

Woodlands and Park Community Council

Minutes of Meeting

Wednesday 13 April 2022, via Zoom, 7.30pm

Present: Ruth Gillett (chair), Tom Johnstone (secretary), Diane Mitchell, Gerry Doyle (treasurer), Clare Crawford (minutes), Derek Manson-Smith, David Gallagher

In attendance: Councillor Hanzala Malik, Alison Thewliss MP, John Mulholland (CCHA)

Tom Johnstone welcomed Alison Thewliss MP, John Mulholland from Charing Cross Housing Association and David Gallagher from 124 Woodlands Road, who wrote an appreciative letter about the objection the community council tried to make to the application for a ventilation duct at the back of shop premises.

1 Apologies: Kay Scott, Stewart Leighton, Councillor Andrew, Councillor Wardrop

2 Police Report

Tom Johnstone reported that there is mention of the start of the Kelvingrove Park operation again. Derek Manson-Smith said that since the report was submitted there had been a major incident in Kelvingrove Park on 5 April when a group of teenage girls were attacked by a group of teenage males.

3 John Mulholland on the Possible Transfer of Charing Cross Housing Association to the West of Scotland Housing Association

John Mulholland said he had worked in social housing for over 40 years, 30 of those in housing associations at a senior level. For the past few years he has been interim director at a number of associations, particularly those in trouble, and has acted for the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) on three occasions as a stand-in manager. He started in Charing Cross Housing Association (CCHA) the previous June. At that time CCHA had had a number of difficulties with the regulator. When he arrived, CCHA had already taken the decision to pursue a partnership or merger with another landlord. In July 2021, it placed an advert in the housing press. Of the eight bodies that applied, two were excluded as they were outside Glasgow and of the remaining six only four provided detailed bids. These were assessed on governance, financial strength, rent, service charge levels, investment levels, sensitive services, especially cultural, and other benefits they could bring. The West of Scotland Housing Association (WSHA) came in with the best offer. There is a statutory process for the transfer, which involves tenant consultation and the development of a joint business case to prove that any partnership is going to be to the benefit of both CCHA's and WSHA's tenants, before a tenants' ballot on the matter. A first consultation has been completed, with 94 per cent of the tenants contacted, 72 per cent of whom have said that they will support it. Only 1.5 per cent have said they definitely won't. The key points are a rent freeze for the first year, followed by a maximum rise of CPI inflation at the most for the next 29 years; a review of service charges, a freeze on factor management fees; a £100,000 budget for partnership projects in the area; and an improved investment programme. CCHA had been looking at about £3.3 million pounds investment in the next five years. WSHA has committed to nearly £10 million and is going to look at upgrading windows and the tenemental stock. It has also committed to retaining the office and staff and constituting a new residents' association to increase opportunities for decision-making locally. A second-stage consultation should start soon, and a tenant ballot will start the day after the local elections and run until 6 June. There will be a couple of special general meetings for CCHA members to vote in favour of the transfer, with the transfer taking place on 1 August. The business case demonstrates that it is to the benefit of all CCHA's tenants and residents, and WSHA has been approved by the Scottish Housing Regulator. It has also been scrutinised and approved by the Tenant Information Service (TIS), which has acted as independent tenant advisers throughout the process. CCHA has moved considerably to address the issues that it faced last year. In reply to questions from Gerry Doyle, John said that although CCHA had asked for a partnership, none of the associations who were interested offered anything other than a transfer of engagements because of the expense of running two separate organisations and a group structure is more attractive. WSHA has no vacancies on its management committee at the moment for CCHA tenant representation, but it wants to start up a new local residents' association to manage budgets and eventually places on the management committee will open up for CCHA residents or existing committee members. WSHA is keen to engage locally and to use the existing office not just as a housing base but as a base for the provision of other services, like a handyman service and for energy advice to tenants. The staff are guaranteed their jobs but there will be a cultural change. Some people will take the opportunity to leave. Some will take the opportunity to enhance their careers. WSHA has a high staff satisfaction rating and it wants to extend that to CCHA's staff and deliver real change for the area. In reply to a question from David Gallagher,

John said that WSHA has said it is not going to put a time limit on its use of the office. It genuinely wants to be local and has reached out to others about sharing services within the office.

4 Minutes of 9 March Meeting

Tom Johnstone pointed out that under item 8, Kelvingrove Park, line 1, 'MacCulloch' should be 'McCullagh'. Otherwise, the minutes of the meeting were proposed as a correct by Tom, seconded by Derek Mason-Smith.

5 Matters Arising

See item 15, Electric Charing Points.

6 Trinity College Tower

In reply to a question from Tom Johnstone, Alison Thewliss reported that she had been liaising on an individual basis with people who have been having issues with insurers and the Association of British Insurers (AIB) who have been reasonably helpful in terms of getting some people's claims moved along. If the community council is aware of anybody having an issue she is more than happy to take it up. She said she is pleased that the surrounding residents are getting back into their buildings. For the people in the tower it has been a long-running problem, starting long before the storm, but the engineers are working hard to get a resolution.

7 Councillors' Reports

Alison Thewliss introduced herself as MP for Glasgow Central and thanked Tom Johnstone for inviting her to the meeting. She is continuing to do a lot of casework, most recently with Ukrainian people wanting to come here as a place of safety. Her constituency office has not been able to open, first because of Covid and, second, because of rats in the building. Her staff team have been working very hard from home in support of constituents and they have been able to restart surgeries in various places around the city.

