DDCC MEETING. 2nd June 2025. In person at the Steading Inn.

Present:
Residents: Pippa Thomson, Gordon Buchanan, Robin McBride, Anna Henly, Heather Bertram, Megan Bertram, David Newbould, Gill McLeod, Mark Hartree, Catriona Umpleby, Duncan McAuslan, Ailsa Carlisle, Jo Gillies, Helen McKay, Julian Holbrook, Kate Holbrook, Constance Newbould, Diane Graham, Les Graham, Tommy Telfer, Rob Diacon, Gaetan Richard, Heather Binanti, Guiliano Binanti, Sue Gray.

In Attendance

Pauline Winchester	–	Midlothian Council, Elected Member
Paul Johnson	–	Midlothian Council, Communities Lifelong Learning and Employability Worker

Apologies: Ana Isabel Castro Marques

1. **Ratification of minutes,** 7 April 2025
   Proposed by Mark Hartree, seconded by Duncan McAuslan

2. **Update on actions not on agenda**
   - Speedtrap on OPR and Burnside. JG had had a long discussion with Gillian Bathgate and Chris Ferguson, both from the Roads Department at Midlothian Council. All agreed that speeds were unlikely to show up as excessive on Burnside given the national speed limit in place. A certain density of houses is needed for the speed limit to be lowered to 20mph on the Burnside, alongside pedestrian usage. There is an important difference between 20 and 30mph speed limits (30 is police's responsibility, whereas 20mph limits are the responsibility of the Council, so unlikely to be enforced in the same way). The advice was for the local community to put up signs e.g. children at play, etc. Given that these are already in place the DDCC continue to want Burnside to be 20mph.
     We discussed the fact that an exception was made for OPR to reflect local needs, and we need one to be made for the Burnside. PT asked if there are any specifics for single roads without pavement which is particularly relevant because Burnside is a pedestrian link between the bus stop and local facilities.
   - Taylor Wimpey development - PT informed the DDCC that long lorries are still stopping close to the sharp bend on the A703 or reversing into the access to the housing development. Another access was being built even though phase 3 doesn't have planning permission.
   - SEPA comments to JG for 12th June.
   - A701 Relief Road. There had been a Zoom call with Colin Beattie. DDCC has also contacted Lorna Slater.
     Residents made the following points relating to the relief road:
     - The justification of additional nearby development is no longer relevant because almost all of these already have been built.

- An important change is that following the introduction of the traffic lights at the triple junction on the A702 the estimated time saving claimed for the relief road is no longer valid.
- Better access for the University campus at Bush has been solved because of the additional roundabout at Bush Loan.

- Action still to be taken to register with the Information Commissioner
- Giant hogweed and knotweed.
  ACTION: Anyone who knows of the location of these dangerous invasive species to contact AH who will pass the locations to Esk Rivers Trust, where they will co-ordinate and monitor.
  ACTION: AH will pass details on the plants to JG who will circulate.
- Boundary issues have still to be discussed.

2. **Police Scotland Report**. No report had been sent by the time of the meeting.

3. **Strategic planning and developments:**
   - DDCC Local Place Plan publication. Copies were distributed on the night and volunteers had taken additional copies to hand on to neighbours.
   - A701 Relief Road and link to A702. As always deeply held concerns about the need for the relief road and the negative impacts were expressed.
     - Active traffic routes from Bush to both Hillend and Straiton would be much better use of money. The proposal is not value for money.
     - Raise with MFCC - overall cumulative impact assessment needed to inform the MLDP2, including cumulative number of houses and impact of developments. CU and CN will also attend the meeting on the MLDP2 with the Council and emphasise the need for all proposed developments to be considered cumulatively.
     - It would be more effective to incorporate active travel on new routes within developments instead of the relief road, and suggestion of active travel route alternative to A701 corridor.
     - A new Park and Ride further out of town would be worth investigating.
     - PW says the Planning Committee can pass the relief road regardless of the number of objections. If the planning committee turns it down and developers then appeal it will go to the Reporter.
     - Feedback on stakeholder event. Those that attended the event were of the view that Wardle Armstrong are only interested in improvements to the new route, not whether the new road should be built or not. Planning application is in August. It was thought developers would only pay £400 per house for the road.
     - First planning committee is on 25th August so papers will come out two weeks in advance.
     - The DDCC agreed that we should continue to object to the road, as well as to the proposed route. Individuals should also submit their objections to the planning application in due course, but also to Councillors at any time, and in advance of planning committee. Every objection made should set out the individual's relevant objections. Many suggestions were made for other action to be taken, e.g.

- we need advice to get most effective wording for our objections to ensure this is most impactful, including for example starting any submission with the words“I OBJECT”;
- John McAllan who helped with the LDP response has retired, but it would be useful if anyone knows other individuals who could provide support, and potential pro bono offer;
- FOI request for information about what could be gained from building the road, even though the Council could claim that it is commercial in confidence;
- petition based on one letter which we could all then sign but there was a question of the validity of this approach in relation to planning applications. ACTION: CN to find out if a petition is valid.
- Public Enquiry?
- Scottish Government could stop it but not the MSPs
- Need to go to wider range of people.
- Go to court - the road is against Climate Change Plan
- All need to write to all MSPs in advance of the Planning Committee meeting.

ACTION JG to email community for volunteers to structure a collective DDCC response, and to agree a plan of action.
ACTION: HM to ask about planning advice.

- 24/00752/PAC Cala Housing Development, Damhead. No further information.

4. Traffic and road safety

- Burnside erosion, drainage, potholes and proposed 40mph speed limit (see agenda item 2)
- Triple junction signalisation update. Lots of work has been done but more to be done. BEAR is willing to take account of feedback. Residents made the following points: no right turn going north would be helpful from a safety perspective as would additional pedestrian crossing; lorries are still mounting the pavement.
- Summer gathering. A summer ball was suggested.
  ACTION: ALL dates and ideas to JG.

5. DDCC Administration (not discussed because of lack of time)

- DDCC budget and bid for grant
- Community Council Boundaries Review – Damhead and District, Penicuik, Roslin and Bilston

6 AOB

- To our knowledge bat surveys have been done on 3 areas along the proposed A701 Relief Road route: CN, KH, and around the Schoolhouse.

7. Date of next meeting: 7.30pm, Monday 4 August 2025, by zoom.

In general, meetings take place at 7.30 on the 1st Monday in every second month, and alternate between zoom and in person meetings (other than for the AGM). The calendar of meetings will be reviewed following the AGM and DDCC elections in June.

Forthcoming meetings include:
Monday 4 August, 7.30pm, online by zoom
October (venue tbc, plus day/date tbc)
December (venue tbc, day/date tbc)

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