

LEITH LINKS COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES

MONDAY 27 November 2017
LEITH COMMUNITY CENTRE (NEW KIRKGATE)

Councillors Present: Stephen Brennan, Gail Clapton (Treasurer), Angus Hardie, David Igoe, Andrew Mackenzie, Sally Millar (Secretary), Chrissie Reid, Jacqueline Rogers, Eileen Simpson, John Tibbitt (Vice-Chair), Michael Traill.

Elected Representatives: Councillor Chas Booth, Councillor Gordon Munro.

In attendance: Sgt Niven Bull, Police Scotland.

Minute Taker: Kay Goodall.

1. Welcome & Apologies

Vice-Chair John Tibbitt took the Chair and welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Deidre Brock MP, Ben Macpherson MSP, Councillor Adam McVey, Walter Manclark, Jim Scanlon (Chair), Tommy Sheppard MP.

2. Police Report

Monthly report and key investigations and charges

Sgt. Bull summarized: for the Leith ward, recorded crime is down 16% against a five-year mean, and down 6% over 1 year. In the last month, a man has been arrested and reported to the Procurator Fiscal (PF) regarding a rape at Links Place. Another 35yr old man has been reported to the PF for a series of robberies and housebreaking. Lastly, thanks to intelligence from the community, a 49yr old man was stopped for dealing cannabis and reported; if there is a successful conviction he will be evicted.

Incident on Bonfire Night

On Bonfire Night, there were serious incidents in Drylaw and Craigentiny. Officers and members of the public came under attack by young people and one officer in Drylaw was seriously injured. A car was also driven on top of the bonfire in Craigentiny. At least nine individuals have been identified and Police Scotland will review operating practices for next year.

Additional Christmas patrols

Additional officers will be out throughout the festive period, focusing on priorities such as road safety/driver checks, domestic violence, hate crime, and additional patrols on ASB hotspots and licensed premises.

Hedge cutting

This has now been done round the Bowling Green / Dry Dock, but not round the Croft.

ACTION: Sgt Bull will raise the Croft hedge cutting with the Transport & Environment Manager.

Bike theft

This is an ongoing local problem. The police keep a database of stolen and abandoned bikes which can enable them to be returned to their owners, if they are found. A search and recovery team works throughout Edinburgh and if tipped off, can investigate bike shops and other outlets (but Gumtree and eBay are more commonly used, these days). Officers also work with owners of properties on improved security – bike theft from stairs with insecure doors is one of the most common scenarios. Lighting and CCTV also help combat it: the new student accommodation at Middlefield has excellent CCTV and this recently enabled officers to identify a group of youths engaged in repeat bike theft.

3. Adoption of Minutes of last meeting on Monday 30 October 2017

Proposed by Gail Clapton; seconded by Chrissie Reid. Available at <https://leithlinksc.org.uk/>

Outstanding actions

Seafield sewage consultation: The deadline for responses is in January 2018.

ACTIONS: Sally will promote this on the website, to encourage responses from the public.

LEITH LINKS

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Management of the Children's Orchard on Leith Links: It seems members of Greener Leith are still prepared to oversee and e.g. arrange pruning – so no need to approach St. Mary's PS.

ACTION: Chair will contact Greener Leith to check and clarify this and will report back.

4. Seafield Sewage – update

Meetings

LLCC continues to work on contributing to the strategic review of Seafield Waste Water Treatment Plant and the sewage network which supplies Seafield. Eileen is meeting Rob Kirkwood and Prof Jackson on the morning of Tuesday 28 November to look at a joint approach to the report. Rob is then meeting in the afternoon with local city councillors. Ben Macpherson MSP is looking into sponsoring legislation which would tighten up on enforcement. Cllr Munro is also lobbying to have this included in Scottish Water's Capital Improvement Plan.

ACTION: Jim & Eileen will draft a response from LLCC, this may be integrated with LLRA response to present a united 'community response'.

Scottish Water general consultation

Angus has been contacted by the Scottish Water Customer Experience Manager, who is seeking community views about the work of Scottish Water in general. After discussion, meeting agreed that no criticisms had come to the attention of LLCC other than the specific Seafield problem and the general problems that arise when roads are dug up for emergency repairs, particularly if holes are left unfilled afterwards.

It was decided it might be useful to have a point of contact / line of communication so that advance notice can be given to LLCC and from there to the community, particularly in anticipation of the tram works.

