

West End Community Council

10 January 2016 at Ashfield, 61 Melville Street, Edinburgh EH3 7HL

Present: Gordon Wyllie (in the Chair), Alan Weddell, Colin Johnston, Gordon Renton, Isabel Thom, Martha Baur,

In attendance: Cllr. Alasdair Rankin, PC Burt

Discussion	Action
<p>1. Apologies and welcome Apologies were received from Deidre Brock MP, Ruth Davidson MSP, Cllr. Karen Doran, Cllr. Joanna Mowat, Cameron Buchanan, David Johnstone, Ian Robertson, Jock Miller</p> <p>Messers David Duncan and David Harper of Cutler & Stag Ltd, whose planned presentation had been postponed to the next meeting on account of their illness.</p>	
<p>2. Minutes of meetings held on 1st November The Minute of the meeting held on Tuesday 13 December was approved in substance, while noting that it was incorrectly dated 1 November.</p>	
<p>3. Matters Arising CEC will no longer be maintaining stair lights in tenement flats. CEC have stated that residents own the lighting in the stairs. There are still questions around the changes to the stair lighting.</p> <p>CCTV report to be passed to JM</p> <p>All other matters dealt with.</p>	<p>Cllr JM</p> <p>Cllr AR</p>
<p>4. Police Report A warm welcome was extended to PC Bruce Burt, Community Police Constable for the City Centre, based at Torphichen Place, who was glad once again to be visiting and making a report to the Community Council. In that connection, he and police officer Susan Parnell had been doing some research.</p> <p>It was cheering to hear what a positive effect the appointment of the new Chief Constable had already had upon Police Scotland and that there was once again greater sensitivity to local issues, including the deployment of community policemen.</p> <p>PC Burt referred to the public interest regarding the introduction and enforcement of the new 20 mph zones and mentioned the possibly surprising finding that Princes Street, where the principal traffic consists of buses and taxis, was an infringement hot-spot, with one bus driver and nine taxi drivers recently caught exceeding the new limit in a single duty session.</p>	



<p>Supervision of "rough sleepers" involves making a 7am welfare check - recent examples of criminal trespass had resulted in four deportations.</p> <p>Mrs Thom referred to a recent incident in Magdala Crescent, when a young mother returning to her temporarily unlocked motor car found a youth behind the wheel on her return. PC Burt confirmed that it was always worth report such incidents on the 101 Police Call Line, which to some extent replaces the open counter at police stations. Callers could make an appointment to see a policeman between 8am and 9pm to discuss relevant incidents.</p> <p>Gordon Renton referred to the external telephone at Torphichen Place Police Station, where the cable appeared to have been partly wrenched put of its fixing. He also suggested several ways of increasing public knowledge of the 20 mph speed limit zones, focussing upon much more prominent signage, including small targes on lamp-posts, and advertisements on the sides of police vehicles. The Community Council felt that piecemeal introduction of the zones had been an unhelpful way of proceeding.</p> <p>PC Burt also mentioned that of all the city police stations, only those at Gayfield Square and St Leonards are now manned continuously. He himself can be contacted on 0131-221 2045 and his e-address is bruce.burt@scotland.prin.police.uk - he was thanked for a very interesting report and left the meeting.</p>	
<p>5. Neighbourhood Partnership</p> <p>Cllr Alasdair Rankin referred to the concerns which had been raised about the state of the public gardens at Coates and Athol Crescents. The beds had been cleared out and replanted, with flowering bulbs introduced and also a number of bird tables.</p>	
<p>6. Councillors' Report</p> <p>Mr Rankin began by referring to the recent statement by the new Finance Secretary regarding local authority funding and the sources additional to the governmental grants receivable, including the School Attainment Fund (approx. £8m, hypothecated), the Social Care Fund, and the possibility of raising an additional 3% of ordinary revenue through increases in Council Tax. In Edinburgh, increases in domestic properties in Bands E to H would raise an additional £8m. New joint boards with the NHS were being set up with a view to enabling more people to leave hospital sooner and be more appropriately cared for at home. Nevertheless, the decrease in central funding had already had its effects, with approximately 800 staff already leaving Council employment, a figure expected to rise to 1400 within the current year. The City Council was attempting to cover the situation through a variety of measure including more efficient ways of working and delivering services. This included rubbish collection, where a new Director of Cleansing had managed to out a stop to the "culture" of "task-and-finish", where a cleansing team would cease work once its daily allocation of streets had been dealt with. He would welcome being told of any issues arising.</p>	



<p>Alan Waddell referred to the need for the City Council to keep its website up-to-date, citing various pieces of outdated and misleading information still currently displayed, and Gordon Renton referred to the wasteful way arrears of council tax are dealt with. Cllr Rankin agreed to investigate the possibility of issuing further reminder notices instead of immediately referring matters to Scott & Co. There was also a short discussion regarding possible extensions to the tramway.</p>	
<p>7. Correspondence Done by email.</p>	
<p>8. Financial Report There was £683.97 in the bank.</p>	
<p>9. Planning Isabel Thom spoke to her report and drew the meeting's particular attention to a number of matters, including a public meeting on Monday 16 January concerning the fate of India Buildings, the planning decision about which everyone present felt to be regrettable, including Cllr Rankin, who had voted against it. Some discussion took place regarding current trends in applications, such as permission being sought for more convenient roof access to enable greater exploitation of high areas otherwise difficult to utilise. It was noted with satisfaction that the City Council will shortly be refurbishing the Ross Fountain in Princes Street Gardens. Mrs. Thom asked those present to look at planning applications 16/06339/LBC and 16/06195/LBC regarding properties in Belgrave Place and Melville Crescent and revert to her with any comments, She also referred to the currently-open consultation www.consultations.edinburgh.gov.uk/developer_contributionsand_infrastructure where any responses need to be made before 3 February.</p>	
<p>10. AOCB (a) At the beginning of the meeting Cllr Mowat's initiative regarding silent/muted firework displays was warmly commended and Colin Johnston mentioned again his concern about the damage done to historic structures through vibration. (b) A second attempt is being made to revive the Old Town Community Council (c) Mrs Thom referred to a new NHS eye-testing initiative.</p>	
<p>11. Date of the next meeting 7thFebruary 2017</p>	