

Minutes of New Town & Broughton Community Council's ordinary meeting, on Zoom, on Monday 11 December 2023 at 7pm

Actions and decisions are **RED ITALIC UNDERLINED SMALLCAPS**. **ND** ('no dissent') means that no-one spoke or voted against a decision.

URLs have been added by the minutes secretary.

Summary of actions (to be omitted from online version)

Item	actor	Action
2	P Williamson	Contact CEC director of place and Cockburn Association about arranging an event on conservation and insulation
2	NTBCC	NTBCC to discuss Edinburgh World Heritage management plan early in 2024
3	Cllr McFarlane	raise lack of police reports to NTBCC with David Duffy
4.a	B Ryan	Share his calculations of CC populations
4.b	P Williamson	Collate NTBCC members' public realm issues, then seek engagement at senior level with CEC
4.b	B Ryan	Put non-leading question on NTBCC website
4.e	P Williamson	Approach members to fill these vacancies
6.a	P Williamson	Chase up CEC about communications on changing waste collections
8.b	R Price	Be NTBCC's representative on planning construction controls working group
9.a	Cllr Caldwell	Look into inconsistency in dates for STL licensing noted in NTBCC licensing report
9.d	A Gaillard	Chase for update to alcohol license registers
9.e	A Gaillard	Provide full summary of changes to licensing board statement of policy
10.b	M Birch	Contact Cllr Graham about Edinburgh World Heritage Trust
10.c	P Williamson	Ascertain whether NTBCC should meet in January

1 Admin and welcome

1.a Attendance

Mike Birch	NTBCC	Ken Lochrie	NTBCC	Cllr Jack Caldwell	Leith Walk ward
Annick Gaillard	NTBCC	Carol Nimmo	NTBCC	Cllr Finlay McFarlane	City Centre ward
Stephen Hajducki	NTBCC	Richard Price	NTBCC	Alan McIntosh	Broughton Spurtle
Deirdre Henderson	NTBCC	Peter Williamson	NTBCC	~6 residents/visitors	
Simon Holledge	NTBCC	Bruce Ryan	minutes secretary		

1.b Apologies

Laura Graham	NTBCC	David Renton	NTBCC	Cllr Margaret Graham	City Centre ward
Susan Macinnes	NTBCC	Alan Welsh	NTBCC	Cllr Max Mitchell	Inverleith ward
Susan Macinnes	NTBCC	Cllr Jo Mowat	City Centre ward	Cllr Hal Osler	Inverleith ward

2 Approval of the minutes of the ordinary NTBCC meeting held on 13 November 2023, and matters arising

- Approved as-in (proposed S Holledge, seconded C Nimmo, **ND**)
- Item 4.b (conservation/insulation): P Williamson has met with Great King Street association (GKSA) rep: they agree that it would be best if CEC organises a suitable event.
 - **ACTION: PW TO CONTACT CEC DIRECTOR OF PLACE AND COCKBURN ASSOCIATION**
- Item 6.e (Edinburgh World Heritage management plan. **ACTION: NTBCC TO DISCUSS THIS EARLY IN 2024**)

3 Police report

- No report received.
 - S Holledge: police are reporting to CEC culture and communities, so can NTBCC use this route to obtain reports?
 - Cllr McFarlane: police stated that CCs should receive written or in-person reports.
 - **ACTION: CLLR MCFARLANE TO RAISE LACK OF REPORTS WITH DAVID DUFFY**

4 Chair's update

4.a [Response To Phase 1 - Community Council Scheme and Boundary Review 2023](#)

- P Williamson: after NTBCC made the above submission, CEC governance asked for its view on potential changes that would make all Edinburgh CCs have 12,000 to 14,000 residents, which would directly affect NTBCC. No further information was forthcoming, except that such changes were not proposed by CEC governance.
 - This was not mentioned when I met with CEC governance. Leith Central CC has been asked the same question.
 - C Nimmo/D Henderson/B Ryan: CCs should be based on communities, not simply numbers of people. In areas of low population density (e.g. Balerno), CCs would need to be huge to achieve 12,000 residents.
 - A resident: constituency boundary changes are due soon – are these related to the current CC proposals.
 - C Nimmo/S Holledge: NTBCC benefits from overlapping several CEC wards, but there is only one other part of Edinburgh where this can happen.
 - **ACTION: B RYAN TO SHARE HIS CALCULATIONS OF CC POPULATIONS.**

4.b Public realm (to include discussion of the electronic screen, Omni Centre)

