



Gorgie Dalry Community Council Minutes Monday 2nd December

Attendees

GDCC:

Angela Astor – AA, Rona Brown (Vice-Chair) – RB, Joan Gordon (Chair) – JG, Adrian Herbert (GDS church) – AH, Alex McKendrick (Treasurer) – AM, Moira MacKirdy (Secretary) – MM, Susanne Miller (Gorgie Collective) – SM, Mathew Reilly (Engagement Officer) – MR

CEC:

Ashley Graczyk - AG, Stephanie Jamar (PA to AG) - SJ

Local residents:

Anne Winberly (JGCC) – AW, Sophie Cooke – SC, Nancy Macdonald (Garvald) – NM, Maddy Kirkman (FoECF) – MK, Eoghan Clarkson (FoECF) – EC

Guests:

Dierdre Thom (JLL) – DT, Gordon Beaton (Susan Stephen Architects) – GB, Colin Anderson (Maven Capital Partners) - CA

Welcome

JG welcomed all to the meeting and arranged introductions.

Quorum and apologies

The meeting was quorate. Apologies were received from Denis Dixon and the Police.

Previous Minutes

The minutes were proposed as accurate by RB and seconded by AA.

The actions were reviewed, with the open matters arising detailed as follows:

September:

01: Airbnb to be added as future agenda item

October:

01: AG to check how soon AP can be co-opted onto CC

05: RB to apply for funding for bench in Dalry Community Park

06: Future agenda item in Spring to organise clean ups of Westfield and Dalry Community Parks

07: Bring Memorial garden idea to Roseburn Cycle path team

14: FC to arrange donation of mince pies from Coop

November

01: GD and CS to return to GDCC once operator has been appointed for Westfield to answer further questions.

08: Remember to start Christmas lights switch on at 5pm next year

Matters Arising

01. MM to send PHD invite to MR and JG.
02. MM to circulate park events consultation to all CC members.
03. MM to circulate Local Electricity Bill info to all CC members.
04. MM to circulate Police Report with minutes.
05. RB to pass details of Friends of Murieston Park on to CA.
06. RB to ask council for update on ECF
07. AG to set up meeting in January regarding 'Gorgie Fest' and circulate to interested parties
08. MM to contact FC regarding 72 mince pies for lights switch on
09. RB & AM to purchase wall clock for JH
10. RB and JG to present wall clock to JH
11. AH to act as pipers liaison
12. DW to emcee
13. AG and JG to present windows prize
14. AA to present vouchers for poster winners
15. JG to speak to laundry man about chocolates
16. JG to organise thank you card for dressing window
17. MR to make "Christmas lights this way" signs for RB

Police Reports

Police were unable to attend, however report will be circulated with the minutes.

Planning

Murieston Student Development

CA provided some background details on the company behind the development, Maven Capital. They're a fund manager regulated by the FCA. It was formed as part of a buyout of Aberdeen Asset Management. They have 12 offices, with their Head Office being in Glasgow. Murieston will be their 14th student development. Currently they manage 2000+ student beds in the UK, operating in Durham, Exeter, Bournemouth and Stirling. Their operating model is to let directly to students rather than building for the universities. They will appoint an accommodation management company to operate and run, with an operator presence on site. The operation management company will be in charge of letting, upkeep and looking after students. They began working on this project in 2017. It's a derelict site, will create 2-2.5 jobs in the area, as well as providing quality accommodation for just over 100 students.

DT advised that there had been a previous planning permission granted for the site in 2015, and that as things stand they could build to that plan tomorrow. However, once Maven had come on board they had sought to improve upon the existing design both for the students and the local area residents. Two particular aspects have been changed: one, that the materials will be more in keeping with the surrounding tenements; and two,

that rather than levelling the back part of the plot, they will build split level thus minimising disruption to local residents during building process.

GB described the architectural changes in greater detail. The previous plan had involved red brick exterior, this has been changed to natural stone façade. The roofline has been lowered and material changed to slate to be more in keeping with neighbouring tenements. They have also reduced the height of the rear extension. The current proposal is for 120 bedrooms, in comparison to the previous application's 122 bedrooms. Of these, 102 will be studios and there will be 3 x 4 bedroom apartments as well. He showed a photo of the layout of the proposed studio spaces, which come equipped with living area, bedroom area, study area, kitchen area and ensuite bathroom. The apartment bedrooms also have ensuite bedrooms but share communal kitchen and living areas.

CA confirmed that if the planning permission is approved in January at Planning Committee (date tbc), then they would aim to start building at the end of Q1 2020, and expect the build period to last 12-14 months.

