**Grange/Prestonfield Community Council**

**Minutes of 14 October 2020**

**Meeting held via Zoom**

**Elected office bearers: I**an Chisholm (IC)- Chair; Paul Rowllings (PR)- Vice Chair; Ellen Raissa-Jackson (ERJ) - Vice Chair; Raphael Bleakley (RB)- Secretary; Andreas Grothey (AG) - Treasurer.

**GPCC members present:** Peter Jones (PJ); Sue Tritton (ST); Cris Ferguson (CF); Stanley Bird (SB); Alan Gilmour (AG); Tony Harris (TH); Andreas Grothey (AnG); Cllr Cameron Rose; Ken Robertson (KR); Scott Paterson (SP); Maureen Edwards;

**In attendance:** Simon Peltenburg

**Apologies:** Julian Newman, Isabel Clark; Bill Reid; Sally Griffiths; Stuart Tooley (University of Edinburgh Representative)

1. **Welcome**
2. **Declarations of Interest -** No declarations of interest
3. **Minutes of 16 September 2020 -** Minutes agreed as accurate

Actions:

1. Ian approached the Police, asked to join. No response from them on this subject, no written report received.

6(b) No update from University of Edinburgh on students & social distancing

6(c) Top 6 transport issues sent to Cllr Dickie

7(b) Code of conduct circulated to Councillors

9. Skateboarding - included in issues sent to Cllr Dickie

1. **Notice of Matters Arising not covered by agenda - none**
2. **Reports (External)**
   1. Councillors Report – Cllr Cameron Rose

Full Council meeting being held 15 October:

1. Temporary measures in terms of additional cycle lanes and LTNs. Flagged the revolt in East Craigs which is coming to full Council. Councillors are interested in views - there are schemes in the area including Minto Street corridor, Greenbank to Meadows, Buccleuch St corridor to King’s Buildings.
2. The Council is looking to appoint an independent Chair for an inquiry into the culture in the Council. Current issue relating to senior members within the Children & Families Department. The Director of Children and Families has resigned. Is likely to be a significant inquiry and the council is likely to appoint an independent QC to oversee this.
3. Crime - Slip ins to property are being reported along with garden sheds being targeted. Break into sheds. Police looking for owners who have lost jewellery and not realised.
4. Holyrood Park and access on Saturday and Sundays. Issue with signage, Holyrood park road gets traffic because it’s poorly signed. The traffic information system has been out of action for a long time and considering how this could be used to sign park closures.

Questions & feedback:

*Transport*

* SP raised that the permanent bins on Dalkeith Road cause difficulty for people walking on pavements. They are often in the way with no way round. This doesn’t sit well with social distancing. Cllr Rose raised that the Council has received thousands of suggestions for social distancing, but question is where the bins go in the longer term - what happens once temporary measures finished?
* KR - observed that many of the Spaces for People were introduced to cope with situation. A piecemeal response - hope for refinement. Cllr Rose spoke about Braid Road which was closed quickly. Was helpful for people working in the Hermitage. The pressure is not the same in terms of pedestrians. Kept open as a cycle route. A strategy to squeeze cars - creates an inconvenience. Each situation has to be looked at. Encourage active travel - but how far impinge on normal life. Suggested that some active travel lobbies are funded by the Scottish Government. In East Craigs there’s a local revolt as people understand what’s happening.
* AG raised that automatic traffic lights - causing tailbacks up Lady Road. Often lights are out of sync and has observed long queues of traffic in the morning.
* ERJ mentioned that Mayfield Road & West Mayfield, automatic green man doesn’t work. With active travel, has been campaigning for walking as well as cycling. Buccleuch street corridor has taken 5 years. Still not safe to get into town from this side of town. Asked if East Craigs LTN scheme goes, does that mean everything is going to stop? Cllr Rose said that the view within the Council is that it’s time to put them back to normal to encourage traffic flow. Unable to do that and needs a policy decision from current administration. Delay for people and not good for emissions. Risk of catching Covid from pressing buttons is low. Measures in favour of cycling, rather than pedestrian. Cameron suggested cycling provision has improved enormously.

*Council Inquiry*

* ERJ - Had been asked about a bullying incident at the Inch and how to report. Concern around anonymity in a small team, is the inquiry covering this? Cllr Rose replied that there is a whistleblowing helpline called SafeCall. Any council employee can report. With this inquiry, will focus on some bigger issues. The Terms of Reference have yet to be set, understanding that anyone could come forward to make representations. Cllr Rose to contact ERJ re: Inch bullying

*Crime -*

* KR mentioned that other CCs are receiving some update from the Police. Will raise at EACC and follow up at next meeting.

