

**Neilston Community Council**  
**Meeting of Tuesday 28 May 2024**  
**MINUTES**

**In attendance:** Malcolm Briggs, Julie Cloherty, Margaret Currie (Treasurer), Kenny McKenzie, Margaret Pettigrew (Acting Chair), Gail Squires (Secretary & minutes), Cllr Buchanan, Cllr O'Donnell

**Visitors:** Rowena Johnstone, Donna Strathearn, Sunil Telsang

**Apologies:** Janice Connery (Vice Chair)

<b>1.</b>	<p><b>Welcome</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Margaret P welcomed everyone and explained she was acting as Chair tonight due to the resignation of the previous Chair and Vice Chair being unavailable.</li> <li>• Ronnie Junner's resignation was confirmed and thanks for his service will be emailed. <a href="#">[Action: Gail]</a></li> <li>• Previous meeting's minutes: Proposed – Kenny McKenzie; Seconded – Julie Cloherty</li> </ul>
<b>2.</b>	<p><b>Police Report</b></p> <p>The Police were not in attendance and the monthly report has not yet been received. <a href="#">[Action: Gail]</a></p>
<b>3.</b>	<p><b>Chairperson Role and recruitment of new members</b></p> <p>Discussion on re-appointing this role and the need to recruit the 3 vacancies.</p>
<b>4.</b>	<p><b>Matters Arising</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gail confirmed that an acknowledgement of resignation and thanks had been sent to Colin McLeish, and the consultation responses (Shilford and Boundary Changes) had been submitted in the timescales. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ The Councillors confirmed the boundary changes (Holyrood elections only) is a 2<sup>nd</sup> stage consultation which would include Neilston in the 'Eastwood' constituency. It is not expected to be finalised until 2025.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Traffic calming on Neilston Road: Cllr O'Donnell is meeting with the relevant ERC officers on Thursday. <a href="#">[Action: Cllr O'Donnell]</a></li> <li>• Cllr Buchanan updated he was awaiting information on the pothole filling machine. <a href="#">[Action: Cllr Buchanan]</a></li> <li>• Filing Cabinet has not arrived as promised by ERC. To follow up. <a href="#">[Action: Gail]</a></li> </ul>
<b>5.</b>	<p><b>Guidance on community council meetings processes</b></p> <p>The guidance emails received from Andrew Reid (CC Liaison) were discussed and it was agreed to follow the most recent guidance. The members all felt that they had become volunteers on NCC in order to support the community and that addressing a process issue at every meeting would compromise the time available for this. It was decided to invite Andrew to join a subsequent meeting with dedicated time for discussion and clarification. <a href="#">[Action: Gail]</a></p>
<b>6.</b>	<p><b>Communications</b></p> <p>Malcolm updated on options for the Facebook page. It was agreed that it should be principally an archive of minutes and agendas which could then be posted on other community platforms. An outward facing page that invites people to attend the meetings to discuss any items but does not allow for commenting would be more sustainable as electronic methods of contact would require a dedicated person to monitor and respond. It was agreed to include ERC contact numbers in each post as easy reference for the community and Cllr O'Donnell will arrange for Andrew Reid to send us a list of the current details. <a href="#">[Action: Cllr O'Donnell]</a></p> <p>The name of the page has been changed to 'Neilston Community Council 2024' and will be made public as soon as possible.</p>
<b>7.</b>	<p><b>Treasurer's Report</b></p> <p>Margaret C confirmed the current status of funds:  £1,449.25 (TSB - unrestricted funds)  £829.83 (BOS - ERC funding)  £67.70 (Cash in hand)</p> <p>There was discussion around buying a laptop for the secretary role which would keep documents in one secure place that could be passed on to subsequent secretaries and help with continuity. This is under consideration.</p>
<b>8.</b>	<p><b>Neilston Cemetery</b></p> <p>There was discussion about the overgrown condition of the grass and maintenance of the paths which are in a worse state than ever before. The grass being so long that it was obscuring the inscriptions on headstones.</p>

