



Present: Cath McGill (CM) – Chair, Neil Whyte (NW) – Minutes, Seonaid Barker (SB), Hazel Thomson (HT), Mary Davidson (MD), Janice Brown (JBr), Faye Skelton (FS), Jason Rutter (JR), Heather Webb-Nelson (HWN), Mary Webb (MW), Cllr Muirhead (JM) Cllr Catherine Johnstone (CJ)

In Attendance: Ellen Scott, Petra Leimich, Robbie Laird

Apologies: Kelly Drummond, Dawn Barclay, Gillian Cousin, PC Jason MacFarlane

1 Chair’s Welcome & Apologies

CM opened the meeting and welcomed all those in attendance. Apologies noted as above.

2 Actions & Matters Arising from previous meeting and Adoption of Minutes

ID	Description	Who	Status	Update
2020-09-3	Provide update on progress Places for Everyone funding in relation to welcome signs	JM	Closed	Awarded funding, but no further forward on 20mph or gateway. However, welcome signage is in the capital budget for this year and is expected in next couple of months.
2020-11-01	Feedback ideas for Covid memorial garden/planters	MD, HT, Ellen, Dawn	Closed	See full update below.
2021-01-02	Research available ongoing funding for war memorial repairs	SB	Closed	Stale action. Closing.
2021-01-11	Populate noticeboards on an ongoing basis	JBr	Open	Keys cut required. Dawn, Jim, Ellen & Cath. Neil to provide key points to go inside.
2021-02-01	Update from Network Rail on pedestrian access at railway station	CM	In Progress	6-foot fence erected! Awaiting input from Network Rail.
2021-02-06	Find out if there is any issue with the roof of Gorebridge Library that would prevent it opening when restrictions ease	JM	Closed	Building services report roof is complete, so can open. Improvements needed on children’s area – might keep shut until done.
2021-02-10	Discuss opportunity for a planning presentation and Q&A session with Peter Arnsdorf	NW	In Progress	Email request sent – awaiting update.
2021-03-02	Write to Derek Oliver to highlight our lack of welcome signage and ensure all joined up with Places for Everyone application	NW/CM	Closed	
2021-03-03	Arrange stock and distribution of 30mph stickers	CM/JBa	Closed	Stickers being provided.
2021-03-04	Collate concerns on St Andrew’s school crossing signs, confusing speed indication and bus stop to roads department	JBa	Open	No update: carry forward.
2021-03-05	Convene Communications group to discuss how we better publicise the work of the Community Council	SB/NW	Open	Still to meet. Will involve EH23.org as part of remit.
2021-03-09	Convene High School subgroup, keep Moorfoot CC informed	HT, SB, KD, Ellen	Closed	Progress being made – see item 4.1 below.
2021-04-01	HT will continue to discuss with Marc (CRVS) to understand the full scope of support that can be given and agree next steps	HT	Closed	Marc to send through a proposal, to be looked at offline.
2021-04-02	Write to Melville Housing to discuss land at Barleyknowe Road/McLean Place	NW	Open	No update: carry forward.
2021-04-03	Report outcome of meeting with Gareth Davies on land at Stobhill Depot	CJ	Closed	See full update below.
2021-04-04	Report missing bin at Harvieston Cemetery	CJ	Closed	See full update below.