ACTION: Angus when responding will ask for a line of communication and ask for LLCC to receive advance notice of any major works in this area.

Roadworks

In connection with road works, Cllr Booth mentioned "lane rental" as a possible strategy for roadworks, as a means of achieving fewer, shorter periods of digging. He suggested that it would be worthwhile writing to MSPs about this to ask if the pros and cons of this could be considered in upcoming debates.

ACTION: LLCC Secy will write to Ben Macpherson MSP to raise this.

5. Parks and Greenspaces Committee – update

Scoo Bikes' application to use the Links

Chair wrote to Suzanne Anderson at CEC to submit an objection to this as it is not an event for the public good but a commercial business. Conceivably, as a business, it might be an activity that people on Leith Links might like to try, but that is another matter.

ACTION: Jac will email Suzanne to clarify what's been done about this so far, as it seems to be going round in a circle, currently.

Martial arts posters

There has been flyposting on Leith Links on the bowling green railings near the Dry Dock, to advertise a martial arts class. A local resident has also expressed concern about the words and image portrayed ("Prey or Predator - which do you want to be?")

ACTION: Andrew / Sally will contact the Dry Dock to ask for the posters to be taken down.

It was noted that the Dry Dock actually need proper notice board to advertise their activities, like the ones elsewhere on the Links e.g. Tennis Courts.

ACTION: LLCC to explore whether a notice board could be obtained through the Council.

Rent for the Cricket Club grounds

A dispute has arisen with the City Council over back-payment of rent. Historically, there was a gentleman's agreement (via Councillor Cornie Waugh) in which the Cricket Club would cut the grass for the cricket green in exchange for not being required to pay rent. The City Council is now challenging this, and Cllrs Booth and Munro are attempting to find a resolution.

LEITH LINKS

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Upgrade of the playpark

Chair and Jac have emailed Scott Thomson about this and other matters but he has not yet responded or made himself available to meet. The Neighbourhood Partnership committed money for playpark upgrade (August 2017) but nobody has heard anything since then about if/ how plans are progressing. We were expecting a major community consultation exercise, as soon as possible, on what type of facilities is needed. For example, repair or replacement of the 'spider's web' is of particular value to teenage users, because much of the equipment is for younger children. There is concern that although committed, the money could be 'lost' if not used by next year, so it is important to check that plans are proceeding.

ACTION: Jac will write to Scott Thomson again, copying in Evelyn Kilmurray as the Neighbourhood Manager.

Poppy seeds

These are being sold at £1 per packet by a charity for the Centenary of the Great War in remembrance of Scottish soldiers and could be sowed in the wild areas of the Links. Edinburgh Living Landscape is looking for areas for wildflower planting and there are areas of the Links that would be suitable, such as near Wellington Place, at the St. Mary's corner, and perhaps the Children's Orchard.

ACTION: Jac will notify Scott Thomson of this and check whether seed planting would be permitted and whether LLCC can go ahead and identify suitable areas.

6. Planning and Licensing Subcommittee

Andrew Mackenzie agreed to Chair the LLCC Planning and Licensing Subcommittee and to receive and circulate news of relevant and important planning applications. Meeting approved this unanimously.

Skivvies

The disused building that was formerly Skivvies in Duke Street is falling into disrepair: Chair wrote formally on behalf of LLCC to the owners, but has not yet had a reply. Angus noted that although a community right to buy is possible, the applicants would need to show a legitimate and valid need for the benefit of the community, which is supported by the community - and even then the application can still be refused. Meeting agreed that it would be better to raise this with the Environment Manager, citing public health grounds and the need for the building to be made safe and secure.

ACTION: Jim will write to the CEC Environment Manager on behalf of LLCC.

RopeWorks development, Salamander / Leith Links

Sally reported that the City Council has awarded planning permission (already granted, in principle) for the next phase of the Ropeworks housing development.

Pavilion on Leith Links

The lease for this has been transferred from Leith Athletic to Crops in Pots at a City Council planning committee. Depending on the outcomes of consultation (which has started, and all LLCC members are encouraged to respond to the survey individually), it may eventually be proposed as a cafe or market area for local produce. Whatever is planned by the Croft would be required to go through the full planning process.

ACTIONS: David will attend the Croft's meeting on 12 December as a representative of LLCC, and feed back.

LLCC will respond to the consultation once information, options and views are better known.

