

GOVAN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING 7 NOVEMBER 2016

Present: Dick Carabine, Flora Pagan, Esme Clark, Robert Preston, Gina Preston, Jean Melvin, Helen McNeil, Wilma Bruce, John Foster

Attending: Cllr Fariha Thomas, Councillor Stephen Dornan, Councillor John Kane, Alan Bell, Reinbild Gormiak, David Jones, Mae Wilson, Jimmy Stringfellow, two representatives of Police Scotland

Apologies: Jessie Sinclair, Cllr James Adams, Humza Yousaf MSP, Chris Stephens MP, Sandy Black (via J Stringfellow)

Minute taker: John Foster

CONTINUATION OF 2016 AGM

At the beginning of the meeting our Secretary announced that there had been some unforeseen technical irregularities at the October meeting. A new election needed to be held for the Chair and Vice Chair.

Cllr Dornan took the Chair.

Chair: John Foster was nominated by Esme Clark and Flora Pagan and agreed on a temporary basis

Vice Chair: Flora Pagan was nominated by Wilma Bruce and Gina Preston.

John Foster then took the Chair for the November General Meeting.

1. MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER GENERAL MEETING

Moved as correct by Jean Melvin and Esme Clark

2. POLICE ISSUES

Two police representatives attended. They reported that a new policing system had been introduced that divided the force into two categories: local police teams and problem solving teams focussed on the beat who would be attending community meetings. Communication should still go to the Sergeants Room.

Two issues were raised.

a) Elder Park and Elder Library

Waste bins had been set on fire, the play park damaged, the Library fire alarms vandalised and staff intimidated.

b) Speeding on Langlands Road at the park

Flora reported problems along the '20 mph' stretch of road alongside the park: the police reported that they would seek to monitor.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE OCTOBER MINUTES

a) Asda shopping trolleys

Cllr Kane reported that there had been a meeting with Mark Allen, Asda manager and two representatives of Craigton CC. Asda had now introduced new trolleys with a Techtronic lock and it appeared that this had been successful in preventing trolleys leaving the Asda carpark. Some remaining trolleys had been reported but they were either old ones (and remained from previous

usage) or from Farmfoods or Iceland. It was also reported that Asda was willing to consider collections for community ventures.

b) Hate Crime Working Party

Bailie Thomas reported that the issue of race hate would now be incorporated in the wider Thriving Communities cohesion agenda. Councillor Kane would ensure that it was embedded in the forthcoming work plan.

On a specific issue it was reported that new housing had been secured for an Asylum Seeker family following our representations and that of our MP. Our Secretary had also written on our behalf asking that a Removal order be suspended pending Appeal. This had now been agreed. On the more general issue of housing for asylum seekers it was agreed that we should remain vigilant as the contract reverted from Orchard and Shipman to SERCO at the end of the month.

c) Alcohol Awareness

Secretary to report to the December meeting on a new contact.

d) Bus services and Fastlink

Two issues were raised.

Issuing of bus tickets that did not correspond to the journey taken

Robert Preston produced two tickets issued by Stagecoach which appeared to indicate a lack of correspondence. Members agreed to collect such tickets so that we had multiple incidents when writing to SPT.

Failure of electronic signage system:

Councillors reported that the new system was still being tested. It was hoped that a working system would be available by the new year.

e) Meeting with MP, MSPS, and Councillors to discuss strategic issues on 3 November

A report of the meeting was tabled and is reproduced in an appendix. Those present agreed that the meeting had been very useful. Our Secretary made a report. The positions taken by the meeting were as follows:

BUS REGULATION

There was a consensus that a model such as Lothian Buses was preferable to the current system. Doubt was expressed over whether simply providing 'legal certainty' to the City Council for its right to establish its own arms-length company to provide bus services would be adequate by itself as, in the west of Scotland, the two private companies would be able to challenge and compete for routes. A more comprehensive and statutory right to provide exclusive and integrated services to Greater Glasgow area would be required – as still existed in London. It was AGREED

to consider this further and to come back to the December meeting with proposals. It was noted that legislation was currently going through the Scottish Parliament and this added some need for speed.

