

DENNISTOUN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD AT WHITEHILL SCHOOL 15/1/13

Present: Stephen Birrell (chair), John Bones, Andrew Campbell, Ruth Johnston, Anne McKenna, Vicky Melvin, Frank Plowright, Wesley Wright (Council Members, Councillors Elaine McDougall & Alison Thewliss, MSP Humza Yusaf

Police officers Sharon McPeake and James Rowe

Apologies: Naila Akram, Lauren Amazeen, Jane Clarke, Brian Johnston, Helen McCarthy, Jenny Mullholland and Louise Williams, Councillors Frank Doherty, Jennifer Dunn & Russell Robertson, MSPs Hanzala Malik, John Mason, Paul Martin and Anne McTaggart

Minutes provided by Frank Plowright

1. **POLICE REPORT:** The police officers arrived later due to attending an incident and as per arrangements made by Stephen, provided a written report. It provided information about how to spot cannabis cultivation, and an update on the changes to service brought about by the Scottish police becoming a single unified force from April 1st. It was suggested the Community Council receive a full briefing in February or March, but we have been provided with all current information. It's anticipated there will be no difference in day to day operations, but custody arrangements will change, with greater priority given to London Road, currently undergoing renovation, with Baird Street only used at weekends. The current Glasgow East division covering Dennistoun will be merged with the City Centre division and the South division to create a larger force covering a greater area. Councillor McDougall raised the concern that this would lead to less effective policing in the East if there were a big incident in the City Centre, but it was revealed current arrangements already call for East division police to be seconded to the city centre during periods when greater need is anticipated, and regularly at weekends. The crime figures were provided for a period covering December 12th to January 7th. There were at least 121 crime reports for the area in total, of which 68 had been resolved, including 23 traffic offences on Alexandra Parade, and two cases of drugs cultivation in Haghill. Of greatest concern were the street robberies occurring after 6pm in the area. One culprit has been arrested, but despite good information another suspect remains at large. There are increased high visibility patrols as a result.

There was no police report at the last meeting as officers were needed to cover an incident. An officer personally apologised to chair Stephen Birrell at home after the previous meeting.

2. **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 11/12/12:** It was noted that Councillor Elaine McDougall had submitted apologies not noted, but the minutes were otherwise proposed as accurate by Ruth Johnson and seconded by Anne McKenna.
3. **MATTERS FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES:** a) Our meeting had to be postponed from last week, and this was a result of the mailed booking not being received. Stephen noted the fractious nature of the December meeting and highlighted that all community councillors are present as volunteers with the best interests of the community at heart, so allowances should be made for different approaches. There is a wealth of shared skill and experience, and it's hoped we can progress more positively.
- b) SOSO Campaign – A conference call took place between Royal Mail and MPs/MSPs just before Christmas. Royal Mail reiterated determination to proceed with their agenda irrespective of the cost to the local population, and our representatives found their lack of willingness to explore alternative arrangements for package collection annoying. Willie Bain MP referred the matter to ministerial level, but was disappointed with the response. There was greater success at local authority level, where Jennifer Dunn's motion on the closure of Cubie Street was unanimously passed. It highlighted Royal Mail's poor communication and called on Glasgow City

Council to convey the expectation that the council and any involved community councils are consulted before future sorting office closures. Glasgow Council has written to Derek McKay, the Scottish government minister, requesting a change in legislation ensuring there is consultation over any Royal Mail closures affecting front line services. The information has been forwarded to other Scottish local authorities. Cubie Street will close on January 26th, but Frank considered Royal Mail will have been surprised by the furore and fallout, and it's hoped this will inform procedures in future. The possibility of writing to all other Glasgow community councils about the matter to pre-empt any other possible closures was raised, and Councillor McDougall asked why local residents are expected to pick up parcels from Cambuslang when there are two nearer sorting offices. It is still hoped that an alternative package collection can be instituted with the aid of Clyde Gateway, and SOSO will continue to work on this. It was noted that Royal Mail had not consulted with SPT regarding transportation to the new sorting office as they claimed at November's public meeting. Humza Yusaf mentioned that in his time as an MSP he'd never been fobbed off with such disdain as when dealing with Royal Mail. There is still time for one last gesture before Cubie Street closes, and a priority would be to ensure charges are dropped for delivery to post offices.

b) John Bones said negotiations regarding the Alexandra Parade playing area were still going ahead. There is some money for all Glasgow schools, and the cost of removing the current surface is currently being estimated. Milnbank Housing may be providing a donation.

c) Greer McCulloch from Market Gallery will attend the next meeting to provide detail about the Stalled Spaces initiative and the planned project on Millerston Street. Volunteers are being solicited to provide craft workshops on the creation of large inflatables.

d) the Community Council Support Service confirmed that spending £20 per head on a social occasion is not correct use of funds. This would be permitted with a focussed developmental need, so may still occur at a later date.

e) A response has been provided to the consultation about the new Scheme for Establishment of Community Councils, as the deadline was yesterday. Concerns were as previously noted, particularly a register of interests for community council members and the withholding of the annual admin grant if funds in the bank exceed twice the grant amount. It's unclear when the adoption of the new scheme will occur.