7. Leith Chooses project – Update

Contacting local groups, support sessions, volunteers, and briefing

The launch took place on 22 October and was very successful. 33 individuals and organisations 'signed in', with around 50 people in the room. John thanked Angus for his hard work in poster design and distribution and Sally for her hard work in creating guidance notes and application forms, and website (thanks also to Michael Traill for this) and social media. He also thanked the other LLCC Councillors who distributed leaflets, posters and social media notifications. Feedback was very positive. In particular, the City Council attendees were very impressed by the level of engagement and materials produced.

The steering group meets weekly, and most of the rules and procedures have been agreed, although there is still discussion about the online voting system to be used. In spite of very different starting

LEITH LINKS

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

points and perspectives, and some barriers, a good understanding and working relationship between City of Edinburgh Council and Community Councils has been reached, through commitment, persistence and compromise. What is important now is to maintain momentum.

VOLT (Voluntary Organisations in Leith Together) is meeting on 12 December at EVOC's office. It would be good to make a presentation at this to encourage applications.

ACTION: A member of LLCC will attend the VOLT meeting if possible.

Support Sessions

The support sessions will be held weekly in four venues: Leith Library, McDonald Road Library, Newkirkgate Centre, and the Hub. The intention is that someone from the steering group and someone from the partner organizations, including CEC Lifelong Learning staff will be involved at each session. There will be a short briefing session for the support sessions on Thursday 30 November. There will be a briefing/training session for all those undertaking this work on Thursday 30 November and Monday 4th December.

Volunteers

Volunteers are sought for delivering leaflets and posters, each time a new one is printed. The latest one is the orange version, 'Apply Now!'

Contacting Groups to stimulate applications. Volunteers (from all the community councils) are sought to proactively approach groups, to try to encourage them to apply.

Website

The website is now available at www.leithchooses.net

Map: It is important for applicants, and voters to know whether they fall within the geographical reach of the project.

ACTION: The Steering Group has asked the City Council to provide a map of the area, i.e. Leith Neighbourhood Partnership area and all 3 Leith Community Councils.

8. Northfield & Willowbrae CC, NE Locality CCs, & EACC

Another community council, Northfield & Willowbrae, has contacted LLCC to suggest a meeting of community councils in the North East Locality. The Edinburgh Association of Community Councils had its AGM earlier in November, although LLCC did not attend and not all CCs are members of EACC, so there are different points of view. The EACC is supportive of local groupings like this, and Michael has proposed this in the past. Meeting agreed that it would be worthwhile to take part.

ACTION: Sally will reply on behalf of LLCC to express interest in meeting on an exploratory basis.

9. Open Forum

Elected Representatives

Consultations: Cllrs Booth and Munro encouraged members individually to take part in the Council budget consultation, and to comment more widely on any matters relevant to Edinburgh City Council budgeting, such as the tourist tax or national funding. Significant cuts are proposed over the next five years. The deadline for responses is 19 December.

Also, The Picardy Place consultation closes on 15 December. This is looking at options for revising the design of the junction. It is part of National Cycle Route One and the Cathedral is also significantly affected by the plans, among other stakeholders, so there is much to consider alongside pedestrian facilities. The local community and community councils have had little opportunity for involvement so should take this chance to contribute views.

Cllr. Booth also encouraged participation in the Licensing Board consultation on licensing policy which will close on 22 December.

ACTION: Sally will put links to all three on the LLCC website and social media immediately, advertise the deadlines and promote participation.

ACTION: John will email round to seek comments for a joint response by LLCC to the budget consultation.

Christmas tree lighting: The tree lighting will be accompanied by carol singing by Victoria Primary School on Thursday 7 December at 4pm at the Kirkgate, and several of the other primary schools will be singing then and also at other times and venues.

LEITH LINKS COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Scottish Government event

Angus noted that the Scottish Government and COSLA are about to sign off the review of local government and will launch this on 7 December, possibly in Leith Theatre. There will be focus on community councils and Leith Chooses will be mentioned (There is a commitment that 1% of all Councils' discretionary budgets should be distributed by participatory budgeting).

Chair thanked all attendees. Meeting ended at 9pm.

Date of Next Public Meeting: 29 January 2018, 7pm. Shore Room, Leith Community Centre, Newkirkgate.

PLEASE NOTE THERE IS NO MEETING IN DECEMBER.



@LeithLinks_CC



/LeithLinksCC



www.leithlinksc.org.uk



contact@leithlinksc.org.uk