Minutes of New Town & Broughton Community Council's ordinary meeting, held in the Garden Room at Broughton St Mary's Church, on Monday 10 November 2025 at 7pm

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

Actions (to be omitted from online version)

Item	Actor	Action
3.b row 2	S Hodge	Reach out to local businesses about volunteer days to maintain Picardy Place
3.b row 3	G Wells	Create 'easy access' version of NTBCC governance documents
3.b row 7	P Williamson	Pursue CEC planning convenor about plans for old and new towns
3.b row 8	S Hodge	Draft paper on concerns, then contact MSPs and CEC cllrs, pushing for a public campaign
3.b row 13	M Birch	Liaise with Royal Circus resident over bin-hub issues
4.a	S MacInnes	Notify CEC about the new members
4.c	NTBCC	Revisit public drop-ins in spring 2026, and liaise with EACC
4.d	NTBCC	Add bins FOI request and response to its website
4.d	Cllr Mowat	Seek improvements in CEC-CC engagement
4.d	NTBCC	Inform its councillors of good and bad examples of engagement with CEC
4.e	P Williamson	Engage with resident about the issues s/he is suffering
5.a.i	NTBCC	Object to planned serviced apartments on Claremont Cresent
5.a.ii	NTBCC	Object to changes at 11 Royal Terrace
5.a.iii	R Price	Ask for a public meeting about the new plans for the RBS building
8.a	M Birch	Draft objection about Charlotte Square plans

1 Welcome and apologies

1.a Attendance

Fiona Banatvala	NTBCC	Susan MacInnes	NTBCC	Cllr Jack Caldwell	Leith Walk ward
Michael Birch	NTBCC	Martin McDonnell	NTBCC	Cllr Margaret Graham	City Centre ward
Pierre Forissier	NTBCC	Masudun Nessa Mitu	NTBCC	Cllr Max Mitchell	Inverleith ward
Annick Gaillard	NTBCC	Andrew Naughtie	NTBCC	Cllr Jo Mowat	City Centre ward
Laura Graham	NTBCC	Richard Price	NTBCC	Cllr Hal Osler	Inverleith Ward
Stephen Hajducki	NTBCC	Nick Reid	NTBCC	Alan McIntosh	*Broughton Spurtle*
Simon Holledge	NTBCC	Vanessa Roëves	NTBCC	At least 10 residents/visitors	
Ken Lochrie	NTBCC	Peter Williamson	NTBCC		
Joe McAdam	NTBCC	Bruce Ryan	Minutes secretary		

1.b Apologies

Shaun Hodge	NTBCC	Gerald Wells	NTBCC
David Renton	NTBCC	Ben Macpherson MSP	Edinburgh Northern and Leith

2 Declarations of interest

none

3 Approval of October meeting minutes and matters arising

The draft minutes were approved *ND*

3.a Actions from October meeting

Item	Actor	Action	status
3.a row 2	P Williamson, M Birch	Meet with Essential Edinburgh chair over maintenance of Picardy Place	See item 8.a.iii below
3.a row 6	S Hodge	Reach out to local businesses about volunteer days to maintain Picardy Place	*HELD OVER: SH ABSENT*
3.a row 7	G Wells	Create 'easy access' version of NTBCC governance documents	*HELD OVER: GW ABSENT*
3.a row 8	S Hodge S MacInnes	Chase Police Scotland for email addresses, so they can be publicised as decided in September	Complete but no reply from police
3.a row 11	M Birch	Submit complaint about ETRO issues to public service ombudsman	See item 8.a.vi below
4.b	NTBCC	Consider co-opting Andrew Naughtie	See item 4.a below
4.c	P Williamson	Pursue CEC planning convenor about plans for old and new towns	*IN PROGRESS: PW GATHERING INFORMATION.* Old/New Town management plan not yet published, despite being near completion 2-3 months ago
4.d	S Hodge	Draft a paper on these concerns, then contact MSPs and CEC cllrs, pushing for a public information campaign	*HELD OVER: SH ABSENT*
5.a	R Price	Lead on NTBCC's Royal London objection, including chasing about the LBC issue	Objection submitted

