

# Fairmilehead Community Council

Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday 1 December 2009 in Fairmilehead Parish Church Halls

**Present:** Dennis Williams (Chair); Louise Maguire (Vice Chair); Norman Tinlin (Secretary); Alison Elfick (Treasurer); Johanna Carrie; Barbara Dick (Buckstone Association); Bryan Fisher; James Gow; Richard Hinton; Sandy Macpherson; Tom Strathdee; Councillors Elaine Aitken and Eric Barry; PC Kenny Welsh; Paul de Luca; Ian Elfick ;Liz and Mike Brunsdon; Ann McCutcheon; Norman McKenzie; Matthew McKerrow; Colin Manson; Audrey Ryan; Fiona Simon; Christine Spence; Margaret Walker; Charles Whytock; Alan and Pam Wight;

**Apologies:** Councillor Jason Rust; Bruce and Joyce Beveridge

**In Attendance:** David McLetchie, MSP

## 1. Police Report

PC Kenny Welsh reported that during November there were 12 reported crimes. This was good news as the figures had fallen from the summer to the lowest level since February.

There were 3 thefts which occurred in Winton Loan, Biggar Road and Buckstone Terrace and a fraud occurred in Swanston Drive. 2 of the crimes again involved vehicles where property was stolen from within and it appears the owners are leaving property in full view inviting their vehicle to be broken into.

3 assaults which occurred in Pentland View were all related to the one incident and a person has been reported.

There are 2 reports of property being damaged in Pentland View (related to the above incident) and Caiystane Crescent.

There was one report of disorderly conduct in Buckstone Drive and a person has been reported for this. Finally, a person has been reported for being in possession of an illegal substance in Caiystane Gardens.

During November the weather has proved extremely wet which has seen an increase in the activities of bogus workman. Please ensure you take all the correct precautions and don't get caught out.

## 2. Minute Of Meeting Held On 3 November 2009 And Matters Arising.

The minutes were approved on the motion of Bryan Fisher seconded by Norman McKenzie.

### Matters Arising:

#### a) Boots at Buckstone Terrace

The Secretary reported that following the last meeting he submitted an FOI enquiry to NHS Lothian regarding their pharmacy contract. He had received a response and this is reproduced below:

"The arrangements for the provision of pharmaceutical services are set out in the National Health Service (General Pharmaceutical Services)(Scotland) Regulations 2009. This includes the dispensing of listed drugs and medicines which are included in the Drug Tariff and all pharmacies will provide this service.

According to our records the pharmacy at 10A Buckstone Terrace, Edinburgh, EH10 6PZ also provides continence aids and domiciliary oxygen services. We also understand that the pharmacy offers prescription collection and delivery services to patients that may require them.

Over the past few years a new community pharmacy contract has been developed and negotiated to reflect the pharmaceutical needs of NHS Scotland and the patients it serves. The new contract will comprise of two elements – core services and additional services and will be underpinned by an ePharmacy programme.

Core services will be provided from every community pharmacy and to date the minor ailment service and the public health service have been introduced.

Additional services will comprise a range of services available to the public but will not necessarily be from every community pharmacy – for example oxygen supply, harm reduction services and advisory services to care homes.

Further information is available on the Community Pharmacy website created by the Scottish Government: <http://www.communitypharmacy.scot.nhs.uk/>.”

Members of the meeting confirmed that were problems getting prescriptions fulfilled the same day and there had been occasions where persons had to wait four days before getting their medicines. There was general discontent with the service being provided. The Chair asked Mr McLetchie if he could pursue the matter with NHS Lothian which he agreed to do.

The Secretary also informed the meeting that the Threshers branch at Buckstone Terrace would be closing in the next few days. Along with the pram shop this would be two empty premises next to each other.

### **b) Hunter’s Tryst Site Proposals**

Councillor Aitken reported that the meeting which had been due to be held on 30 November had been cancelled but there would be another one in the New Year. Mr McLetchie said that there had been a lot of mistaken beliefs regarding the proposals for the site which had caused the initial problems.

