Minutes of New Town & Broughton Community Council's ordinary meeting, held via Zoom, on Monday 8 December 2025 at 7pm

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

1 Welcome and apologies

1.a Attendance

Michael Birch	NTBCC	Joe McAdam	NTBCC	Bruce Ryan	Minutes secretary
Pierre Forissier	NTBCC	Andrew Naughtie	NTBCC	Cllr Jack Caldwell	Leith Walk ward
Annick Gaillard	NTBCC	Richard Price	NTBCC	Cllr Max Mitchell	Inverleith ward
Laura Graham	NTBCC	David Renton	NTBCC	Cllr Jo Mowat	City Centre ward
Shaun Hodge	NTBCC	Vanessa Roëves	NTBCC	Alan McIntosh	Broughton Spurtle
Simon Holledge	NTBCC	Gerry Wells	NTBCC	At least 7 residents/visitors	
Ken Lochrie	NTBCC	Peter Williamson	NTBCC		

1.b Apologies

Susan MacInnes	NTBCC	Cllr Claire Miller	City Centre ward
Martin McDonnell	NTBCC	Cllr Hal Osler	Stockbridge and Inverleith ward
Cllr Margaret Graham	City Centre ward		

2 Declarations of interest

none

3 Approval of November meeting minutes and matters arising

- Approved as-is (proposed V Roëves, seconded M Birch, ND)

3.a Actions from November meeting

November Item	Actor	Action	Status
3.b row 2	S Hodge	Reach out to local businesses about volunteer days to maintain Picardy Place	On hold[1]
3.b row 3	G Wells	Create 'easy access' version of NTBCC governance documents	Complete[2]
3.b row 7	P Williamson	Pursue CEC planning convenor about plans for old and new towns	On hold[3]
3.b row 8	S Hodge	Draft paper on concerns re e-bikes etc, then contact MSPs and CEC cllrs, pushing for a public campaign	In progress
3.b row 13	M Birch	Liaise with Royal Circus resident over bin-hub issues	See item 8.e below
4.a	S MacInnes	Notify CEC about the new members	Complete
4.c	NTBCC	Revisit public drop-ins in spring 2026, and liaise with EACC	Held over
4.d	NTBCC	Add bins FOI request and response to its website	Held over
4.d	Cllr Mowat	Seek improvements in CEC-CC engagement	In progress[4]
4.d	NTBCC	Inform its councillors of good and bad examples of engagement with CEC	In progress[5]
4.e	P Williamson	Engage with resident about the issues s/he is suffering	In progress
5.a.i	NTBCC	Object to planned serviced apartments on Claremont Cresent	Complete
5.a.ii	NTBCC	Object to changes at 11 Royal Terrace	Complete
5.a.iii	R Price	Ask for a public meeting about the new plans for the RBS building	See item 5.a.iii below
8.a	M Birch	Draft objection about Charlotte Square plans	In progress

4 Chair's report

- Emma Swift (elected at the most recent CC elections) has now left NTBCC, after attending no meetings.
  - *IF THERE ARE FUTURE SERIAL NON-ATTENDING MEMBERS, CHAIR WILL INITIALLY CONTACT THEM, DESPITE* CC scheme *ITEM 8·1*.

5 Planning matters

All points made by R Price unless otherwise noted.

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1 NTBCC is waiting for CEC's update/long-term plans for Picardy Place. Trams team will undertake soft landscaping in winter 2025. Essential Edinburgh may take over maintenance thereafter.

2 *ACTION: B RYAN TO ADD THIS TO NTBCC WEBSITE*

3 NTBCC is on new version of management plan and reconvening of planning group.

4 A proposal is being developed.

5 Cllr Mowat is willing to collect examples of problems. CEC is investigating officer response-times. Relevant CEC policy exists, so NTBCC could evaluate its experience versus this policy.

5.a Current applications and issues

5.a.i 14–15 Claremont Crescent: switch from residential to serviced apartments (25/05228/FUL)
NTBCC has objected to this application. Some new documents have been added to the application on CEC's planning portal. The application is still awaiting assessment, and should go to the DMSC due to the number of objections.