- M Birch: Would NTBCC support a resident's complaint of being affected by the screen's flickering and long hours? To whom might people complain – perhaps CEC environmental health?
 - Cllr McFarlane: People could complain to the head of the Omni Centre, although I have received no complaints since the screen's brightness was reduced to meet the permitted limits. Planning permission was granted for 5 years in 2022, so this will expire. The planning permission mandated 'no moving images' and 15 seconds before changing to the next image. CEC does take action if street-lights are affecting people. People could complain to CEC planning enforcement.
 - A Gaillard: Picardy Place residents would be affected – has they made a significant number of complaints. There is no clear route to complain, as there is for noise issues. The Croall Place sign was too bright, blinding bus-drivers.
 - D Henderson: can such signs be tilted so they do not impinge on homes? Was there any risk assessment, e.g. of the effect of flashing on drivers? (Ken Lochrie noted an instance of this happening.)
 - S Holledge: the sign is within the World Heritage area. If NTBCC takes no action, it will look complicit or ineffectual.
 - C Nimmo: EWHT has taken no action – this is why the management plan is very important.
 - P Williamson: should NTBCC take public realm issues in this area further with CEC? *I WILL COLLATE NTBCC MEMBERS' PUBLIC REALM ISSUES, THEN SEEK ENGAGEMENT AT SENIOR LEVEL WITH CEC.* Also, NTBCC needs to be sure it is speaking for its community, not just its members.
 - C Nimmo: to achieve the latter, NTBCC should engage with residents' associations.
 - *ACTION: B RYAN TO PUT NON-LEADING QUESTION ON NTBCC WEBSITE.*
- A resident: tree-planting on Leith Walk is very poor. The ban on turning left from Leith Walk onto London Rd, and the whole Picardy Place situation, are causing environmental damage. I fear for what will become of George St.

4.c Local plans

- P Williamson: I think these are good things, providing local, proactive, focus. NTBCC now has a proposal to discuss.

4.d South East Locality (SEL) Improvement Plan

- P Williamson: I and other SEL community councillors met recently about this. The geographic area of the locality is somewhat arbitrary, containing a mix of types of area. I suspect there are too many layers of plans. The main issues flagged at the meeting were poverty, inequality and young people being nuisances.
 - There was discussion of relative amounts of trouble in Morningside and the city centre (which has much trouble).
 - R Price: was anything in the 2017 LIP achieved?
 - Cllr McFarlane: that concentrated on Dumbiedykes. It brings together health and social care and other services.

4.e NTBCC officer and convener positions

- *ACTION: P WILLIAMSON TO APPROACH MEMBERS TO FIL THESE VACANCIES.*

5 Culture and communities

See also [report on NTBCC website](#). All points made by S Holledge unless otherwise noted.

5.a Amplification of sound in public places

- The C&C convener will ask SG for support for a bylaw.
 - Cllr McFarlane: relevant powers could be devolved from police to CEC street enforcement officers.

5.b Visitor levy (tourist tax)

- C Nimmo: Edinburgh is one of the few cities that has a significant number of city-centre residents, who should be considered.
 - Cllr McFarlane: there is currently an informal survey on the potential levy. CEC cannot formally consult on it until the legislation has been passed, but the consultation is almost ready for that point.
 - B Ryan: if levy revenues are used to attract more tourists, this would raise even more money for Edinburgh.
 - D Henderson: Amsterdam also has a residential city centre.
 - M Birch: about 3 years ago, [NTBCC made a detailed response](#) to a consultation on a tourism plan, stating that it wanted not more tourists but better tourism, and training of Edinburgh residents as tour guides. Levy revenue should be used to make things better, e.g. pay for more frequent litter collections – benefitting both tourists and residents. The plan seems to have been abandoned when COVID intervened. It had mentioned creating community groups to help manage tourism.
 - Cllr McFarlane: the survey is very simple, asking if there should be a cap on levied nights, about other exemptions that might be introduced (which might complicate collection), whether the rate should be a percentage (which simplifies collection). It is handled by CEC's policy and sustainability committee. Levy revenues can contribute to the city. It seems desirable to cap the levy after seven nights' stay per person. Edinburgh residents might be exempted from the levy.
 - A resident: the levy needs to be part of a properly articulated vision for Edinburgh.
 - Action: *B RYAN TO ADD SURVEY TO NTBCC WEBSITE.*

5.c Edinburgh Million Tree City – update

- I am concerned about where trees have been planted, e.g. mostly outwith urban areas.
 - Cllr McFarlane: more funding was agreed. Action will now include replacing dead street-trees.
 - C Nimmo: public realm plans included tree-planting but this did not happen. (S Holledge concurred.)

5.d George Street – to note upcoming stakeholder events

- Details are in the report. I am in contact with the new leader of the George St project.

5.e Other matters**5.e.i Police report April to September 2023**

- See item 3 above.

