

Woodlands and Park Community Council

Minutes of Meeting

Wednesday 10 March 2021, via Zoom, 7.30pm

Present: Ruth Gillett (chair), Tom Johnstone (secretary), Gerry Doyle, Clare Crawford (minutes), Alasdair Gerrie, Johnpaul McCabe, Stewart Leighton

In attendance: Councillor Martha Wardrop

1 Apologies: Liam Brady (GU SRC), Kay Scott, Derek Manson-Smith, Diane Mitchell, Councillor Andrew

2 Police Report

Tom Johnstone said that a police report by PC McGlynn for February had been circulated with the other papers for the meeting. The police seem to be having difficulty catching the 'boy racers'. Stewart Leighton said that a statement near the top of the report reads 'This report is prepared for the information of Community Council Members only.' Since nothing unduly confidential or private is divulged in the report, he thinks information included could be circulated.

3 Minutes of 10 February Meeting

The minutes of the meeting were proposed as a correct record by Tom Johnstone, seconded by Alasdair Gerrie.

4 Matters Arising

Stewart Leighton said that under item 12, AOCB, he meant by the term 'lobbying' that whoever becomes the MSP should meet the community council to be made aware of the community council's opinions on HMOs. He thinks that the community council should be prepared to lobby or pursue not just our constituency MSP but anybody on the list system who we feel could benefit from awareness of our concerns. Tom Johnstone said that the community council's response to the position statement on National Planning Framework 4 has included concerns about HMOs.

5 Councillors' Reports

Councillor Wardrop reported that she has received a report from council officers about the electric charging points being developed in the area, but it doesn't really answer Johnpaul McCabe's enquiry. It would be good to get some idea of where he would want a point to be located. She has still to speak to Charing Cross Housing Association. Johnpaul made two suggestions: Eldon Street and somewhere in Park as Woodlands is a different parking permit area. Councillor Wardrop said that the council is investing in an 18 unit hub at Kelvin Hall. Over the next three months 84 additional units are being put in place across the city. She said she would mention having one per parking zone. There has been ongoing discussion about street bins and the fact that they are overflowing at the moment. Some people want them removed and some rely on them as they don't have access to back courts. At the moment the street bins are remaining. Stewart Leighton said they are better retained than not as he suspects there would be an even bigger problem with dumping without them. Cleansing has fairly regularly produced annual reports highlighting that Woodlands is one of the worst areas in Glasgow for flytipping and a few months ago *The Herald* reported Glasgow as the flytipping capital of the UK. Councillor Wardrop said the street bins will have to be monitored and she hopes they will be emptied twice a week so they don't become an eyesore. The streetlighting issues have been followed up, and an abandoned caravan was removed from one of the lanes. Ruth Gillett said someone had raised a problem with a huge pothole at the other side of the park on the cycle path. The streetlight number R20 in West Princes Street has still to be fixed.

6 Millennium Park

Nothing was reported.

7 Kelvingrove Park

Nothing was reported.

8 Cleansing

Tom Johnstone said that about two weeks before the blue bins in his area were pulled out from the back courts, left on the pavements, then the truck came round, emptied them and then left them on the pavement and they stayed there until people decided to take them back into the back courts. He wondered if this was a planned change of policy. Councillor Wardrop said she had not heard of anything. Tom said it might have been a one-off

to do with staff shortages. Councillor Wardrop said we need patience and understanding as Covid is still an issue for the council and its staff to deal with. Tom said, speaking of his own close, there is a huge difference in how organised and efficient the green bin emptiers are compared to the people who empty the blue bins, who seem to have a bad attitude. Councillor Wardrop said she would explore if there are different staffing arrangements for green and blue bins and what training they both receive. She said the council provides a commercial waste service and because of Covid they've had to juggle staff. Alasdair Gerrie said his bins are collected via the lane that runs between West Princes Street and Grant Street and the blue bins seem to be emptied along with the green bins. Councillor Wardrop said that would be worrying if it is the case, recycling going into general waste. Alasdair said he would monitor the situation. Stewart Leighton asked if Cleansing would provide another blue bin for 80 Barrington Drive. Councillor Wardrop said they would and said not to hesitate to ask for blue bins if they are needed as there is a stock of them now. Tom said that the wheels came off one of his green bins when it was being emptied and it was immediately thrown into the back of the truck and crushed before his very eyes. A replacement has been ordered but it hasn't turned up. Ruth Gillett said she was once told that it takes six weeks for a bin to turn up. Tom said that could be the explanation.