5.a.ii 11 Royal Terrace: outdoor wellness area/sauna etc. (25/05233/FUL)
This is now awaiting CEC's decision, which will be made by the DMSC in early 2026.

5.a.iii Former RBS site Dundas St – reopened for comments (25/01899/FUL)

- There have been 8 applications since 2014, including a couple of very recent ones: NTBCC has objected to these. There will not be a public meeting but there will be a DMSC hearing on 17 December: concerns can be raised then. The CeC report to DMSC recommends approval. Hence NTBCC will attend, along with relevant residents' groups. *RP will meet with objectors to plan strategy*. Work has started on the areas covered by the application approved in 2021.
  - The current plans would house 593 students, down from 599.
  - 469 objections have been submitted; discussion of these at DMSC should cover potential infrastructure issues.
  - The new applications [if approved] mandate very large developer contributions, e.g. £1m to education.
  - Following a change in government policy, I have tried to -raise the issue of residential accommodation applications being replaced by purpose-built student accommodation (PBSA) applications. Build to rent (BTR) appears not to work for this development, yet other BTR developments are going ahead. Overall, developers can choose whether to apply to build PBSA.
  - P Forissier: Developers may realise up to 5 times the amount from PBSA compared to BTR. (Short-term lets of PBSA over summers can significantly increase such revenue.) This does not mean that BTR is always unprofitable.

5.a.iv City Plan 2040 current consultation

- This consultation is on the CHub. *I will circulate the link*.
  - P Forissier: this consultation is poor: it's leading and vague, e.g. not asking for full postcodes of issues.

5.b Recent decisions, planning committee
There was no discussion of EPSG Christmas, Rose Street Theatre or Royal London/Thistle St, or of the planning committee,

5.c Revised scheme of delegation
This retains the need for more than 20 objections to send a planning application to DMSC. Non-material comments (both for and against) will not count towards this criterion.

5.d Draft Princes Street & Waverley Valley Strategy
A 'summit' to reconsider the original proposals is due. NTBCC should keep an eye on this.

5.e Omni development food-stalls
Action: R Price to consider what NTBCC can do.

6 Licensing matters

6.a Regulatory review of sun-tan centres licensing conditions - Consultation (to note)
This review was noted by NTBCC. (No members expressed views on it.)

7 Culture and Communities matters

All points made by P Williamson unless otherwise noted.

7.a Early update on CEC Culture and Communities Committee meeting on 4 December

7.a.i Community Council Elections 2025 – survey results

- The main issue in these elections was post-hoc imposition of the declaration for CC members. The report suggests five actions: (1) explore how the transient visitor levy and participatory budgeting can be integrated into CCs' work; (2) reconsider promotion of CC elections; (3) review the election nomination form; (4) develop a post-election handover checklist; (5) explore training for CCs. These don't go far enough.
- *Action: P Williamson to draft NTBCC's response to this report*.

7.a.ii Misuse of quad bikes and dirt bikes in public spaces

- There is some concern about these, and e-bikes, in parks. The report proposes limited response by CEC: it should be tackled by Police Scotland. However, it is reported that police do not pursue bikes for safety reasons.
  - I was involved in an incident with dirt bikers on Calton Hill, together with a Park Ranger, and afterwards discussed it with the Police, who subsequently arranged extra patrols. I was surprised that Park Rangers did not have a hotline to the Police. The response to our 101 call took 20 minutes. We hope there will be CCTV on Calton Hill in the future..
  - Cllr Mitchell: there will be debate tomorrow at Holyrood which will require fuller response from ScotGov.

7.a.iii Use of public spaces for events: annual update
Up to October 2025 made over £1m from such use. It contributes to staffing costs. NTBCC would like CEC to break even on. There will be changes to such charges.