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5.c	R Price	Circulate links to planning documents for Edinburgh's Christmas	Complete
8.c	M Birch	Undertake an FOI request to ascertain what parking enforcement is mandated	Not needed – information found
8.e	M Birch	Draft NTBCC's response to north-south trams route consultation	See item 8.a.v below
8.f	M Birch	Liaise with Royal Circus resident over bin-hub issues	*EMAIL EXCHANGES IN PROGRESS*

4 Chair's report

All points made by P Williamson unless otherwise noted

4.a New NTBCC members

The following joined NTBCC *ND*:

- Andrew Naughtie – co-opted as voting member. He was previously on Stockbridge and Inverleith CC, and is a journalist.
- Martin McDonnell – joined as associate member. He is interested in transport.

4.b Dunard Centre

Additional funding has been obtained from the Scottish Government and a private donor, so this project is going ahead. IMPACT continues to actively fundraise, with plans to launch a public campaign once main construction is underway. However, more private funding is sought to reduce use of public money.

4.c NTBCC public drop-in sessions

It was suggested that this becomes part of the 2026-27 NTBCC engagement plan 2026-27. It would need to be targeted well, perhaps using social media campaigns. *ACTION: NTBCC TO REVISIT THIS IN SPRING 2026, AND LIAISE WITH EACC*.

4.d NTBCC engagement with CEC officials

- An FOI request showed that for the communal bin project there appeared to be no formal process, designated leads, minutes of meetings. Hence it is hard to understand what is happening, let alone influence it. (Not all CEC projects are like this.)
  - *ACTION: NTBCC TO PUBLISH REQUEST AND RESPONSE ON ITS WEBSITE*.
  - All CCs need to understand what they're getting involved in, i.e. formal agreements of what is to happen, and who is leading it. How do the CEC cllrs advise this can be achieved, so that CC members' time is not wasted? NTBCC has good relationships with its CEC cllrs, but some projects have a life of their own, despite this.
  - Cllr Mowat: the national code of conduct for LA councillors restrains cllrs' actions. They can seek and communicate information. Together they set the LA's strategies/policies, and assess its performance. They are not operational, so cannot instruct officers. Possibly they spend too much time seeking information – this may be because project plans are approved at non-cllr levels. CEC has found that there is room for improvement, especially in engagement with communities. CEC has not defined well how it should do this in the post-covid era. *I WILL TAKE THIS BACK TO CEC*.
  - Cllr Osler: in addition to this, projects get moved between committees. Policies change, as do residents' priorities. it can take years to get projects into motion.
  - Cllr Mitchell: there was a material change in circumstance for the bin project due to a CEC recent policy-change.
  - F Banatvala: There are very poor communication from the CEC governance to team CCs.
  - Cllr Graham: CEC head of place admitted that comms are not as good as they should be. She would tackle this.
  - M Birch: we regret it's now not possible to talk with the planning team. We have asked for organigrams and contact details because we struggle to know who to contact. Engagement with CEC officials is beneficial both ways.
  - If a new project comes up, NTBCC would want a preliminary conversation, but some CEC officials do not engage.
    - *ACTION: NTBCC TO INFORM ITS COUNCILLORS OF GOOD AND BAD EXAMPLES OF ENGAGEMENT WITH CEC*.