ID	Description	Who	Status	Update
2021-04-05	Raise issue of heavy lorry use with Federation	CM	Closed	
2021-04-06	Liaise with Tynehead CC and Ian McAlpine at Newlandrigg, who has already done a survey of lorries	CM	Closed	CC personnel changes means regular meetings stopped. Lorna @ Moorfoot will look to restart and loop us in.
2021-04-07	Write to Justin Venton to question Vogrie Car Parking and potential for Access to Midlothian cardholders using for free	CM	In Progress	Written – no response as yet.
2021-04-08	Write to Justin Venton to suggest additional signage at Arniston Park	NW	Closed	Plan being progressed.
2021-04-09	Contact PC McFarlane to make aware of standing traffic Hunterfield Rd near car wash	NW	Closed	PC McFarlane will discuss with the owner.
2021-04-10	Discuss with Ruts local sites for off-road bike use	JBr / Ellen	Closed	There is a place at Nitten already, but it's likely temporary. JBr to send details for Emma to Ellen to discuss further next week.
2021-04-11	Contact PC McFarlane to ask if police can still install shed alarms	JBr	Open	Carry forward.
2021-04-12	Obtain clarity from Derek Oliver on welcome signage and Sustrans funding	NW/CM	In Progress	Awaiting feedback.
2021-04-13	Arrange with Grant Richie moving planters from Emily Court to the Hive	CM	Closed	On the list.

2020-11-01 (Covid memorial planters): Competition proposed with school kids (one from each of the 4 primary schools), with Erin Whyte offering her services to realise the winning designs onto the planters – GDCC would just to pay for materials. HT chatted to Dawn and concerns over blocking fire exits has been relieved. Four planters will be moved from Emily Court.

2021-04-03 (Meeting with Gareth Davies RE land at Stobhill Depot): JM and CJ met with Gareth. At that meeting lots of confidential information that cannot be disclosed for commercial reasons was covered. After Covid, development partners are having different ideas. Papers to go to planning in summer. Depot will still be there, but maybe not in exact current location. GDCC should follow up with Gareth directly and ask him to present at a future meeting.

2021-05-01	Ask Gareth Davies to present update on land at Stobhill Depot to future meeting	NW	15-Jun-21
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2021-04-04 (Missing Bin at Harvieston Cemetery): Missing bin now replaced. However, it seems people are using the bins as skips. Too full of rubble/soil to empty using the regular equipment, so they overflowed while a larger vehicle was sourced. May look to relocate to inside the cemetery gates rather than in car park to avoid this issue in future.

It was mentioned that the plinth that the World War 2 memorial was originally placed on (in the grounds of Gorebridge Parish Church) needs to be demolished. It is unclear who 'owns' this, but Robbie volunteered.

2021-05-02	Arrange for demolition of previous WW2 memorial plinth in church grounds	Robbie Laird	15-Jun-21
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Previous minutes proposed by SB, seconded by HT.

3 Guest Speaker: Representatives from Springfield, developers for Lingerwood

Mark Hamilton (Springfield Group Architectural Director) and Graeme Patrick (Strategic Planning Director) were in attendance to discuss the pre-application consultation for the Lingerwood development. They confirmed that the original MLDP allocated 735 units to this space. Currently looking at a detailed assessment, refreshing work done by Walker Group in 2008. The biggest issue in 2008 was a historic development brief which didn't take into account ground conditions, mining etc. The updated local plan (MLDP 2017) suggests abandoning that historic plan. That detailed assessment will cover capacity and look to inform transportation, Environmental Impact Assessment, noise assessments and all other deliverables typically involved in the planning process.

At this time, the actual 'real' capacity of the site expected to be up to 1000 units. This is a similar density multiplier as was realised by Cruden in Newtongrange (local plan suggested ~90, actually delivered ~120) and Persimmon in Mayfield (local plan suggested ~40, actually delivered ~60). The Lingerwood application will develop at a density of around a third more than the original brief.

In terms of timescales, the tentative plan would be to submit a PPP for the entire site alongside a DPP for Phase 1 by the end of the year. The precise extent and location of Phase 1 has yet to be determined but is expected to be for around 200 residential units.

