those written –**

Ann Wigglesworth reported briefly on the matter of the future of the Tollcross Community Centre and funding for the full-time post of Community Education worker which was likely to be axed. She said that she would monitor the situation at the Centre and report back to the meeting when more information became available.

## **11. AOCB –**

Richard Allen circulated copies of the Fountainbridge Canalside Initiative Winter 2016/17 Newsletter. The AGM will take place in Monday 20 March 2017 at 6.30pm at King's Church, Viewforth/Gilmore Place. See [www.fountainbridgeci.org.uk](http://www.fountainbridgeci.org.uk)

The meeting closed at 8.57pm

**Date of next meeting: Wednesday 22 February 2017 at 7pm  
Tollcross Community Centre**