

Seafar & Ravenswood Community Council
Minutes of meeting held Tuesday 4 March 2014
At Muirfield Community and Learning Centre, Cumbernauld

Meeting Chaired by Annie McFarlane who welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming along. Meeting Commenced at 7.00pm. Minutes recorded by Annie McFarlane.

Present

Members

Annie McFarlane (Chair)
Anne King (Vice Chair)
Ken Brown (Secretary)
Ian Morrow (Treasurer)
Netta Brown
Margaret Lawless
Morag Stephen
Alex Clark

Residents

S. Griffin
Anne McGuinness
Frances Hodgson
Cathy Lester

Councillors

Councillor Allan Graham
Councillor William Goldie
Councillor Stephanie Muir

In Attendance

Community Police attended. P.C Andrew McAlister N445.

Guests

None

Apologies

Councillor P Hogg

Minutes of previous meetings

Minutes of previous meetings were not presented

Item 1. Improvement Group Update

The Improvement Group attended their first in a series of five meetings with the Scottish Community Development Centre. This is part of SCDC's Supporting Communities Initiative. The meeting was run by David Allan, and we covered a number of topics including how to get word to the local community via interactive participation, attracting new members and linking with other groups in the community.

Item 2. Dog Fouling

Alex Clark brought to the attention some NLC figures from Feb 2011 showing statistics on dog fouling which was discussed. Mr Clark will contact NLC for dog fouling posters and clarification of statistics.

Item 3. NLC Policy on Housing

There were concerns raised about a rumour circulating in the community that the high flats which are being vacated due to demolition and re-housing are to be rented out to immigrants who are not on the housing list.

Annie McFarlane contacted Sanctuary Housing and the High Flats Committee. A McF read out a statement received by email from G Lawrie of Sanctuary Housing where he refuted the rumour that vacated flats in the Seafar and Ravenswood areas are being let to immigrants.

A McF read a statement from the Chairman, Murray Mackenzie, of the High Flats Committee in which Mr MacKenzie stated that NLC asked Sanctuary for any empty flats available for emergency housing for homeless people. Sanctuary provided 6 flats, 3 in Kildrum/North Carbrain, and 3 in Seafar. Only 2 of these flats had been rented out in the short term, and each of these renters is a single homeless individual. Mr Mackenzie pointed out that there was a similar story about immigrants going the rounds regarding 37 new flats built in Kildrum where it was rumoured that 19 were given to Polish immigrants, but in truth there is 1 Polish person housed there. As Mr Mackenzie stated, the current story is as factually incorrect as the story about Polish people being given housing in Kildrum.

A King is concerned that immigrants have not lived in Cumbernauld, and made the point that NLC took European Fund monies whereas Edinburgh did not. She believes that this may be the reason NLC are housing immigrants in the high flats. Mrs King explained that a resident of the high flats in Seafar had told her there were workmen in the flats getting them ready for incoming immigrants, and that a letter had gone out from NLC to vacating tenants asking them to leave their properties in good order.

Councillor Goldie stated that NLC took money several years ago for Congolese people fleeing from conflict in their own country and that these people were housed in Motherwell. Glasgow City Council did the same thing in Sighthill. NLC has not done anything like this with Polish residents. In Councillor Goldie's opinion this recent spate of rumours are xenophobic nonsense and similar to nonsense you read in tabloids.

Alex Clark stated for the record his interest as Vice Chair of Sanctuary Board. He commented that NLC were looking for temporary accommodation for homeless people and that Sanctuary leases to those tenants are not in place permanently. There are still repairs being carried out when people vacate their flats, but there is no fast way for people to get into new housing due to the rules of Common Housing Regulations, they have to go back into the queue.

A King said that if people are decanted and then homeless people are put into the empty flats, they will be jumping the queue because then they will get a new flat when the old ones are demolished.

Councillor Goldie stated that there are many issues taken into consideration before someone is in an emergency housing situation can be allocated housing. For example a single man requesting a 2 bed home has no chance. Also if someone is put out of a flat for anti-social behaviour, they will not be able to access new housing.

A Clark pointed out that what is happening with vacated property is temporary accommodation for homeless, a different thing from rehousing. There is a rota based on needs and assessments and Councillors can only make sure that people are being treated fairly. Sanctuary Board members do not know who prospective tenants are.

