

LEITH LINKS COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES

MONDAY 30 OCTOBER 2017
LEITH COMMUNITY CENTRE (NEWKIRKGATE)

Councillors Present: Stephen Brennan, Gail Clapton (Treasurer), Adrian Graham, Angus Hardie, David Igoe, Andrew Mackenzie, Chrissie Reid, Jim Scanlon (Chair), Eileen Simpson, John Tibbitt (Vice-Chair), Michael Traill.

Elected Representatives: Councillor Chas Booth, Councillor Gordon Munro, Councillor Adam McVey

In attendance: Sgt Niven Bull, Don Giles, Walter Manclark, PC Lauren Mitchell, Rob Munn.

Minute Taker: Kay Goodall.

1. Welcome

Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Deidre Brock MP, Ben Macpherson MSP, Sally Millar, Tommy Sheppard MP, Jac Rogers.

2. Police Report

Community Partner of the Year

LLCC has been shortlisted for 'Police Scotland Community Partner of the Year', asked to appear in a short video and invited to attend the awards event at Tulliallan in January. Chair expressed his congratulations and thanked Sally, Michael and everyone involved in the Community Links project.

Policing focus during October

Sgt Bull spoke about several successful and ongoing investigations. They have obtained a very good description of the attacker in a rape which took place recently at the back of Links Place. Meanwhile additional high visibility patrols have been put in place for reassurance. and the owners of the grounds have since put in more lighting, improved CCTV, a locked gate and have cut away a lot of shrubbery. Chair commented that he had previously notified the owners that the private CCTV had been inadequate for detecting prostitution activity there.

Operation Pumpkin

Operation Pumpkin is ongoing, with additional patrols for Halloween and Bonfire Night. All community officers have been changed to back and weekend shifts to help support this in Craigmillar and Leith. Officers will be visiting shops selling fireworks to make sure they are familiar with the legislation: only three shops in Leith have licences.

Chair drew the officers' attention to noisy fireworks on the Links late at night the previous weekend from near the playpark.

Underage drinking

The Community Action Partnership continues to deal with underage drinking, focusing on patrols in Dalmeny and Montgomery St Parks at weekends. It is not known to be an issue in the Links. They are also speaking to shop staff and asking them to keep an eye on CCTV when young people are loitering outside waiting for adults.

Cllr Munro mentioned that while helping with Leithers Don't Litter, he had found a lot of White Lightning bottles in the industrial estate off Coburg Street.

Lighting on Leith Links

Cllr Munro and Gail Clapton have reported the faulty lights on the Links, as has PC Mitchell. Anyone can report this by email to streetlighting@edinburgh.gov.uk. It is important to quote the individual numbers on the lights.

Activity around the Bowling Green

Chair mentioned that the City Council has stopped cutting hedges around the Bowling Green as this had been identified as 'low priority', but he pointed out that these now provide cover for criminal activity. Sgt Bull agreed that it should be a high priority to have them cut and will raise this with CEC.

LEITH LINKS

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Cllr Munro added that Crops & Pots increasingly come across condoms and syringes near the old pavilion in areas of shrubbery not being maintained.

ACTION: Sgt Bull will raise hedge-cutting around the Bowling Green with the CEC Transport & Environment Manager.

3. Adoption of Minutes of last meeting on Monday 25 September 2017 and Matters Arising

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

Matters Arising

Chair welcomed Adrian Graham back as a Community Councillor. It had been agreed at the last meeting that as a vacancy had arisen, the post would be offered to candidates who had achieved the highest number of votes at the last election until the post was filled. Adrian accepted the offer. Michael Traill proposed his co-option; Andrew Mackenzie seconded. Adrian was then formally co-opted on to LLCC.

4. Seafield Sewage – update

Chair, Eileen Simpson, Rob Munn, Ben Macpherson MSP and Cllr Munro attended a meeting at Victoria Quay on Friday 27 October. Consultants Amec Foster Wheeler had been appointed to carry out the strategic review of Seafield Waste Water Treatment Plant and the sewage network which supplies Seafield. Their initial findings were presented at the meeting and a draft summary was distributed. The draft report is yet to be finalised, and comments are open to the public until January 2018 at <http://www.scottishwater.co.uk/Investment-and-Communities/Your-Community/Seafield>

The focus of the review is on the structure and the operations, rather than on issues such as involving local people and changing the reporting system: these are separate problems - which LLCC and Leith Links Residents Association will continue to focus on. The draft report does however recognise the difficulties that residents face in making individual reports / complaints.

Evidence from the McDonald Report indicated that levels of odour nuisance are much higher than previously reported. This information should shape the agenda for the next capital funding round. Scottish Water has not yet put in a bid for upgrade, and some of the infrastructure is quite antiquated. One option is that some problems could be lessened by more localised treatment, such as dosing at Prestonpans, further upstream.

Michael suggested hosting a community workshop for the wider community to contribute, and perhaps a comments form for LLCC to take comments on board, promoted through social media such as I Love Leith.

ACTION: Chair will send the documentation to Michael to set up a response form.

ACTION: Chair will contact Rob Kirkwood to liaise for dates for meeting.

5. Parks and Green Spaces Committee – Update

Scoo Bikes application

Cllr Munro raised a concern that this application to carry out a temporary activity on the Links is in fact from a commercial organisation looking to carry on regular trade as a long-term business.

ACTION: Chair will put in a comment on behalf of LLCC that it is a business not an event, and should be refused.