### **c) Newsletter**

Tom Strathdee provided a brief update on the newsletter. It was hoped to have the final draft ready before Christmas so that it could be passed to the printer at the start of the year. The Secretary reported that the Community Engagement Fund grant from the Neighbourhood Partnership for the calendar had been approved in principle and would be formally approved at their meeting the following week. He had been at the Youth Project to commence the competition to design a logo.

## **3. Correspondence**

- a) Pentland Beacon Newsletter – Autumn 2009 edition
- b) Invest Edinburgh Bulletin – Autumn 2009
- c) Waste Action Grant Celebration Event – 2 December at City Chambers (*Circulated by e-mail*)
- d) CEC Planning – Community Engagement and the Planning Service
- e) Edinburgh Civic Trust – Minutes of previous meeting and agenda for next on 8 December 2009 (*Louise Maguire attending*)
- f) Marie Curie Hospice – Notice of Christmas Fair, 5 December
- g) CEC parks – Draft Edinburgh Parks Manifesto – Comments by 31 January 2010 (*Circulated by e-mail*)
- h) BT Community connections – Free laptops for voluntary groups (*Circulated by e-mail*)
- i) TV Licensing – Notice of enforcement campaign in Edinburgh during November and December
- j) Morningside CC – Problems with overcrowding on buses through Morningside (*Cllr Aitken had previously highlighted this problem and had contacted Lothian Buses*)
- k) Zero Waste Project Consultation Event at Danderhall (*Circulated by e-mail and Secretary to try arrange a speaker*)
- l) Scottish Health Council – Connect newsletter Autumn 2009 edition
- m) Tenants Voice newsletter – November 2009 edition
- n) Pentlands Neighbourhood Partnership – Update newsletter November 2009

- o) CEC Licensing – Draft gambling statement of principles 2010
- p) CEC Licensing – Premises Licence applications December 2009 (*2 in area, Morrisons and Pavilion*)
- q) CC Liaison Officer – Community Council Newsletter November 2009
- r) CC Liaison Officer – Housing information event for older people, 7 December.
- s) Halcrow – Planning Pre Application Notice – land at Burdiehouse
- t) Scottish Water – Notification of Pipe Laying Frogston Road West
- u) CEC Roads Department – proposed waiting restrictions at Buckstone Primary
- v) CEC Road safety – Notification re Buckstone Traffic Calming (*Leaflets delivered to houses - Secretary to write confirming approval but pointing out problems with a couple of existing locations*)

#### **4. Pentlands Neighbourhood Partnership**

The Secretary reported to the meeting that an application had come in front of the Funding Panel from the Currie and District Round Table. This was under the Community Grants Fund and was for £4000. The purpose was to buy a trike to replace the trailer they had used for the fund raising tours with Father Christmas on board. He explained the background for his bringing this matter to the attention of the meeting. He reported that normally applications were approved at the Panel with sometimes the amounts requested being increased. But this application had caused disagreement in the Panel.

He had voted against the application and he sought guidance from the meeting who agreed that he use his discretion when the matter was raised at the meeting the following week.

#### **5. Planning and Environment**

Louise Maguire reported a pre-application notice regarding the Dreghorn polo fields had been issued but that any meeting would not be until February.

#### **6. Transport Sub-Committee**

The Secretary reported that at the recent Transport and Infrastructure meeting the objection which had been lodged to the parking restrictions in Braid Road had been repelled. This meant that the time limited parking bays would be installed there. It was also hoped that the double yellow lines in Buckstone Avenue, Gardens and Road would also be installed at the same time.

He also reported on the recent area walkabout in the Camus and Caiystane area which had been attended by himself, Councillor Aitken, Louise Maguire, Tom Strathdee and two council officials. The main problems had been the state of the roads and pavements.

#### **7. Other Matters**

##### **Environmental:**

Johanna Carrie raised the matter of sustainable targets. She was trying to get information on this subject from the Council and suggested the following be submitted to see what response was made:

“Please will the City of Edinburgh Sustainable Development Department share their targets with us, and other community councils. Please will they point out how communities and individuals can help meet these targets.

If targets for 2010 are given, I hope that there will be feedback on their attainment, with targets for 2011, in a year's time. I assume all the targets will relate to reducing carbon emissions, but I would like more detail, examples:

what % of waste goes to landfill now and what reduction is target?

what % of Edinburgh buildings are now well insulated and what improvement is target?

what is being done to reduce emissions from traffic?”

