

MINUTES

MONDAY 26 FEBRUARY 2018
LEITH COMMUNITY CENTRE (NEWKIRKGATE)

Councillors Present: Stephen Brennan, Gail Clapton (Treasurer), Adrian Graham, Angus Hardie, David Igoe, Andrew Mackenzie, Sally Millar (Secretary), Jacqueline Rogers, Jim Scanlon (Chair), Eileen Simpson, Michael Traill.

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

In attendance: PC Joseph Kennedy, Deborah Bailey and Marty Hall of Port of Leith Housing Association (PoLHA) (speakers), and 4 members of the public.

Minute Taker: Kay Goodall.

1. Welcome

Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Deidre Brock MP, Ben Macpherson MSP, Chrissie Reid, Tommy Sheppard MP, John Tibbitt (Vice-Chair).

2. Police Report

Operation Contrition: drugs and disorder

Operation Contrition, which began on 15 January, is a response to concerns from the public regarding a spike in drugs and related disorder. This has been a success so far. Drugs of street value of £73,000 were seized last month, alongside over £33,000 in cash from criminals. There were 55 arrests in total. Also seized were a stun gun and two CS spray canisters. PC Kennedy thanked the local community for sharing valuable information throughout the month.

During January there were several other significant arrests, including the arrest of a 26 year old male for robbery, abduction and three housebreakings.

Disorder at the Spey Lounge

Councillor Munro raised the issue of licensing of the Spey Lounge and problems of repeated disorder. PC Kennedy confirmed this was being investigated. A member of the public suggested that their 1am licence should be changed to midnight, in line with other premises nearby, as the trouble always seems to start up after all the other pubs have closed and people gravitate to the Spey as it is still open.

Vehicle noise and anti-social parking

There has been a problem of noise late at night from an alarm going off. PC Kennedy recommended making an official complaint to the taxi company responsible, although this appears to have been unsuccessful so far.

Obstructive parking on the pavement has also been a problem. PC Kennedy responded that Police can't deal with this, as it is currently not an offence, although traffic wardens can. There is however legislation going through the Scottish Parliament that will make it an offence.

PC Kennedy also offered to check out during his next shift a car with a foreign registration reported as arked (abandoned?) in Summerfield Gardens for some months. Such cars can be moved by the City Council if they are clearly abandoned, or by the police if causing a dangerous obstruction.

3. Talk by Deborah Bailey and Marty Hall of Port of Leith Housing Association (PoLHA) on the demolition of Porthaven Home

PoLHA has been providing homes since 1975 and has around 2800 properties. One of these is Porthaven House (care home for the elderly) Residents there have been moved to new premises at Royston Mains because of regulations that now require all residents to be housed in en-suite rooms. Deborah and Marty of PoLHA came to talk about the plans for the site.

Planned accommodation for the elderly

It turned out not to be possible to convert the property to suitable housing accommodation of a quality and standard to meet modern requirements, so it will be demolished and new flats will be built. The site is in a conservation area alongside properties with listed building consent, so the new flats require to fit in with these. The flats are to have shared/communal facilities, but no warden. There will be communal facilities on the ground floor, such as a communal garden and lounge. The intended

tenants are over 50s (who will bid on EdIndex for tenancies) wishing to downsize or move to a more accessible property. There will be lifts at each end of the building. The pend access will remain. There will be offices and a conference room on the ground floor.

Timetable

The process has taken time because of planning issues such as historic building consent. This has now been approved. The demolition is to be completed by April 2018. The new build will begin by January 2019 and be completed by July 2020.

Questions from the public

Members of the public expressed their concerns that the first plans had not clearly shown the inclusion of balconies at the back, which will overlook their homes. Marty responded that these are gantry walkways which will only provide access to each flat, rather than being balconies for sitting out on, and they are not open to the public. He also responded to concerns about bins, explaining that these would be stored in protective housing.

To address these and other concerns, Marty and Deborah offered to carry out a letter drop and invite residents of the adjoining POLHA properties to a meeting so as to have time for full discussion.

4. Adoption of Minutes of last meeting on Monday 29 January 2018

Proposed by Gail Clapton; seconded by Andrew McKenzie.

Available at <https://leithlinksc.org.uk/>

Outstanding actions

New homes at Salamander Place

Chair had attended the pre-planning application drop-in event to view the proposal. Link Group has bought part of the larger site from Teague, so is a separate developer. Chair commented that it needs to be clear how responsibility for the Section 75 payments for local infrastructure is to be taken forward (by either Teague or Link? Or divided up between the companies?) In total, the developers are required to contribute £1.6 million for infrastructure such as transport and schools. Chair questioned whether Section 75 payments are properly monitored, for example, there has been inflation since the original planning application in 2012, will that be reflected in payments required? Cllr Booth observed that the developer contributions are updated annually online. Cllr Munro noted that, following previous failings exposed by Alison Johnstone MSP, there is now an Edinburgh City Council account monitoring this.

ACTION: Cllr Booth will look into the latest records of developer contributions and report back to LLCC.

Chair also expressed concern that only £31,000 is allotted for St Mary's RC primary school, which may face a significant rise in pupil numbers, compared to £228,000 allotted for Leith Academy. Cllr McVey responded that the developers are only responsible for any impact of an increase in numbers directly from their own development.