A period of Q&A followed, and is summarised below:

Question to Developer	Answer from Developer
On p5, there looks to be boiler-plate text on what Springfield is, with a particular focus on the “20-minute Neighbourhood”. What plans are there for local shops, businesses, long-term jobs, education and entertainment to be introduced into the development area, or is all of this expected to be provided from existing facilities within existing neighbourhoods?	This is a bit of a ‘fashion badge’, pushed by central government. The aim is to allow people to try and live locally. However, it was confirmed that there is nothing required in the existing brief to deliver facilities directly and instead to focus on helping existing facilities flourish (e.g. as part of Midlothian Council’s aim to improve Mayfield Town Centre). Financial contributions are expected to be provided for leisure and other facilities.
Will the affordable housing allocation be placed evenly across the development to maximise integration, or will it be confined to one area?	Not concentrated in one part of site. The site will contain a mix of tenures (home builder brands & house styles) and each tenure will have it’s own mix of affordable housing.
The development will provide a de-facto urban link between three currently independent towns and villages. Is the development considered to exist as a new independent settlement, an extension of one or more of the existing towns or intended to create an conurbation of Mayfield, Newtongrange and Gorebridge/Gowkshill?	It is a new development, so it is reasonable it will take on its own character. However, there will be a mix of tenures, housing styles and building materials that mean each neighbourhood will have a distinct ‘feel’.
Will the development include options for those who are downsizing and/or requiring homes with greater accessibility (e.g. 1/2-bed bungalows or similar), or will it only contain larger family homes?	No specific answer for this site as yet. Unlike other Council areas, Midlothian does not enforce any requirements for this style housing within the plan. Springfield themselves have experience of this, and raise a development in Elgin that provided 1/2-bed ‘retirement-style’ units.

A discussion was had on the design brief, given the existing guidance in the MLDP is to ignore the historic brief. It was confirmed that Springfield have essentially been tasked by the Council to develop their own brief. This is increasingly become common practice across the country, as the Planning Departments in each Council simply do not have the experiences or resources to take on the town-planning aspect of the new developments and their integrations. This is why the PAC process is so important in providing input to that brief. It was confirmed that even though from the outside it might seem odd that the brief is developed by and then delivered against by the one developer (the phrase “fox guarding the hen-house” was used by one GDCC member) there are lots of checks and balances within the process to ensure that this ‘outsourcing’ is still constrained to include all local development needs as laid out in policy from local and national governments and with extensive oversight from the planning authority.

A few general points were raised, not specific to Lingerwood but with the planning process in general:

- A huge amount of housing development is underway or planned, from this development through Stobhill Depot, around Gore Glen Primary School and across to Redheugh yet no sign of any developments for shops, services etc. This emphasises the need for the Community Council to get involved earlier in the process as once down at the individual developments it is too late to effect meaningful village-wise change.
- Loss of agricultural land is always disappointing, but perhaps more so is the loss of hundreds of years of soil that has been made workable and fertile by generations of farmers and will likely be scraped off and stored poorly to spoil as developments progress.

Attendees were reminded of the upcoming public presentation on Wednesday 26 May 2021, with attendance and feedback encouraged. Our feedback as discussed in this meeting will also be submitted to Springfield directly.

2021-05-03	Provide summary of GDCC feedback to Springfield RE Lingerwood Development	NW	15-Jun-21
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Mark Hamilton and Graeme Patrick left the meeting at this point.

4 Update on Ongoing Issues

4.1 High School

NW has been discussing a potential public meeting with representatives from the Education department at Midlothian Council to get an update on plans for the school. This was a follow-up to some initial contact made through Cllr Johnstone. As a result, a meeting is proposed on either Tuesday 31 August or Thursday 2 September with Fiona Robertson, Executive Director Children, Young People and Partnerships and Chief Education Officer. The proposed format would be an hour dedicated meeting, with a 20-30 minute presentation, then Q&A (based on questions collated ahead of time from the community) and, if time permits an open-mic Q&A.

Community concerns over whether the idea of the new school becoming a Centre of Excellence for Engineering is appropriate, and rumours of no swimming pool being considered, were raised. Both JM and CJ confirmed that no discussions have been had on the facilities of the school, nor the key focus of the facility.