It was agreed that the Secretary would submit the request on behalf of the Community Council.

She also raised that Transition Edinburgh was intending applying for funding from the Climate Challenge Fund. The closing date was 13 January. She asked if the members would

be agreeable providing a letter of "Expression of Interest". This was agreed and the Chair and Secretary would meet to agree the wording.

## **8. Youth Report**

James Gow and Paul de Luca showed a short DVD of interviews with members of the Youth Project. Margaret Walker showed the Highly Commended Award in the Young Edinburgh Citizenship category that the Project and Youth Club had recently won at the Standard life Achievement Awards. This was for the Family Fun Day and Sponsored Duck Race.

The Chair gave thanks to Margaret and the Youth Project/Club and the meeting showed their appreciation in the usual way.

## **9. Councillors Reports**

Councillors Aitken and Barry gave their annual reports verbally. In the absence of Councillor Rust, the Secretary read over his report.

Copies of their reports are attached as an Appendix to this minute and can also be found on the website.

## **10. David McLetchie MSP**

Mr McLetchie highlighted that teacher numbers were declining and that the Education Secretary had just been replaced. Regarding "equal pay" problems that were causing strikes and work to rule in local government, agreement in the matter had been reached in 1999 with the unions. He drew the meetings attention to the insulation programme that was available. For no, or minimal, outlay depending on an individuals circumstances cavity wall and loft insulation could be installed. This helps to save money on energy bills.

## **11. AOCB**

The Chair gave thanks to all politicians, members and attendees and wished them the compliments of the season. He invited all present to partake of cheese and wine and the entertainment to be provided by members of the Youth Project.

## **12. Date Of Next Meeting**

This was arranged for Tuesday 5 January 2010 in Fairmilehead Parish Church.

### **Forthcoming Meetings:**

Tuesday 2 February 2010

Tuesday 2 March 2010

Tuesday 6 April 2010

### **Contacts:**

e-mail: [Secretary@fairmileheadcc.org.uk](mailto:Secretary@fairmileheadcc.org.uk)

Website: [www.fairmileheadcc.org.uk](http://www.fairmileheadcc.org.uk)

## Councillors' Reports

### Annual Report 2009 by Councillor Elaine Aitken (Conservative)

This is a summary of some of the issues on which I have reported and discussed with the members of Fairmilehead Community Council:

#### Environment:

- The Edinburgh City Control bunker in Buckstone Grove which had been the subject to graffiti had been repainted.
- The litter bins at the Buckstone shops were replaced but one had been put in the wrong place so required to be resited.
- A review had been undertaken of public conveniences including the one at Fairmilehead Crossroads. It would cost at least £25,000 to refurbish and as all funding had now been withdrawn there was no possibility of it being revamped. A couple of agencies were interested in buying it.

#### Roads & Footpaths:

- Gritting problems in the Pentland Drive, Pentland School and Buckstone School areas.
- A meeting was held with the three residents in Buckstone Avenue regarding their objection to the proposed double yellow lines there. Also present at the meeting were Councillor Barry, the FCC Secretary and Gordon Drysdale, the CEC Area Road Manager. As a result a slight adjustment was suggested which satisfied the concerns of the residents.
- Railings were installed in Cockmylane when funding was identified.
- A site meeting was held with the area roads manager and residents in Swanston Avenue and Drive regarding rat running and the provisions of DYL (double yellow lines) at the junction with Biggar Road in the interest of road safety. There was also a bad carriageway in Swanston Terrace.
- A site meeting was held with the area roads manager and residents concerning the need for a pedestrian crossing in the Biggar Road at the paths from the Winton estate, currently 141st on the list.
- Councillors and Community Councils in the area discussed projects under the Neighbourhood Partnership devolved roads budget. It has been agreed that two traffic islands, one in Biggar Road and one in Pentland terrace at Comiston Rise, be approved.
- Getting the dipped pavements at the Buckstone shops lowered so that they were more suitable for wheelchairs. An audit found that the dropped kerbs at the Buckstone Shops were too high and they were altered.
- No through road signs are being erected at Buckstone Howe and Shaw. Both of these developments were as result of complaints from Jim Hill who sadly died earlier this year.
- I arranged a meeting with Caroline Burwell and Euan Kennedy regarding the report on speed bumps. Discussions took place with members of the ambulance service who agreed that the cushions could be changed to humps. An information leaflet has been delivered to households in Buckstone regarding the suggested change from cushions to humps in Buckstone Road and Loan. The works could be done before the end of this financial year. A similar leaflet will be delivered next year concerning works for the Drive and Crescent.
- I requested that the appropriate department investigate requests for traffic calming in Pentland View and the Drive near to the routes children take to Pentland Primary.
- I've reported a number of overhanging trees and foliage and a number of gullies for cleaning including the problem at the bus stop at Buckstone Terrace.