1. **Reports of Interest Groups**
   1. Planning – Paper from Tony Harris

TH reported that the backlog from planning department has been caught up. Main points of planning report:

* Application at Thrums Hotel. HES have commented on these proposals, likely revision to the scheme.
* 5G mast - didn’t go to Development Management Subcommittee due to errors in paperwork. New photos on the planning portal. Will go at a later date
* 4 Seton Place - revision of materials submitted, means a further consultation period. Will liaise with Grange Association to see their view and likely action. - ST suggested that Grange Association likely to object.
* 9 Relugas Road - new application, not yet validated. A change of use application, to turn railway land to private garden. Will be in touch with residents of Relugas Gardens. ST - how many times can applications be submitted? Case officer can’t go beyond what the law provides. Should GPCC use this as an example to lobby MSPs about this issue? To be taken outside the meeting.
* St Margarets Nursery - revised proposals rely on planting. The planting isn’t development. The impact on the wider community area would not be great but could be severe for a small number of residents.
* UoE Sports village - formal reasons for rejection. UoE have three choices. Appeal, which would go to Scottish Government, accept or put forward revised proposals.
  1. Licensing - no issues
  2. Roads/Transport - Alan Gilmour
* City Mobility plan - gave an overview of the City Mobility Plan. 1,800 responses to the plan. KR - EACC has an event with a focus on Spaces for People. Will bring up the themes, how wide-ranging, many avenues of opinion. CF commented that disabled people may feel that these are issues that are important to them so are likely to respond.
* SP commented that the south suburban railway, skirts the city centre and would be a convenient way to get to the West of Edinburgh.
* Dalkeith Road Wands - wands continue to be removed
* Cameron Toll junction - six sets of traffic lights. Are there options to to try and divert traffic away from the area?
  1. Communications/Publicity

PR gave an update on the website and Facebook page. Considering how to promote CC in Waverley Conservation area - help increase visibility and traffic for the website. Usually single visits per day, one spike due to a Facebook post about Scottish Widows. All traffic to website from Facebook. Local news stories are a useful way to increase visibility and get traffic, more residents know about the CC.

* 1. Environment

ST mentioned that volunteers have been helping with sweeping the streets. Received Comments from residents in Merchiston and Morningside about how to get it going. ST asked if there are any grants schemes available this year - Cllr Rose to enquire.

f. Newington Cemetery

ERJ reported that the fruit tree that was damaged has been replanted. Hoping to do more planting of bulbs. Local restrictions have affected plans for working parties.

TH provided comment on the cemetery tour guide registration scheme. Likely to be changes to the recommended charging scheme.

1. **Reports from Office Bearers**

**Treasurers report - as per email.**

AnG reporting that we currently have £4034.94 in the bank account. Of that £2140.54 belongs to Friends of Newington Cemetery. Changes since early summer have been our annual maintenance grant of £830.14 and a donation of EUR 1000 = £877.49 for Cemetery groups. There are a few outstanding items to pay (£657.52 of cheques for Newington Cemetery and our recurring Zoom subscription of £14.39 a month).

The core GPCC has about £1850 available to spend. PR raised that the website costs are still to be paid. AnG to follow up.

**Secretary’s report**

RB reported that CCs have been asked to consider using Microsoft Teams to meet electronically, in line with Council systems. Commented that there are some barriers here. Some community councillors continue to have difficulty accessing meetings. Can the Council provide help for people with visual impairments to access? Cllr Rose to follow-up.

1. **Reports of Outside Groups**
   1. Edinburgh Association of Community Councils (EACC) GPCC Representative -
   2. Southside/Newington Neighbourhood Network (SNNN) - ST - not heard anything about it. Not heard anything about it. CR - Nothing happening on this front this year. Grants fund has gone quiet. People focussed on other things.

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| 5a | Inch query - Cllr Rose to contact ERJ |
| 5a | KR to follow up at EACC about police updates at virtual meetings. |
| 7 | Payment for cost of website hosting - AnG to follow up with PR |
| 7 | Support for people with visual impairments to access CC meetings - Cllr Rose to enquire |
| 8 | Small grants schemes - Cllr Rose to enquire |
| 9 | IC to send a letter of congratulations on behalf of GPCC to recipient of Local Hero award |
| 10 | IC to circulate minutes of May 2019 AGM |

1. **Open Forum (including items from members of the public) –**

* CF spoke about the Edinburgh awards - information about Local Heroes award. CF submitted a nominated for a neighbour for her work during the lockdown. Neighbour won an award. Asked if CC could send a congratulations? Ian to send a letter.
* SB interest in doing winterwonderland in people’s houses, if guising is not allowed due to Covid?

1. **Date of next meeting:** Wednesday 18 November – to include AGM.

Financial reports to be prepared. The Chair will do a report and will circulate the minutes of the last AGM in May 2019. Office bearers are elected annually. Confirmation needed if want to stand.

**Action summary**