

DENNISTOUN COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD AT WHITEHILL SCHOOL 10/1/12

Present: Stephen Birrell (chair), Lauren Amazeen, Jane Clarke, Janette Cochrane, Brian Johnston, Ruth Johnston, Mary McCabe, Helen McCarthy, Anne McKenna, Jenny Mulholland, Frank Plowright, Louise Williams, Wesley Wright (Council Members), Councillors Frank Docherty, Jennifer Dunn and Alison Thewliss. John Mason MSP
Police Community Liaisons PC McAdam & PC Webster
Members of the public: Vicky Melvin, Matty Sutton

Apologies: Jenny Boyd, MSP Humza Yousaf

Minutes provided by Frank Plowright

1. Before starting on the agenda items Janette wanted to explain why she resigned as Secretary. Stephen and Brian knew of work due to go ahead in Onslow Square, but failed to inform the Community Council this was the case, despite Stephen attending the meeting representing the Community Council as well as the Conservation Group. As the Community Council had not been informed, Janette told several people there was no work going ahead, and feels she was made to look a liar when work began. She feels all information about the area involving Council members should be passed to the Council, and had therefore lost her trust in Stephen and felt she couldn't continue to work as Secretary. Stephen responded that issues such as dog fouling, litter and fly tipping around the square was had been highlighted at monthly clean-ups organised by Dennistoun Conservation Society. GCSS and GHA arranged informal meeting to which Stephen and Brian were invited and it was decided that GHA would apply for funding and that GCSS would consult with local residents (securing approx 25 notes of support). It had been his understanding that once funding was achieved there was to have been a fuller consultation before any work went ahead, and this would have been the time to raise the matter with the Community Council. Work commencing in November was a complete surprise. However, given the strong feelings this has generated, in future such matters will be mentioned immediately.
2. POLICE REPORT: a) There still appears to be some misunderstanding as to the area covered by Dennistoun Community Council, and Stephen again requested that police figures presented to the Community Council correspond to the area within the boundary the Council represents for the sake of consistency. b) Beats 20-22 cover North Dennistoun, and in that area there were 172 reported crimes between November 9th and January 10th, of which 86 resulted in arrests. Of the more serious matters dealt with, there have been arrests of two men for breaking into cars in November, an arrest for assault on Alexandra Parade, an arrest for an attempted break-in on Onslow Drive and theft in Whitehill Street. The case of a pupil bringing a knife into Whitehill School has been dealt with by the officer on site there. c) The robberies in the area remain a priority. High visibility patrols have been joined by circuits from the CCTV vehicle and motor cycle patrols. Last month it was reported that the police had arrested the people for house break-ins, but they've continued. Dennistoun is perceived as a well-off area, and it's know there is a large collection of empty houses while people work during the day. Most break-ins are opportunist and carried out by people from outwith the area. People are urged to call the police about any suspicious behaviour. d) Frank Docherty announced that Glasgow Council have approved funding for body cameras, which will be available shortly.
3. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 8/12/11: The minutes were approved via Brian Johnson, and Jane Clarke seconding.

4. MATTERS FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES: a) There was a discussion regarding Associate members. Stephen had not specifically informed the organisations already contacted about this meeting, but will add them to the contact list from next month. Contact still has to be made with the housing associations. b) After further discussion it was decided having an associate member from Dennistoun New Church without involving other faiths would not be even handed, and it was decided to drop the idea of having any faith-based group as an associate member. c) Frank Docherty suggested Alan Murray as an associate member based on his links to the local community via several groups. d) We have received an acknowledgement of our comments regarding the Local Development Plan and we will be kept updated. e) Frank apologised for not being able to attend the Police & Community meeting, but Stephen was there. He spoke to Sgt Kenny Ramsey regarding community initiatives and noted the Community Council would be keen to be involved. One immediate possibility would be to streamline meetings with the local community so saving police time.
5. TREASURER'S REPORT: Stephen has the paperwork in the absence of a Treasurer, but hadn't been able to produce an official update. He noted spending had been minimal with no significant items since the previous meeting. Jane Clarke volunteered to take over as Treasurer. She was proposed by Mary and seconded by Louise. Stephen to transfer all books and paperwork.
6. CORRESPONDENCE: a) Planning Applications. Brian reported that over the past month there has been nothing contentious, and his full report can be seen on the DCC website. The vet on Annfield Place appears to have re-submitted the same application as previously, an application had been made for a fast food premises in the former Geronimo's facility, and application has been made to modify flats at 97 Sannox Gardens for sheltered housing. Frank Docherty added there had also been three applications for multiple occupancy licences in Roslea Drive and one for Oakley Terrace, but it was assumed these were all renewals. The policy of objecting to any new applications was re-iterated, noting that areas of the West End are almost all multiple occupancy properties thus preventing any sense of community. There has been no update on the application for hotel premises on Alexandra Parade, and it's not scheduled for the next planning meeting. The local councillors mentioned that members of the public are permitted to sit in on planning meetings, which occur every Tuesday, although they are not permitted to speak. Background reports for all matters to be discussed should be available online. b) Licensing Applications. There has been an application for a pawnbroker to operate from premises at 523 Duke Street, the property occupied by All Kinds of Everything until 2009. It's been noted that the application notice that should be on display has sometimes been covered by shutters. Frank Docherty noted that the police look out for this, and any property found not to be displaying visibly will be made to re-apply. Some see pawnbrokers as generating crime, but there is no proof. This will not be part of a chain, and needs to apply for a metal dealers' licence. c) Dennistoun Community Council has received a copy of the recent Neighbourhood Management Survey. Stephen noted there were no surprises and suggested it's posted on our website, and should anyone want to discuss it further this can be added to a future agenda. d) Online Update. Wesley noted he felt it not worth compiling statistics for the website any more frequently than quarterly unless people felt otherwise. People can now add their e-mail addresses to the site to be updated with regular news, and Community Council members are encouraged to promote this. Every address added receives a preliminary e-mail checking they wish to have information, which requires a response as a safeguard. Wesley summarised online comments regarding the bulk uplift, and Stephen suggested a working group look at the viability of a public meeting on the matter. The Glasgow STV Local site will mirror ours, actively requests updates, and we can replicate a blog there. It was suggested this take the form of the brief up-date of time-sensitive material Frank posts to Dennistoun Online. .

