

Neilston Community Council
Meeting of Tuesday 27 February 2024
MINUTES

In attendance: Malcolm Briggs, Janice Connery (Vice Chair), Margaret Currie, Kenny McKenzie, Colin McLeish (Treasurer), Margaret Pettigrew, Gail Squires (Secretary & minutes)

ERC Councillors: Tony Buchanan, Owen O'Donnell.

Visitors: PC Meldrum, PC Muir, Douglas Curry

Apologies: Ronnie Junner, Julie Cloherty.

1. Welcome

- Margaret Pettigrew was chairing in absence of Ronnie and welcomed everyone.
- Previous meeting's minutes were approved following a small amendment from Cllr O'Donnell. (Proposed: Kenny; Seconded: Janice)

2. Police Report: There was discussion with the officers around the monthly report and they alerted us to a recent scam whereby people are being tricked into withdrawing cash from ATMs and subsequently robbed. They will email us a synopsis of what's been happening, and we will attempt to alert the community about it. (The officers then left the meeting)

3. Matters arising

- **Yellow lines/parking:** Signage to fully activate the yellow lines does not seem to have yet been installed, this will be monitored. Car parking issues have diminished due to the reduction in workmen at the school.
- **Tree Planting at Kingston Playing Fields:** this has been successfully arranged and will take place on 13 March from 10.30-2pm and the schools are arranging for the kids to participate. Wider sharing of this info will be done in advance. [Action: Gail]
- **Participatory Budget Fund:** Margaret P updated on progress. The bids were sufficient for the event to go ahead on 16 March at Glen Halls from 10-12 and she encouraged the members to come along if they can. There was discussion about future sources of funding for local groups and possibility of including NDT.
- **Electronic noticeboard:** Margaret P updated that ERC couldn't give an estimate of the cost of re-siting it just now so no progress yet on this but NCC will keep it under review.
- **Filing cabinet:** Andrew Reid had been contacted to request any information on progress but still to hear back. To be followed up. [Action: Gail]
- **Gravestones safety issue:** Cllr O'Donnell updated that ERC will be undertaking a safety test and recommendations will arise from that. It was noted that it is not clear where responsibility lies for this, particularly as it is no longer in use for new burials, which alters its status and bye-laws may be applicable. There was some discussion around the deteriorating fabric of the manse wall which led to discussion on the need for **street sweeping**. Cllr Buchanan will check out if 'scarab' sweepers could be deployed regularly in the village. [Action: Cllr Buchanan]
- **Written permissions:** Cllr O'Donnell fed back on last meeting's query about what permissions 'Incredible Edible Neilston' have for their activities and advised they don't have any in writing. The main concern is the open grass area at Pig Square although no complaints have been received about this to date. Cllr O'Donnell was clear that there was no wish at ERC to be heavy handed with an essentially positive and beneficial project, however if complaints do come in to NCC, they will look at them then and, if required, a 'cease and desist' letter could be issued to IEN. This is more likely to happen after the hoardings come down on completion of demolition of the old school which is likely to take a year or thereabouts.

Gail (who is an IEN member) had been advised by the chair of IEN that the composting project had written permission and ERC were using it in their media. There may also be complaints re the 2 cow sculptures which are in a more central position on the open grass, however Cllr Buchanan pointed out that there had been consultation on them before they were put up.

- **East Renfrewshire Equalities Forum:** Gail updated that she is keeping in touch with this and will be attending an online meeting on 20 March on behalf of NCC. [\[Action: Gail\]](#)

4. **New school pre-opening visits**

Cllr O'Donnell advised that a recorded video presentation of the new school building will be made available to parents and NCC amongst others. He also mentioned that an event is being arranged for the Duncarnock residents, who have been most affected by the building work, but could not divulge any of the details.

