

Minutes of the Meeting of Giffnock Community Council.

Venue: Giffnock Library

Date: Monday 19th March 2018 at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Jack Powell (JP - Acting Chair), Jim McCann (J McC), Maureen Powell (MP), Bill Crawford (BC), Janey Floyd (JF), Ian Lang (IL), Caroline Wilkinson (CW)
Richard Loudon (RL)

In Attendance: Cllr Colm Merrick

Apologies: Douglas Lawson, Cllr Jim Fletcher

Police report:

Officers Raymond Jefferies and David MacLean attended the meeting and provided a crime statistics report for the period 13th February to 14th March 2018, the contents of which were noted.

While there were no domestic break-ins during this period, the officers stressed the need to ensure that doors and windows are kept secure as most break-ins are opportunistic. Also stressed the need to report anything unusual as per the recent alert issued through Neighbourhood Watch, Scotland.

Recent thefts in the Newton Mearns area had been committed by a very professional travelling criminal gang. A major police operation (Operation suitcase) had resulted in a number of arrests, but the threat still remains – again the need for vigilance is stressed.

CW asked if the recent incident outside the Giffnock Synagogue would be treated as a race hate crime as it was important that minority groups felt they were being adequately protected. The officers agreed that it would be viewed in this way.

Inconsiderate parking in Hazelden Gardens – no longer a criminal offence so would be dealt with by community wardens – it is in order to take photos of offending vehicles, making it clear that they are causing an obstruction.

CW also raised the issue of the OLM school bus parking at a busy junction (Merryton Avenue/Braidholm Road) at the same time as the Braidbar School bus, causing a problem with pupils trying to cross the road at the same point. The head teacher at OLM had been contacted, but no action has been taken. CW to pass details to Cllr Merrick for further action.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 15th January 2018 were approved.

Proposed – Maureen Powell Seconded – Jack Powell

The minutes of the meeting held on 19th February were also approved.

Proposed – Bill Crawford Seconded – Janey Floyd

Chair's Report

Douglas Lawson is on holiday so no report.

Secretary's Report

The interim election process has been completed. No new members, but 2 co-opted members have successfully been nominated as elected members. This means GCC can now co-opt more members.

Treasurer's Report

Budget is being prepared for next month's AGM. Possibly ask treasurer of Eaglesham and Waterfoot CC to verify accounts.

Matters arising from minutes

VA-ER community Café meeting, Friday 16th February

VA-ER has issued a summary report of the meeting which had previously been circulated. The poor attendance had previously been noted. Follow up action includes:-

- VA-ER speaking to ER Culture and Leisure re community space options and information point
- VA-ER using their contact list to set up another meeting (towards end of March)
- Establishing a steering group with the capacity to take forward a vision of Giffnock

It was noted that VA-ER seemed unwilling to share contact information with GCC. This reflects a pattern of using the data protection act as a catch-all excuse not to share contact details. (Similar requests to ERC have met with the same response).

JP expressed the view that this unwillingness actively militates against any attempts to achieve greater co-operation within the community. Further, using the data protection act as the reason for not circulating such information is actually a misuse of the data protection regulations. It was agreed that, should VA-ER set up a follow-up meeting, they should be asked to get agreement of all participants to share contact details.

Planning

A reply has been received from Jackson Carlaw (MSP) regarding the recent approvals for a restaurant in the former Clydesdale Bank building, and of a hot food takeaway facility by BRGR. In it he stated that he had received no other representations regarding these approvals. He would however, pass our concerns over to the Conservative Party spokesperson on planning in the Scottish Parliament.

JP commented that, in speaking to friends and neighbours, they were unaware of these planning applications and approvals, so the lack of representations at this stage is not perhaps surprising. However, once the applications are acted upon, and residents see the actual effects, the picture might change.

IL stated that the Local Development Plan is the responsibility of ERC, so any representations regarding deficiencies in the plan should be taken up with the local authority planning department.

Vacant business sites –Wholefoods/Bank of Scotland – while certain rumours are circulating (e.g. M&S taking over Wholefoods), there is still no concrete information.

An editorial from the Scottish Community Alliance Publication had previously been circulated. It claimed that the community submissions to the consultation on the new Planning Bill expressed ‘a strong sense of alienation and frustration’ as local opinions on planning issues are simply being ignored. It was agreed that these sentiments were also felt by GCC.

Budget for 2018/21

Copies of the budget statement from ERC for the next 3 years had previously been circulated.

It was noted that the proposed cut of 400k in the roads budget had been rescinded.

There is no mention in the current budget statement of the £1.6M that was set aside for the improvement of local roads in the previous budget statement. Instead 10.8M of capital spending is allocated to improving roads over the next 8 years. Does this include the 1.6M allocated in last year’s budget? JP to seek clarification.

BC expressed concern about the repairing of potholes – the quality of repair was often of a poor quality, resulting in repairs not lasting very long. In addition, when repairs were carried out, they were frequently incomplete, with some potholes simply being ignored - why was this?

RL asked about the £250K spent on class sets of virtual reality headsets for each school in East Renfrewshire - where had this money come from? Cllr Merrick said he did not know the details.

JMcC asked about the building of the new Maidenhill Primary School and nursery – would this be a PFI initiative? Irrespective of the management system for the construction of the new school it should be supervised by a professional independent Clerk of works so that we get exactly what we are paying for in terms of the contract.

Cllr Merrick stated that he believed PFI was no longer used for new school builds, but would check the details.

Cllr Merrick also stated that a public consultation regarding proposals for a new leisure centre, which have been outlined in a previous report, would be held soon.

AOCB

JP reminded the meeting that the GCC AGM is due to be held alongside the next meeting in April. All office bearing posts are due for re-election, and the accounts need to be verified so that next year's administrative grant can be claimed. There is also a need, expressed by some members, for the community council to take stock and work out what direction it should take in the coming year.

It was agreed that an interim meeting should be held in advance of the AGM to address these matters – JP to arrange.

JMcC expressed concern regarding the powerlessness of the Community Council. He felt that it simply wasn't being listened to by ERC and the Leisure Trust, with requests for information and for meetings with relevant officers being ignored or side lined. This was particularly true regarding issues of planning and licensing.

BC stated that, very often, the phone numbers for contacting ERC were not advertised.

The meeting ended at 8.50 p.m.

Date of next Meeting

Monday 16th April 2018 at 7.00 p.m. in Giffnock Library. Also date of AGM.