

Grange Prestonfield Community Council
Meeting of 17 January 2018

Present: Janet Sidaway (Chair, **JS**), Mike Hunter (Vice-chair, **MH**), Andreas Grothey (Treasurer, **AG**), Tony Harris (**TH**), William Reid (**WR**), Sue Tritton (**ST**), David Stevenson (**DaS**), Ellen-Raissa Jackson (**ERJ**), Eileen Francis (**EF**), Julian Newman (**JN**), Cllr Alison Dickie (**AD**).

Apologies: Joe Griffin, Henry Philip, Ian Chisholm (**IC**), Doreen Allerton, Ian Murray MP.

Absent: Maureen Edwards, Irene Hood (**IH**), Philip Murray, Denis Stevens.

Resigned: Graham Dann (**GSD**) and Fraser Graham (**FG**).

Also in attendance: PC Chris Harris (**CH**) and 3 members of the public – John McClure, Neil Kempself and one other.

1. Welcome

JS welcomed the members of the public and explained that, as they were all attending the meeting in relation to parking in Priestfield, she would invite their comments at the appropriate moment.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of 15 November 2017

TH proposed; **WR** seconded. *Approved nem com.*

4. Matters arising not covered by the agenda

a) South-East Locality Improvement Plan

Andrew Gallacher sent a follow-up to his presentation confirming that the Locality Improvement Plan has now been formally approved and that Neighbourhood Partnerships will continue. **JS** noted that GPCC had recorded that we had not been formally consulted, even though CEC felt that officers had made efforts to consult community councils through a variety of public events. **TH** noted that widespread concern had been expressed on the lack of consultation with community councils at the EACC.

b) 10th Anniversary Party

ST had received a bill from CEC for the event and paid it, but had since received a final demand. If necessary she would send a second cheque. The surplus was £15, which exactly covered the Christmas present for the Cameron House team.

5. External reports

a) Police report

PC Chris Harris (**CH**) briefed us on what had been happening over Christmas - a busy period for Police Scotland. Recently, there have been problems with a group of local youths who have been responsible for lots of anti-social behaviour, including opening lockfast places (OLPs), smashing car windows and grabbing anything inside. Police Scotland solved some of those cases and three youths will be charged with 15 offences in the Nicolson Street area. Another man has been carrying out similar OLPs at dogwalking spots. He has been caught and charged with 12 offences. The police advise dogwalkers not to leave valuables in the car. Housebreaking is down by 60 per cent on this period last year. Community police have recently dealt with a young man who started a harassment campaign against a local café. He has been told to stop and has been flagged as a vulnerable person. Re recent community tensions: letters have come from outside the UK inciting trouble, and counter-terrorism officers are looking into it. **CH** noted that the mosques are proactive in reporting this. Police Scotland asks people to be aware but not alarmed.

WR had previously asked about hate crimes against people with disabilities. **CH** had analysed the figures and in the 9 months up to November 2017 there had been 11 such offences citywide, 4 of which occurred in the Southside. **CH** hoped that **WR** found that low figure reassuring. **WR** asked how that compared to previous years and **CH** agreed to go back and check.

ERJ asked about increased drug activity in Dumbiedykes. **CH** said that the police have targeted several addresses in the area and confiscated drugs so it is possible that drug dealers are increasing lookouts because they feel under pressure, and may move into adjacent areas. **AD** asked about increased visible drug dealing on the Pleasance. **CH** said the police are aware of this. **JS** thanked **CH** who then left the meeting.

b) Councillor's Report

Cllr Alison Dickie (AD) reported that it is a busy time for CEC, and councillors are currently going into budget negotiations. A homeless task force has been set up and the citywide schools review is a big issue. Antisocial behaviour, housing and homelessness are particularly acute in the Southside corridor. There is innovative work at Nicolson Square on how to deal with vulnerable people gathering in certain areas. Parking is the biggest issue in the GPCC area.

6. General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

TH reported that GDPR is a concern for the EACC, particularly following the CEC guidance that community councils have to sign up with the data protection controller. **TH** said that raises the question of whether community councils would get an additional £35 for registration and money to enable secure storage of data. EACC has taken up the issue and has invited the official who wrote the guidance to its next meeting on 22 February. **AD** asked whether we want her to raise any of the issues with officers. **TH** confirmed that EACC is dealing with the matter for now.

7. Reports of Interest Groups

a) Planning and Licensing

TH had nothing to report on licensing. He noted that he no longer receives information directly on licensing, but he is happy to continue to comment. **MH** agreed to forward the relevant emails.

TH's planning report gives an update of events since the November meeting of GPCC.

