

# LEITH LINKS

## COMMUNITY COUNCIL

### MINUTES MONDAY APRIL 30 2018 LEITH COMMUNITY CENTRE, NEW KIRK\_GATE

**Councillors Present:** Stephen Brennan, Gail Clapton, Adrian Graham, David Igoe, Andrew Mackenzie, Sally Millar (Secretary), Jacqueline Rogers, Jim Scanlon (Chair), Eileen Simpson, John Tibbitt (Vice-Chair), Michael Traill.

**Elected Representatives:** Councillor Chas Booth, Councillor Adam McVey.

**In attendance:** PC Calum Clark, Lisa Clark (Ben Macpherson MSP's Office), PC Margo Darling, Cass Macdonald (#SaveLeithWalk), Scott Thomson (CEC Parks Development Officer), Ross Woodside (Edinburgh & Lothians Greenspace Trust), 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, Cllr Gordon Munro, Angus Hardie, Chrissie Reid, Tommy Sheppard MP.

#### 2. Police Report

PC Darling reported on the previous month's activities. Sgt George Nisbet is now in post and hopes to attend and meet the Community Council in future.

##### ***Traffic Days of Action***

Commercial Street and Leith Links were targeted. Around 50 vehicles were stopped and reported for minor vehicle & road traffic, seatbelt and DVLA offences. Others were issued warnings for speeding and there were two positive finds of cannabis. As regards breaking the 20mph limit, a record is kept of drivers' details but these are currently not being recorded on the national database, as the main focus at the moment is education. Enforcement is the next phase, particularly around primary schools, using mobile speed guns. There is also a plan to produce a leaflet with local schoolchildren.

##### ***Pedal cycle theft***

This problem is city wide. A new team has been set up and is at the intelligence-gathering stage, meanwhile encouraging members of the public to get their bikes marked and registered and to record details and photos of the bikes they own. The Bike Registry team will be at St Andrew's Square on 9 May, and maybe at Leith Festival Gala Day (tbc)

##### ***Operation Orbit***

Off-road bike officers are focusing on motorbike issues patrolling hotspots.

##### ***Youth anti-social behaviour***

Patrols in collaboration with CEC officers are taking mobile CCTV out, in response to complaints. Key areas include Leith Walk, Portland St and Giles St, among others.

##### ***Camper vans and caravans parked around Leith Links***

LLCC informed police that the public keep raising this issue. One static caravan has two different number plates. Some caravans, although otherwise parked lawfully, are dangerously obstructing

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signs in key places such as outside a primary school. Some are apparently used by temporary workers to sleep in, but others appear to be dumped there for long-term parking.

**ACTION: Community officers will investigate these reports.**

### ***Operation Close Pass***

This focuses on drivers who pass cyclists dangerously close. Cllr Booth asked if this would be introduced in Leith.

**ACTION: PC Clark will look into this, as regards Leith.**

### **3. Parks and Green Spaces Committee / Visiting Speakers**

#### ***Visit from CEC / Edinburgh & Lothians Greenspace to discuss progress with upgrade of Leith Links Play Park***

Scott Thomson and Ross Woodside attended to provide an update on the plans. The Neighbourhood Partnership has £200,000 to spend on the Leith Links play area, in urgent need of upgrading. It is a one-off award, so Scott and Ross are hoping to successfully apply for match funding to boost it by up to £100,000. Over the winter they held three drop-in consultation sessions to get a general idea of what people wanted. They also put up posters around the area to encourage people to attend. Although turnout was not high, a number of children participated and provided helpful feedback.

#### *Funding, Timetable & Next Steps*

Most external funders meet only three times a year, often in June. It will not be possible to start any of the work until funding is won, so it might be another four months before the plan can be put out to tender. It can be a lengthy process: Portobello Community Council required over a year to apply for and receive the additional funding and start the work.

The next step is to put out to consultation three alternative plans, starting in the week beginning 7 May, to finish by 28 May. Community Councillors stressed that people have asked for an interactive web consultation, and for face-to-face meetings during the morning or early afternoon. There will be a web-based survey option this time, and questionnaires placed in libraries. The team will offer to visit each local school, perhaps gathering advance views through the Pupil Councils.

#### *Discussion*

There was discussion about possible other improvements / equipment and areas on the Links, e.g. the bowling green area. Scott observed that he would like to see the kind of equipment used for bikes and skateboards which is installed at the Craggs where it has been a huge success and in fact has been used much more than some outdoor gym equipment has. Scott pointed out that a Friends group could help bring in small grants and volunteers: for instance, the Skelf group who built the Craggs equipment could apply to take on the bowling green. On the subject of Green Flag accreditation, he added that this in itself achieves little and he did not recommend focusing on this to the exclusion of other more useful approaches.

