

Notes of New Town & Broughton Community Council's ordinary meeting, held via Zoom, on Monday 17 February 2025 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.

Actions (to be omitted from online version)

Item	Actor	Action
2.a.i row 3	R Price	Liaise with Leith Central CC over Calton Square issues
2.a.i row 7	M Birch	Circulate report about bus-noise on East London St
2.a.i row 10	NTBCC	Respond to the RBS consultation in due course
2.a.i row 3	NTBCC/ S Holledge	Arrange meeting after 27 January to develop NTBCC's response to Waverley Valley consultation
2.a.i row 5	M Birch	Ask current NTBCC members which meeting options they prefer, then also ask 'externals' – after the election. Then book Broughton St Marys for March, if appropriate.
2.a.i row 10	NTBCC	Revisit committee membership when it next decides its office-bearers
2.a.i row 12	NTBCC	Members to volunteer to take part in Broughton St site-visit
2.a.i row 13	M Birch	In advance of actual submission, email that NTBCC has concerns about Rose St and Thistle St cycle-exceptions
4.a	P Williamson	Follow up on EWH oversight group
4.a	Cllr McFarlane	Probe about EWH oversight group
4.a	NTBCC	Discuss concerns about lack of engagement with/by EWHT
4.b	P Williamson	Resend elections poster to the <i>Spurtle</i>
4.c	P Williamson	Via B Ryan, circulate proposal about research by Edinburgh Napier University students
6.b.i	A Gaillard	Attend 3 March hearing about 5 Picardy Place (Taco Bell)
7.a	NTBCC	Meet online to develop its response to the consultation on draft 'listed building' guidance
7.a	R Price	Attend relevant EACC meeting
8	Cllr Graham/ M Birch	Action: to meet, then take forward air-quality reporting issues

1 Welcome and apologies

1.a Attendance

Fiona Banatvala	NTBCC	Susan Macinnes	NTBCC	Margaret Graham	City centre ward
Mike Birch	NTBCC	Richard Price	NTBCC	Finlay McFarlane	City centre ward
Annick Gaillard	NTBCC	Nick Reid	NTBCC	Alan McIntosh	<i>Broughton Spurtle</i>
Simon Holledge	NTBCC	David Renton	NTBCC	6 residents/visitors	
Ken Lochrie	NTBCC	Peter Williamson	NTBCC		
Joe McAdam	NTBCC	Bruce Ryan	minutes		

1.b Apologies

Stuart McAllister	NTBCC	Hal Osler	Inverleith ward
Claire Miller	City centre ward	Ben Macpherson MSP	Edinburgh Northern and Leith

2 Approval of Minutes of December 2024 Meeting and Matters Arising

2.a Actions from previous meetings

2.a.i 9 December 2024 (ordinary public meeting)

Item	Actor	Action	Status
2.a row 3	S Holledge	Chase up George St traffic modelling	Complete
2.a row 5	S Holledge	Chase for CEC feedback on walkabout report	Complete – reported to CEC
2.a row 9	NTBCC	Pick up Calton Square issues in 2025	HELD OVER: RP TO LIAISE WITH LCCCC
3	M Birch	Chase for police report	Police now only reporting once per quarter
4.b	B Ryan	Ask for examples of good works by CCs	Complete
4.b	B Ryan/ M Birch	Create guidance around candidacy for forthcoming CC elections	Complete
5.c	M Birch	Circulate report about bus-noise on East London St	HELD OVER
6.b.i	Ward councillors	Follow up issues about fumes at 6 Picardy Place	See item 6 below
7.a	NTBCC	Respond to Princes St/Waverley Valley consultation in early 2025	Complete
7.c	NTBCC	Respond to the RBS consultation in due course	HELD OVER - WAITING FOR FULL APPLICATION
8.a	S Holledge/ NTBCC	Submit and publish responses to visitor levy, Ross bandstand and future libraries consultations	Complete: responses made to visitor levy and future libraries but not bandstand

2.b 13 January 2025 (business meeting)