Dissolution of Greener Leith

Greener Leith has now formally voted to dissolve, and is giving out its remaining funds of around £3000 to good causes. The Children's Orchard on Leith Links was raised. The trees have been well-managed and have produced good crops of apples. Greener Leith have previously been involved in managing it and are now looking for somebody to take over such things as pruning the trees and strimming the grass. Cllr Munro suggested that St Mary's primary school, as a local eco-school, could adopt it and look after it. St Mary's could hold the money for this if needed.

ACTION: David will discuss this with the parent council and Chair can then raise it with the school.

LEITH LINKS

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

6. Planning & Licensing Sub Committee

121 Constitution Street

Cllr Booth discussed the three applications made for Constitution St, involving a hotel, a hostel and listed building consent for number 121. The listed building and HMO applications were rejected. The third (hotel/guest house) was approved but without listed building consent the developers will not be able to progress it. They may however appeal.

Skivvies

The disused building on Duke Street which was formerly Skivvies bar has been “under offer” for nine months. It is a blight on an otherwise improving street and potentially an environmental hazard. There is evidence of it having been broken into. Cllr Booth confirmed that he has previously contacted the owners, and that environmental officers visited in May. LLCC could ask the owners to act on this and to make the building secure. Building Standards and Control can take action. It was also suggested that LLCC could register interest as regards a community right to buy.

ACTION: Chair will write formally on behalf of LLCC to the owners.

ACTION: Angus will explore whether a community right to buy is practicable.

7. £eith Chooses project – Update

Consulting local groups re themes / priorities – volunteers, and briefing

John summarised the work done so far. The money has now been received from the Scottish Government. A separate bank account has been set up under the name of Leith Links Community Council Project, to enable it to be audited separately. The name chosen for the project, £eith Chooses, is a compromise between £eith Decides and Community Choices.

Key dates and themes

- The launch of the application process will be on 22 November 2017, 6pm, in the cafe at the Community Centre, New Kirkgate.
- Public voting will be on 3 March 2018.

LLCC did not get the notification of the grant award soon enough to allow time for a voting process to select themes. Instead, the team is working with the themes already identified by Leith Creative's Blueprint for Leith and Leith Neighbourhood Partnership, to build on those and provide continuity from this development work. Four themes have been identified:

- Neighbourliness (small grants)
- Improving the quality of our environment
- Celebrating our cultural and artistic lives
- Making connections across Leith
- Creating a healthier community

Governance

A steering group has been meeting weekly. It is composed of the £eith Decides steering group, a representative from each of the six Community Councils, and other community representatives. This large committee is unwieldy for decision-making, so subgroups are being created. Funding for projects totals £116,000 (£72K from LLCC plus £44K from CEC /£eith Decides), so there is a substantial amount of money to distribute – we must attract a LOT of applications!.

Grant structure

The grant awards will be on three levels:

- small grants up to £500, specifically for unconstituted groups or individuals, hence not requiring a specific bank account. There has been disagreement with the City Council around whether this is possible, but similar grants have been made before in Edinburgh, and the Scottish Government had no objection to this approach last year. A maximum of £10,000 will be allocated to this.
- medium grants from £500-£5000
- large grants from £5000-£10,000.

LEITH LINKS COMMUNITY COUNCIL

There may therefore be 80 or more opportunities for projects, which will require extensive advertising, A designer is working on branding, and it will require many volunteers to visit other groups and organisations to promote the scheme. The project boundary for voting includes the area of all three community councils plus a further area at Abbeyhill included in the Leith Neighbourhood Partnership as part of Wards 12 & 13,

There was discussion about auditing and whether there would be monitoring of all the grant applicants to ensure that any previous grants they had been awarded had been appropriately spent. All grants awarded by LLCC last year have been monitored; the discussion therefore centred around grants previously awarded by any other local funders.

ACTION: John will ensure that a question about satisfactory completion of previous locally funded projects will be added to the application form.

ACTION: John will coordinate a Resources group across the three community councils to ensure there are plenty volunteers.

Data security

Chair attended a meeting about securely managing data retention by Community Councils.

ACTION: Chair will be registering LLCC with the Data Commissioner as a body storing personal details.

LLCC stores relatively little such information, but does need to comply with regulations governing how securely it is to be stored and for how long.

Expression of thanks

Michael noted that only three of the 60 community councils who applied were successful. Chair thanked John, Angus and all else involved for their enormous amount of work so far.

8. Open Forum

Members of the public

Walter spoke about his walkabout with Cllr McVey. Despite the actions taken, there had been no change yet as regards the refuse collection and rats problem. The pole for the disabled space has been installed, but an abandoned vehicle still blocks the space despite several tickets issued by parking wardens. Lighting is also an issue locally. An attempted robbery took place on a woman in a wheelchair on Crown Place, which lacks suitable lighting.

ACTION: Cllr McVey will contact the police about having the vehicle removed.

ACTION: Cllr McVey will make an enquiry about the lighting at Crown Place.

Elected Representatives

Cllr McVey commented that the draft City Council budget will go live in around a week, aiming to make savings of £31.1 million. There will be time to comment on the proposed savings, and there will also be a consultation event for the North-East Locality. The main reason for savings being needed are that the costs of homelessness and health and social care have increased considerably.

Chair thanked all attendees. Meeting ended at 9pm.

Date of Next Public Meeting: 27 November 2017, 7pm. Shore Room, Leith Community Centre,



 @LeithLinks_CC

 /LeithLinksCC

 www.leithlinksc.org.uk

 contact@leithlinksc.org.uk