

Grange/ Prestonfield Community Council
Minutes of meeting 20 March 2024

Meeting held in person at Prestonfield Community Centre and via Zoom

Office Bearers -

Chair - Ian Chisholm; Joint Vice Chairs - Paul Rowllings, Ellen-Raissa Jackson;
Secretary- Raphael Bleakley; Treasurer - Paul Rowllings;

Members present:

Stanley Bird, Alan Gilmour, Ken Robertson

Members present on Zoom:

Sally Griffiths. Andreas Grothey

In attendance on Zoom:

Denise Fisher

Apologies: Ian Wright, Sue Tritton, Peter Jones

Absent:

Bill Reid;

1. **Welcome.** – Ian Chisholm welcomed members to the meeting.

2. **Declarations of Interest** –

3. **Minutes of 21 February 2024**

- Minutes were agreed as accurate.

Actions:

- Planning Vacancy. Ian had been in contact with Stuart Tooley who had been speaking with a local councillor about this. Suggestion to register the volunteer opportunity for an architecture student on the EUSA website.
- Newington Cemetery wall – Cllr Pogson to chase to see if there is any update / timescale about what can be done. Ellen has received four enquiries via website.
- Access at Salisbury road improved – green man crossing? Ellen highlighted that there is still no pedestrian phase – to put that right would need to replace the lights. Ten second gap. Change the sequence. Cllr Pogson – want to redevelop entire junction – Current traffic roadworks on Dalkeith Road has pedestrian access. Cllr Pogson to go back and enquire about possibility of a ten second gap.

4. **Notice of Matters Arising -**

None

5. Reports (External) – Cllr Pogson updated:

Cllr report

- Council has passed budget for the next year. Labour administration had their budget voted through with amendment. Prioritising roads pavements, footways drainage with an extra 12.5million. No cuts to education budget.
- Communal bin hubs work is beginning. In two phases. First phase towards Grange and Priestfield area. Second phase towards Prestonfield. Markings are on the ground for the bin hubs. Couple of issues with some residents in the area – council officers liaising with residents. End of Grange Loan/Ratcliffe terrace. Priestfield Road/Dalkeith Road – residents in touch to set up a site meeting. Roll-out of programme is continual.
- Cameron Toll roundabout works – discovered the culvert under the roundabout was about to collapse. Since overnight inspection on 13th February, works are underway. Having to replace entire culvert. Also doing resurfacing works and drainage works on approach roads to Cameron Toll. Due to progress to 10th May. Discussion about the bus gate to allow traffic a diversion through Prestonfield. Unhappy residents in the immediate area. Concern about the volume of traffic on Prestonfield Avenue as there are no crossings. Will be a period from 2nd April, when the west side of the roundabout will be shut for resurfacing . Bus gate will be opened for four weeks. Have had lots of communication from residents. Ellen raised that Prestonfield Road has not been resurfaced. Cllr Pogson suggested that both roads are due for resurfacing very soon. Due to be at a meeting about this at the end of the month. Includes some design elements
- Denise asked about Marchhall, bin hub to be on the side of Priestfield Church – would have thought it would be better to be on the other side of the road. Would be better sited next to a blank wall where it would impact no one rather than it marring the view of the church. The pavement on church side is very narrow. Cllr Pogson confirmed that all bin hubs are going on roads. Consultation took place in 2023, hadn't been flagged as a major issue at the time. Cllr Pogson to ask about this.
- Ian asked about the budget – how Council can save £155million over coming years and will come to a head. Had to deal with Council tax freeze this year.
- Ellen raised the library consultation which is an open consultation. Is there any talk in the council about the status of libraries. Cllr Pogson doesn't know, cuts have been made in other LA areas. Not about cutting access – is about activities and services that are being delivered in libraries. Cllr Pogson to find out.