NURSING PROVISION AND THE RESOURCING OF THE LOCAL NHS

The presentation by Anne Thompson of the RCN made it clear that the crisis in bed provision, and consequent problems for admissions, was, first, the consequence of an acute shortage of nurses and increasing reliance on agency nurses and, secondly, a function of the decline in preventive and post-hospital care in the community. The Audit Scotland report published the previous week made many of these points. Although the new QEUH provided excellent facilities and a dedicated staff, these pressures meant that some patients, sometimes highly dependent ones, did not receive the care required. It was AGREED:

To raise with the Minister the need to address what had been described as the causes of the shortage of nurses in NHS employment: a low level of earnings (less than that for agency staff) and lack of career progression (only four grades and the prospect of still being on £26,000 equivalent into mid and late career) and training provision that was, in terms of financial support and the required experience in the private care sector, unattractive.

To raise with the City Council and the Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership the need to maintain and if possible enhance existing levels of preventive social care and to ensure that the City's arms length provision through Cordia enabled adequate levels of home care for the vulnerable.

In discussion it was noted by Cllr John Kane that in the current discussion of £11m budget cuts in Cordia every attempt would be made to ensure the maintenance of targeted care for the most vulnerable. A new service of hot meals was now being introduced.

BAE EMPLOYMENT

Chris Stephens MP had been able to report to the meeting the decision announced earlier that day that the date for the cutting of steel for the eight Type 26 frigates would now be summer 2017 and guarantee the continuation of employment till the late 2030s. Those responsible for lobbying to this effect, the shop stewards and our elected representatives, were congratulated on the result.

PLANNING LEGISLATION WITH REGARD TO PREMISES FOR GAMBLING

Our Secretary had been in touch with Johann Lamont MSP, who had taken up the issue in the previous session. Legislation was now going forward that would make gambling premises *sui generis* and no longer part of the existing general Category II for offices and give Councils the power to limit the number of betting shops in particular areas. This would enable objections to be made in terms of community-impact.

CONCLUSION

It was further AGREED that the initiative to hold the meeting had been useful and that such strategy meetings should be held on annual basis to examine major issues requiring legislation or intervention by elected bodies.

f) New bus and subway station

The issue of lack of lighting after dark in the bus station area had been investigated and appeared to have been aberrant. There were other concerns about lack of signage on where to get buses for the Fastlink service for those exiting from the subway. It was hoped that this would be resolved once the Fastlink service was fully running on previously agreed routes.

g) G51 Parking Campaign

No further report.

h) Cottages in Craigton Road: subsidence

Remedial action was now being taken on the first of the affected cottages. A resident, Mae Wilson, described her particular plight in maintaining her property and the problems posed by absentee owners. Councillors agreed to keep in touch with her.

i) Environmental Task Force

Cllr Kane reported that details of interventions in the Govan Area would be circulated and that a co-ordinated approach was being developed between the Environment Task Force and LES. Significant progress had already been made in the Ibrox area. It was hoped that comparative statistics would be available to assess progress and that LES enforcement could be strengthened to reduce tipping.

j) Govan Road reconfiguration at Stag Street

Work was now scheduled by SPT contractors but priority was likely to be given work to the Drive Road crossing that was still more dangerous. Robert Preston urged speedy action to prevent serious accidents.

k) Large van parked at 23 Langlands Road

This had now been removed.

l) Pensioners gardens

Helen McNeill reported that, thanks to the intervention by Bailie Thomas, her garden had been given very satisfactory treatment with the grass and hedge well cut.

m) Tea in the Pot

Cllr Kane reported that funding had been secured for three months and that further efforts would be made to ensure future funding.

n) Review of primary school places in the Govan area

Cllr Kane reported that this review was on-going and that he would keep the Community Council informed.

4. COMMUNITY COUNCIL ORGANISATION

a) Accounts for the past financial year

A new auditor had been generously provided by Govan Workspace. Unfortunately, however, she also had become very seriously ill. It was agreed that the Chair approach Elderpark HA and failing that Govan Housing Association or Money Matters.

b) Computing equipment for the Secretary

Our Secretary was instructed to proceed with the purchase.

c) Membership

It had been proposed at the previous meeting to review membership in order to ensure that the renewal of the Community Council was maintained. It had been agreed that our Secretary should write to these members requiring them to respond prior to this meeting. Kevin McGee had responded and indicated that he was keen to continue – though currently busy setting up a new business and unavailable for the current meeting. There had been no response from Sandy Black – although Jimmy Stringfellow reported that he was ill and that he would not be available for some months. It was agreed that officers consider the issue and come back with recommendations to the December meeting.

d) Govan Letter

The Chair tabled a draft outline of content. It was agreed to add an article commemorating the life of Pat Keegan, previously councillor for the Govan Ward.