Application to build flats at 67 Prestonfield Ave: **TH** noted that Graham Dann (**GSD**) had successfully got up a petition of 51 local users of the path to suggest that it is a right of way (through uninterrupted use) and that this had been submitted along with an objection from the Scottish Rights of Way Society. **JN** and **ST** asked about the status of a right of way in the plans. **TH** responded that the plans had shown lockable gates. He noted that given that the site used to be part of church hall grounds and the park area is maintained by CEC, there must be some original documentation, which could address the issue of the path. The application is awaiting assessments. **AD** agreed to ensure that the application goes to the CEC Development Management Sub-Committee.

26 Craigmillar Park application: GPCC agreed to object to. **TH** to draft and circulate to the planning group.

Sick Kids site: Although in Marchmont and Sciennes Community Council, the development raises serious issues affecting all Southside community councils. **ST** outlined the current proposal, which includes a new build of 34 affordable houses and a student block of 100 units. There is no detail of the design of the student block, but there is a suggestion that it will be 8 storeys high. For more information see <http://marchmontandsciennes.blogspot.co.uk>. **TH** suggested as many people as possible should attend the next public meeting on the proposals on 7 February. **TH** and **ST** will attend and follow up with suggestions for GPCC.

Scottish Planning Review: **TH** reported on this. The EACC is working on a joint response on behalf Edinburgh CCs.

Representations on planning applications by email: **TH** has drafted a response to CEC's email.

Planning subgroup membership: **TH** (Convenor); **ERJ, AG, ST, JN.**

b) Roads and Transport

GSD has resigned from the GPCC, and therefore is no longer Roads and Transport convenor. **JS** offered GPCC's thanks to **GSD** for working so tirelessly on our behalf, and congratulated him on his recent successes.

MH delivered **GSD's** last report.

Area B7 parking. **GSD** had summarised the results of the parking survey carried out by GPCC. **JS** and **AD** noted the high response rate (25 %).

Member of public (John McClure) thanked **GSD** for his work and for initiating the questionnaire, but asked about the basis for the survey analysis and whether CEC had received the full responses to the questionnaires. **AD** confirmed that she hand-delivered the questionnaires to Andrew Mackay of the transport department, and **JS** reported that Andrew Mackay had emailed **GSD** on 10 January to say that he had not yet looked at the consultation responses in any detail, and it was unlikely that his department could complete any additional analysis without risking delays to

the indicated timescale. John McClure outlined his concerns as a long-term resident of Priestfield, particularly about the way in which CEC assesses need and demand for Resident Priority Parking (RPP) spaces based on the number of permits purchased, when it is clear that residents will not purchase a permit unless there is a space at or close to their property.

Another member of the public (Neil Kempzell) noted the tight deadline if there were to be an assessment of the new spaces. He said that residents did not think the additional spaces would be enough and would exacerbate the problem elsewhere. His concern is that a residential area is becoming a car park.

AD said that councillors listen to all voices. She had raised some of the questions and had been given different opinions, but officers seem to be fixated on the demand-led proposition. She noted that the situation is problematic citywide, and one of the problems was the extent of irresponsible parking. **JN** offered a B1 resident perspective and noted the increase in very bad parking in that area, and suggested making the whole city a CPZ.

John McClure said that the high-density commuter parking problem particularly in West Priestfield was that there were not enough new RPP spaces proposed and if the new spaces were too far away residents would not purchase an RPP permit if they had to walk half a block to get a parking space. **MH** noted that it is normal for tenement residents and others elsewhere in the city to have to walk more than a block and that they do not expect to have spaces outside their houses.

JS suggested that residents consider forming a registered local group, to look at issues highlighted. Meanwhile, residents should address further comments directly to CEC, using the dedicated email address controlledparkingzone@edinburgh.gov.uk. Neil Kempzell said that an informal residents group has been already created. John McClure said that its aim was for reduced commuter parking in Priestfield.

AD noted the involvement of other partners, including Scottish Widows, and **GSD** was congratulated on his major contribution to the Scottish Widows' initiative of a Green Travel Plan.

TH is to take up the issue with EACC as it is a citywide problem.

The Neighbourhood Environment Programme

This is finally open. GPCC has a request for funding footway repair in East Mayfield and we support a similar scheme in Relugas Gardens. The closing date for voting is 26 January. **MH** noted that the pop-up events were not well advertised. **ST** pointed out that there is a deadline for the next application towards the end of the month. GPCC to suggest another section of East Mayfield footway. **MH** to check this.