7.a.iv Motion by Councillor McFarlane: grant funding for 'Friends of' and Trusts

- There are 85 such groups. The motion attempted to get more CEC support for them but no funding is available. (A pilot might cost £50K, but that would not be sufficient to make a difference.)
  - S Holledge: this is frustrating: a volunteer action plan – a purely administrative process – is costed at £1·25m.

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- P Williamson: it is not clear how this money would be spent.

8 Transport and Environment matters

See also convenor's report. All points made by M Birch unless otherwise noted.

8.a Charlotte Square – comments provided to CEC project manager

A draft submission has been created. NTBCC members can comment on this draft, then *I will submit it*.

8.b North-south trams consultation – NTBCC response

NTBCC has submitted its concerns. The consultation has had many thousand responses.

8.c TEC deputations – TRO subcommittee review and supported bus services

- NTBCC made a written deputation about supported bus services, noting lack of community engagement and that the report did not address this lack. However, in future relevant CCs will be contacted.
- NTBCC made a verbal deputation on review of the TRO subcommittee, noting lack of opportunity to make representations. CEC stated that CCs' views will be considered, but it is not yet clear how this will be done.

8.d St Marks Park path closure (to discuss)

- This much-used path was recently closed with very little notice, to facilitate development at Powderhall. NTBCC members undertook site visits. Cllr Caldwell is in discussions with residents, the contractor and CEC. The diversion route is poorly signposted and is not suitable for people with limited mobility. (This is posted on the now-closed gate, stating the works/diversion will last for 3 weeks, so the path should have been reopened by now. It is unclear how long the closure is needed.
  - D Renton: the main problem for mobility scooter and wheelchair users is that the diversion route is very steep.
  - Cllr Caldwell: there are two issues:
    - impact on the community, including incorrect dates on the gate. Unless a path is fully accessible, it is not accessible. The diversion route goes through a non-public area. CEC officers are reviewing access options.
    - a process has gone badly wrong. A motion is going to the next full CEC meeting because this is not the only instance of such unwelcome impact with little notice. Please can NTBCC let CEC undertake this motion and hence resolution of the issue. *I will keep NTBCC informed*.
    - Cllr Caldwell: CEC cllrs had very little notice of the closure, despite the development being approved in 2021. There may be routes through other parts of the site that are not currently being developed. I agree that the path is important, and understand the frustration about this closure.
  - M Birch: there appears to be no other suitable diversion route. While the contractor is in discussion about alternatives, these would have significant issues (in-progress construction, need for lighting and surfacing). Hence this path needs to reopen asap. The contractor must manage any vehicular use of the path. CEC owns the path, commissioned the development and appointed the contractor, so CEC has ultimate responsibility. CEC officers have not consulted or notified the public, or undertaken proper risk assessment. The path has been damaged by construction traffic, so it needs to be repaired before it is reopened (on 19th December, for 2 weeks). Further closures need to be better planned, with proper community/stakeholder engagement. (Future closures are needed to facilitate excavation of utilities under the path.)
  - R Price: the approved plans included changes to the path, so there will be extensive work in the future. However, the path is currently closed to suit the contractor. What commitments have been made by CEC to the contractor? The latter could implement a staffed crossing. It is unclear whether there is a viable detour route when the Powderhall waste transfer station is in use.
  - A resident: I am a construction professional with much relevant experience and knowledge. I've sent a document with technical details to NTBCC's secretary. This work has raised serious public safety issues. In brief, construction access points should not be next to public footpaths. Powderhall could have been done much more efficiently.
- *Action: M Birch to engage with NTBCC ward cllrs about this issue*.

8.e Communal bin review (CBR) phase 6: outcome of meeting with CEC staff

- This meeting, also attended by cllrs Mowat and Macfarlane, was not long enough for NTBCC to pose all its questions to the CBR team. Hence there will be briefings for CCs and residents. CEC will write to all residents where there is change of service. (CCs will have advance sight of these.) Impacted CCs are meeting tomorrow. *I will update NTBCC about this meeting*. The changes are that areas with gull-proof bags will have red boxes to be replaced with green sacks. Bin-installations require TROs, so installation will take place in 2027. Bin locations from the previous phases are now being re-examined. The outstanding issue is that some streets' opinions were unclear. CEC has reconsulted about these: decisions will be communicated in January.
  - P Williamson: bins should not be outside front doors, but should be clustered to facilitate to promote proper use.