7. EAST CENTRE AREA COMMITTEE: A meeting was arranged at short notice in December and Ann received notification two days after the meeting. Jennifer Dunn reported back that this was to apply for funding for upgrading two football pitches, one being that attached to Alexandra Parade school. The meeting only lasted 20 minutes and the next will be on January 25th.
8. COMMUNITY REFERENCE GROUP: Janette has heard nothing since being informed a new contact had been appointed two months ago.
9. CRIME PREVENTION PANEL: a) The December meeting was cancelled. There will be a meeting this Thursday dealing with traffic concerns and school cycling proficiency tests. It was re-iterated that Louise can use DCC funds for a taxi to attend, and Jennifer Dunn will be able to offer a lift if folk want to go. b) There was a bicycle exchange programme run in Alexandra Park during the summer. c) There is a movement to re-start a Neighbourhood Watch scheme. There was one around 15 years ago in the conservation area, but it no longer exists.
10. ELECTED MEMBERS: a) Jennifer Dunn has contacted Transport Scotland regarding plans reported by the Evening Times to close Duke Street station among others. They assured her that nothing has yet been decided. It would be helpful if the Community Council submitted a letter in favour of keeping the station open. The consultation deadline is February 20th. Frank Docherty added that the money spent last year on upgrading the station for disabled access was more than would be saved by closure. b) Alison Thewliss noted the concerns of her constituents at the moment focussed on the changes to bulk uplift and street lights not functioning. c) In response to concerns regarding the lack of cleansing and rubbish collection Frank Docherty made enquiries with the Cleansing department who noted that over 300 trees had been blown down in Glasgow during the recent two spells of high wind and efforts have been concentrated on ensuring roads are cleared as rapidly as possible. A letter has been sent to the person organising and advertising tours of the Necropolis pointing out the consequences of continuing, including arrest. The high price of metals at the moment has left to an epidemic of thefts. At present it's only smaller metal dealers that require a licence, although the annual turnover requirement for exemption is to be increased to £3 million. Frank believes it should be universal. There have been new bollards on the chicanes in some areas as the concrete ones were constantly being knocked down, enabling parking on the chicanes. There will be a full review of traffic calming measures for Dennistoun in the near future. There has been no update regarding the funding of John Wheatley college. d) John Mason said that he hoped to be able to attend DCC meetings two or three times a year. The government is aware of the ongoing metal thefts in all areas and one suggested solution is to ban all cash transactions for the industry thus enabling all sellers to be traced. The legislation regarding factors is proceeding slowly, but current rules regarding the registration of landlords needs to be more thoroughly implemented to ensure tenement properties are maintained. He suggested that once the current legislation regulating factors passes it may be the case that all blocks will have to employ a factor (while recognising some blocks self-factor efficiently) and that they could have the power to enforce maintenance and repairs. It now seems that the transfer of Glasgow police headquarters to the East End will not go ahead until a decision has been made about the future structure of Scottish police forces. The forthcoming Commonwealth Games continue to be a boost to the area overall. Stephen added that the government's Private Rented Sector Strategy Group held a city wide meeting in November, but that there was no involvement from Glasgow East. John Mason noted that he would be keen to be involved in future.
11. ONSLOW SQUARE DEVELOPMENT: There has been no update since the previous meeting. Laura deSoto is aware of community interest and will engage with both the local community and the Community Council sometime soon. It was asked that Whitehill Gardens also be flagged up as a possible choice for renovation.

12. A.O.B: a) Janette asked why it's Glasgow City Council policy that there are no longer any single purpose dog bins in the city, when similar programmes elsewhere have proved useful. Councillors responded that universal bins had been perceived as a better solution and that they saved money. Janette's experience is that people are reluctant to push litter into these bins for fear of soiling their hands. b) Stephen suggested a policy begun by the conservation group be extended to the wider area. During monthly litter clean-ups participants are encouraged to undertake an environmental audit noting local potholes, where bins need replacing, where lights are not working, where drains are blocked and other such problems. This could be marked on a map (possibly online) in order to be collated, reported and monitored. It would enable several jobs to be done at once, saving time and money. b) Ruth noted the next pick-up as being Saturday January 13th at 10am, and that the event is spreading more widely throughout Dennistoun with greater participation and other areas forming their own groups. There are known to be groups based around Firpark Terrace and Cumbernauld Road. c) Taking his cue from a comment on Dennistoun Online, Stephen suggested it would be a good idea for the Community Council to look into instituting an annual Burns Supper in the area. Ruth added that there is one in the Cathedral House Hotel, slightly outside the DCC area, and Alison Thewliss mentioned the SNP Burns Supper to be held in Ballieston, to which people are welcome. d) It would be good to set up a Communications working group looking at engaging with the wider community and partners. e) Jennifer Dunn has set up a meeting with City Buildings regarding the damage done to old Golfhill School building by the recent storms and a car crashing into the wall.

NEXT MEETING: Our next meeting will be at Whitehill School at 7pm on Tuesday February 14th.