

Grange Prestonfield Community Council
Cameron House Community Education Centre – 16th November 2011
Minutes

Present: John Palmer (**JP**)(Chair), Tony Harris(**TH**)(Vice-Chair), Sue Tritton(**ST**)(Secretary), Andreas Grothey (**AG**) (Treasurer), Graham Muir (**GM**), Maureen Edwards (**ME**), Mike Hunter(**MH**), Gillian Dennis(**GD**), Bill Reid(**BR**) Alistair Pugh (**AP**), Ray Footman (**RF**), Allister Thom (**AT**)

In Attendance: Sheila Gilmore (**SG**) MP, Cllr Steve Burgess (**SB**), Alan Stewart (**ASt**) (CEC) PC Lynsey Collins (**LC**), PC Evelyn Hegarty (**EH**)

Public: Miss C Murray

Apologies: David Stevenson (**DS**), Alison Bramley (**AB**), Mansour Ahmadian (**MA**)

1. Welcome and Apologies

JP welcomed everyone to the meeting – especially Sheila Gilmore (one of our local MPs).

2. Declarations of Interest. None

3. Minutes of the Meeting of 19th October 2011

These were approved; proposed by GD, seconded by AG.

4. Matters Arising (not on the agenda)

- ST suggested a donation to thank Jessica Morgado for her talk in October. £50 agreed. Jessica to be contacted to suggest the best recipient – possibly Friends of Hermitage of Braid.
- PC Mark Dickson had sent a message announcing a Police Surgery on Friday November 18th.

5. External Reports

a) Council Report: ASt reported that the cost of installing each 20mph sign is about £150 - £100 for the post and £50 for the sign.

b) Police Report: PC Hegarty reported the following:

- There had been a spate of thefts from houses in the Grange area in the past two weeks. Thieves seem to target houses where the outer solid door is open and items can be seen through the inner glass door. JP suggested that this should be mentioned in the next Police newsletter. The priority is to reduce housebreakings – an increase is expected over the Christmas period.
- There had been thefts of lead – two persons had been caught in the past 2 weeks.
- A short term initiative based from St Leonard's over 2 weeks had recovered 9 stolen bikes.
- Several thefts from public buildings (e.g. mobiles from staff) in Sciennes and KB. A man had been arrested in KB and was linked to other thefts.
- PC Collins reported that a large van parked in Prestonfield Avenue had been uplifted.
- Warning about bogus workmen – everyone, especially the elderly, should always check ID.
- There is a postal scam taking place with failed delivery notices for unwanted parcels being left at houses asking people to phone a number – the cost of the call is astronomical.
- In general, there had been fewer crimes in the area.

Other matters:

- ST asked about the vandalism to cars in Findhorn Place at 3am on 31st October – this was not known about. EH said it's very difficult to respond quickly to such incidents.
- GM asked about the sexual assault case – this is an ongoing Police inquiry.
- Bike controls are continuing – cycling on the Meadows, no lights etc.
- SB asked if people trying stair doors should be reported. PC Collins said anything suspicious should be reported (but not to 999).
- AG said that there are 5 cars regularly parked on Mayfield Road in restricted places from 8-9am – who should this be reported to. AG to send details to JP or ST for forwarding. **AG**
- AG asked about the safety of Hermitage of Braid and Blackford Hill at night. The Police said that there are no particular problems apart from vandalism (or theft from) to cars in the carpark.
- GM complained about people with drug or alcohol problems being moved from Nicolson Square – they just moved to the Royal Mile. JP noted that the policy of removal from Nicolson Square had been decided by the SCNP and the Royal Mile is in a different NP area. SG said it was a pity that benches in Nicolson Square (designed for locals) had been removed to discourage others; also that there are local by-laws (e.g in Hunter Square) to allow the Police to move people using alcohol or drugs from the area.

c) Councillors Report: SB said the councillors would like advice about what was required. JP said that a report lasting 10 minutes at most on key issues in the Council and details of any particular local matters would be useful. SB then reported the following:

- He had attended a meeting of the Savile Area Residents Association when the issue of access to the Astley Ainslie had been raised.
- Lack of bus shelters – he had checked with CEC officials and only 8 had been installed in the past year. A shelter near 50 Grange Road (for 24 and 5 bus services) was approved for 2012; the position near Mayfield Court in West Savile Terrace had still to be assessed but might be included for 2012.
- Pavement in Relugas Road had been assessed and would be resurfaced in 2012/13.
- Bridge End Allotments Community Health project is struggling for funding.
- “Nature strips” in East Suffolk area (TH said these are within the CPA) – fences deteriorate and there are no funds to repair/replace. Suggestion that the fences should be removed had been opposed. GM suggested owners had responsibility for upkeep.
JP asked for a report back from the CPA. **TH**
- The former Princess Elizabeth nursery school had been sold by CEC. JP asked ASt to check details of the purchaser and possible use of the site. **ASt**
- Alternative Business Model. This is a big CEC issue and thought of as semi-privatisation – work to investigate 3 areas started in 2009. Proposal to outsource Environmental Services to a private company, “Enterprise”, came to October Full Council and the decision was deferred for a month to see if the In-house proposal could compare favourably. There are differences between the two proposals in cash savings and reduction in personnel (£72million over 7 years with 228 job losses compared with £45m and 156 job losses for the In-house proposal - £20m savings in the Enterprise bid depended on diverting waste from landfill).

6. Ambulance Noise – possible mediation

JP thanked SG for her very helpful letter which had been received at the start of the previous meeting. A flier to about 200 residents in the vicinity of Cameron Toll had been distributed (thanks to AT and ME) asking for their views about the problem to be sent to JP. Only a few responses had been sent: some are disturbed, some think it's a minor problem and some think ambulances have to use sirens in emergencies. JP asked for views on our next action – do we accept the offer of mediation or just continue to ask for minimum use of sirens. He also reminded the meeting that there was an offer from the Head of Service to address the CC.