Item	Actor	Action	Status
2.a row 4	M Birch	Advise police of meeting dates when these are fixed	Complete
2.a row 9	NTBCC members	Inform Mike Birch if they will attend the CEC meeting on 27 January	<u>IN PROGRESS</u>
2.a row 9	NTBCC/ S Holledge	Arrange meeting after 27 January to develop NTBCC's response to Waverley Vally consultation	<u>IN PROGRESS</u>
3	M Birch	web-publish advice to potential candidates and nominees. review his notes of who has been interested in standing, and help such potential candidates find proposers and seconders	Complete
4	M Birch	Ask current NTBCC members which meeting options they prefer, then also ask 'externals' – after the election. Then book Broughton St Marys for March, if appropriate.	<u>ASKING EXTERNALS IS HELD OVER</u>
5.a	B Ryan	arrange for more than one NTBCC member to have access to the different parts of NTBCC's digital estate	Complete
5.b	NTBCC	Maintain both Twitter/X and BlueSky accounts	Complete
6	NTBCC members	Send in other suggestions to minimise meeting over-runs	Complete
6	P Williamson	Collate suggestions to minimise meeting over-runs	Complete – this meeting finished within time
7	NTBCC	Revisit committee membership when it next decides its office-bearers	<u>HELD OVER</u>
7.a	M Birch	Draft a deputation on the transient visitor levy	In progress
7.d	NTBCC members	Volunteer to take part in Broughton St site-visit	<u>HELD OVER</u>
7.d	M Birch	In advance of actual submission email that NTBCC has concerns about Rose St and Thistle St cycle-exceptions	<u>HELD OVER</u>

2.c Draft minutes of 9 December 2024 ordinary meeting

Approved as-is (proposed D Renton, seconded R Price, ND)

3 [Police report for Q1 2025](#)

- noted

4 Chair's report**4.a Edinburgh World Heritage Trust Update**

All points made by P Williamson unless otherwise noted

- PW had asked in December 2024 for an informal meeting about engagement with/by EWHT, but received no response despite prompting again in January 2025. EWHT did confirm it received PW's emails.
 - S Holledge: there have been some sudden departures from EWHT, but I am in touch with Megan Veronesi (EWHT interim director), who seems approachable.
 - Cllr Graham: EWHT's current chair has stepped back due to health issues. NTBCC should contact EWHT's vice-chair.
- CEC has now approved the EWH site management plan. This includes setting up an oversight group but this hasn't happened. I WILL FOLLOW UP ON THIS.
- J McAdam: my street association was asked to complete a survey for EWHT: what would the association like, what are its concerns, what area it covers.
- F Banatvala: do councillors have concerns about the composition/functionality of the steering group? No minutes of the steering group meeting have yet appeared. What is the next step?
- CEC Planning convener had asked for a workshop prior to the oversight group's first meeting to get clarity on such matters. However, there is no sign of this occurring.
- Cllr McFarlane: CEC councillors have not received anything. I WILL PROBE.
- S Holledge: an EWHT person was applying for a grant to study engagement and representation, but suddenly left.
- The point of the proposed meeting with EWHT was to discuss such concerns.
- ACTION: NTBCC TO PUT THIS ON MARCH AGENDA.

4.b Community Council elections and governance update

- M Birch (via email): as of last Friday the Council had received three valid nominations for elected Community Councillors and one valid nomination from a local interest group. (As of 25 February, there were 10 valid election nominations and 5 LIG nominations. NTBCC may have up to 16 elected/co-opted and 8 LIG members.)
- A McIntosh: NTBCC could place an article in the *Spartle*.
- ACTION: P WILLIAMSON TO RESEND POSTER.

4.c Napier University communications project

- P Williamson: NTBCC was approached by 3 Napier students about a project on how to attract and engage young members of under-represented groups.
- ACTION: P WILLIAMSON TO CIRCULATE RELEVANT PROPOSAL TO B RYAN, WHO WILL THEN CIRCULATE IT.

5 Culture and Communities matters

- S Holledge: [tenants are sought for the privately-owned Mansfield Traquair Centre](#).
- R Price: renovation of the building is being undertaken by the trust that owns it. SCVO currently rents the basement, and subcontracts the main part (~75 office spaces) to Heritage Portfolio (HP). However, SCVO does not wish to stay while HP does. Hence a new leaseholder is needed after June.
- A McIntosh: the trust insists that monthly open days will continue and that there will be options for other openings.