The meeting noted its great respect for Pat Keegan whose funeral had taken place the previous week.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

There was none.

6. PLANNING

Edmiston Drive – stall for football memorabilia on match days. No objection.

7. COUNCILLOR'S REPORTS

BAILLIE THOMAS

Financial Settlement

Figures from the Scottish government were not now expected till February and so detailed discussions on cuts had not been finalised.

Area Partnership

Following the success of the local budgeting initiative last year, a further community meeting would be held in the Clyde Community Hall, Whitefield Street, on 25 January at 6.30. Community bids would be publicly assessed for a total of between £8 and £12 thousand.

Affordable Warmth

£100 grants for the over 80s were now again available.

School Uniform Grants

Bailie Thomas outlined the new streamlined procedures that ensured that needy families secured the grant.

COUNCILLOR KANE

Mary Barbour statue

Cllr Kane reported that it was intended to have the statue ready for unveiling on International Women's Day, 8 March 2017. Current progress could be observed on Andrew Brown's facebook page.

Youth Orchestra

Proposals were being developed for a youth orchestra for the Govan area – jointly between the initiator of a German-Iraqi youth orchestra and Glasgow's Africa Centre and other local groups

'Community and Beyond' Toy Bank initiative for Christmas

Councillor Kane commended the project based in the Riverside Hall

COUNCILLOR STEPHEN DORNAN

Stephen reported that he was establishing liaison between LES and Housing Associations to ensure that the clearing of weeds from pavements and open areas was more effectively carried out and that weed killer was no longer applied in periods of rain and then washed away.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: MONDAY, 5 DECEMBER IN THE ELDERPARK WORKSPACE BOARDROOM AT 7 P.M.

GOVAN COMMUNITY COUNCIL
STRATEGY MEETING 4 NOVEMBER 2016

ATTENDED BY ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES
CHRIS STEPHENS MP, HUMZA YOUSAF MSP AND CLLR STEPHEN DORNAN
APOLOGIES FROM CLLR FARIAH THOMAS AND CLLR JOHN KANE

Summary of contributions

BUS TRANSPORT – THE ISSUE OF REGULATION

Jackson Cullinane, head of Policy and Research at Unite Scotland

The problem with the existing privatised bus services is that they are not accountable to the communities they serve. They concentrate on securing the most profitable routes and are free to discontinue other routes, to increase fares and hand profits to shareholders rather than re-invest. Mr Cullinane said the consequences were particularly acute for rural areas where whole villages could suddenly find themselves without public transport and those with jobs elsewhere stranded. In the cities the concentration of services along the main routes left those living out in the schemes, such as pensioners and those on low income, isolated.

The problem, he argued, went back to the 1985 Transport Act which privatised the country's publicly owned bus transport on the grounds of breaking up public monopolies – with the only area exempted being London. To start with there was indeed more competition. Private bus companies battled for passengers and fares temporarily declined. But in the longer run we have ended up with private monopolies, four in England, two in Scotland, higher fares and heavy public subsidies. Passenger numbers have declined, congestion from private car use increased and conditions for employees worsened: increased hours, less holidays and working conditions that make for less safe road use. At the same time the Scottish government pays a subsidy of over £50 million to the private companies and local government has to pay for the infrastructure of signage, bus lanes and road repairs.

There were two immediate answers. One was local community bus services – really only suitable for rural communities. The other was to adopt the same model as Lothian buses, where an arms length publicly-owned company, responsible to the Council, takes responsibility for providing a comprehensive transport services. This has proved cheaper and more efficient – with profits invested in new buses and staff training and development.

Mr Cullinane stressed the importance of local community organisations such as community councils taking up the issue and hoped legislation would be forthcoming in the next session of the Scottish Parliament.

Humza Yousaf MSP for SW Glasgow (also Minister for Transport)

Humza agreed that Lothian Buses represented a model that could be adopted elsewhere. He noted that the Scottish government funded the £250m concessionary travel scheme as well as the direct subsidy of £50m.

