

Grange Prestonfield Community Council

Cameron House Community Education Centre

Minutes 18th May 2016

Present: Janet Sidaway (JS) (Chair), Mike Hunter(MH) (Vice-Chair), Andreas Grothey (AG) (Treasurer), Doreen Allerton (DA), Gilly Dennis (GD), Denis Stevens(DeS), Tony Harris (TH), David Stevenson (DS), Sergey Gorobets(SG), Maureen Edwards (ME) Daniel Johnson MSP Edinburgh Southern (DJ), Cllr Steve Burgess (SB).

Apologies: Ian Murray MP, Sue Tritton (ST), Julian Newman (JN), Eileen Francis (EF), Barbara McNaught (BM), Bill Reid (BR), Graham Dann (GSD), Hazel Fletcher (HF),

Absent: Graham Muir

In Attendance: Ross Stewart (RS) (Police Scotland)

Martin Scott (MS) (Waverley Park Feuars Association)

1. Welcome and Apologies

At the conclusion of the AGM, JS welcomed everyone to the Ordinary Business Meeting. Apologies as noted above.

2. Declarations of Interest. None

3. Minutes of the Meeting 20th April 2016

Draft minutes had been previously circulated; their approval proposed by AG, seconded by DA.

4. Matters Arising not on the agenda

Re Minute 5b of the April meeting, SB passed on a note from Cllr Ian Perry about tree replacement that he would try to get a report for the June GPCC meeting.

5. External Reports

a) Police Report: RS reported that he worked alongside Neil Mackay covering Southside/ Newington Ward providing also back up at the Meadows as required. Police statistics on a Ward basis for this Ward showed crime down generally year on year, particularly drug related, with less frequency of legal highs and finding fewer used needles on common stairs. Recently following a clamp down about £50k worth of legal high stock had been removed from shops and taken out of circulation. JS asked about Police statistics: these are an average of Ward activity, are on the Police website and are not broken down more locally below Ward level.

It was agreed that whilst the Police were present MS on behalf of Waverley Park Feuars Association could raise the subject of recent break-ins and attempted break-ins in Waverley Park and the surrounding area, which had also been referred to in emails to GPCC. MS produced to the meeting a detailed list of observations from November 2015 to 16th May 2016 of actual and attempted break-ins and car damage on a street-by-street basis. Domestic CCTV had captured images of masked gangs returning every 2-3 nights, generally not aggressive and moving on if seen. These occurrences had been reported to Police who had attended incidents as required, but did indicate that broad Ward area crime statistics could mask local spikes in criminal activity. The information presented by MS had been handed over to the Police and reports passed to the dedicated Community Investigation Unit.

RS stressed the importance of passing on all information or observations of suspicious activity, even if the culprits had left the scene as this is helpful in building up a picture of activity, so always call 101 or 999. RS also made a plea for householders to improve their own security, such

as not having car keys on show, installing security lighting and giving the impression of the premises being occupied even when not, as crime is opportune and criminals will leave rather than face a challenge.

DJ queried why the very valuable contribution by MS to the meeting showed the area to be a hot-spot for break-ins etc and it was agreed that ease of ease of speedy escape via the Dalkeith and Craigmillar Park main roads could be significant factors. DJ offered to follow up on this. SG referred to an occurrence known to him where a car stolen locally had been towed to Glasgow for safe keeping by scenes of crime officers and then after a lengthy delay cleaned and returned without being fingerprinted.

MS was commended for the work involved in recording all this activity in the Waverley Park area. RS and MS then left the meeting.

b) Councillor's Report: SB reported as follows:

Playing Out: Following an earlier Motion by SB, a report went to the April 12th meeting of the CEC Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee setting out what needs to be done to devise a procedure as to how this can be implemented simply and more frequently than the present permitted annual TTRO closure procedure. The Committee positively supports Playing Out, with many groups such as Ross Gardens wanting to take part; however the cost estimated at £1500.00 per closure needs to be met and ways and means are being explored. SB will continue to follow up on this and he and AG will liaise.

Biodiversity Action Plan: The next stage for adoption was reported to the same Committee meeting. Following an email from TH to SB, the Committee recognised the work of groups such as Newington Cemetery Group in endeavouring to protect wildlife and ensure biodiversity in cemeteries now longer active and the value these cemeteries have as areas of biodiversity.

South Centra£ Decides: This had been a highly successful event likely to be repeated, with many people attending. As well as the Community Grant Fund decisions, there were good Housing Revenue Account projects such as BBQ areas etc and roads allocations.

Astley Ainslie Hospital Rights of Way: At a recent Local Access Forum CEC had agreed to recognise pedestrian north-south and east-west routes through the site, which although not resulting in any immediate changes would be helpful in protecting these routes in any future disposal of the site.