4.e Ongoing issues raised by local resident and how best to resolve them

- A local resident has suffered potholes, weeds, overhanging trees, graffiti, bin-issues for a long time. NTBCC is part of a system that hasn't responded appropriately. NTBCC has told the resident that it is asking about the problems s/he and others suffer. There is no residents' association to help argue the resident's case.
  - Cllr Mowat: I sympathise with and have engaged with this resident – one issue is being resolved. CEC officers have done what they would for others. Roads are in poor condition throughout Edinburgh.
  - M Birch: NTBCC has submitted reports on the potholes, and CEC has responded in the normal way. The whole street needs to be resurfaced. CEC is not responsible for dealing with all graffiti. It's hard to say this street is worse than others in the area, so there may not be a resolvable situation here.
  - Cllr Osler: cllrs acknowledge CEC could do better if it had resources. We will continue to try to make things better.
- The frustration here is due to the situation's duration. How can NTBCC know that everything that could be tried has been? Is CEC itself clear enough? *I WILL MEET WITH THIS RESIDENT*.
- Action: B Ryan to investigate how to avoid 'followers' mailing list being spammed by its members.

5 Planning matters

All points made by R Price unless otherwise noted.

5.a Live applications

5.a.i 14 – 15 Claremont Crescent – switch from residential to serviced apartments (25/05228/FUL)

- A former hotel in #14 and #15, at the apex of the crescent, fell into disrepair. It was bought about a year ago, to convert these townhouses into 7 residential apartments, along with building 2 mews houses in the carpark. (There were already some flats in #14, so this is about #15 and half of #14.) Residents were broadly supportive of improving the area, despite noise, dust etc from development. The site was then put on the market for ~1 month, then the developer decided to create serviced apartments, with no on-site presence, and to not build the mews houses, leading to 7 STLs. There is planning approval for the residential apartments; the developers claim this has not been used, so the change is from hotel to serviced apartment. (This tactic is becoming common.) The residents are upset about this late change of plans, although others have commented in support of this change. NTBCC should support the residents.
  - P Forissier: the first application should have been refused due to planned demolition of a listed building. CEC should apply its current policy of no loss of residential to STL. If developers object to this, they can appeal. Planning is permissive, so owners do not have to develop their sites.
  - RP/K Lochrie: legally a site only becomes residential when it is lived in. So someone could buy a new 'residential' flat and make it an STL without legal issue.
  - Cllrs Osler/Mowat/Caldwell: there are other policies that may help but when change of use actually occurs is a grey area. CEC has lost in court when it took the view that the last consented use decides what a site actually is. CEC is limited in what it can do in such situations.
  - P Forrissier: on a positive note, this experience shows that CEC planning sees through this tactic.
  - Cllr Osler: it is cheaper and easier for developers to go directly from commercial to STL, than commercial to residential to STL. DPEA is the highest planning authority – CEC can't go against it. Only MSPs can change the law.
  - RP: *NTBCC WILL OBJECT, USING MATERIAL PLANNING ISSUES*..

5.a.ii 11 Royal Terrace – outdoor wellness area / sauna etc. (25/05233/FUL)

- Work is ongoing to transform this traditional Edinburgh Hotel to an aparthotel with 9 en-suite rooms and a wellness centre (sauna, terrace etc), including adding a new orangery. The work is very visible and noisy, so *NTBCC WILL OBJECT*.

5.a.iii Former RBS site Dundas St. – reopened for comments (25/01899/FUL) & City Plan 2040 & current consultation

- The last application to change from build-to-rent to student accommodation is now being determined by CEC. This has led to a huge number of documents arriving on CEC's portal, and the application being open for comment until 24 Nov (so the planning officer must have found that changes are significant). I have not had time to read the documents, which constitute a nightmare read (a resident concurred), so I have notified the local residents' association.
  - Despite NTBCC applying to be a statutory consultee in this case, it was not notified about it.
  - P Forrissier: of the changes are so significant, there should be a public meeting. Notification is faulty in this case.
  - V Roëves: what impact assessments, e.g. about transport, health service, have been done?
  - K Lochrie: driven piles are being used, rather than the agreed drilling, but there has been no response to queries.
  - RP: there is undue pressure on residents due to the unspecified changes. *I WILL ASK FOR A PUBLIC MEETING*.

5.b Recent decisions

5.b.i EPSG Christmas

A new application for increased footprint has been refused by the DMSC.