A King said it was stupid that the high flats are going to be left open for two tenants.

A Clark said the Council will not allow that situation.

Councillor Goldie said that homelessness covers a variety of people, families, single people, people in domestic violence situations, and NLC will do their best to provide accommodation based on need.

Item 4. Report from Community Police

P.C. McAlister reported that in the month of February 11 offences were raised and 7 detected. There were 6 theft (1 motor vehicle, a worker's van), theft of a pedal cycle, 2 possession of drugs offences, 2 breach of the peace offences, one of which was an assault. In general it was a quiet month.

Councillor Goldie asked P.C. McAlister how things are progressing with the new Indian restaurant which has taken over from the Kingfisher pub where things could become quite rowdy. P.C. McAlister reported that things had been quiet so far.

Allan Graham commented on the street sign at the end of the road leading to the new Indian restaurant, and informed the meeting that the sign will be replaced, and that in future when road signage is replaced only those with directions to churches and schools will remain in the present format.

Item 5. Wall at Barke Road

Only one side of the wall at Barke Road has been repaired (2 years ago). Given that there was supposed to be a budget available for small works in the area, why has this been turned down? Councillor Graham suggested inviting Martin Dixon along to the Community Council meetings to explain budgeting decisions.

Item 6. Local Councillors' Reports

Councillor William Goldie

Councillor Goldie reported that footpaths at Ferguson Road have been cleaned and the drains have been cleared. At Muirfield, some money is available so plans are ongoing. There will be open days to communicate with local groups. Some user groups are not happy with proposals so there will be ongoing discussions with them.

A King asked what the closing date at Muirfield will be, and will it lead to no surgeries with councillors.

Ian Morrow stated that all lets in Muirfield will be completed by June.

Councillor Allan Graham

Councillor Graham stated that he and Councillor Stephanie Muir have been in discussion with Campsies Board re funding for Muirfield. The project needs additional monies and Campsies will make a decision on whether they will donate from their funding. The decision should be made by the end of March. NLC has disseminated information to the public. Campsies Board Funding have been asked to fund Muirfield from the £5m left by the former Development Corporation for improvement in the area.

As for improvement works carried out by Campsies Board, works at ASDA filling station is underway, there have been large stones placed near the bus station on the Tesco side of the road to prevent parking there, and roundabouts are being improved. There is a total of £3.5m left in the fund.

A King asked re Muirfield if residents will get a chance to give their opinions if the development goes past the planning stage. Also people in the immediate vicinity of the building work will be contacted. Outline planning has been lodged and waiting on finalising Campsies consent to funding is also required. The proposed houses at the playing fields on Brown Road are not on NLC plans at the moment.

Councillor Graham has been in contact with the new owners of Phases 1 & 2 of the Town Centre re bus stances which are a bit of a disgrace. Also the fast food area at the pathway to ASDA has been reported to the Environmental Inspector at NLC and is supposed to be cleared up by now. At B & M Bargains near the Kwik Fit end of their land, there has been some clearing up of litter. As Councillor Graham pointed out, it's people who make the mess and B&M do their best to clear it up.

At Grieve Road the rubbish will be removed. The brown bin left in the woodland area there has been removed. At Central Way the drainage is bad and the litter is awful, so that is underway. At Blake Road drainage should be fixed and NLC will deal with it. Amey target is for the middle of this week. Drains require emptying. In Brown Road the drains are choked and Ken Brown will contact Northline Option 2 to make a request for unblocking.

Recently Councillor Graham has been talking to the Services Manager at ASDA regarding the amount of litter on their land. They have cut the grass but have not removed the litter.

Councillor Stephanie Muir

Councillor Muir said she didn't have much to add to Councillor Graham's information. She has just returned from her honeymoon, so could possibly be excused!!! She mentioned the application from Morrisons to open in Cumbernauld, and that the application will go to the Planning Committee, but that recommendations from officers would be no to Morrisons.

Councillor Goldie remarked that NLC are traditionally against anything that took away from a town centre, but there is a sea change because ASDA application to open in Airdrie got through recently. Tesco application to open in Condorrat has seen quite strong arguments on both sides with 8—100 protestors turning out. The Condorrat Club owns the building, and it would be advantageous for them as it would help with their current debt.

Any Other Business

None

Next Meeting

Tuesday 1st April 2014