### **Schools:**

- I reported that the buckets near to Buckstone School were being emptied around about 0845 when pupils were going in, following a complaint from a resident that the lorry had reversed into the school whilst there were pupils about. The refuse collection in the area around Buckstone Primary school has now been undertaken later in the morning once the pupils are in school
- Recently, a lorry was working in the area at High Buckstone when the children were going in to school. This is extremely bad considering the assurances given when I reported this previously. An investigation is taking place to see the steps needed to stop this happening again.
- I am still looking for sites for grit bins near to the schools
- I raised concerns with Councillor MacLaren regarding the cancellation of school lets on Thursdays from the start of the next school session in August. In this area there was no alternative and it affected both the Buckstone Dance Group and the youth football. As a result, an arrangement was agreed with the group to enable them to continue with the Thursday let.
- I attended a meeting to discuss the possibility of opening Pentland Primary playing field in the evenings and weekends. Due to lack of resources it has been decided that it would not be opened.
- Following discussions with Margaret Walker, I met with Mike Rosendale to raise the problems which would result because of the withdrawal of two secondments from the Scouts Council and the Lothian Association of Youth Clubs.

### **Planning:**

- Looked at a proposed development to build a house within the garden ground next to the nursery at 226 Braid Road. (08/04064/FUL) and supported FCC in their submission against this proposal.
- I submitted comments against the application for change of use for 16 Buckstone Terrace
- Councillor Rust and I attended a meeting of the Development Committee to speak against the recommendation made by the Reporters that the Dreghorn polo fields be included for housing in the Edinburgh City Plan. This was successful but has still to be approved by the Council
- There were questions about the current position of the Fairmile Inn and proposed Calderstone development. It had been confirmed that the planning permission for the Fairmile Inn had expired and there was nothing further on Calderstones.

### **Areas covered by The Walkabouts:**

- The first area walkabout started in Camus Avenue, went to Pentland Drive round about the school, took in hotspots in Fairmilehead Park and also took in Colmestone Gate.
- The Caiystane area paying attention to the areas where there had been recent gas and road works.
- The Winton and Biggar Road area and observations were made of the car wash at the Fairmile Inn.
- The Buckstone area when the fence around the "water board" field on the houses side was in a very poor state of repair and a safety issue. I have brought this to the attention of the Children's and Families officials
- Caiystane Terrace and Camus Avenue to look at a number of problems but mainly the state of the roads and pavements.

### **Bus Issues:**

- Letters were sent to the frontages at the bus stop in Buckstone Terrace (west side) regarding the intention to install a seat there. This has since been installed.
- I've exchanged a number of emails with Ian Craig, Lothian Buses, re the problems experienced by Boroughmuir pupils trying to catch the bus to and from school. The buses are often full, leaving pupils and other passengers waiting for the next bus. Ian has arranged for audits of passenger numbers to be carried out.

### **Community:**

- **Oxgangs Post Office:**  
Following an excellent campaign by Firrhill and Fairmilehead Community Councils, members of the community and politicians, The Post Office reversed their decision to close the branch in Oxgangs Broadway.
- **Pentlands Community Safety Panel** has undertaken two action days where information and leaflets have been distributed at the local supermarkets.

