

Grange Prestonfield Community Council
Cameron House Community Education Centre
Minutes 19th October 2016

Present: Janet Sidaway (**JS**) (Chair), Mike Hunter (**MH**) (Vice-Chair), Tony Harris (**TH**), Sue Tritton (**ST**) (Secretary), Maureen Edwards (**ME**), Graham Dann (**GSD**), Bill Reid (**BR**), Irene Hood (**IH**), Ellen-Raissa Jackson (**EJ**), Henry Philip (**HP**), Harry Mulligan (**HM**), Fraser Graham (**FG**), Denis Stevens (**DeS**), Joe Griffin (**JG**), Cllr Cameron Rose (**CR**), Cllr Jim Orr (**JO**)

In Attendance: PC Neil Mackay

Apologies: Andreas Grothey (**AG**) (Treasurer), Doreen Allerton (**DA**), Julian Newman (**JN**), Eileen Francis (**EF**), Ian Chisholm (**IC**), Philip Murray (**PM**)

Public: David Stevenson (**DS**)

1. Welcome - Introduction

Cllr Cameron Rose took the Chair at the start of the meeting and explained that he would chair this first meeting of the new CC until Office Bearers had been appointed. He welcomed everyone and explained that as there were exactly 16 people who had put themselves forward there was no need for an actual election. There were also 4 members representing Local Interest Groups. He said that he was one of 4 councillors covering the CC area; one would always attend the CC meeting; that they worked together for the area and agreed that GPCC was one of the best organised CCs in the city. He had been the returning officer for the CC election, which was why he was now in the Chair; after the formalities he would hand over the Chair and that Cllr JO would be the attending councillor for the rest of the meeting. He then asked all present to introduce themselves and give a brief description of any particular interest. He explained the options as regarded the office bearers; to ask for nominations for new office bearers or to re-appoint the present office bearers for a limited period in order for people to get to know each other. DeS proposed the re-election of the present office bearers (all were still on the CC and willing to stand) and this was agreed with the situation to be reviewed at the January meeting. Cllr CR provided a copy of the "Councillors Code of Conduct" for all present and then handed the Chair over to JS.

JS then welcomed everyone and thanked Cllr CR for being returning officer and chairing the first part of the meeting.

2. Declarations of Interest. None

JS explained that this item was an opportunity for anyone to declare if they had a financial interest in any matter under discussion – for example if they, or a relative, had submitted a quote for designing or printing any material.

3. Minutes of the Meeting 21st September 2016

The minutes had been previously circulated. Proposed by TH, seconded by DeS.

4. Matters Arising (not on the agenda)

JS suggested that as this was a new CC this item should be skipped. .

5. External Reports

a) Police Report: PC Mackay reported:

- i) Fire at the Central Mosque – a 28 year-old male had been charged and was in custody.
- ii) There had been a serious assault in Salisbury Place on October 2nd – enquiries are ongoing but there have been positive results.
- iii) A new shift pattern had been introduced for community officers on Monday – this seems to be working well. He is, at present, working “back shift” 12-10 which is more suitable for attending community events etc.
- iv) In September there were 21 reported crimes in the Prestonfield area and 27 in the Grange area – several had already been solved. Many of these related to thefts of pedal cycles – following the influx of new students.
- v) Housebreak ins. These had increased with the darker evenings – he reiterated advice to householders such as keeping car keys safe and not leaving tools around which could be used to help break in.
- vi) Road Safety – one drunk driver arrested; 3 motorcycles stolen – 2 recovered. There are high visibility patrols and advice given to motorcyclists.
- vii) Two events coming up – Halloween and Bonfire Night – any concerns should be reported to the Police.

In response to questions:

- i) Cllr CR and FG asked about cycle thefts. PC NM said that, unfortunately, the Police hadn't been able to offer help this year with naming cycles etc. Most thefts are from tenements or from sheds.
 - ii) 20 mph enforcement. He has been trained and is shortly due in court as a driver is challenging the ticket.
 - iii) Females on the Meadows? No incidents this year.
- JS thanked PC Mackay who left at 19.40.

b) Councillor's Report:

Cllr JO said he had 6 items to report:

- i) Priestfield Avenue flooding – June 2016:** There had been a meeting last Friday between CEC officials and Scottish Water to which Cllr JO hadn't been invited. It seemed that the conclusion was that this was an exceptional event and that nothing could be done. However, JO said that as there was a similar event in 2012 it shouldn't be considered exceptional and he will try to get the officials to come to a meeting with local residents.
- ii) Controlled parking:** Some residents can't park near their homes and would like some changes to the bays. Cllr JO had contacted parking officers who said that there will be a full review soon and they are not keen to make minor changes in the meantime.
- iii) Cameron House Community Centre:** This centre had been flooded for the third or fourth time – 3mm had been sanded off the gym floor.
- iv) Community Empowerment Act:** This had been suggested as a way of acquiring the Dalkeith Road shop which had been empty for 15 years since the owner absconded. It wasn't clear if this act could be used in this case – the issue is more complicated than he had at first thought and he will keep monitoring the situation.
- v) Remembrance Sunday – Nov 13th:** He reminded everyone about the service at the Prestonfield War Memorial at 10.45.
- vi) Community grants etc.** He encouraged GPCC to look at possible funding opportunities. Some schemes receive 50% funding from SEstrans.

In response to questions:

i) Flooding: ME and TH mentioned flooding in basements in the Dalkeith Road shops – could there be a joint meeting with the Priestfield Avenue residents? Cllr JO thought this was a separate issue and that two separate meetings would be better

ii) Community Empowerment: FG asked if the empty Dalkeith Road shop could be used for e.g. Friends of Newington Cemetery. Cllr JO said he needed to check exactly what powers would be granted.