GM reported that a meeting at the Northumberland Hotel 18 months ago had attracted lots of people and that there had been 460 complaints about sirens (over the whole of Scotland) in the past year. The phasing of the traffic lights at Cameron Toll might contribute to the use of sirens (default is green for the Liberton Road-Craigmillar Park route) – ASt said that the lights should change quickly enough for this not to be a problem. ASt was asked to check if the traffic light priority could be changed. **ASt**

ME proposed, seconded by TH, that we invite the Head of Service to the January meeting. This was agreed (ST to write and say the talk should be about 15 mins and then questions) **ST**

Following this meeting the CC would decide if we wished to consider Mediation.

7. AAH/REH Update

TH had circulated details of the walkabout of the AAH grounds on 11th November by members of local CCs etc. There would be a meeting of NHS Lothian personnel with CC reps (JP, TH and ST for GPCC) on 17th November to discuss issues of concern. A list of questions to be raised at the meeting had been circulated to those attending – these included both Health and Planning matters. JP said that the GPCC is most interested in the AAH site and the possible disposal of part of the site. JP asked if Boroughmuir High School is still interested – SB said the probable site for the school is now at Fountainbridge. There will be a report after the meeting on 17th.

8. Capital Roads Funding 2012/13

This is a fund of approx £100k for each NP to allocate funds to road and pavement improvements which were not in the Capital programme. The final result for which projects would be completed in 2011/12 was not yet known (in particular East Mayfield). One project submitted for 2011/12 and not given priority was Rankin Drive – the meeting agreed to resubmit this. Other streets agreed to be submitted were the rest of Findhorn Place and part of Oswald Road. The closing date for submissions is 31st December and JP and/or ST would submit these.

9. Reports of Interest Groups

a) Planning: TH had circulated a report. Items to note:

- 35 Fountainhall Road. Approval for a run-in approved although contrary to guidelines – justification that guidelines had been breached before with a similar approval for 37 Fountainhall Road. TH suggested that the Civic Forum (organised by the Cockburn Ass) should arrange a meeting with planners to justify Guidance not being adhered to. TH to write to support this on behalf of GPCC. **TH**
- SESPlan – consultation ends on 19th December. TH can't see any points for GPCC comment.
- Main Issues – more relevant to GPCC area – consultation ends January 31st. A group should meet and consider a response. SB pointed out that the Local Plan can consider items (such as parking in front gardens) which are not in the Main Issues report.
- Lighting Consultation. MH said the report “looks pretty” – there appears to be a conflict between proposals for minimising light pollution and lighting up public buildings.
- Woodcroft Telephone exchange application for – just outside our area but we might want to comment. TH will consider and circulate.

b) Roads and Transport: JP had circulated a report – points:

- Priestfield area – Residents Priority Parking. Cllr Mackenzie had reported that we couldn't revisit the decision made by TIE about the priority of this area cf other areas in the city. JP said that the best compromise would be to press for both schemes to be implemented ASAP.
- MH reported that there are still major problems with overparking in CPZ Zone 7 – the West Blacket Ass will raise this again. Many would like a RPP scheme in the Blacket area.
- GM said that many guesthouses have problems finding parking spaces for visitors.
- JP said he is pursuing the access problems at the AAH.

c) Licensing. No applications in our area.

10. Office Bearers Reports

a) Chair's Report: Dealt with above.

b) Secretary's Report. Members were reminded of various meetings which they could attend.

c) Treasurer's Report: AG reported £1658.10 in the Bank account.

11. Neighbourhood Partnership matters.

- JP reported that he had been told that the “Alcohol event” held that morning had been well attended. It had discussed licences, the easy availability of alcohol etc.
- Student event (on 1st November 2011) – report attached to Secretary's report.

Safer Neighbourhood Group (SNG) – attended by MH. The previous priorities of antisocial behaviour in Nicolson Square and speeding and double parking in Sciennes would not continue. The priorities for the next 3 months will be:

- Cycling problems (e.g. jumping red lights and cycling without lights)
- Problems in Dumbiedykes with youths terrorising the area
- Vandalism – mainly graffiti

Anyone can attend these meetings and MH will notify dates.

12 EACC Matters

TH reported that Planning guidance is being considered by the planning subgroup of the EACC

The EACC website is quite good and worth looking at: www.edinburghcommunitycouncils.org

13 Future meetings – possible speakers etc.

Two suggestions were made: JP suggested Linda Wright (Prestonfield Neighbourhood Centre on services for older people); GM suggested someone from the charity “Help for Heroes”. Names and further details etc. should be provided for decision at the January meeting.

14 AOCB

ME wished the CC to note the following:

- The Prestonfield area had won a silver medal for “Scotland in Bloom”
- Green Flag status was being applied for the park near the War Memorial in Prestonfield Avenue
- Back Green initiative – should be followed up. SB said this had been discussed at the South Central Housing Area Board meeting but not much enthusiasm had been shown by the Prestonfield representative. JP suggested that we should get notification of this meeting from the Neighbourhood Team and seek to be represented.

JP

- Initiatives had been taking place in the cemetery – a tree survey and owl boxes. ASt was asked to identify the officials to enable GPCC to make contact. **ASt**

As there is no CC meeting in December everyone was invited to a social at Tony Harris’s house on December 13th – a reminder invitation would be circulated.

AT raised the issue of inconsiderate cyclists. There was a frank exchange of views about the relative behaviour of cyclists and motorists travelling through the area.

The meeting closed at 9.15pm