It was agreed that the transport group will operate without a convenor until the next AGM. The group's membership is now: **DA, MH, AG, TH, IC, JG, ST**.

c) Communications and Publicity

Email list: **MH** asked whether it was possible to have a discrete, rather than a forwarding email address, to avoid replies from personal addresses. **AG** suggested that people would have to log in separately, although it is possible to set up different identities in your email programme. He noted that there could be data protection issues. It was agreed to defer the issue until we hear more about GDPR.

Website: Fraser Graham, (**FG**) who has had to resign as he has moved out of the area, had been working on a more user-friendly website but it is not finished. He was warmly thanked for all the work he had done not only on the website but in designing the GPCC's publicity material. **AG** reported that we also needed to transfer the archives from the old GPCC site. **FG** would be asked to help complete the work.

Publicity subgroup membership: **MH** (Convenor), **ERJ, JS, AG**.

d) Environment

Leaf clearing: **ST** has complained to CEC about the leaves in the Grange and the complaint has been added to the annual leaf-clearing programme.

Street lights: There is a high number of street lights out in the area. **ST** alerted members to the easy method of reporting any problems to CEC by going online and clicking on the map. Link:

http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20089/roads_and_pavements/1071/report_a_street_light_problem

Astley Ainslie – next meeting of the forum is 22 February. Timescale for AA has slipped by at least 6 months and consultants have not yet been appointed. A group is considering community buy out or asset transfer of whole site with a public meeting to consider the proposal on Wednesday 31 January.

Environmental group membership: **ST** (Convenor); **TH, JN, AG, IH**.

e) Newington Cemetery

There was an active working party this week and volunteers removed lots of ivy from the catacombs. The next committee meeting is 24 January. **TH** noted that data protection could be an issue for the NC subgroup and its status may have to change as a result. The now-annual snowdrop walk will take place on 26 February. Robin Boyd's project came to fruition and the ceremony for the rededication of the JVS Taylor grave organised by JS was held on 17 November. There was a service followed by lunch at Priestfield Church.. **EF** noted it was an excellent event, which everyone enjoyed.

Newington Cemetery group membership: (No convenor), **TH, ERJ, IC, IH.**

8. Office Bearers' reports

a) Chair's report

Membership: As three members had left, **JS** suggested GPCC should consider co-opting new members.

Secretary's Role: JS apologised that no progress has been made on redefining the secretary's role due to her illness and the winter holidays. It was agreed that we continue on the current basis until May. **TH** volunteered to take minutes in February, **ST** in March and **AG** in April. **EF** had suggested that we co-opt a young person to help in the secretary's role, which would be positive from an intergenerational perspective, and this would be included in the discussions by the ad hoc group of the officers plus **JG, EJR** and **TH**.

Other Points: **JS** had also sent cards to thank Cllr Cameron Rose, Cllr Alison Dickie and AD's secretary for their work in organising and speaking at the GPCC 10th anniversary party.

b) Treasurer's report

The balance in the account at 1 December was £4,967.77. **FG** is yet to cash a cheque for £51.99 for the questionnaire and £1592.63 was part of the donation to fund the restoration of the JVS Taylor grave (including a £53 donation to the Newington Cemetery group). £1255 is for specific projects at Newington Cemetery from the SCNP grant. That leaves GPCC with current funds of £2,068.

c) Secretary – nothing to report

9. Reports of Outside Groups

a) South Central Neighbourhood Partnership (SCNP)

The next meeting would be on January 22. GPCC's representative **ST** has asked for updates on Newington Library and the restoration of the jawbones at Middle Meadow Walk. There was a discussion on the progress on the structure and role of localities following an email that had been circulated by **JS**. **JN** noted that the quorum information is unclear and **ST** noted that community representatives will make up a smaller proportion with a greater role for CEC councillors. Concern was expressed about the apparent diminution of the role of community councils.

b) Edinburgh Association of Community Councils (EACC)

TH (GPCC's representative) and **JS** attended the AGM on 25 November. There had been a robust discussion on the loss of influence of community councils as well as the impact of GDPR. **TH** attended the development forum on 12 December. There has been a backlog in the approval of building warrants. CEC has outsourced some of that work to other councils (Aberdeen and Argyll and Bute). Next EACC is 22 February.

10. Any other competent business

AG asked about quantifying the demand for student housing and its location. He suggested we interview someone from the student union, recognising that students are part of our community. **ST** would find out if there is still a student representative on the Neighbourhood Partnership. If not, **MH/JS** would contact EUSA or Edinburgh University Accommodation Service to see if they have information.

The meeting closed at 8.55 pm.

Next GPCC meeting: 21 February.