### **Community safety:**

- Currently, no proposals had been submitted yet regarding the Fairmile Inn but the existing planning permission had expired. I have arranged for the building to be monitored by Community Safety and Environmental Services.
- Local Authorities were given extra powers from the beginning of the month regarding abandoned or derelict buildings. She had brought this to the attention of the relevant departments in relation to both 17 Buckstone Crescent and the Fairmile Inn.
- I made enquiries regarding the car wash within the Fairmile Inn and found out that the owner had apparently granted a year's lease for this. Scottish Water had confirmed that they had no concerns. This has since closed.

### **Events/Meetings Attended:**

- 650 people attended the Summer Fayre at Buckstone Primary where £2634 had been raised
- £2000 had been raised at Pentland Primary.
- I supported the Buckstone Youth Project to gain a grant from the Pentlands Neighbourhood Partnership towards their week away at Nethy Bridge and the purchase of portable goal posts.
- The children's safety day at the Oxgangs Police Station on 17 June
- AGMs of the Parent Councils
- Tea in the Park event in Braidburn Valley Park
- Fundraising events for the Boroughmuir School Trust.
- The Pentland Community Safety Panel
- Information meeting relating to the Hunters Tryst site proposals and a meeting arranged with Dunedin Canmore to discuss the proposals. The main concerns were the reinstatement of the public footpath which went through the site but which at present was blocked off.

Elaine Aitken, December 2009.

## **Annual Report by Eric Barry (Labour)**

### **Care for the most vulnerable**

Plans by the Council Administration for a reduction of 21% in the financial support for people requiring a lot of help due to complicated physical and mental problems took a set back when the three opposition parties found common ground to defeat the ruling group of Liberals and Nationalists.

These disadvantaged people have the right to choose who provides their care and the Council was taking that away by tendering care services. We felt that some of the groups winning these tenders were not going to be giving nearly as good a level of service as people currently enjoyed. Indeed some have no experience in providing service to the disabilities they had won a tender for. Current providers like the Garvald Centre give a very high standard of service, priced their bids accordingly and lost out. Garvald is highly thought of by its users and will close if this process goes ahead.

Very few of the vulnerable have any money so topping up the “bare minimum” payments from the Council is not an option. This takes away their right to choice of service provider.

**Director of Social work admits “communication and consultation was woefully inadequate” but that didn’t stop the Administration trying to push ahead with this scheme.**

Imagine you need the help of a carer for your most intimate personal hygiene requirements. Would you rather have the same person you trust every time or a variety of agency workers with whom you have no rapport?

### **Industrial action by manual workers**

Our bin dispute drags on into its sixth month, costing you the Council Tax Payer, unnecessary millions for private bin men to top up the service.

We deserve a good standard of cleansing at an economical price but this Council refuse to negotiate meaningfully or don’t know how to. All councils are having to address the same issues but most have sorted theirs out, indeed Glasgow settled their dispute in just one week.

I don’t support the bin men because of a political ideology but because I believe they give a good service at reasonable cost. If it could be even better and cost a bit less then I would want that outcome. At the moment bringing in the outside contractors is doing neither.

I don’t believe privatising cleansing would benefit you and me. Just look at hospital cleaning services.

Tell me you think our hospitals are cleaner as a result of kicking out the in house service and replacing it with agency type workers. Tell me you think we are paying any less for the new rotten service.

Another aspect of this dispute has been that cleaners at our local primary schools have not been replaced instead Blue Arrow were supposed to be providing agency workers to make up the numbers. They failed to do this and a staff of 3 ended up having to do the work of 5 but still for the pay of 3. Our council don’t mind exploiting the lowest paid and agencies charge much more but offer much less it would appear.

### **The homecoming extravaganza**

This party in Holyrood Park lost over £600,000 and probably cost a lot more than that. Who’s picking up the bill? You are. Despite the denials of the Council Leader, you are.

Asked at the October Council meeting she told us The Homecoming would not cost the council-taxpayer a penny. The truth is over £300,000 of this debt was charged to DEMA, the council owned tourist organisation who's chief exec resigned on having this bankrupting charge forced on to DEMA

Asked at the November council meeting the Leader denied knowledge of the resignation and councillor Tom Buchanan refused to answer any questions using the excuse that he is a council appointed director of DEMA so cannot comment. That seems a conflict of interest since he is only a director because he is a councillor and is there to protect the council's interests.