4. **ACTION PLAN:** a) Stephen noted attempting to discuss detail at December's meeting was possibly not the best approach. Ruth provided a simpler document itemising headings and it was agreed members should digest this before February's meeting and return with their top three priorities, which would then be totalled for an indication of what the group priorities should be. Further suggestions would also be welcome.
5. **MEETING DATES & FORMAT:** It was suggested that we should aspire to 12 meetings each year in principle, with the practicality of Whitehill School being unavailable for several months of the year providing the opportunity to be more inclusive by holding meetings in other areas of Dennistoun. It was pointed out that there was no expectation for members to attend more meetings if they preferred not to, and the issue of continuing membership with non-attendance was only raised after missing three consecutive meetings without offering apologies. Stephen spoke for all in noting that extenuating circumstances would obviously be considered in cases when there were no apologies. There was a wide ranging discussion during which it was noted that the Community Council membership was predominantly from Central Dennistoun, which hadn't always been the case, Whitehill would remain the core venue, and the difficulty of promoting meetings at frequently changing venues. It was proposed that as the community council was quorate that a vote take place regarding the issue of 12 meetings a year, but Frank was reluctant on the basis that due to circumstances beyond our control the meeting date was irregular and several community councillors were unable to attend. Everyone will be informed of the proposal and a vote can take place at the next meeting. The format of meetings will also be discussed.

6. **FINANCE UPDATE.** As Jane Clarke was absent there was no financial report.
7. **CORRESPONDENCE:** a) Brian had prepared a listing of planning applications since the last meeting, and noted nothing worth commenting on. It was mentioned that the sale of the Craiglea Nursery once again appears to have stalled over the matter of planning regulations. b) Stephen has contacted the Licensing department and ascertained they have the correct contact details for Wesley as secretary. It is hoped that this will ensure timely notifications in future. c) Wesley supplied a list of the correspondence received, to be appended to the minutes, and a brief run through of notable items. Clare Darlaston wrote a letter criticising the community council and the way meetings are conducted after being unable to speak the previous meeting. Wesley noted some valid points, but the letter was factually incorrect in a number of places, including a belief that the community council operated the Dennistoun Online website. Copies of the letter were passed to members who wished to read it at the meeting, and Vicky believed it should have been read aloud as a matter of course.
8. **REPORTS:** a) Ruth attended the last meeting of the East Centre Area Committee, but noted that due to this item not being reached in December the information is now two months out of date. She also noted the amount of paperwork produced by the East Area Committee, and the problems of both storing it and making it available. Online is a possible solution. Stephen noted the changes in which the ECAA will operated in future, moving toward partnerships and this would be a good opportunity for our input. April is the date when changes are due, and there was general agreement that it would be worthwhile having someone address us about them. b) There was no news from the Crime Prevention Panel.
9. **ELECTED MEMBER UPDATES:** a) Councillor Thewlis reported that long standing problems with the M.O.T. station on Reidvale Street operating at weekends has been addressed, and new parking regulations will prevent cars awaiting assessment blocking the way for residents. Previously noted traffic problems at the junction of Duke Street and Millerston Street have been attributed to buses holding up traffic further along Duke Street at the stop just past Whitevale Street. The bus stop area will be modified to reduce the hold ups. b) Humza Yusuf MSP mentioned the issues he'd wished to address, SOSO and the police service changes had already been discussed. He mentioned the Commonwealth Games Open Fund now operational as part of the legacy funding and open to community groups and artists. Ruth mentioned that Brian had attended the launch on behalf of DCC. The opportunity to register as a volunteer has also begun with 15,000 places available. He also mentioned that there is to be discussion regarding the removal of statues from George Square. It was noted that DCC has registered an objection to this, and that there will be a sit-in protest at George Square on February 2nd
10. **AOCB.** a) DCC can take part in the consultation about gambling in the city and members should consider feedback. b) The previously mentioned Car Club proposal has resulted in four dedicated parking spaces in Dennistoun for people sharing cars. These are located on Duke Street outside Coia's and the post office, and off the Parade at Dennistoun Masters and W.A.S.P.S. c) Dennistoun Conservation Society is working in partnership with Whitehill school to restore the boating lake in Alexandra Park for use of model yachts. d) Andrew Campbell's architectural practice produced a leaflet in 2012 mapping areas of interest within easy reach of Glasgow's subway stations. He was interested in providing a similar project mapping sites of social and cultural value in Dennistoun.

NEXT MEETING: At 7pm Tuesday February 12th. Venue to be announced as Whitehill will be closed. Please notify Wesley if unable to attend.