

Mount Florida Community Council

Minutes of the Virtual Meeting of 24 March 2020
held via Zoom, 7p.m.

Present: Community Councillors Chris Carus (Chair), Janet MacDonald (Minutes), Judith Pollock, Robert Pollock, Gavin Thomson (Secretary)
Also attending: Cllr Anna Richardson, Sam Tongue, Fraser MacLeod, Calum Mackinnon, Mandy Evans Ewing, Nicola Smith, Tariq, CJ, Ewan, Mandy, Beth, David, Dan, Marine

1. Welcome:

Chris Carus chaired the meeting. This is considered an official Community Council meeting although held online.

2. Minutes of last meeting:

Approval of minutes of the last meeting will be carried over until the next meeting.

3. Matters Arising:

See above.

4. Correspondence:

There had been no urgent correspondence.

5. Treasurer's Report (Judith):

We have £647 unallocated funds in the account but the hall rental has still to be paid which will leave a working balance of around £300.

6. Special Discussion on Corona Virus and Mount Florida:

We recognise that we have many elderly residents in Mount Florida who are particularly at risk. **Tariq**, who works for the Council for Voluntary Services in Falkirk, wanted to get a better idea of the organised response locally, especially what is being done in conjunction by and with other organisations.

Sam expressed a willingness to volunteer if needed. There were some reservations about face-to-face involvement as the virus can take up to 14 days for symptoms to appear but can be spread asymptotically. Volunteers are advised only to participate if you are certain you are unaffected.

Calum said that testing is low at the moment but we could adopt the model being used in Northern Ireland of having drive-through testing, and suggested that perhaps Hampden could be used for this purpose. He asked if it is possible to use the electoral register to identify those who may be in need of help, e.g. elderly. Judith suggested that the local pharmacies might be better able to help, but raised the issue of GDPR. **Anna** said that the electoral roll may not be helpful as some elderly people will have family who are able to assist, and other younger people may be more in need. The South Side group have put up posters on railings etc and it may be more useful for us to help spread their details, bearing in mind that we should follow government regulations. We should try to add value to what is being done already, but avoid replication.

Tariq said that community councils and other groups are coming together in Falkirk. Neighbourliness is being encouraged by the Scottish government, and there is money available. How can a structured approach be developed locally?

The local population numbers approximately 6000-7000, and they will have varying needs including food, medication, and ability to communicate to avoid feelings of isolation. We can try to identify services and anchor organisations that can lead or co-ordinate. Tariq is happy to share models being tried elsewhere.

Chris said that Lauren Hughes is organising volunteers and putting them in touch with those who are in need. The South Side Self-Isolation Group are volunteering across the whole of the south side. Resources are available from the NHS, GCVS, Ready Scotland and others (see <http://www.communitycouncils.scot/information-on-coronavirus-for-community-councils.html>) **Anna** was asked how the funding programmes will work in Glasgow. She responded that things are changing rapidly and she will share any updates.

Beth (GCVS) said there will be more clarity over the next couple of days regarding volunteering, and on what is essential. Resilience hubs will be set up. SCVO have set up a community assistance directory; she will post a link. **Chris** added that Susie Heywood is contributing to that

directory and we will pass on any information. We could try to identify those who may be falling through the net and pass on details. **Anna** suggested that contacts should minimise the distance covered by providing micro level support, i.e. to those in your immediate neighbourhood.

Judith suggested promoting What's App chats in closes or streets. **Mandy** said that her stair has set up such a group, but also reminded us that there are many elderly people who may not be "tech savvy." It was also suggested that children and others could help boost morale by displaying artwork such as rainbows or flags in windows.

Chris summarised:

- biggest priority is to avoid transmission of infection
- Southside Self-Isolation Support Group (<http://southsidesis.co.uk/>) is co-ordinating response; their suggestion is that the simplest and safest way is to contact your immediate neighbours and let them have your contact details, especially those not online (**Dan** advised that paper can possibly transmit the virus, so best to put up a notice in closes or contact numbers in a plastic pocket, wiping down beforehand)
- The Community Council can be a route for people to access available funds as we are already constituted and have a bank account.
- Anna was asked to suggest that GCC create a team as a single point of contact for vulnerable people and co-ordinate the pharmacies in distributing leaflets with the contact numbers with prescriptions
- Chris agreed to set up regular virtual meetings via Zoom (7p.m. on Tuesdays).

Beth said that a funding announcement is likely very soon. Organisations may be allowed to spend money already allocated for other things on more urgent needs.

Chris asked how prevalent the virus is in our area; we know of only one person infected to date, but there is no further information available.

Anna advised that GCC is prioritising need – councillors are not meeting in the City Chambers. People want to help but are worried about unintended consequences. Voluntary organisations have more expertise. We should minimise risk and be careful that what we are doing is the right thing for the right people. We have to try to identify the particular challenges for our area.

Calum said that the NHS is looking for volunteers; we need to keep tabs on what is happening. Community testing is vital. **Chris** will contact the new boss at Hampden and enquire about drive-in testing.

Chris had a list of organisations offering help provided by Shared Care Scotland (e.g. the Mount Befriending Scheme and others). He suggested that we each volunteer to contact a number of these organisations and ask what they are doing in Mount Florida, what we can do to put them in touch with people and how to fill in gaps. **Judith** will co-ordinate this – email her via moflococo@gmail.com if willing to volunteer.

The Community Council cannot take on the responsibility of co-ordinating wider efforts, as we don't know what all the risks are, but we can stimulate and share the flow of information.

Anna advised all residents regularly to check the city council website emergency response page at <https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/coronavirus>. The information is regularly updated, e.g. recent changes to bulk uplifts. Cleansing centres including Polmadie are now closed. GCC is doing everything possible to ensure the safety of the public and its staff. Councillors currently have no admin support as the staff have been redeployed to essential tasks, so they cannot take on individual casework at present. We can help manage expectations about the service that can be provided by getting the message out to the local community.

7. Letherby Triangle update (Judith):

SusTrans have extended the grant period – funds will be transferred to the next financial year. The consultation event has been postponed till after the corona virus period. Roads and Planning have agreed the basic design.

8. AOCB

(i) Community Trust: a bat survey for the bowling club site has to take place. The lawn has been mowed, and some pieces of turf removed. Equipment and furnishings have been removed from the clubhouse. The effects of the corona virus have thrown into perspective the need for open green space within communities.

9. Close. Next meeting postponed; informal information sharing will take place weekly at 7pm, via Zoom.