

# Gorebridge Community Council

## Minutes of Meeting

Tuesday 21 January 2020, 7pm, at Birkenstone Pavillion

### Present:

- Cath McGill (CM) – *Chair*
- Faye Skelton (FS)
- Neil Whyte (NW) – *Minutes*
- Brian Paterson (BP)
- Willie Law (WL)
- Janice Brown (JB)
- Mary Davidson (MD)
- Mary Webb (MW)
- Heather Webb-Nelson (HWN)
- Cllr Christine Johnson (CJ)
- Cllr Jim Muirhead (JM)
- PC Pendreich
- PC McGuff

### Apologies:

- Seonaid Barker (SB)
- Jason Rutter (JR)
- Trevor Taylor (TT)
- William Duncan (WD)

No	Item	Minutes
1.	Chairman's Welcome & Apologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• CM welcomed new faces, as well as the usual ones</li><li>• CM gave a quick introduction to her role, encouraging people to speak up and treat everyone with respect</li></ul>
2.	Actions & Matters arising from previous meeting and Adoption of Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No minutes yet circulated from previous meeting<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>Action: CM to chase up</b></li></ul></li></ul>
3.	Fire Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lynne Bruce, Community Safety Advocate for Midlothian since September 2019, was present representing the Fire Service and keen to raise awareness of both herself and the services offered through her role to our community</li><li>• Highlighted that the increase in installation of smoke detectors over the past few decades have contributed to a huge reduction in fire-related deaths, but that many properties still do not have any</li><li>• Fire Safety Checks are still free and can be booked online or over the phone – see <a href="https://www.firescotland.gov.uk/your-safety/for-householders/home-fire-safety-visit.aspx">https://www.firescotland.gov.uk/your-safety/for-householders/home-fire-safety-visit.aspx</a> for details</li><li>• Enhanced checks are now also available to vulnerable households (e.g. the elderly), as often it is those households that are being left behind</li><li>• The Fire Service is also involved with youth offenders in less-serious cases, aiming for early intervention through education and training as to the dangers of fire<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Often, just a bit of a talking too is enough to deter future offences</li></ul></li><li>• Lynne was keen to stress the importance of reporting all fires via 999 – even 'small' ones like furniture in a field – as they are often indicators of early patterns of persistent offenders</li><li>• Can also be contacted for more 'fun' stuff – like giving talks at events, or even arranging for a fire-fighting appliance to be at open days etc</li><li>• Lynne can be contacted at: <a href="mailto:Lynne.Bruce@firescotland.gov.uk">Lynne.Bruce@firescotland.gov.uk</a></li></ul>

4.	Issues Raised by Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nothing provided in advance</li> <li>• A street light failure on Station Brae was noted. JM reported that this was a Scottish Power fault, and that they have a set period of time to rectify. Reps from the Stobsmill Inn suggested if it is reported to the council as an emergency it may be fixed quicker.</li> <li>• As part of the lamppost renovations, a section of pavement containing an old light near 7 Greenhall Crescent was prepared for the new light, but has since been reinstated with the old light still in place and no new light added.</li> <li>• A lamppost had been removed from near 7 Greenhall Cresc, but not replaced (even though the pavement had been reinstated).</li> <li>• Several issues around Barleyknowe Road were raised, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Inappropriate signage at bottom near school crossing, leading to speeding</li> <li>○ Bus stop built into banking is falling to bits and is not fit for purpose for the amount of children getting on/off school buses</li> </ul> </li> <li>• JM was asked if there was any further communication from the Council after a Climate Emergency being declared by the authority. JM responded that there was indeed a motion past, and that the implications of that are being worked through by officers and further announcements will be made in due course.</li> <li>• Broad feeling of frustration around the room on the lack of 'Welcome to Gorebridge' signage. Other towns (some much smaller than Gorebridge) have these signs, and it was felt they would help lend a sense of 'place' to the area. JM reiterated that this was not a priority for the Council in the current financial climate, but did suggest that independent fund raising could be done – perhaps approaching house builders?</li> </ul>
5.	Plan for 2020 GDCC Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remembrance Day Parade: volunteer sought to liaise with Council on road closure, policing, especially in light of increased attendance. JM noted that the only hiccup from 2019 was lack of clarity on who were the marshalls. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ No volunteer found at the meeting</li> <li>○ <b>Action: CM to outline responsibilities so someone else can pick this up</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Christmas Lights: again, needs a volunteer to organise. Ellen Scott offered to organise the lights as part of the Santa Event</li> </ul>
6.	Police Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Police report circulated at the meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Highlighted the good result of the widely-reported attempted robbery outside Scotmid</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Organised crime groups are targeting high-value cars with keyless locks, by blocking the signal transmitted from your key-fob and copying it, using it later to gain access to your vehicle. Cars are usually then stripped down and the parts sold. Issue is widespread – not just Midlothian – and the local incidents are believed to be from Edinburgh-based gangs. Use of RFID blocking pouches is a useful deterrent.</li> <li>• Police patrols increased around Tesco/McDonalds after incident with trolley thrown from the pedestrian bridge crossing the A7. Ongoing issues with young people congregating for cheap food in a warm place with free WiFi, especially at weekends. It is a focus area for the Police.</li> <li>• Issues with parking on double-yellow lines, particular on Main Street, raised from the floor. The Police said that, unless it is causing an obstruction to the whole carriageway, then since parking on double-yellow lines has been decriminalised this is for the Council to address. CJ reported that Midlothian Council has two traffic wardens (subcontracted).</li> <li>• In response to a question from the floor on when pavement parking will become unlawful, the Police responded this is likely a year away.</li> </ul>
7.	Community Council Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chair: CM set out her aim to make the Community Council meetings provide updates from many local groups, in order to increase awareness of the good things happening in the community. Asked people to think about the organisations/groups/local business who may want to feature.</li> <li>• Secretary: NW was spared, given it was his first day in the job...</li> <li>• Treasurer: bank balance is looking healthy, with the status of the four funds as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ £1347.64 in the General Fund (for calendar, lights etc)</li> <li>○ £1534.83 in the Miner Memorial Fund</li> <li>○ £469 in the War Memorial Refurbishment Fund</li> <li>○ £752.67 in the Awards Fund</li> <li>○ Overall balance is £4133.66</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Discussion around how we might progress a wall plaque (in the Beacon) which lists the names of all those who died in the Gorebridge pits. CM has a list of 132 names, but research would be needed to verify it is accurate and complete before work progresses. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Action: Volunteer needed for this research work. Guidance available.</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Federation: Training day held earlier in January for Community Councillors – no attendance from Gorebridge.</li> </ul>