The Links has been designated by CEC as a Premier Park so is to be assessed by the standards applied to similarly-sized premier parks (Princes Street and the Meadows), but this has not yet happened. Scott observed that the amount of investment this needs will have to be found from outwith CEC. Saughton Park obtained its funding through the Heritage Lottery.

Chair thanked Scott and Ross for contributing their time to attend.

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### ***Leith Primary Trim Trail***

There has been some concern about whether Leith Primary School had permission to install the Trim Trail for which it had been awarded a Leith Chooses grant. Scott confirmed that agreement is likely to be reached on this. Most of the equipment is fixed, and the location is available. Some minor difficulties merely need to be ironed out, such as responsibility for safe use outwith school hours.

**ACTION: Scott will keep LLCC updated on progress with the Trim Trail.**

### **4. Adoption of Minutes of previous meeting (26/03/18)**

An amendment to last month's minutes was proposed and accepted to item 5.

The minutes were proposed by Michael and seconded by Jac. They are available at <https://leithlinksc.org.uk/>

### **Outstanding Actions**

#### ***Dry Dock lease***

The outstanding electricity bill now runs into several thousands, and hence Cllr Booth reported that CEC is unable to take over the lease. Edinburgh Leisure are however planning to relinquish the building; a difficulty for Dry Dock is that other organisations are requesting use of the building. Cllr Booth noted that he had spoken to Ken Harvey (Head of Operations at Edinburgh Leisure), who stated that CEC are going to issue a more formal lease to Dry Dock which will enable them to continue for the time being, but may lead to termination if Dry Dock are unable to cover their finances.

**Seafield** - Chair still to pursue the question (email Ben MacPherson) as to whether Scottish Water gets a contribution from new builds, to cover sewage infrastructure.

#### ***Leith Links Playpark upgrade***

Sally had written to Evelyn Kilmurray to voice LLCC's concerns. Evelyn responded commenting that she felt that the next consultation would be more effective.

### **5. Seafield Sewage – Update**

The Scottish Water Strategic Review was made available to the public on the same night as a particularly bad smell incident occurred yet again, reaching over a large area. There have been a number of other smell incidents in the month since. It is felt that council officers' response and the general approach has been offhand and unresponsive. Cllr Booth has tried to pursue the possibility of an online reporting form for Seafield, but with no success as yet yet.

Scottish Water has withdrawn the funding for technical advisor Professor Robert Jackson whose work has been invaluable to the LL Residents Association and to LLCC. LLRA and several LLCC and CEC Councillors have written to John Telfer, Scottish Water's Head of PFI, to challenge this but have received an unsatisfactory response. Ben Macpherson MSP is organising a meeting to discuss next steps. Several other responses have been investigated, such as bringing a legal challenge to the current arrangements for smell testing.

**ACTION: LLCC will attempt to create an online reporting form, to make it easier for members of the community to report odour nuisance incidents.**

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**ACTION:** Cllr McVey is communicating with Scottish Water about stakeholder meetings possibly being run more effectively by a third party.

**ACTION:** Chair will arrange a meeting with Ben Macpherson MSP.

### 6. Leith Chooses project

**Awards:** Most have been distributed.

**Evaluation:** A Survey Monkey questionnaire has been sent out to project applicants and a second survey is going out via social media in the next two days to the general public.

**Feedback:** There will be a face-to-face event on 15<sup>th</sup> May with small table discussions in the community centre café, for people to give feedback and ideas for future projects.

**Report:** The report on the project to Scottish Government will be submitted by 31<sup>st</sup> May.

### 7. Planning and Licensing Sub Committee

#### ***Baltic Street PAN (Pre-Application Notification)***

The drop in pre-planning application public exhibition for the Baltic Street Timber Yard development is on 9 May, 3pm-7.30pm.

**ACTION:** Chair will invite the developers to speak to LLCC.

#### ***Stead's Place***

Cass Macdonald from Save Leith Walk updated the CC on the campaign. The second stage of developers' community involvement is going live this week in the Barnardo's shop – a display of the plans and drawings, with more on Friday and Saturday at OOtB, Dalmeny Street. The developers plan demolition of the red sandstone block of shops, followed by the construction of high-rise buildings, providing accommodation for 500 international postgraduate students, a 50-bed hotel, 50-60 affordable homes, and retail space.

Cllr Booth confirmed that the PAN was put forward at CEC Planning Committee last week and that committee members were taking a close interest and have asked for a number of assessment reports. The planning application itself cannot go into CEC until there has been further public consultation.

