

Record of EACC Annual General Meeting 23 November 2023

1] The meeting was hosted by City of Edinburgh Council's (CEC) Governance Team, represented by Louise Galloway, Chris Highcock (who acted as Returning Officer) and Martin Scott. Their help is much appreciated.

2] Invited Guests

Introductory talk from Joan Parr, CEC Service Director for Culture & Wellbeing, accompanied by Andrew Field, CEC Head of Community Empowerment & Engagement.

Joan Parr: The Culture & Wellbeing Directorate:

Four principal areas of focus:

Community Empowerment & Engagement;

Lifelong Learning (encompassing Community Centres, Libraries, Activity and Wellbeing);

Culture Strategy and Events (including Galleries, Theatre, Festivals and Filming);

Heritage and Culture Venues (including World Heritage Sites and Collections);

Alongside work with Strategic Partners.

Culture Strategy for the City:

Deliver meaningful culture experiences to Edinburgh residents in their local areas;

Welcome and support creative professionals; give a base for their local and international work;

Build Edinburgh's international reputation as an environmentally-responsible cultural capital;

Work with Strategic Partners to bring a cultural offer to Edinburgh's neighbourhoods.

[cec-culture-and-wellbeing-strategic-partners-report-community-engagement-impact-2021-22.pdf](#)
(cultureedinburgh.com)

Community Empowerment & Engagement

Encourage local community groupings to design and build Locality Improvement Plans;

Deliver the approved community centre strategy for the city.

[7.8 - Community Centre Strategy.pdf](#) (edinburgh.gov.uk)

Questions related to:

'Over-tourism' and the over-concentration of events in the city-centre; opportunity cost for struggling venues in local neighbourhoods.

Queensferry & District CC's difficulty in gaining meaningful representation on the Forth Bridges Forum.

Cramond & Barnton's lack of 'local neighbourhood' amenity.

(continued)

3] Annual General Meeting

From the previously-issued agenda:

3.1 Attendance – see Appendix

3.2 Minutes of 2022 AGM approved (proposed by Steve Kerr, seconded by Judy Wightman)

3.3 Report from Chair*:

‘Community Councils at 50’ – Scottish Parliament review underway – community councils need ‘reform or rebuild’.

A new national body is needed for Scottish community councils.

EACC has made good progress in 2023 in furthering community councils interests and profile, but more support would be welcomed from individual councils.

Individual councils are strongly encouraged to participate in the ongoing Scheme and Boundary Review.

3.4 Report from the Treasurer*:

A one-off grant (£1850) from CEC safeguards the financial position for the moment, but the case for regular support must be tabled.

3.5 Report from the Secretary*:

Early-stage working groups in place on Licensing, District Heating & Home Energy. Community council help wanted to form groups leading on Locality Improvement Plans, Roads & Transport and Planning.

Following the early-stage work of West Lothian Joint Forum of Community Councils in their promotion of a Scottish Forum of Community Councils.

Appreciation expressed for the continued (and discounted) website support work undertaken by David Bewsey (Colinton).

Issues discussed:

How to encourage participation from community councils unable or disinclined to attend EACC meetings?

Use the 17 February 2024 ‘live meeting’ as a launch pad.

Suggest that community councils of ‘a neighbourhood’ link up informally to exchange news and views; use EACC as a ‘bridge’ to widen the network.

3.6 No other relevant reports.

3.7 No motions tabled.

3.8 Demission of Members’ Board

(continued)

3.9 Election to the Members' Board of candidates from the Nominations Table*, with Chris Highcock acting as Reporting Officer.

The following were elected without contest:

Steve Kerr as Chair; Judy Wightman as Treasurer; Ken Robertson as Secretary.

The post of Deputy Chair stands vacant.

Roger Colkett, Ian Doig, Keith Giblett, Nick Marshall, Bill Rodger, Douglas Tharby
(See Appendix for community council affiliations.)