He hoped that the Transport Bill before Parliament in coming session would include a clause giving legal scope for other local authorities, such as Glasgow, to move forward to the same type of

provision as Edinburgh without legal challenge. There were, however, other transport issues that had to be addressed, particularly traffic congestion in cities, which was reducing people's appetite for using buses. Congestion was worse in Glasgow than anywhere in Britain and thought would have to be given to banning cars from certain sections.

Humza also indicated that the Scottish government was working towards the provision of an integrated transcard system similar to that available in London.

EMPLOYMENT IN BAE GOVAN

Chris Stephens MP gave a report of discussions in the House of Commons which resulted in the government's announcement earlier that day. This indicated that the cutting of steel for the first of the eight of the Type 26 frigates would now take place in summer next year, 2017, rather than the following autumn. This would guarantee continuity of employment for the current staff in BAE. There was also a guarantee of five general purpose frigates.

Chris indicated that in his opinion the intervention by the unions in the yard had been particularly important. There remained the issue of the full order of 13 frigates originally promised. Nonetheless, the announcement marked a very important step forward.

He also hoped that in the future BAE could also make a bigger contribution to the local community.

HOUSING FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS

Chris Stephens reported on the successful campaign to secure more appropriate housing for an asylum seeker family – and also the suspension of a Removal notice.

He noted that there were still major issues to be addressed and we should be vigilant over the coming year when SERCO takes back the housing contract from Orchard and Shipman.

NURSING PROVISION IN GLASGOW AND THE QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL

Anne Thomson, Area Organiser for the Royal College of Nursing, reported on staffing shortages currently impacting on health provision in the Glasgow area. Anne had practised for forty years as a nurse and been an officer for the Royal College for the past twenty years.

In her opinion the NHS in Scotland was the best anywhere in the world but it was now beset with serious resources problems. She had never seen it under such stress. The Audit Scotland report published earlier in the week detailed these problems.

The bed shortage experienced over the past year, with consequences for response times in Accident and Emergency, was effectively a nursing shortage. Beds could not be allocated unless there were nurses to provide care.

At the moment there were 890 nursing vacancies in Glasgow. Usually there were between 15,000 and 20,000 shifts to fill each month. Currently 20 per cent of these could not be filled and this was likely to get worse in the winter. This problem of unfilled shifts leads to the use of agency nurses at much higher cost – with further detrimental effects on Health Board funding.

The pressure on nurses working 12 hour shifts was also increasingly a problem and absence through sickness was now very high.

Anne indicated her concern at cuts in preventive medicine and care in the community – essential to keep people out of hospital. District nursing in Glasgow was 22 nurses short (and the 2014 Review of District Nursing had actually reduced the number of training places). This compounded the problem posed by Cordia’s cuts in visiting times by carers to just 15 minutes. There were also fears that the Health and Social Care Partnership would cut School Nursing in the coming year. All this meant that more people would enter hospital.

The nursing shortage was, she argued, the result of a) a cut in training places imposed earlier this decade and b) the unattractive prospects of a career in nursing. There was now much less opportunity for career progression than when she began her career and salaries for most were low: around £26,000. Nurse training itself was problematic. Nurses had to work in the health sector as part of their training and therefore, unlike other students, had no opportunity to take part-time jobs and earn supplementary income. Some element of their training was also in the private Care Home sector where conditions were often poor. While she acknowledged the £6,500 bursary paid to student nurses, this did not make up for these other factors.

Anne suggested that the solution was more training places for nurses, greater financial provision and better career structures – as well as better funded care in the community.

Humza Yousaf indicated that the Scottish Government accepted the findings of the Audit Scotland report and noted that an additional £500m funding would be made available by the end of the current parliament.

PLANNING LEGISLATION: PREMISES FOR BETTING SHOPS

The Community Council had asked our previous MSP Johann Lamont to take forward in parliament proposals that would make it easier to prevent the opening of new betting shops. The weakness of current legislation had allowed permission for the opening of two betting shops in the same street in Central Govan.

The specific proposal was that betting shops should no longer be classified as Category II (offices in general) but *sui generis* so that the conversion of, for instance, a solicitor’s office could not be undertaken without ensuring that community-impact was taken into account.

Discussions between our Secretary and Johann Lamont indicated that such an amendment was now tabled in the Scottish Parliament for consideration in the coming session.