8.	Project Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GADEG (Gorebridge and District Environmental Group) was represented by Lorna &amp; Bill, who gave an overview of the group, it's history, aims and activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Founded in 2003/4, with arguments over 'this is not just Gorebridge' – hence the long name!</li> <li>○ Original aim to get Gorebridge Circular Walk setup – achieved 2008</li> <li>○ Now consider themselves as 'guardians' of this walk, checking signage etc</li> <li>○ Perform regular litter-picks - now doing 1st Sunday at 10am &amp; 3rd Monday of each month – see Facebook page for details</li> <li>○ Also bulb planting and shrubs, once a year, on a targeted area of the walk</li> <li>○ Always looking for members, or even just casual helpers</li> <li>○ Can help arrange pickers, bags from council etc too for other ad-hoc tidy-ups (e.g. local housing estates) – get in touch!</li> <li>○ On a related note, Lynne Bruce (Fire Service) mentioned a new group launching soon – MIDPARC – tackling common issues, the top 2 being fly-tipping and hare coursing in Midlothian</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Gorebridge Community Cares was represented by Ellen Scott: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Keys received for police station, and then it was duly broken in to. Copper piping and electric wiring taken. Repairs done after break-in now, though work to replace pipes continues/</li> <li>○ Major upgrades planned in summer, for now just doing 'cheap' things to get the place running. Services being connected ... slowly ...</li> <li>○ Several groups interested already in using the space</li> <li>○ 'Gorebridge Hive' is being considered as the name</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Beacon (Gorebridge Development Trust), represented by Hazel Thomson <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ AGM held in December, nothing much to report</li> <li>○ Looking towards an event to celebrate 1st birthday, more details to come</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Surgery participation group – we should solicit feedback if possible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Action: MW volunteered to get update from 50+ group</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
9.	Councillor Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Councillor Johnstone was welcomed back by CM after a period of absence due to ill-health. CJ provided a verbal report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Has been back doing surgeries since October, and getting back to Community Council meetings from now</li> <li>○ Chair of group looking at frail people (18+) and how they might be better looked after – looking at pilot programme out of Newbattle where dedicated GP will spend some dedicated time with targeted individuals to get a feeling of 'expected normal' for those frail people. This takes time at the start, but the indications are it saves time overall by helping to identify new symptoms due to illness versus 'usual' symptoms due to existing frailty, speeding diagnosis and ultimately appropriate treatment for those individuals</li> <li>○ In light of her recent battle with breast cancer, CJ is campaigning with the group "The wee c" – who promote that improvements in detection, treatment and survival rates mean cancer shouldn't be feared as the Big C any more.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• JM provided a verbal report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Noted that the Council is usually arguing about the budget at this time, however the settlement from UK government has been delayed by the General Election. However, not as bad as first thought as the Scottish Government have said they will progress the Scottish Budget in early Feb regardless, with subsequent roll-down to local Councils so JM is confident we will get there</li> <li>○ Plan for balanced Midlothian budget on 11 Feb, no plans for additional cuts over what has been identified and communicated already</li> <li>○ Changes made in Council recently help address gender balance, most new director-level appointments are female</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
10.	Any Other Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Question from the floor on the status of the Station Building? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ CM reports ScotRail said some interest from private institutions, and confirmed the building is listed</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Mary Webb asked about the planters at Emily Court <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ CM said we attempted adoption last year – no real interest, lot of work to maintain watering, particularly in summer (every couple of days)</li> <li>○ Unclear on who is responsible for moving these – possibly Council?</li> <li>○ Some look a bit shabby: perhaps remove names while it gets sorted out</li> <li>○ MW may look at taking it forward as a project – take to next meeting</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Meeting closed by CM at 9pm.