5.b.ii Rose Street Theatre

Following a site-visit with the DMSC, NTBCC is concerned about impact on the sanctuary space. There is fear that if this application was refused, the building would just rot. However, NTBCC supports the decision to refuse this plan.

5.b.iii Royal London – Thistle St

NTBCC objected here but the application was passed.

5.c Planning Committee

5.c.i Revised scheme of delegation

- In the previous scheme, were there more than 20 comments opposing the planning officer's recommendation, any application would go before the DMSC. Especially for STLS, developers have been submitting more than 20 supporting comments, so these applications go to DMSC where they might receive a more favourable decision. It is now planned to remove this rule, leaving decisions about going to DMSC to planning officers' discretions.
  - Cllr Mitchell: the petitions mechanism will also be removed
  - RP: this is welcome because petitions often contain only names and addresses, no comments.
  - Cllr Osler: be careful of this – there will no longer be a rule for forwarding matters to the DMSC.
  - RP: being a statutory consultee needs to be meaningful. It has not happened in this case.
  - P Forissier: this change is very dangerous because officers may be biassed, mistaken or influenced by developers.
  - Cllr Mowat: matters are not being left to discretion; there will be checks and balances. It avoids numbers games, and enables officers to bring other matters to the DMSC. CEC cllrs can also ask for matters to go to DMSC.
  - M Birch: this change risks NTBCC becoming involved in more cases. Previously, residents' association could get issues seen by the DMSC. NTBCC does not have the necessary resources.
  - Cllr Osler: the chief planning officer and CEC cllrs ultimately will decide which matters go to the DMSC.

5.c.ii Draft Princes Street & Waverley Valley Strategy

It is too late to make any further comments on the latest application. Due to previous approvals, there is very little change.

6 Licensing matters

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All points made by A Gaillard unless otherwise noted

- There is a proposal to consult on extending the scope of public entertainment licenses to activities that are not currently listed in the current Public Entertainment Resolution e.g. axe throwing, escape room, ice skating.
- Short-Term Lets
  - There are concerns that applications for home letting are disguising secondary lets. The Chair of the Regulatory Committee wrote to the Scottish Government back in April, requesting clearer guidance on the definition of 'only or principal home'. A response is expected in the New Year.The first successful enforcement about an STL has occurred. These enforcements cost CEC resources.
  - The *Herald* states that numbers of AirBnB postings have decreased but there is a black market.
- I am monitoring, and will circulate, alcohol licensing applications; there is nothing controversial just now.
- The Licensing Board has been holding separate meetings to decide on fast-track items. The business section of the Board's meeting has now been moved to those meetings.The Licensing Forum membership is 33% trade, 33% residents' representatives, 33% 1/3 statutory.
  - NHS Scotland was particularly disappointed by the Board's recent decision to scrap their overprovision policy, due to ongoing alcohol related public health issues.
  - The trade reported that footfall in licensed premises is back to pre-covid levels, but younger people are less interested in alcoholic drinks. This may be good news for residents sharing common stairs with HMO properties as this could mean less disruption at night.
- Civic licensing is 'business as usual'. 11 Royal Terrace was covered in Planning section.
  - P Forissier: it is very poor that licensing decisions are not made publicly.
  - Cllr Mowat: CEC has been working on getting licensing online and public for years. It is difficult to develop such software that interacts with CEC IT. Property licensing matters should go online and real-time next month. This should reduce the work associated with incomplete applications.