9 Correspondence, including Planning and Licensing

Tom Johnstone reported that there had been a couple more HMO licence renewal applications, which brings the total, including the ones that turned up between him preparing last month's list and the actual meeting, to 16 licensing applications in a row, not one of which has planning permission, and in fact two had had enforcement action taken, to all practical purposes to no effect. The community council's response to National Planning Framework 4 includes reference to the skewing of the demographics of the area caused by the proportion of HMO properties. Stewart Leighton said that there is a probability that some have existed for at least ten years. Tom said some landlords will be able to apply for a certificate of lawful use for that reason but they're not even under any pressure to do that. Stewart said that the Licensing office could, if there was a political will, inform Planning that they have received applications from new owners of existing HMOs so Planning could investigate whether an HMO is eligible for a lawful use licence or whether it is still within the planning threshold of ten years. He suspects that senior Planning officers decided not to pursue HMOs after the 2006 Act, possibly taking the view that the Act would take care of the private rented sector, which clearly it does not. Tom said DRS were extremely concerned about the situation in the period of consultation, which led up to the changes made in 2006. They made a lengthy representation, but it did not have any effect so any change to the policy would have happened after they had realised that their concerns were not being addressed in the 2006 Act. In discussion with Stewart about the 2006 Act, Tom said he suspects that the Licensing section would simply say that they were under no statutory obligation to inform other council departments about HMOs. Stewart noted that Councillor Andrew had emailed a press release that afternoon on pre-1919 tenemental stock in Glasgow. He had read the press release and, as Glasgow City Council now records all committees, he had listened to the Neighbourhoods Committee on the subject. He had noticed that it was a 500 sample out of what had been identified as something like 77,000 pre-1919 tenements, which he thinks is a relatively small sample. The press release says that in a third of the sample there is no factoring and something like 5 per cent needed serious repairs. It needed a far larger sample to draw more useful conclusions. Tom said that Steven Dowling had asked the community council to vote for one of two candidates for a seat on the Wellbeing, Empowerment, Community and Citizen Engagement Policy Committee. He had no views over one or the other. Stewart said he knows neither of the two people concerned but from reading their statements he feels the better bet is Debbie McGowan. In the absence of any contrary view, it was agreed that the community council would vote for Debbie McGowan.

10 Finance

Tom Johnstone said that it should be minuted that Gerry Doyle be congratulated for getting the accounts done on time, and this was agreed. Tom said he would get in touch with Gerry because the annual subscription offer to Zoom has not been processed yet and they are still charging him money. If it is not sorted out very quickly, he will have to work out how to complain to Zoom.

11 Electric Charging-points

This was covered under item 5, Councillors' Reports, but Councillor Wardrop said it would be good to get Derek Manson-Smith's view on electric charging points in the Park area.

12 AOCB

Councillor Wardrop said that it seems that where Christmas trees are dumped at the park gate is not a very good place, but people dump them anyway, and they are better there than in the lanes. Tom Johnstone said that Derek Manson-Smith had made it clear that he is getting a limited response from local residents he had contacted by email. The biggest unknown is who is responsible and what the overall attitude of people in

immediate area is. Derek seems to suspect that people in the immediate area would not want anything to happen that would encourage people to leave more trees there. Councillor Wardrop said she would try to get wider feedback.

Alasdair Gerrie reported that the Arnold Clark development has resulted in massive trucks coming along Grant Street on a regular basis. He understands why they are necessary but he cannot see why they can't enter from the bottom of Grant Street rather than coming along Carnarvon Street and then the whole length of Grant Street, which is quite narrow. Councillor Wardrop said she would raise the matter with the planners on the basis of road safety.

Clare Crawford said she had received an enquiry from an Alistair McCay, a transport engineer who is researching the roads in Woodlands before the completion of the motorway system, and asked if anyone could give her any information to pass on. Stewart Leighton said that it was advocated that all the streets that had a junction with Great Western Road should be closed and also the closure of West Princes Street at the lower end. This was intended to stop rat-running and to give some kind of environmental protection to the Woodlands area. It may have been enacted some time in the mid 1980s. He thought the Woodlands Local Plan was adopted in 1984. The Mitchell Library may have a copy of the Woodlands Local Plan and he would look to see if he has a copy of it.

13 Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 14 April 2021 at 7.30pm via Zoom.