### **Speed humps in Buckstone**

Three of the main streets in Buckstone are to have their speed bumps replaced by full width humps. I have met with the roads director to try and ensure that the replacements will be properly constructed. The council is currently putting these new humps in at a lot of locations but although they at first appear acceptable, they quickly deform and become quite violent.

I believe the construction fault is that the tarmac is not compacted by a powerful enough roller and I am trying to get this resolved for residents of Buckstone who have suffered for long enough.

### **Local road tragedy**

When plans to reduce the speed limit in Frogstone Road went to council I spoke against the change. All the Police reports said that there was no issue of speeding in the area and a period of about 10 years since any speed related casualty. In fact the Police had stopped placing the Speed (driver tax) Camera at the location because it was collecting only one fine for ever three visits there.

A plethora of new signs went up to announce the new signs and the new likelihood of "cops with hairdryers" which I find can actually distract you from driving safely.

Sadly two young people from outside the area, lost their lives soon after the changes. The changes have proved not to enhance safety.

### **Edinburgh's Trams**

These are often a topic at Fairmilehead Community Council.

The real tragedy is that Edinburgh could have had a good tram system complementing it excellent and low cost bus system. However, the Tram project is designed to also hammer private motoring in the city and may well do that but it fails on the first count.

My instinct is saying that it will all come to a head in January as they get back to construction work.

The cost of the reduced system, sorry, single line, was promised to be fixed at £545Million but this promise is about to be broken by anything up to £200M.

Besides that, although the Council has the £500M from the Scottish Government, it does not have its own £45M contribution most of which was going to come from milking developers who now aren't developing and Lothian Buses' Profits which are now losses.

I reckon that we can only find the money to do the line as far as St Andrew Square. I have noticed for months that while there is the appearance of road works in Leith Walk, in the form of barriers and holes, there is quite literally never anyone working there. They still talk about the line going to Newhaven but I think they are just putting off breaking the news to the Leith Councillors who are mostly fanatical supporters.

They will tell you that Dubliners were against their tram system while it was being constructed but that all Dublin loves it now, so just wait and you will love Edinburgh's Trams. The truth is, the Dubliners who love it tend to live, work and shop on the route. Most importantly, Dublin had a very poor bus service so anything was an improvement.

£545M to replace the number 22 bus? You're having a larf.

Eric Barry

## Annual Report from Jason Rust (Conservative)

Please accept my apologies for the meeting this evening. I note below items for Councillors' report item on the agenda.

- It will be next year before there is any substantive progress on the Hunter's Tryst site.
- I joined some parents this morning on the school walk from the Dreghorn Estate to Pentland Primary School to see the problems crossing Redford Road. Discussions are taking place with the Police and Head Teacher and the matter will be taken forward with Council Officials.
- Pentland Primary School Christmas Fair is this coming Saturday.
- School closures are on the agenda for the next Council meeting. None is in the Fairmilehead area. The nearest is Burdiehouse Primary.
- Fly-tipping at the Fairmile Inn has been dealt with and discussions are to be had with the proprietors regarding security. The terriers are investigating. Elaine has been leading on this.
- The road mileage signage on Oxgangs Road is to be replaced in the next financial year.
- Pavements at Caiystane Avenue/Terrace have been reported due to only part of the required work being carried out.
- Speeding on Swanston Road continues to be reported.
- Pentland Community Centre are to face budget cut-backs. I am having discussions with officials and a meeting will be arranged with the Management Committee and the relevant officials.
- The next meeting of Pentlands Neighbourhood Partnership is on Tuesday 8th December 2009 at Colinton Primary School, Redford Walk at 7pm.
- Fairmilehead will remain in the Edinburgh Pentlands seat for the Scottish Parliament elections in 2011. The new Pentlands seat loses Allan Park and Craiglockhart and South Morningside and acquires Stenhouse and Ratho. This means that the entirety of Ward 8, Colinton/Fairmilehead will remain in Pentlands.

Finally, thank you to Dennis and all members for their work and support during the year and a happy Christmas and peaceful New Year to all members.

Regards  
Jason