Councillor Malik reported that road repairs and markings are being carried out in Napiershall Street and other roads but there is no indication yet when they will be completed. He has noticed that some of the signage that has been erected is rather low down and there is a danger of people injuring themselves so he will be bringing that to the appropriate department's attention. He is relieved that the Trinity Tower situation is coming closer to an end. He had reported the vegetation growth on Kelvin Bridge and had circulated the response that it will be dealt with in the very near future. Clare Crawford reported that the pedestrian phase hiccup at the Napiershall Street and Great Western Road traffic lights has returned. Councillor Malik said he would report it. Derek Manson-Smith said he had noticed that there is vegetation growing out of the bridge across the Kelvin at the Kelvin Hall but he doesn't know if it is within the Woodlands and Park Community Council area. Councillor Malik said he would report it in any case.

8 Kelvingrove Park

Ruth Gillett said she has recently received correspondence through Friends of Kelvingrove Park about hedge growth and damaged railings by the war memorial statue on the art gallery side of the park. She will follow this up and report back to the community council. See also item 13, Planning.

9 Dropped Kerbs

Tom Johnstone said that Councillor Wardrop had circulated several emails and he thinks that she is beginning to make some progress with council officials. Diane Mitchell said she uses a mobility scooter and finds it difficult to locate dropped kerbs and where there are dropped kerbs people often park cars across them.

10 Park Circus Lane

Tom Johnstone reported that Councillor Wardrop has arranged with George Hazel to have a meeting on 22 April to work out how to get the unanimous support of owners in the lane, which is essential before getting any money from Glasgow City Council. The money from the Ambassador Group is assured.

11 Citizens' Panels

Ruth Gillett reported that she had emailed the person who had emailed the community council to let him know what was discussed at the last meeting and she has had an acknowledgement.

12 Cleansing

Tom Johnstone said that, personally speaking, things have been better over the past couple of weeks.

13 Correspondence, including Planning and Licensing

Planning: Tom Johnstone reported that the first application, 343 West Princes Street, is a second attempt to get things right. A wildlife survey is required before work is started involving trees or near to trees, and this has not

been done. Another concern is the proposal to cut back branches on the large tree beside the building to get the scaffolding in. This will unbalance the tree and spoil its appearance. It was agreed that Tom would object. Tom said that on the next planning application, for double glazing at 5 Park Quadrant, it cannot even be worked out from the scant information supplied what the new windows are to be made of. The Architectural Society has submitted an objection, and it was agreed that Tom would submit one on similar terms. Tom said that the third planning application, for use of an office as a gym at 4 Lynedoch Place, has had an objection from a nearby resident concerned about the hours of operation and parking provision. A subsequent statement says that the gym will not be used before 7am and when in use the gym will have one person and a trainer, which seems reasonable in a residential area. It was agreed not to object. Tom said two planning applications had come in since the list was circulated. The first is a memorial to the British Indian Army, which is quite interesting if you read the application because it refers to a group of Punjabi Muslim soldiers who escaped from Dunkirk and came to Scotland. The organisation that is putting this proposal forward is called Colourful Heritage, and they are trying to get as much extra information about this. The group of soldiers were called Force K6 and he thinks the memorial is quite tasteful. To check the application online the reference is 22/00725/ful and the address, which you can also search by, is Kelvingrove Art Gallery, 1 Kelvingrove Park. It is just across the footpath from the memorial with the Lewes Gun, from the First and Second World Wars. It was agreed not to object. The second is at flat 2/1 15 Dunearn Street wanting to install replacement windows, preservation windows to replace inappropriate UPVC windows with wooden sash and case, exactly the right thing.

Licensing: as usual, none of the HMO applications has planning permission, and one more since the list is exactly the same.

Correspondence: Tom said that he was commenting only on items on his list of correspondence printed in red. If anyone wanted to comment on any other items, please would they do so. On 11 March he was first contacted by David Gallagher about the objection the community council had made to the flue at 124 Woodlands Road. On 15 March Ann Laird complained about the review notices that had come out about 65–67 Otago Street, the development in Otago Lane. The appeal was wrongly described as two appeals, one to the Scottish ministers and one to the Local Review Committee. There have since been profuse apologies followed by a new notice with a new mistake in it, this time the omission of the date to respond by. On 16 March confirmation was received that our application for an appeal to the refusal to supply information under the Freedom of Information by Glasgow City Council, advised by Derek Manson-Smith, is valid. On 30 March there was notification that our objection to a low-level ventilation duct at 12 Woodlands Road has been refused. The only important item of correspondence since the list was circulated was the objection that he was finally able to submit to the Local Review request for the Otago Lane application has been acknowledged and has been posted on the council's planning portal.

14 Finance

Tom Johnstone reported that he had another Zoom Video Communications invoice for £14.39, which he will pass to Gerry Doyle. He thanked Gerry for the cheque to cover the previous Zoom payments. Broccoli Design has submitted an invoice for £60.79 for maintaining the community council website. It was agreed that Tom would pass the invoice to Gerry and Gerry would give Tom a cheque for the amount. Tom will then pay the money to Broccoli Design by bank transfer.

15 Electric Charging-points

Derek Manson-Smith said he could find no evidence of damage caused to the pavement in Park Street South by the insertion of charging points. He had, however, found commercial vehicles parked in the spaces, not charging. Councillor Malik said he would ask for advice and report back to the community council. Derek said he would recheck the charging points for damage.

16 Air Pollution

Nothing was reported.

17 AOCB

There was no other business.

18 Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 11 May 2022 at 7.30pm via Zoom.