Douglas Curry, visitor to the meeting, raised issues of:

- excess noise pollution from the school site, particularly from machinery running through the night. Also, an alarm had rung for a solid 13 hours at the weekend previously and nobody was available to remedy this.
- consultation with the Duncarnock residents in respect of the problems they have faced has been essentially nil, both before and during the work at the school.
- the poor quality of communications from the contractors and ERC on the residents' issues have been entirely unsatisfactory. An ERC employee, John Adams, had indicated that the rule of thumb was that residents should be told as little as possible. It was agreed this was infuriating, disrespectful and counterproductive.
- Letters in reply to complaints are unhelpful and dismissive and just assert that the rules have been followed and their interest appears to end there.
- an additional window had been added that had not been in the plan and when queried, ERC had responded that it was not a window it was an 'aperture' and dismissed the concerns.
- light pollution is another issue with spotlights on unnecessarily throughout the night.
- a letter of apology to the Duncarnock residents would be welcome.

The Councillors present stated that all of the issues that had emerged at NCC meetings had been followed up by them and they had received assurance that they were dealt with. However, they agreed this was wholly unacceptable and they would make enquiries. [\[Action: Cllr O'Donnell\]](#)

It was also agreed that a Liaison Officer for the project should have been appointed from the very start and that it was not too late to arrange this to cover the period until all work at the site was complete, and this will be looked at now. [\[Action: Cllr O'Donnell\]](#)

5. **Pavement Parking in Kirkton Road**

There was discussion over concerns that the new building site at Kirkton Road would have enough space for parking given the new legislation disallowing parking on pavements. Should previously granted planning permissions be reassessed to now include the relevant space and would this now be part of future planning requirements. The Councillors present explained that access issues were currently being looked at and that there was a lot of work still to be done. There would be some exclusions put in place where applicable. They confirmed that ERC would be mindful of both legislation and practicalities.

6. **Neighbourhood Watch Schemes**

It was suggested that it might be worthwhile to start up a NW scheme in Neilston. The discussion included some of the past experience of this in Neilston, pros/cons etc. Social media has taken over to such an extent that the traditional NW schemes are probably no longer effective. Kenny has experience of setting up NW schemes and will liaise with Cllr O'Donnell who volunteered to look into this and feedback. [\[Action: Cllr O'Donnell, Kenny\]](#)

7. **Treasurer's report**

Colin reported the only finance activity this month was the cost of flowers presented on the occasion of the death of a previous NCC Chairperson (see AOCB). The third bank signatory arrangements are progressing.

8. **Facebook and Email**

Malcolm is happy to be the lead on these but felt that any FB posts should be agreed by all in advance.

Facebook Page: Malcom described the options for how the FB page could be run and the consensus was that it should essentially be outward facing only, fulfilling a noticeboard function with information on how to contact NCC by email or come to the meetings if there was a desire to respond to any posts. There are other issues to resolve (e.g. agreeing wording for posts, tapping into another CC's experience) and it was agreed that a meeting will take place after the PB event on 16th March for those who can attend.

Email: there are still some problems with bounce back from the NCC email and Malcolm will investigate.

[Action: Malcolm]

9. Recruitment to NCC

The current membership is mainly drawn from owner occupiers and it was agreed that we should be pro-actively addressing greater diversity in recruitment. Facebook and the electronic noticeboard are obvious ways of reaching out to the community as a whole and possibly approaching housing associations to advertise for us. To be further discussed. Andrew Reid to be contacted re max number of members.

[Action: Gail]

10. AOCB

- Margaret P and Janice updated that they had visited the wife of former NCC Chairperson, John Scott, to give condolences on his death on behalf of NCC and had brought flowers and a card which were very well received.
- Dealing with anti-social issues (such as dog fouling) came up and the advice is to contact **Ring & Report** on **0800 013 0076**.
- Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES): The councillors updated that this is in the early stages with an inventory currently being compiled before anything else can be done. It is a long-term strategy and no input required from NCC at this stage.

11. Next meeting: Tuesday 26 March.