5.e.ii Fireworks

- Cllr McFarlane: new regulations restrict use of fireworks to only organised displays. Purchase may be restricted.

5.e.iii Neighbourhood Networks

- Many NNs are not meeting, including the city centre.
 - There was discussion of the number of layers in Edinburgh's administration, and their functions.

5.e.iv Third party cultural grants

- Cllr McFarlane: CEC has approved a 3-year funding cycle. The amount has reduced by £1.1m in real terms.

5.e.v Fossil-fuel powered leaf blowers

- CEC's use of these has been ceased.

6 Environment**6.a Communal bin review: report from Edinburgh Council Transport & Environment Committee meeting, 16th November**

- P Williamson: NTBCC submitted a deputation, and attended this meeting.
 - C Nimmo: the trial of refuse collection has been extended, albeit with a slight change. CEC officers see the benefits. Food-caddy use is being encouraged. We visited the recycling centre at Miller Hill – it is fascinating.
 - P Williamson: has there been a decision on how area C's refuse collection will happen?
 - M Birch: there was only time for a vote, hence no discussion. An amendment calling for better engagement was passed, but there is no clarity on how it will be done. In general, waste collection in the world heritage area will be: new town – kerbside collections; old town – communal bins; area Cs (peripheral areas) – undecided. West End CC's position is not yet known. The question will come back to TEC in 6 months' time.
 - Cllr McFarlane: people from other areas are dumping their rubbish in communal bins, so the borders of the areas are important. Hence CEC officers are thinking to move CB areas onto gull-proof bags. TROs have been completed.
 - M Birch: there is no evidence of where such rubbish is coming from.
 - A resident: there have been observations of such unwelcome dumping.
 - R Price: there needs to be clear communications about changes. For example, do people in communal bin areas know they will be moved onto gull-proof bags?
 - Cllr McFarlane: there will need to be a substantial communications effort. NTBCC could help with this.
 - A resident: education of the public on the benefits of the changes is crucial. Doorstep collections reduce abuse of communal bins by commercial bodies and short-term let operators.
 - [ACTION: P WILLIAMSON TO CHASE UP CEC ABOUT COMMUNICATIONS.](#)

6.b CEC cleansing performance report, 16 November 2023

- P Williamson: CEC is doing some good things in this context, but I struggle to understand this report. For example, Broughton St looks messy. I may ask for a better breakdown and a better scoring system.

6.c Weeds on pavements, gutters and roadways

- Held over

6.d Edinburgh Council's conservation and adaption initiative

- Held over

7 Transport

See also [report on NTBCC website](#). All points made by M Birch unless otherwise noted.

7.a Supported bus services (13 Bus Route) – report on discussion at recent Council & Transport Committee

- Cllr Caldwell: councillors almost missed the proposed change of the 13 route. CEC developed a route-change process in 2015, but these proposals arrived just before the deadline. An amendment against re-routing was passed, but this topic may come up again at the next tendering process (summer 2024).
 - M Birch: it is possible that the tendering process may increase the cost of these services, so some may be dropped. We recognise that Dumbiedykes needs bus services. The problem is the lack of notice and consultation. The *Spurtle* could help publicise requests for use-data and demand for services.
 - Cllr Caldwell: this service was run by Lothian Buses – it could tender again, as could other companies. I cannot share use-data. There is a case for this west-east link, and for other supported services.

- M Birch: a full review of Edinburgh's bus network (and population changes) is needed.

7.b East London Street – report on recent correspondence with Lothian Buses and City Council

- This will come back to TEC in January, hopefully with options based on data from surveys. Nocturnal noise levels are beyond acceptable, and are not solely caused by buses. It is necessary for data to be published well in advance of the TEC meeting, so NTBCC and others can examine it. I have now had a constructive meeting with Lothian Buses.
 - A resident: Lothian Buses claims that 86 buses per day use ELS, but in reality there are ~100 buses. Many of these should be stopped. LB have issued list of buses using ELS – 86 buses but it's really over 100. 80% of these should be stopped. Relevant expertise is available.
 - M Birch: there are issues with the way noise readings have been interpreted.

7.c Controlled parking zones – request for updated information on current provision in NTBCC area

- At full Council, Cllr Mitchell asked about loss of parking places due to some being used for communal bins. Some CPZs were already heavily over-subscribed, and yet have lost parking places to bins etc. How can we obtain relevant data?
 - Cllr McFarlane: via a question to full council.

7.d Picardy Place – follow up on outcome of FOI request and outstanding issues

- As well as the lighting-pole issue in my report, there is lack of waiting space at junctions, and lack of signage. How can we best obtain the data requested in the FOI request? It is not clear whether dimensions meet relevant guidance. Different sides of PP have been constructed to different sets of design standards.
 - R Price: are the cycle-lanes fit for purpose. Edinburgh street design guidance may not be very good.
 - K Lochrie: there is lack of signage for cyclists.