8.f Graffiti – website post and follow-up actions

- Thanks to cllr Caldwell for words used in NTBCC's post. There is supposedly a graffiti taskforce but it has not achieved anything for 2 years. NTBCC will raise this in time for the next street-cleansing report, due in early 2026.
  - P Williamson: CEC held a graffiti summit in 2024 but nothing like this since then.
  - S Hodge: There is some support to remove graffiti but not enough prevention. Can NTBCC/CEC use social media? *I'll include MB in engagement with relevant CEC officers*.

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8.g TROs and ETROs for George St

S Holledge: these are due on 16 January, i.e. before NTBCC's next public meeting.

8.h Dublin St and Abercromby Place

Planned changes have put on hold, but we don't know what other options have considered. *I will engage with cllr Miler*.

8.i Cycling exemptions

- The TRO subcommittee is to consider a report recommending that the first batch of permissions for two-way cycling on one-way streets is approved, including on Rose St (a designated primary pedestrian route). CEC says that such cycling is already happening, so it should be permitted. It is surprising that CEC might introduce more cycling into pedestrian areas. A road safety report has not been published. Any need for such use of Rose St has now gone.
  - *Action: M Birch to progress NTBCC's objection*.

9 Engagement: planned strategy for 2026

All points made by S Hodge unless otherwise noted.

- Trust in local politics is very low, a problem for CCs. People feel that decisions are made without engaging with them. CCs need to advertise what they do and the positive outcomes, not just work behind the scenes, and how they fit into local decision-making. (This was the finding of the recent project by Herriott-Watt students.)
- Hence S Hodge and F Banatvala have developed a plain English engagement strategy for NTBCC, including how it will listen to residents, what they can and can't expect from NTBCC and that NTBCC does not make decisions on substantive matters. NTBCC will attempt to engage early, so that it can influence decisions and focus on matters that concern residents.
- FB will undertake more traditional engagement, which SH will concentrate on digital work.
  - SH/FB have tried to minimise 'attack surfaces', e.g. promising what cannot be delivered, by using language such as 'NTBCC will do its best to', 'NTBCC will aim to' etc.
  - Feedback from NTBCC included 'this complements the easy-read constitution' (see item 3.a row 2 above), 'this is a good induction document: new members know what they are joining' and 'add in what NTBCC cannot do'.
  - There was discussion of inclusion of maps of CC areas, e.g. links to CEC's Edinburgh Atlas. NB NTBCC considers matters that are outwith its area but still have impact on its area.
- *Action: SH/FB to share draft with NTBCC members, then take in feedback*.
- *Action: NTBCC members to endorse finalised strategy*.
- *Action: once the strategy is complete, NTBCC to share it with other Edinburgh CCs and CEC*.
- *Action: SH/FB to develop action plan to implement finalised strategy*.

10 Any other business

10.a NTBCC meetings

- *Action: P Williamson to organise NTBCC's business meeting for January*.
- NTBCC's first 2026 public meeting will be in February, and in-person. Subsequent meetings will alternate between in-person and online.
- NTBCC needs to advertise its 2026 meetings on its website and via posters. Venues need to be booked.

10.b 'Political' flags on lampposts

- These were raised on Broughton St and London Rd. Removal in some areas took ~2 weeks, due to need for work orders and concern that workers might be attacked.
  - Cllr Mowat: CEC doesn't have a flag-removal team. There have been threats to council workers in Edinburgh and elsewhere. There has been a CEC motion on community cohesion, so delays should be no more than 1 week unless there are extenuating circumstances.
  - Cllr Caldwell: both CEC officers and private contractors were concerned for their safety. *I will keep NTBCC informed*.

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