	<p>The councillors advised that the frequency of cutting is based on a total number of cuts in the growing season and not in terms of at regular intervals. Rowena Johnstone (visitor to the meeting) is a member of the Neilston Litter Pickers and explained that as litter on the grass is not removed first, it increases the number of items to be picked as the litter gets shredded into smaller parts. It would be helpful to know their schedule to allow the litter to be picked by the volunteers in advance. Rowena was requested to email the councillors present with details and they will pick it up on behalf of the Litter Pickers.</p> <p>NCC will approach ERC to request a grass cutting schedule for sharing in the community. <a href="#">[Action: Gail]</a></p> <p>It was highlighted that the use of weedkillers has been thoughtlessly done and the cemetery, which should be a pleasant and peaceful place, is now looking dreadful. Additionally, the paths are being allowed to become overgrown and unsightly. There was concern re the strategy around the use of weedkillers and the impact on climate change; the councillors advised that there have been recent discussions on weedkillers v strimming and the cost implications.</p> <p><b>Pig Square/Kirkstyle Lane raised beds</b></p> <p>A local resident had complained to NCC that the raised beds were untidy and overgrown. It was agreed that this could be partly due to it being early in the growing season and the growth rate differing between plants, also some perceived 'weeds' such as dandelions are in fact good for the soil; additionally, the uncut grass problem was a contributory factor and this is an ERC task. Contact will be made with Incredible Edible Neilston to clarify. <a href="#">[Action: Gail]</a></p> <p>It was suggested that anyone with concerns could chat to the IEN volunteers at their Monday evening sessions (from 6pm) at the site and they would answer any questions and explain the growing strategy.</p> <p>It was acknowledged that there had been grass cutting undertaken during the day of the meeting, but that it was long overdue.</p>
9.	<p><b>Neilstonside Wood</b></p> <p>The path and the trees are falling into a poor condition, any pathways are so overgrown they are disappearing and there are a lot of dead trees that need cleared and plastic tubes that should have been removed by now. The path was popular and used a lot initially but now it is rare to meet anyone else there. Maintenance could be part of the initial funding agreement but unsure who is responsible. The councillors thought it might have been an NDT community project and so it was agreed to contact them in the first instance. <a href="#">[Action: Gail]</a></p>
10.	<p><b>Old St Thomas's School Site</b></p> <p>The councillors confirmed that the new leisure centre/library will not now be built here, and that ERC's preferred use of the site is for social housing to be managed by ERC or Housing Association but no firm plans yet. Retaining the current right of way through the site was highlighted as an important connection between village communities.</p> <p>It was also confirmed that the plans for demolition of the old school is being accelerated to avoid any vandalism issues.</p> <p>A new leisure centre and library is planned to be built on the existing site following demolition of the current buildings and the budget for this has already been allocated and increased. The likely timeframe is 2026/27.</p>
11.	<p><b>AOCB</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visitor, Rowena Johnstone (Neilston Litter Pickers), explained the need for 24/7 accessible, secure storage for the litter pickers' equipment and the difficulty in finding a place for this. A member of Neilston Allotments was also present as a visitor (Donna Strathearn) and she offered secure space at the allotments in Craig Road for this purpose.</li> <li>• Visitor, Donna Strathearn, highlighted the lack of CCTV covering from the leisure centre to outside 'Flames', the doctors' surgery, Robb's garage and the church hall area. She explained there had been a serious stabbing in this area and that nobody was arrested as there was no footage to identify them. She had reported this to ERC but has not yet heard from them about it. The councillors advised that a mobile camera could be a temporary measure. NCC will email the Police and Community Safety to (a) raise the issue and (b) request a map showing where the existing cameras are placed in the village. <a href="#">[Action: Gail]</a></li> <li>• NCC Email: Malcolm confirmed that all non-members had been removed from access to the Outlook address. The new password, which is for the current members only, will be emailed asap. <a href="#">[Action: Gail]</a></li> <li>• New members' application forms will be sent out to the visitors as requested. <a href="#">[Action: Gail]</a></li> </ul>
12.	<p><b>Date of next meeting:</b> Tuesday 25 June 2024</p>