6. Reports of Interest Groups

a) Planning: TH had circulated a report which was slightly longer than usual in order to help inform new members of the CC. He mentioned that the CEC would be offering training to new (and old) community councillors and said that training in the Planning system was particularly helpful. He highlighted the following issues from his report:

- **20 Duncan Street:** The application to demolish the existing building was refused – this has gone to appeal and the result is not yet known.
- **East Suffolk Road Playing Field:** The period for reaching agreement on the upkeep of the “park area” has been extended to 4th November. A local third party has offered to do this but this offer has not yet been discussed by CEC.
- **Kings Building Campus:** GPCC supported the redevelopment of the Darwin Building.
- **Local Development Plan (LDP2):** The current plan is going through the final stages. Consultation on the next plan starts in 2017.
- **Strategic Development Plan (SESPlan2):** This plan deals with strategic planning issues in an area from the Borders to Fife. GPCC needs to consider whether to comment – public consultation runs until 24th November so can be discussed at the November meeting.
- **Open Space Strategy:** Comments have to be submitted by Friday (21st October). TH drafted a possible letter of comment. GPCC agreed to comment – TH would include any comments sent to him by email. Individuals can also submit comments. Several suggestions were made at the meeting which TH agreed to incorporate.

TH commented that the Planning Department seems to be in turmoil with Planning lists being sent out incomplete and late. He also asked anyone interested in joining the Planning group to contact him.

- **Allotments:** ME raised the issue of allotments – there is a huge waiting list. CEC will provide space for more allotments but will provide no support. Allotment holders will have to get together to deal with the site etc. The allotment officer is Ian Woolard Tel: 529 7916.

b) Roads and Transport: GSD said that he leads a small group which deals with Transport and Roads matters in our area and asked for anyone interested in joining this group to contact him.

He noted the following matters and actions:

- **Cameron Toll Bridge:** An HGV had hit the bridge in May – this causes considerable problems – both for Network Rail (who own the bridge) and for the Council because of the subsequent congestion caused. He had contacted CEC about getting better signage – and will continue to pursue this matter. Cllr JO also agreed to follow this up.

- **Illegal right turn into Cameron House Avenue from Peffermill Road:** There had been several near accidents but CEC is not interested in trying to prevent this action. GSD has also been in touch with all 4 councillors. He asked for suggestions about possible solutions.
- **Roads Capital Funding:** GSD explained that this was a fund for (relatively) minor improvements to roads or pavements. Submissions for next year need to be made by the end of January 2017. Last year's submissions (not funded) were East Mayfield pavements and parts of Prestonfield Avenue. He will try to find out the total available for 2017 – all suggestions welcome.
- **20 mph sign removal:** With the introduction of further streets to be included in the 20 mph zone there will be opportunity to get some signs removed. GSD has asked for the name of the relevant officer to contact about this.

c) Licensing. Lists for new licences, or extensions to existing licences are sent to the secretary – these are mainly for pubs and restaurants and for shop opening hours and there are not often any to concern us in our area. HMO licence applications are separate to this. Some residents were concerned about a new licence for an HMO which had already received planning permission. It was not felt appropriate for the GPCC to comment in this case (although individuals could obviously object).

d) Publicity – Newsletter and website. MH explained that our main publicity was through the newsletter or information on our website. The GPCC had sufficient funds to enable it to produce a newsletter every two or three years – but not annually unless we got a grant. The printing costs were about £500 for about 7,500 addresses. Depending how many were delivered by GPCC members (or friends) some had to be delivered by a delivery company which added to the cost. The website had been originally written by AG - MH would like it to be more user friendly but doesn't have the necessary skills to do this. HM suggested that there could be links on our website to other matters of interest (e.g. CEC Consultations) – this should be easy and possible. FG asked about social media – MH said that GPCC had discussed setting up a Facebook page a few years ago but decided against this as it would require daily monitoring to check for defamatory postings. Further discussion on this should be an agenda item for November.

e) Newington Cemetery: JS reported:

- **Meeting on 26th October:** The group consists of volunteers – some are GPCC members but many are local residents. There will be a meeting at Priestfield Church on 26th October at 7.30pm when a report on Doors Open Day will be given. EJ commented on the success of the Doors Open Day.
- **Working Party:** TH said that the working party on Monday (17th October) had been very successful and details about joining these would be given on 26th October.

7. Reports from Office Bearers

a) Chair's Report: JS again thanked everyone, particularly the other office bearers, for their work for the CC.

b) Treasurer's Report: AG had circulated a report explaining how GPCC is funded and also circulated statements for the past four years. Over the summer there had been several expenses etc. The costs for the printing and delivery of the newsletter had been paid; a grant for the reinstatement of the "Fallen Angel" in Newington Cemetery had been received and some work on this paid; the annual CEC grant (£830.14) had been received. Once various outstanding bills had been paid there is a total of about £1750 to spend for GPCC purposes.

c) Secretary's Report: A report had been circulated; this was mainly to explain the various Interest Groups run by the GPCC and a description of the SCNP and its various Action Groups. GPCC needs to appoint representatives to the SCNP and the Action groups – to be done at the November meeting. There was discussion about the times of the SCNP Action Groups – most meet at 2pm which is not convenient for many GPCC members.

8. Reports of Outside Groups – deferred to next meeting.

9. Date of next meeting – Wednesday 16th November 2016

10. AOCB and Open Forum

DS had not stood for election to GPCC; however he was willing to continue to represent GPCC on the "Active Living Action group" of the SCNP. The meeting unanimously agreed to co-opt DS to be a member of GPCC and to continue to represent the CC on this group.

The meeting closed at 9pm