6 Licencing matters

All points made by A Gaillard unless otherwise noted.

6.a Licensing board

There is slow progress on the overprovision policy, but the terms may soon be out for consultation.

6.b Civic licensing

6.b.i [LHC 540091 at 6 Picardy Place](#)

- This is the new Taco Bell. Its late-hours catering application went to committee on 27 Jan. Submitted objections were not listed against it, so AG could not attend this hearing. The application has been continued to 3 March. There have been environmental health issues (e.g. fumes from diesel generators percolating into other parts of the building) while and since the premises were worked on. The applicant and CEC environmental health (CECEH) appear to have taken no action about these issues. **ACTION: AG TO TRY TO ATTEND THE 3 MARCH HEARING.**
 - A resident: I live the above the premises, which have been split into units: Taco Bell and another that is still being developed. The diesel fumes continued for ~2 weeks until electricity was restored, so I was forced to live elsewhere. I was advised by CECEH to contact the [Scottish HSE](#) but have not heard from it. There is no barrier between Taco Bell and other parts of the building, hence the fumes percolation. I have demonstrated the issue, which continues, to Taco Bell managers. There may be ways forward.
 - R Price: CEC refused the original application but it was allowed by the Scottish Reporter, maybe without a site visit.

6.b.ii [STL 538256 at 10a Blenheim Place](#)

- This was decided in January 2025. The property had been residential, and would have been the owners' retirement home. Prior to retirement, the owners applied for and received permission to let it short-term, leading to noise affecting nearby properties. They then sold the property, and the new owners continued the STL, applying to make it permanent. This too was granted despite objections. There is no on-site management, and the property is advertised using a photo at ground level, leading to those occupants being disturbed.
 - Cllr Graham: the licensing meeting chair stated that there were insufficient grounds for refusal. The applicants put their case well, and have undertaken mitigation and listening to concerns.

6.b.iii [Occitan \(Rose St\)](#)

There is an application for very late catering: see [NTBCC website post](#).

6.c Update from Regulatory meeting 31/1/25

- During a review (see [post-consultation update](#), [another update](#)), some STL operators described the licensing policy as too onerous/expensive. They were disappointed with the time taken to process license applications. There were divided opinions on licensing/planning interactions. Others are disappointed about the small number of refusals (5000 applications processed, 4300 granted, ~200 withdrawn, 100 refused), possibly because grounds for refusal are narrow.
 - It is proposed that new secondary let applications are granted for 1 year initially, with grants of up to 3 years for renewals if there have been no complaints. Owners are required to submit contact details to neighbours, so complaints may be made to owners and not CEC. Hence CEC may not know about complaints.
 - Unlicensed STLs gave rise to 60% of licensing enforcements, noise etc to 5-5%. These data may not reflect reality.
 - Statutory consultees, e.g. Police Scotland, suggested that the existing [STL additional conditions](#) are proportionate and enforceable, so it is recommended that these are left as-is.

7 Planning

- All points made by R Price unless otherwise noted.

7.a Planning guidance consultation timeline (closes 03.04.25)

- NPF4 and CP2030 already have statutory guidance, but there are 3 current consultations on non-statutory guidance on the ConsultationHub:
 1. [Listed buildings and conservation areas](#). NTBCC should make input. Focus groups have enabled me to learn what residents' associations believe – mainly that the new draft has is poorly laid out, lacks change-tracking, and is hence confusing. **ACTIONS: NTBCC TO MEET ONLINE TO DEVELOP ITS RESPONSE; R PRICE TO ATTEND AN EACC MEETING WHICH WILL HAVE CEC PRESENTATIONS ON THIS GUIDANCE.**
 - F Banatvala: Edinburgh University is currently giving voice to historic property owners, by reaching out to owners and running focus groups.
 - R Price: this will not affect this consultation but may affect the next revision of this guidance.
 2. [Edinburgh design guidance](#): this is hard to comment on, so NTBCC may choose not to make a submission.
 3. [Planning guidance for householders](#): this consultation is short and easy to respond to.
- Consultation on guidance on student housing should open soon.