HT asked how much input the community would have on siting the school. NW confirmed that correspondence with the Education department suggested that the decision is not close to being made and that the timing of our proposed meeting will be well in advance of any such decision. Ellen raised a commitment from Midlothian Council to GCC to ensure that the community was involved in these discussions. JM highlighted that siting the school is a multi-faceted problem with many considerations, including ownership of land, which need to be balanced in making the decision so as to temper expectations that the community does not have free reign on the decision.

Ellen also asked when the school is likely to be built? JM expects 2025 build based on information presented to Full Council meeting, and noted that the papers presented to that meeting that referred to 23/24 consultation date is the formal detailed planning consultation at the end, rather than the beginning of the wider public consultation.

2021-05-04	Confirm 31 August for meeting with Education department on High School	NW	15-Jun-21
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4.2 Hunter Square Trips/Slips

NW submitted a summary of the incidents gathered after local consultation to Derek Oliver. He has commissioned a slip test to be carried out on the surface to explore possible reasons behind the incident rate.

5 New Issues Raised by Community

5.1 Bus Stop at Barleyknowe Road

JBa took photos of the deterioration of this bus stop, and again expressed concern for school children. NW has forwarded these on to Derek Oliver, also asking about who is best placed to advice on re-routing the school buses to avoid this stop altogether, and is awaiting a response.

JM suggested getting in contact with Safe Routes to School for advice too.

2021-05-05	Contact Safe Routes to School RE bus-stop issues at Barleyknowe Road	NW	15-Jun-21
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6 Major Planning Applications

6.1 Lingerwood Pre-Application Consultation

A brief discussion was held to summarise the earlier interaction with Springfield.

CM asked why elected members are seemingly unable to stand up for the communities they represent during the planning application, since they are all on the planning committee and therefore subject to restrictions on what they can and can't say. JM outlined that the pre-application process is run in a controlled environment, which has a bearing on what they can comment on publicly to avoid any potential later challenge that they had already determined the application before it was presented. By means of example, a Councillor cannot even meet with a developer without a Council Officer being present to ensure transparency. However, both JM and CJ encouraged constituents to get in touch with them directly to make representations. When the appropriate time comes, these views will be represented. JM therefore rejected the point that elected members cannot represent the community, and argued the converse: that having Councillors on the planning committee meant that community views are more likely to be fully reflected in the discussions and decisions made as a result.

A continual concern remains over healthcare provision and how it integrates into the planning process – what level is this done at? JM shares these concerns, and notes that for some recent planning applications there has been response to consultation by The Health and Social Care Partnership, whom he would expect should be making representations. As well as our planned session with Peter Arnsdorf, JM also suggested getting in touch with the MSP.

HT asked if there is any formal mechanism for the Council to feedback issues and concerns to Central Government? JM said there is, though it is met with varied success.

2021-05-06	Write to our MSP to ask how healthcare provision is supposed to be integrated with the planning process	NW	15-Jun-21
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6.2 21/00252/PPP – Land at Stobs Farm

NW posted on Facebook about this consultation, directing members of the public to the published files and also asking for feedback to help shape our response. NW also collated the views of the Community Councillors over email, and has provided a letter to them for review. The summary paragraph is:

“In summary, we believe the development is proposed in the wrong place, has not adequately estimated the impact on road use for the particular local constraints, does not adequately address the acknowledged short-comings in education provision, has unrealistic expectations for active travel (therefore further underestimating road use), will impact already strained healthcare

facilities (partly due to being an 'unplanned' development) and does not guarantee a long-term increase in available jobs and, as a result, we object to the development."

Those present approved the letter to be sent.

2021-05-07	Submit formal objection response to Stobs Farm development	NW	15-Jun-21
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6.3 Redheugh West Gorebridge - 21/00374/PPP

This PPP has now been published. Our date to respond is not yet known, though is likely to be around the middle of June.

6.4 Land At Newbyres Site B River Gore Road - 17/00435/DPP

This application has been withdrawn by the developer.