7.e Low emission zone – report on meeting with LEZ Project Manager

- See [transport report](#).

8 Planning

All points made by R Price unless otherwise noted.

8.a Local place plans

- LPPs result from the [Planning \(Scotland\) Act 2019](#), possibly in place of [third party right of appeal](#). In theory, they are good things because, for example, CEC must take them into account in subsequent local authority plans. (The one that would be affected is CityPlan2040 – if LPPs are in place in 2024.) However, so far there is only one Edinburgh LPP. This is for Wester Hailes, and it was very expensive, needing much work and community consultation. Hence NTBCC needs to consider deeply if it is worthwhile developing one. EACC has held relevant discussions with CEC officers, who stated that CEC cannot help with the development of LPPs. A possible starting point is the Powderhall place brief.
 - P Williamson: NTBCC should undertake some initial thinking. Also LPPs are about physical planning, so exclude transport matters. NTBCC would need to be sure that CEC would use NTBCC's LPP, before starting work on it.
 - R Price: there are quite a few LPPs outwith Edinburgh, and they are wider in scope.
 - M Birch: would it help to approach universities for help?

8.b 72-74 Eyre Place planning application

- This was unanimously refused for the second time, despite CEC planning supporting it. Local residents did a great job in objecting to the application.
 - S Hajducki: it seems there have been some inconsistent decisions by CEC planning. Perhaps this is due to officers working at home, hence new officers missing out on discussion, teamwork and shared knowledge.
 - R Price: residents looks at another refused application for purpose-built student accommodation, and found that the Eyre place application had more amenity space, i.e. there is inconsistency. NTBCC needs to engage with developers, so that the site will be developed acceptably. PBSA might be acceptable, but not a huge monolith.
- The Cockburn Association has been asked by CEC planning take part in a planning construction controls working group. A city centre CC rep has been requested.
 - ***DECISION: R PRICE TO BE NTBCC'S REPRESENTATIVE.***

8.c Hotel and associated developments in Rose/Hanover/Princess Streets

- This area cannot be residential, and the proposals would tidy a messy area.
 - C Nimmo: NTBCC needs an update from developers about what's happening in this area.

8.d Short Term Lets Judicial Review - to note for future consideration

See [licensing report](#) (item 1.1).

9 Licensing

See also [report on NTBCC website](#). All points made by A Gaillard unless otherwise noted.

9.a STL Licensing – date by which all hosts and operators must have a license

- **ACTION: CLLR CALDWELL TO LOOK INTO INCONSISTENCY NOTED IN THE REPORT.**

9.b Objections to licence applications – additional council guidance

- See top of page 2 of [licensing report](#).

9.c Street trading, market operators, mobile trading consultation – NTBCC response

- See [NTBCC's response on the website](#).

9.d Alcohol licensing registers for variation/provisional/transfer of premises

- These registers have not been updated for a long time, so **I WILL CHASE FOR UPDATES.**

9.e Licensing board – new statement of licensing policy

- This is now finalised, but not yet published online. Changes include:
 - Webcasts of business sections of meetings, considering applications via webcasts, a reduced festive period. Changes to seasonal hours and conditions are *ultra vires*. **I WILL PROVIDE A FULL SUMMARY OF THE CHANGES.**
- Cllr Caldwell: the lack of notifications of licensing applications is due to CEC officers being abstracted to short-term lets work.

10 AOCB, including news from residents' associations, and points raised by the public

10.a St Andrews Square Xmas market

- There were only 4 applications for Xmas markets in the city centre, of which only a Spiegel tent was due to be in St Andrews Square. However, there are now many temporary structures all over the square (see this [Spurtle article](#)), to the ongoing detriment of the square and its grass – and far outwith granted permissions/site-plan.
 - A Macintosh: the extra structures include toilets, and stalls belonging to [Social Bite](#)'s 'festival of kindness'. While it does excellent work, this is exacerbating damage to the Square.
 - R Price: if set-up, presence and take-down last longer than 28 days, there is a breach of the 'temporary' permission.

10.b Edinburgh World Heritage trust

- M Birch: there has been no notification of EWHT's AGM, despite NTBCC having been told it would take place in January. Cllr Graham is on EWHT's board, so NTBCC should approach her because there is lack of transparency on governance.
 - Residents' associations should take an active role in the AGM, to make EWHT act in community interests.
 - **ACTION: M BIRCH TO CONTACT CLLR GRAHAM.**

10.c Date of next meeting

- **ACTION: P WILLIAMSON TO ASCERTAIN WHETHER NTBCC SHOULD MEET IN JANUARY.**