7.b Powderhall development – withdrawal of planning application

- This site is owned by CEC, which had 3 planning applications: one including social housing to be developed by CEC; two others to be developed privately. These applications were withdrawn just before Xmas, possibly because they were insufficiently dense to meet the previous local development plan's requirements. According to an answer to Cllr Caldwell, the applications were withdrawn due to unacceptable height and massing.
 - A further application is anticipated.
- The Powderhall Stables development, supported with Scottish Government funding, has made the building look very good but it has been unoccupied for 2 years due to utility-supply issues. At the adjacent bowling green site (meant to become a nursery and intergenerational housing by the end of 2023), nothing has happened at all.

7.c Current applications to note**7.c.i RBS site (Dundas St)**

- A new application is anticipated by the end of March, following consultations in 2024. There has been a scoping request to CEC planning about needs for environmental impact assessment.

7.c.ii 21 McDonald Place (former Batley's cash and carry)

- There has been a series of planning applications over ~6 years. Permission for ~16 flats had been granted but the latest application is for 19. There are ~90 objections, and the application was refused at DMSC.

7.c.iii BT kiosks

- Some of these have been bought by a company that proposes to make more sympathetic arrangements. Applications have been made for kiosks on South St Andrews St and on Frederick St. NTBCC's submission suggested that these should not be rejected out-of-hand, so that derelict kiosks would be dealt with. The Frederick St application has been refused, the other is awaiting decision.

7.c.iv Former London St sauna

- This has been split into two units. An STL application for one was refused by CEC but granted on appeal. There is now an application (with 25 supporting comments and almost no objections) for the other unit.

7.c.v Former Trotter's optician (George St)

- There is a proposal to modernise the shop front here by the new owners, a clothing brand. NTBCC should submit a representation.

7.c.vi 7-8 Baxter's Place

- This has a chequered history, including being an unlawful STL that was ceased by CEC. It has now been sold to someone who wants to make it an STL or serviced apartments. There is permission for it to be residential, which may make conversion to STL difficult, but the owners say its only lawful use is as a social club. Hence NTBCC should raise concerns.
 - A Gaillard: neighbours had asked for enforcement against it being used as a party flat, with attendant disturbances. Because it was not registered as an STL, there was no way to submit complaints to CEC. Conversion plans are inadequate: no toilets or sleeping area for the staff supposed to be present 24/7. Despite there not being a common stair for this flat and residents in other parts of the building, noise and smells do affect these residents.
 - A Gaillard: neighbours have not been notified about the STL application so I am chasing this.

7.d Consultation on Princes St/Waverley Valley draft strategy

- See [draft NTBCC statement](#), in which NTBCC states that the draft strategy is seriously deficient. (After this meeting, the statement was co-signed by West End CC and Old Town CC, [then published](#).)
 - S Holledge: it may be that the consultation process is being misused here. There have been three design stages over seven years, yet Princes St is in a worse state than George St argument, so this shortcut consultation is nonsensical. Instead, the issues should be fully analysed before consulting the public on resulting suggestions.

8 Transport and environment matters

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

- I have submitted an FOI request asking when the annual air quality report was posted to CEC's website. There was almost no opportunity to review this information-heavy report before the TEC meeting. CEC had promise of more monitoring on the LEZ's periphery but has actually removed many and only added one. The next annual report may not be published until January 2026.
 - F Banatvala: it is unacceptable that reporting of LEZ pollution levels is not being published.
 - **ACTION: CLLR GRAHAM AND M BIRCH TO MEET, THEN TAKE THIS ISSUE FORWARD.**
- There has been no explanation of why CEC's discussion of 'tables and chairs' rules has been postponed to March.

8.a Transport and Environment Committee (30.01.25) and Trams to Newhaven project update

See report.

9 Any other business

- The 'new' NTBCC will meet on 10 March (~2 weeks after the closing date); P Williamson thanked current members for their contributions.
 - R Price: the nomination process has seemed to work smoothly so far.
 - Cllr Graham: NTBCC will know quickly if there is no election.