Bin emptying: DA presented a note listing phone calls to report failures to empty bins at Viewpoint Buildings, St. Albans Road with no action being taken. It appeared that the last remaining Community Waste Officer had left and the service is in crisis. There were occasions when bottle bins and other recycling bins had not been emptied leading to overflows. SB said there were numerous reports of service failures and Cllr Lesley Hinds is trying to resolve issues. JS requested SB to follow up on what is being done and he said he would try to get a briefing.

6. Reports of Interest Groups

a) Planning: A report had been circulated and these reports are now, after the relevant meeting, being put on the GPCC website. TH was thanked for this report. Matters arising:-

- **23 East Mayfield – Extend coach-house:** The draft letter with comments on this application was approved for submission.
- **Cameron Toll Shopping Centre:** There had been continued concern expressed by Lady Road residents and TH about the limited notification of the applications last year for the “drive-thru” units now under construction in the north car park and the adverse impact now being experienced due to the reduction in parking space. There was general support for the proposed fitness club to replace the food hall on the 1st floor. TH to comment to the case officer on 24 hours a day operation via keypad entry and potential impact on nearby residents.

b) Roads and Transport: JS to pass on thanks to GSD for the comprehensive report in his absence. Matters arising:-

- **Cycle Routes:** Chris Brace is moving to Sustrans and appreciation of his work was expressed. It was noted that the Marchmont to KB route is on hold due to lack of resources. MH reported on the meeting with Blacket Association, GPCC and CEC consultants AECOM about Quiet Cycle Route 30 from Holyrood Park to Ratcliffe Terrace. MH stated that the consultants are now looking at a revised route avoiding Pollock Halls in view of Edinburgh University's unwillingness to allow unrestricted access via Pollock Halls and it was hoped to report on this by the end of June. The map attached to GSD's report is therefore subject to change.
- **Road Repairs:** Concern was expressed that Prestonfield Avenue and Priestfield Road are not yet priority. There was a wide-ranging discussion about the ineffectiveness of short term pothole repairs and the waste of money involved. SB said he would forward to JS a Briefing Note for CEC Members produced at the end of February. JS thanked DJ for his support.

c) Licensing: Nothing to report.

d) Publicity: MH reported that material for the Newsletter is being gathered and agreed to sub-edit the AGM Planning Report for the planning contribution.

e) Newington Cemetery: JS reported:

- **Working party 16th May:** Work continued on clearing undergrowth adjacent to the cemetery walls.
- **Interest Group Committee Meeting 11th May:** Arrangements for EDOD on Sunday 25th September and the graves to be featured. Organising the work consequent on the successful grant application for the "Fallen Angel" restoration.
- **Official visit:** JS, BM, TH and Cllr Jim Orr had met David Jamieson, CEC Parks and Greenspace Manager, on 16th May and walked round the cemetery briefing him on matters of joint interest and work done and the vision for the future. David Jamieson very supportive.

7. Office Bearers' Reports

a) Chair's Report: JS said that all matters had already been covered under other items.

b) Treasurer's Report: No movements since the last meeting, that is £1702.91 in the bank, of which £40.60 belongs to the Newington Cemetery group.

c) Secretary's Report: No separate written report as the Secretary is away and TH said that all matters had been reported under other items. Forthcoming meetings of interest to be in the Secretary's next report, prior to the summer recess. The meeting was reminded that Anna Stamp of Edinburgh University Capital Projects Team would be giving a talk at the June meeting on the proposals for the King's Buildings Campus.

8. Reports of Outside Groups

a) SCNP Group: DS had attended the SCNP Active Living Action Group meeting on 9 May. He had emailed a report to GPCC Members.

b) EACC: TH had continued to represent GPCC on the EACC and had recently been involved in drafting EACC standing orders and revising the Planning Concordat. Details of EACC activity is on the website www.edinburghcommunitycouncils.org.uk.

c) **Community Safety Action Group:** MH reported that this meeting had been cancelled.

9. **Date of next meeting – Wednesday 15th June 2016**

10. **AOCB and Open Forum**

Meadows Festival: JS reported receipt of an email about the Meadows Festival on 4th & 5th June with a request to take part and for a contribution. MH and TH explained that we had in the past participated with no discernible benefit to GPCC, with not enough people to staff a stand which had not been well sited. It was agreed to make a goodwill gesture contribution of £100.00 to the Festival, but with apologies that we could not take part. (See JS emails 19 May. AG to make payment.)

Open Space Strategy: TH reported that he had attended that afternoon a Workshop conducted by the CEC Team revising the 2010 Strategy and Audit. Revising the Strategy is underway, the Audit having been revised last year, and it is expected that the revised Strategy will be out for consultation in the autumn.

The meeting closed at 8.55pm