7 Culture and Communities matters

- No discussion

8 Transport and Environment matters

8.a Charlotte Square – report of meeting with CEC project manager and next steps

- NTBCC has met with the project manager, who could not fully answer all of NTBCC's questions. The plan was originally part of CCWEL but is now in the Charlotte Square enhancement program, which is aligned with the George St project, and requires levelling of the area. There are two conceptual plans, both having a bidirectional cycle lane on CS' north side. NTBCC has queried this because previous plans also had a cycle lane on the south side. The plan's overall purpose includes both active travel and public realm improvements.. This affects funding sources; the current budget is £6·5m, but no breakdown of this is available. NTBCC has asked how the changes will work with the George St project.
  - NTBCC has queried CEC's abnormal approach to consultation here. CEC states that the consultation advisory panel had determined that normal public consultation was not needed; just working with key stakeholders. Others can comment via email. Therefore it is not quite clear who has been consulted, or how decisions have been made.
  - CEC has not yet undertaken a road safety audit for the whole final scheme. CEC recognises the need for this RSA.
  - The pedestrian crossings don't follow desire lines. It's unclear why the southern crossing would be a zebra crossing.
  - A heritage impact assessment has been undertaken, and NTBCC should receive a copy.
  - There was no answer to the question 'why not restore setted streets?'.
  - The bus-stops on the south side have now been removed from plans, after discussion with Lothian buses.
  - P Wiliamson, similar to item 4.d above, lack of project documents is hindering NTBCC's work. Instead information is being transmitted via meetings. There is lack of a clear idea why this project is happening.
  - MB: a further report is due by end of 2025. I've contacted Glenfinlas St residents, who have succeeded in changing plans on safety grounds. NTBCC will submit a comment: *I WILL DRAFT THIS*.

8.b George Street cross streets – report of meeting with CEC project manager and next steps

NTBCC had been told that buses (routes 10, 11, 13) currently using George St would be moved to the cross streets, but now will be moved to Princes St and St David's St. This means an extra 300 buses per day on the already congested PS. It would also remove bus stops proximate to George St. The final decision has not been made but TROs are due soon.

8.c Picardy Place – report on meetings with Essential Edinburgh and CEC

EE is willing to take over PP's maintenance. The trams team confirmed that replanting of the whole tram route is to be retendered; the same contractor will do both the tram route and PP.

8.d Elm Row and Gayfield Square

- Appropriate slabs for repaving the redundant cycle path are currently unavailable. CCTT has asked for cycle-markings to be removed, and benches placed to hinder access to the former cycle-lane. CCTT will raise issues about parking.
  - Cllr Caldwell: CEC officers are looking into this.
- Gayfield Square benches are due back from repair, but only 2 can be fitted on GS. The other will go to Blenheim Place.
- L Graham: the utility cabinets for the formerly proposed 5G mast have been removed.

8.e North South Trams Consultation – agree NTBCC response

- The parts of NTBCC's area this would pass through are already congested. I have drafted a response.
- F Banatvala: this also applies to Lynedoch Place/Queensferry St. NTBCC should object to trams on the Dean Bridge.

- Air pollution levels on Leith St have been rising for years. Trams work would exacerbate this. It is unclear where traffic would go if the Mound and/or the bridges are closed. Traffic management planning is needed before building starts. It is possible that South Bridge cannot support trams. It is possible that CEC has spent much money to come to an unviable position
- Cllr Osler: the £1m consultation cost came from CEC's Place budget.

8.f Communal bin review phase 6 – update on planned meeting with CEC staff

- Thanks to Cllr Miller, NTBCC is arranging a meeting on this topic. NTBCC will invite relevant residents' associations.
  - P Williamson: Picardy Residents' Association had a very helpful meeting with Cllr Graham, and a site visit. This was the first direct engagement with residents on this matter.

8.g Forthcoming TEC meeting

- Supported bus services are on the agenda. The 'lessons learned' report does not address why it was requested.
- The TEC meeting will also cover a road safety delivery plan. Most projects are being moved to next financial year but new crossings in St Colme St and in Gt King St, and speed measures in Abercrombie St and Rodney St should be complete by April 2026.
- NTBCC should submit a deputation to the review of the TRO subcommittee, given issues in being heard previously.

9 Any other business

- Cllr Mowat: Gt King St refuse will be collected via gull-proof bags. Details for St Vincent St are due this month.
- K Lochrie: the Drummond Civic Association has heard complaints that drones have been flown in its back area, possibly enabling 'peeping toms'. What can be done?
  - Cllr Osler: inform the police.

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