5. Seafield sewage: update

Chair and Eileen will be going to the upcoming meeting on 23rd March with Scottish Water and the Scottish Government at Victoria Quay, as will Cllrs Booth, McVey and Munro.

6. Parks and Green Spaces Committee

Jac is waiting for a response from Ross Woodside as regards the planned consultation by Edinburgh and Lothian Greenspace Trust on the Leith Links PlayPark upgrade.

Leith Links overgrowing vegetation encroaching on paths

A member of the public asked about this, highlighting the path from East Hermitage Place in particular. Jac responded that LLCC has been told that there is only a very limited maintenance budget for this type of work. Gail added that some sections are being left to develop as wildlife patches, which may also lead to some encroachment of paths.

Meeting discussed whether LLCC could submit a participation request under the Community Empowerment Act to examine the budget for park maintenance. Members concluded that in the first instance, it would be sufficient to ask the City Council to carry out the work needed.

ACTION: Jac will email Scott Thomson to raise this as a matter of health and safety.

7. Planning & Licensing Sub Committee

Right to object by Email

Andrew has written to Nancy Jamieson on behalf of LLCC, objecting to the proposal to remove the right to object to planning proposals by email. LLCC has received an invitation from Nancy Jamieson training meeting on planning.

ACTION: Andrew will respond to the invitation asking for any materials provided to be sent to LLCC.

Andrew has also submitted an additional response to the call for evidence on the current Planning Scotland Bill, emphasizing the importance of Equal Right of Appeal for communities.

The Dry Dock

Adrian Wilkinson of the Dry Dock sought advice on saving his organization and its premises. Edinburgh Leisure (EL) has served the Dry Dock with notice of termination of the let as of 31 March. There is a water and electricity debt of £868 and some further charges for overuse of the building and for use during January although it was empty throughout the period. The heating is constantly running - Edinburgh Leisure had asked the Dry Dock to leave it on throughout the winter to avoid burst pipes. The window broken during the break-in has not been replaced. The Dry Dock is trying to agree an extension, to allow time to pay the bills, and to try to sort out the let. Evie of Crops and Pots is has offered to help set up crowdfunding to cover the debts.

Cllr McVey has contacted David Bruce (CEC), who has emailed saying he is engaging with EL and seeking to bring the building back into City Council use. Edinburgh Leisure are purely geared to settling the debt, but the Council could take a more flexible approach and reach a more positive outcome - helping to move towards a more secure long-term arrangements as well as providing for some negotiation about the immediate debt. Cllr Booth agreed to help to push for a 1 month extension of the let meanwhile,

Meeting agreed that LLCC supports the Dry Dock and wishes to see its work continue. Cllr Booth and Munro also emphasised that Adrian requires support from an active Board of Trustees, and needs more volunteers to help him. It may be that local housing bodies, who work with some of the facility's users, might wish to help, also that neighbouring projects could offer partnership working. Adrian had also asked EVOG for advice.

ACTION: Cllr McVey will pursue with City Council officers the possibility of the building being taken back under City Council ownership.

ACTION: Cllr Booth will contact Edinburgh Leisure to seek a month's extension to meet the debt.

8. Leith Chooses project: update

Volunteers for Saturday 3 March

Most LLCC members present at the meeting, and Cllrs Booth, McVey and Munro, have volunteered to help on voting day. City Council staff will also attend.

Timetable

A few volunteers will be needed to set up on Friday evening. On Saturday, volunteers will arrive at 10am for briefing and for allocation of work. The project applicants have also been asked to arrive at 10. The public arrive between 12 and 3.

The projects seeking support have been active on social media, so attendance could be very high if weather conditions are favourable. Leafleting and a bagpiper at the Kirkgate will also draw the public in, and greeters will meet the voters on arrival.

Voting

Registration will take place in the café area and voters given a festival-style wristband – this needs several volunteers that know the Leith area well (to check addresses). There are 67 projects (15 small, 27 medium and 25 large), and volunteers will be needed to keep the flow going through the three rooms which are expected to be busy. Food and drink will be available in each of the rooms, which will need replenishing by the café but volunteers could help here. There will be a ballot box in each of the three rooms and this will need constant attendance by volunteers. Voters can each post up to four vote cards in each room. If they vote on the day, they get an online vote as well. This requires a unique access code (available on cards from libraries or by emailing CEC) but does not need a personal email address.

9. Edinburgh Association of Community Councils (EACC): update

Gail had attended the EACC meeting and reported back on the discussion regarding the GDPR (General Protection Data Regulation), which becomes enforceable throughout the EU from 25 May

LEITH LINKS COMMUNITY COUNCIL

2018. The Minutes of LLCC meetings are a data record. If anyone attends a meeting who is not a community councilor, elected representative or a regular attender, they must be informed at the beginning of the meeting if their names will be recorded. They have the right to request that they are not.

Meeting agreed that the names of members of the public will not from now on be recorded on the Minutes.

10. Open Forum

Cllr Booth noted that, although not in the LLCC area, it might be of interest that the new Aldi on Commercial Street has applied for an alcohol licence, and the date for making objections is 27 March.

Chair thanked all attendees. Meeting ended at 9pm.

Date of Next Public Meeting: Monday 26 March 2018, 7pm. Shore Room, Leith Community Centre, Newkirkgate



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www.leithlinksc.org.uk



contact@leithlinksc.org.uk