



# Northfield and Willowbrae Community Council

## Minutes of meeting held on 16th May 2023 at 7.00pm At Northfield and Willowbrae Community Centre

Present: Chair - Gordon MacDonald  
Secretary - Nick Marshall  
Treasurer- John Nesbit  
Vice Chair - Dave Armstrong  
Margaret Bennett  
Frances Devlin

Also present: Councillor Joan Griffiths and Councillor Alex Staniforth  
Two members of the public

Apologies: Councillor Danny Aston

1. The meeting was declared Quorate, and the Chair gave apologies received and welcomed those present.
2. The minutes of the previous meeting were formally approved and seconded by MB and DA

### Matters Arising

- i. NM had written to Portobello Councillors (as it is in that ward) regarding the Damaged School Street sign at Hamilton Terrace and had received a response indicating a delay due to problems with the contractors. The matter was receiving continued attention.
- ii. DA had contacted Duddingston Direct and arranged for a notice to appear intimating NWCC meetings at a cost of £60. The meeting gave approval to continue this arrangement on a regular basis and to include other information of events as appropriate.
- iii. Environment Fair – Councillors had been informed of the date and a number of groups have been contacted about participation.
- iv. Willow Course had been publicised as requested and 7 people attended.

Other matters arising were discussed under the appropriate agenda item.

### 3. Finance

The Treasurer reported that there was currently a balance of £3,683.60. Expenditure since the last meeting was £258 which included £72 for hire of the Community Centre and £60 to Duddingston Direct.

### 4. Police Report

There had been no response from CPO Anna Morrison and no report was available at this time.

5. **20-minute Neighbourhoods**

In response to a written request from a member of the public, there was a short explanation of what these involve from Councillor Staniforth and an opportunity for questions from those present. It was emphasised that despite some misleading articles in the press and online, these do not involve compelling or restricting people to one area but are a Planning Approach that means, in new developments, basic amenities such as shops, schools, libraries, doctors' and dentists' surgeries should be included in order to reduce the need to travel long distances.

6. **Amended planning application for Jock's Lodge site.**

The Secretary circulated copies of the revised plan for the east elevation of the proposed building and after a brief discussion it was felt that the minor changes involved did not substantially change the view already expressed by the Community Council. It was noted that the deadline for response was 19th May and agreed that the Secretary would submit a response emphasising our concerns about the height of the building and its impact on the surrounding area.

**Action Point** NM to send a response.

7. **Transport/Buses**

At the last meeting the Secretary had agreed to write to Scott Arthur regarding the changes to bus stops in the area. However, this had been postponed while more information was gathered. After further discussion, it was agreed that we should focus on the Lothian Bus Service 113 which serves the Western General Hospital, emphasising the fact that the distance between the stops at Paisley Drive and Willowbrae Avenue involves a considerable hill and is a difficulty for the many elderly people who live in the area.

**Action Point** DA and NM to draft a letter to Scott Arthur.

8. **Engagement- Coffee Mornings**

An apology was given for the delay plans to put up noticeboards and the cancellation of the April Coffee morning. This was due to the need to address the issue of the falling numbers of community councillors and our capacity to carry out necessary functions. Advice had been sought from the Council Officer as to the ongoing viability of the Council and we had been assured that we could continue for the time being provided we had a strategy for recruiting new councillors. To that end it was proposed that we send out a flyer to all households in the NWCC area (about 5,500), reminding residents of the key purpose of the CC and appealing for more involvement. A draft was circulated and approved with a minor amendment, as was a budget of around £1700 for estimated costs.

It was further agreed to go ahead with the next Coffee Morning on 10th June and to proceed with putting up the new notice boards. The budget of £900 which was agreed at the last meeting will cover the costs of three Coffee Mornings and the hire of the Community Centre

**Action Points**

MB and FD to co-ordinate arrangements for Coffee Morning

MB and DA to put up notice Boards.

MB to arrange for printing and delivery of flyer.

GM and DA to post details of Coffee Mornings and flyer on website and Facebook.

JN to obtain more keys for existing notice boards.

9. **AOCB**

Membership of the Community Council

Since the pandemic, numbers of active members had fallen below the minimum required and some had not attended meetings for some time. A reminder was given of the rules applying in such cases as per the Scheme for community councils: -

*"8.1 Disqualification of membership is automatic under the following circumstances:*

- *Relocation which renders invalid the residency qualification for membership.*
- *Failure to attend any community council meeting, with or without submitting apologies, throughout a period of six months.*

*8.2 If absence is due to ill health or any other reasonable circumstance e.g., planned holidays, work shift patterns etc, a leave of absence not exceeding six months may be approved at the discretion of the community council. "*

**Action Point** NM to contact those involved to clarify the situation and establish the exact current membership.

10. **Date of next meeting**

July 18th 2023 at 7pm in Northfield and Willowbrae Community Centre