3.10 Christine Cameron (Ratho) is reappointed as Independent Examiner.

3.11 No other competent business.

3.12 Date of next AGM set for 21 November 2024.

Close of AGM.

*See the previously-distributed 'AGM Papers'. See all AGM papers on the EACC site at

<http://www.edinburghcommunitycouncils.org.uk/>

Go to *EACC Papers >> 2023 AGM Papers*.

4] Ordinary Business Meeting

4.1 Steve Kerr reported on his recent meeting with Edinburgh Police Chief Superintendent Sean Scott and Superintendent Sam Ainslie (at their request) with the discussion focused on community reporting and engagement.

Regular, direct, in-person police reporting to community councils has fallen away due to extreme pressures on police time (higher volume of events, much greater strain on diminished staff resources – CEC recently withdrew c. £1.2m (?) support for community policing initiatives). The police are likely to move to a standardised reporting format issued directly to community groups, headlining main themes and contact points. Superintendent Ainslie will offer a template shortly.

This may or may not include a 'Community Police Forum' structure, one event recently profiled in the Merchiston, Craiglockhart, Fairmilehead area and held to be 'remarkably constructive' in setting out neighbourhood policing challenges. (These go well beyond 'standard policing', entering into mental health, social welfare and 'soft prevention' issues.)

Strong appreciation was expressed for police work undertaken.

EACC will look to invite Officers Scott and Ainslie to a Q1 2024 meeting, to hear more.

4.2 Roger Colkett outlined his pending submission to Edinburgh Licensing Forum of a paper recommending amendments to the present 'Representations and Objections' practice observed by Edinburgh Licensing Board. His proposals are in favour of better 'accessibility, clarity and fairness'. The full text is posted to the EACC site (*EACC Papers >> Appendix*); you can read a summary on the site Front Page. The submission would stand as an EACC Discussion Paper from the Members' Board.

[Edinburgh Association of Community Councils \(edinburghcommunitycouncils.org.uk\)](http://edinburghcommunitycouncils.org.uk)

4.3 The 2023 Scheme and Boundary Review

Consideration will be given to an EACC Members' Board representation to the current consultation where there is a closing date on 8 December.

4.4 Note this clause 6c from the EACC Constitution on 'policy positions' and their endorsement.

"There will be an elected EACC Members Board. It will act as a forum for developing EACC policy positions for subsequent endorsement by the EACC membership. It will act to provide a management structure for that purpose. The EACC Members Board will comprise of a minimum of five and a maximum of 12 Community Councillors from different parts of the City of Edinburgh, plus the EACC Office Bearers."

With that in mind, I've styled (on the website) Roger Colkett's text as a 'Discussion Paper'. Other approaches to this?

Appendix

Attendance at AGM:

Steve Kerr, Chair, Corstorphine	Richard Allen, Tollcross
Keith Giblett, Vice-Chair, Queensferry	Colin Anderson, Fairmilehead
Judy Wightman, Treasurer, Ratho	Joan Carter, Southside
Ken Robertson, Secretary, Grange Prestonfield	Joyce Clark, Stenhouse Saughton Whitson
	Percy Fekety, Cramond Barnton
Roger Colkett, Tollcross	Lesley Gibson-Eaglesham, Gilmerton
Ian Doig, Merchiston	Bill Krol, Liberton
	John Loudon, Cramond Barnton
From CEC:	Fred Marinello, Granton
Louise Galloway	Alistair McLeod, Colinton
Chris Highcock	Sally Millar, Leith Links
Martin Scott	Clive Preston, Stockbridge
	Jim Scanlon, Leith Links
Apologies:	Ronnie Shaw, Liberton
Tommy McLean, Corstorphine	Douglas Tharby, Leith Harbour Newhaven
Nick Marshall, Northfield Willowbrae	Engagement Officer, Juniper Green Baberton
Bill Rodger, Trinity	