JG asked if the accommodation would be managed 24hrs per day. CA stated that there would be student wardens available 24/7, however the main staff would work Mon-Fri 9-5 and weekends. JG also asked about the medical provision for the students as the local GP surgery is already oversubscribed. DT advised that at present there was no requirement for developers to make a contribution for healthcare in this area. JG asked if the plaque from the old Masonic Hall was to be retained. GB confirmed that it would be removed carefully and replaced on the wall of the new building. JG also asked what the car parking provisions were for the development. GB confirmed that it was a bike friendly development, and there is an on site bike storage facility with enough storage for all residents. AA asked what the accommodation would be used for out of term time. CA advised that the studios would be rented for 51 weeks per year. MK asked why the developers had pursued student accommodation instead of other residential accommodation ie affordable, and also what the projected price points would be. CA confirmed that Maven do build other kinds of developments such as hotels, but that at this site student accommodation was viewed as being most appropriate given location and also the already existing usage permission for student accommodation on the site. Residential application have previously been refused 4 times on the site. GB advised that to provide cheaper student accommodation required a critical mass of around 300-400 beds, so this would not meet that requirement. However, although the studios are at the pricier end of the market, the shared apartments would be significantly cheaper and would fall into the £140-150 per week band, including utilities and broadband. MR queried the design and build model for the development, given some poor quality builds in the area. GB stated that they would be strict with the contractors regarding the quality of the build and that the façade would be traditional stone rather than a cheaper rain screen. AH questioned how the managers would ensure that only 122 residents would be staying there, and CA confirmed that it would be written into the students' tenancy agreements not to have long-term guests staying with them. SM asked if the developers would be willing to contribute towards improvement of green spaces in the area. CA confirmed that they would be open to suggestions but ideally this would be led by the community to ensure that any improvements were relevant to the area.

Friends of Edinburgh Community Farm

MK came to speak about the FoECF. She advised that the former staff of Gorgie City Farm had set up an organisation called Edinburgh Community Farm, and that there was also a sister organisation called Friends of Edinburgh Community Farm to support them in their aims. She explained that their aims are to preserve the ethos of GCF, as a resource for the people of Edinburgh for education, volunteering and an accessible place to visit. They have six demands for any organisation looking to take over the running of the farm:

1. Greater transparency and accountability in management of the site
2. Community members have a say in how the farm is run
3. Greater security and benefits for workers
4. The ethos of GCF is preserved, with similar volunteering opportunities offered
5. The farm is an open and accessible place for the public to visit
6. The farm is economically and ecologically sustainable and contributes to making Edinburgh a zero carbon city

MK explained that there are two separate processes happening concurrently: the settling of the debts by the liquidator, and the hunt for an organisation to take over the running of the farm as a 'going concern'. She confirmed that the GoFundMe campaign reached the target of £100k, and that an unincorporated association had been set up to manage the funds in trust.

JG advised that she had attended a meeting in the city chambers on the subject just after the last community council meeting, where the message given by the council was to let the liquidators do their jobs. AG confirmed that the councillors do have sway as the council is the landlord, and nobody wants to commercialise the farm. Local councillors are keeping an eye on the situation and a charity or social enterprise will be found to take over the running of the farm. MK queried if a national organisation was the right fit for the farm or would a local organisation be better placed to keep ethos alive. AM questioned if the Cyrenians (who are one potential organisation willing to take over the farm) would be prepared to look after the animals or do they only do plant based farms.

Correspondence

1. Invitation to collaborate on PHD project entitled "Restorative qualities of residential housing typologies with natural features at the building edge".
2. Consultation on parks events, closes on 18th December.
3. Community Speed Watch Scheme
4. Facebook comment re graffiti – referred on to Kathy Fullarton.
5. Health All Round Christmas party invitation 10th December 1-4pm St Martin's Church
6. Local Electricity Bill support request
7. Police Report
8. Housing Budget Consultation response request – leaflet received on 2nd Dec however consultation closed on 30th Nov.

Treasurer's Report

Balance is £1384.55 but there are expenses due. AM has been added as a signatory to the account. He proposed adding a 3rd signatory since it's 2 to sign, and JG volunteered. AM also asked for permission to sign up to online banking, which was given.

HMO's

Nothing to report.

Licensing

Nothing to report.

Councillor Reports

AG reported that the planning application was in for proposed student accommodation where Luckie's pub is. She also highlighted the high number of car accidents at the Saughton Park junction. She advised that she has attended further meetings relating to ECF and expects an update shortly. She attended a Grassmarket community project around homelessness and has lots of ideas. She is complaining about bus adverts for Airbnb property management companies as being "anti-tenant". She's also looking for more information about the historic "Gorgeous Gorgie" campaign – anyone with any information should pass to her.

JG asked AG to look into why the city chambers Remembrance Day wreaths were moved so quickly.

AH asked AG to look into getting lights on the stairs from Slateford Road to Wardlaw Place as one of the church's congregation recently had a bad fall down them due to poor lighting. MK also requested white lines be painted on them too.

MR asked AG to provide details of who to contact regarding a troublesome neighbour urinating in the stairwell.

Parks

Nothing to report.

Events

Christmas Lights

Timetable will be same running order as last year. Individual actions covered in matters arising.

Gorgie Fest

AG to set up January meeting to discuss.

AOCB

St Bride's AGM on 13th December

Community Concert Forget-me-nots 20th December

Date and time of next meeting

Monday 6th January 7pm