**Community activism:** #SaveLeithWalk has been very active, setting up Facebook and Twitter accounts, holding a stall at the Kirkgate weekly and at Leith Market, distributing leaflets etc. Paper petitions have been placed in most businesses in Leith Walk and there is an online petition. . Use of a nearby shop window has been donated, providing a space telling the story of the block and the campaign. A public meeting at the Out of the Blue Drill Hall was very well attended The campaign has run a crowdfunder and is selling badges and bags to raise around £2000 for leaflet & poster printing costs etc.. The Cockburn Association will contribute their views. Neu! Reekie! will be holding a benefit gig on 25 May at Leith St Andrews Church in support of #SaveLeithWalk and in particular Leith Depot, which is one of Edinburgh's last live music venues.

**LLCC's response:** LLCC is not a statutory consultee but is able to put in an objection to planning applications. Application for demolition is likely to be the first application. Michael proposed a motion that "This Community Council acknowledges the hard work and commitment of the Save

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Leith Walk campaign, shares their concerns, and is happy to offer its support". The motion was approved unanimously.

### **8. Discussion on trams and the LLCC response to the public consultation: Trams to Newhaven (closes 29 April)**

*Constitution Street:* A family on Constitution Street had a meeting with Rory Garriock of Anturas Consulting on Friday 27 April. The family has produced a useful list of concerns, such as whether tram cables would be affixed to buildings in Constitution Street as it is too narrow for a central reservation with cables. Another problematic issue for the street is the proposal for a bus gate on Wellington Place which would be within yards of a primary school. No parking would be possible on Laurie Street, which would lead to traffic frustration. Staggered traffic lights would also be problematic and the changes would impact on Duncan Place and other neighbouring streets. The proposal also envisages a tram stop on Constitution Street at Laurie Street and this might be better moved to the foot of the Walk. Traders on Leith Walk would probably be supportive of this.

*Other Community Councils' responses:* Leith Central CC's response is that they are not in principle either for or the tram extension but are concerned about the short timetable for consultation and about many of the details. They are taking the position that the proposal should not be rushed and must be 'got right'. If necessary there could be another Tram Act.

Leith Harbour CC has accepted the Newhaven extension in principle because of the benefit to be brought to Newhaven.

Cllrs Booth and McVey commented that there is very little in the consultation that is unchangeable. The route however was set out in the Tram Act and changing this would require three more years and a great deal of expense. The tram team is assuming that the tram would use overhead wires. Some sort of road priority would be given to trams to enable reliable timekeeping. Those are the three things that are least likely to change.

*LLCC response to the public consultation:* Andrew had successfully obtained a short extension to the deadline for the LLCC response from Lesley Macinnes (CEC Transport Committee Convener) (although she warned that delayed feedback might not be considered in the first round of amended designs). Other Community Councils feel similarly rushed into responding.

Meeting discussed the hurried nature of the consultation. There is a huge amount of detail coming out for some parts of the route, but much less has been provided so far for the foot of the Walk and Constitution Street. It is not clear why Great Junction Street is not being used for the route, as it is more suitable.

LLCC would like to see an integrated transport plan, as it is not clear how the project will operate without information about how the buses will be integrated. Lothian Buses is a consultee but no further information is available yet. This could be an opportunity to examine the existing configuration and use of space: for instance, Constitution Street could become a public space which the tram moves through. Sufficient attention has not been paid to Active travel in the initial proposals – rather the reverse is true as the proposals seem engineer- and tram-led and unsympathetic to pedestrians and cyclists.

*Decision-making timetable:* Cllr McVey noted that the final decision by CEC is to be made at the end of 2018. The draft plan is currently out to tender. Stakeholder working groups in July will allow another phase of amendment. The design will not be finalised until that process is finished. The Tram Act sets out the route but little else.

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**ACTION:** Andrew and Sally will draw up a draft response to circulate by the end of the week. No time for additional meeting(s).

## 9. Open Forum

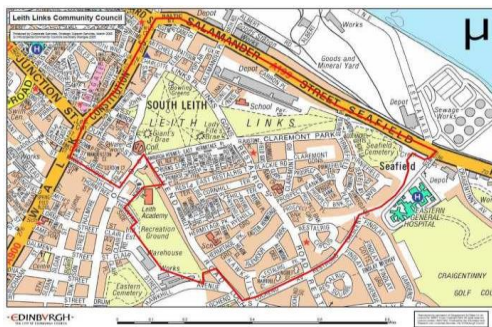
*AGM and Elections:* Chair reminded members that that office bearers will be elected at next month's AGM.

*Gala event 9 June:* A request for a stall has been sent in (Jim will confirm and pay), and an invitation to other CCs. LHNCC will participate alongside LLCC. Sally will arrange for loan of gazebo.

Chair thanked all attendees. Meeting ended at 9.10pm.

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**10. Date of Next Public Meeting: AGM, 28 May 2018, 7pm. Shore Room, Leith Community Centre, Newkirkgate**



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