6. Reports of Interest Groups -

a. Planning

- 27-31 Ratcliffe Terrace Student development – Purpose of the building is more student development. Area exceeds the number of students. Point of affordable housing in the area. Cllr Pogson raised that this is a private development within the planning regime. Student density within an area – but the area is not fixed. Can fit more single study bedrooms into these spaces – is a difficulty. No determination on the law commission building. Ken – incremental impact on the area, plus loss of garage. Ellen – responsibility on behalf of whole community to

argue for improved housing provision. Concern about the sustainability of the design of student accommodation. Is it more about tourist accommodation? Strong view that the Council ought to lobby hard for more affordable housing. Ask Stuart Tooley to attend to discuss student issues. Cllr Pogson attending a meeting about student homelessness.

- GPCC to opposing on the ground that the design is out of character, object on the grounds of density of student accommodation and the incremental nature of the increase in the number of student developments in the area. Ian to draft a response on behalf of the CC.

b. Licensing – 166 Dalkeith Road – is currently a hair and beauty salon no grounds for raising any concerns.

c. Roads/Transport –

Allan updated:

- From the budget – free travel on trams for under 22 year olds is being ended.
- Potholes – Cllr Pogson said to report bad potholes in the area.
- Some discussion extending parking restrictions to 10pm and in some areas to include overnight.
- Parking permits for carers discussed and agreed by the Council.
- Discussion about Prestonfield Bus gate – was open for one day. Has been confusion by drivers. Will be opened from 2 April for four weeks. Plea that it is shut again.

d. Communications/Publicity - Paul updated:

- Grant application from Southside Newington – no update on the grant. Chased the Council for official confirmation with a view for the funds becoming available for the noticeboard. Two sites, Dalkeith Road or at the library. Need to approach relevant authorities. Look at priority for placement. Ken highlighted that the library has expanded the community wall space – could we make use of that? Also a community wall space in Sainsbury's at Cameron Toll. Add to next agenda once confirmation received.

e. Environment

- No further update

f. Newington Cemetery – Ellen updated:

- Issue with the barrel planters that were due to arrive this month. Won't deliver into the cemetery.
- Council changing the rules for parks and cemeteries- having a discussion about level of permission need before do anything. Current proposals are unworkable. Keep under review – Ellen to provide future update.

7. Reports from Office Bearers

- a. Treasurer Report – Paul updated.

GPCC Bank balance - £ 6,852

- GPCC Account Balance £2,644
 - No new income, £16 expenditure (Zoom)

- Newington Cemetery Balance - £4,208
 - £833 metals income no new expenditure

Ellen asked about joint cemetery / CC newsletter? – Share resources to make that happen. Cost in the region of £1500 previously. Ken anticipates elections in September – to that end need to think about what to do to further GPCC ideas. Has approached magazine editor of Grange Association. Have in mind to seek an insert in the Grange Association magazine. Other local magazines, Blacketts. Southside directory has good trade contacts ask how they handle types of request. Phase 3 to conclude, end June.

b. Secretary.

Dates for next meeting. Proposing:

- Weds 17th April – 7pm
- Weds 22nd May (4th in May) – prop that this is the AGM. – 7pm
- Weds 19th June – 7pm

EACC – Ken Updated

- Feb 29 scheme review to be discussed by CEC Governance, Gavin King. Committed to give assistance to CCs. At same meeting, Cllr Watt, led on budget. Record of both meetings on EACC site.
- Meeting on Saturday 23rd March, in person. First for four years.

9. Open forum

Ken raised – proposed Council survey on how to handle projected budget shortfall. Will be a wide consultation – drop in groups in libraries. Is a big issue with the backdrop of Councils in England going bankrupt. Cllr Pogson mentioned that this hasn't been done for a number of years, so going back to do that. Context will change and will need to take that on board.

10. Date of Next Meeting - Wednesday 17th April 2024

Action list

3 Actions ii)	Planning vacancy	Continued for updates
	Newington Cemetery wall	Cllr Pogson to seek further update
	Bin hub at Priestfield Church	Cllr Pogson to enquire about options for this
	Library consultation	Cllr Pogson to enquire about status of libraries in the cities (i.e. subject to cuts?).
6.a. External reports	27-31 Ratcliffe Terrace	Ian to draft and submit an objection