7 Police Report

The police report was circulated prior to the meeting, with thanks. No questions raised.

8 Community Council Reports

8.1 Chair

Fed download, will circulate minutes. Interesting discussion.

8.2 Secretary

NW sent apologies.

8.3 Treasurer

Banking situation almost resolved, and our complaint was upheld. Seems that when the mandate was updated in 2019 adding Cath/Faye and to remove previous members, the bank did not process this correctly and has now lost the paperwork. £100 provided in compensation, but we need to do new mandate.

Update on the current pots:

- GDCC General £2761.51
- Miners Memorial £1,750.83
- War Memorial Refurb £253.00
- Awards £1712.67
- Total: £6478.01

Our small grant award from Midlothian Council (to cover our running expenses) for 2020-21 has been extended to 2021-22.

2021-05-08	Organise and submit new mandate to bank	FS	15-Jun-21
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9 Project Updates

9.1 Station Adopters

Station adopters are now allowed back to maintain the station and plans are on track to get new signs fitted and plant out summer bedding in early June.

10 Councillor Reports

10.1 Councillor Johnstone

CJ provided a written report ahead of the meeting. The full report can be read on our website; key takeaways follow.

- Full Council meeting raised concerns that the building programme, particularly for council housing, is not ambitious enough. The current waiting list is over 4,000 people. The council house site at Morris Road in Newtongrange is making good progress, however.
- Big investment planned for road renewal to sort potholes, particularly on residential streets
- Gorebridge Library remains closed: the vandalism mess has been sorted but there remains some structural issues that require attention. The mobile library continues to make regular visits.
- Working with JM to find solutions for those community groups who used Gorebridge Leisure Centre before it was acquired as a vaccination site – awaiting update from council officers

No questions.

10.2 Councillor Muirhead

JM provided a verbal update to augment the previous report. Rates of Covid around Pentland are concerning, but the expectation is that this rate will fall. A number of pupils at Mauricewood have tested positive and so has gone remote learning. Knock-on effect to Beeslack. There was some concern at the flexibility available to respond to the higher concentration of infections. For example, the Council wanted to 'force' siblings of contacts to self-isolate, but this was denied by Public Health Scotland. This has now been resolved.

10.3 Councillor Munro

KM was not present.

11 AOB

MD raised a few issues:

- Traffic lights at Greenhall are still causing issues for residents in direct proximity, in particular with timings being unable to get out of their driveways
- There are still a number of blocked drains
- Noted that there appears to be increasing haulage – in particular NWH lorries – travelling along Greenhall Crescent to Hunterfield Road, avoiding the temporary lights and associated delays at Newtonloan. Will monitor and we will discuss at next meeting.

HT asked that the next meeting receive an update on the engagement between GDCC and HGTT.

2021-05-09	Escalate Greenhall traffic signal timings to Derek Oliver	CJ	15-Jun-21
2021-05-10	Gather a list of blocked drains for action	MD	15-Jun-21
2021-05-11	Add increased traffic through village from haulage to June agenda	NW	15-Jun-21
2021-05-12	Add update on GDCC/HGTT Engagement to June agenda	NW	15-Jun-21

CM closed the meeting at 9.30pm. The next meeting will be 15 June 2021.

List of Abbreviations

BRCP	Borders Railway Community Partnership
CAT	Community Asset Transfer
CLL	Community and Lifeline Learning (Midlothian Council)
CRVS	Community Resilience Volunteer Service
DPP	Detailed Planning Permission
GADEG	Gorebridge and District Environmental Group
GCC	Gorebridge Community Cares
GCDT	Gorebridge Community Development Trust
GDCC	Gorebridge & District Community Council
HGTT	Hunterfield Gothenburg Tavern Trust
MLDP	Midlothian Local Development Plan
MTRaP	Midlothian Traffic Roads and Paths
PAC	Pre-Application Consultation
PPP	Planning Permission in Principle