

LEITH LINKS

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES

MONDAY 25 JUNE 2018
LEITH COMMUNITY CENTRE (NEWKIRKGATE)

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

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

In attendance: PC Barrie, PC Weaver, members of the public.

Minute Taker: Kay Goodall.

1. Welcome

Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked those present for the support they had given to the Gala Day. Apologies were received from Jacqueline Rogers, Chrissie Reid, Cllr Gordon Munro and Ben Macpherson MSP.

2. Police Report

PCs Barrie and Weaver summarised the previous month's activities:

Pedal cycle theft: bike theft across Edinburgh; still in investigation stage but the project is intelligence-led and there have been recoveries of up to 30 bikes across the city.

Gala Day: this was very successful. There were no issues, and community officers had a great deal of interaction with the public.

Traffic Day of Action: this took place on 25 June and was able to capture a variety of offences being committed, such as tackling disqualified drivers, people with no tax and those with registration issues.

Prostitutes in Leith Links area: two officers will be out in high vis this weekend and next, to cover increased activity during the lighter nights. Two men were charged last weekend. The numbers of women working appear to be down, but some women have however gone back into illegal brothels. The Prostitute Liaison Officers are investigating on this.

Caravans, campers and dumped cars: one caravan has two different registration numbers and has been there for around a year. There is also a dumped Jaguar partially parked on the pavement, registered in the Czech Republic, in Summerfield Gardens.

ACTION: The officers will speak to PC Margo Darling about whether the investigation of the caravan has advanced, and check out whether the owner of the dumped car is committing an offence.

Operation Close Pass: this has been dealing with vehicles which pass too close to cyclists. Cllr Booth thanked the officers for the local team's efforts in running this.

3. Adoption of Minutes of last meeting on Monday 23 April 2018 and Matters Arising (May meeting was AGM)

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

Outstanding actions

Salamander Street at Baltic Street

Chair and Sally, and LH&NCC rep will meet the developers 2 July 2018 for additional input on this plan.

Dry Dock

Cllr McVey explained that the premises have now been transferred to City Council ownership, but there remain some ongoing issues. There are many possible uses to which the building could be put, if the current users withdraw. Projekt 42, Bethany and Inspiring Leith are among the groups who have shown interest.

4. Parks and Green Spaces Committee – Update

Mela, Circus: policy on bookings for the Links

The Moscow State Circus has arrived and set up on the Links where the Mela would be. Gail met with Mo Naveira de Sousa and Devika Ponnambalam of the Mela management team. They have an environmental plan in place and feel that last year the previous team had underestimated the number of

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volunteers needed and the amount of litter. They have taken on board LLCC Chair's requests, such as clear pricing displayed on stalls.

However, the Mela is being moved to the cricket area this year and the management team would prefer to return to the original site. An event such as the Mela is also not suitable for the care of the cricket pitch. The Mela team are not looking for as big an area as before, and do not plan to fence the event off this year. For accessibility purposes, LLCC is keen to promote public transport rather than cars, and the original site has more buses serving it, unlike the cricket pitch which has only one bus serving it. However, the application to use the original site was objected to. An organiser of Leith Athletic has also refused to move a fixture. There was discussion about this decision, and whether an appeal to their goodwill would assist. The Mela is struggling and needs another chance. £250,000 was given to Leith Athletic for facilities at Meadowbank, but it is not clear whether this has advanced yet. Leith Athletic do however pay the Council a lot for the lease. This has been an ongoing problem and it needs to be addressed by the City Council Parks Department, perhaps through mediation. Another option for the Mela could be a return to Pilrig Park. It is a difficulty that LLCC has no powers as regards Leith Links, but is contacted for views whenever there are queries. Cllr McVey has contacted Evelyn Kilmurray, who is looking into this. Another difficulty is funding. There is an employment tribunal case outstanding against the Mela, and funding will not be given by the City Council until this is resolved, although they do have other funders.

ACTION: Parks & Greenspace Committee will follow this up, writing again, to indicate LLCC's support and encourage the parties to consider mediation to reach a resolution.

ACTION: LLCC through the Parks & Greenspace Committee will contact Scott Thomson, Evelyn Kilmurray and others connected to the City Council Parks Department, to seek a meeting to establish the role and powers of LLCC as regards Leith Links.

ACTION: Meeting agreed that in future, LLCC will issue Sally's draft guidelines to event applicants, stating LLCC's policy on how events should use the Links (guidance is now on website).

5. Planning & Licensing Sub Committee – Update

Discussion on Trams to Newhaven

One workshop has been held so far and another is about to take place on 27 June. Angus and Andrew will attend. However, a press release from the previous week suggests that the trams team are veering towards choosing one of the options, even though consultation is not completed.

Constitution Street residents also held a meeting with the tram team. They were assured that it was recognised that the plans for this street would be particularly complicated and that they would no longer be left out of the process, but no further meetings have been arranged since, despite attempts. There are many issues that have not been addressed at all.

Across the board, there are concerns that the fast pace of events is reducing the consultation efforts. Legitimate concerns exist over many matters, such as environmental impact, equalities impacts, a compensation scheme for businesses, and a potentially unrealistic time frame. The four community councils are supportive of the process in principle, but have major concerns.

Cllr Booth commented that the first workshop showed a general consensus for an option that reduces traffic in Leith Walk. There remain problems with the plan however and more discussion is needed. The next workshop will address this. The tram team has argued that there are fewer possible options for the foot of the Walk onward and so a full workshop would not be appropriate, but Cllr Booth has emphasised to them that consultation is nevertheless definitely needed.

The four tenders have to be submitted by the end of July, but they are required to be flexible as the detailed design is not available yet. The detailed design will be based on the public consultation, the workshops, and ongoing discussions with affected parties. Cllr Booth apologised on behalf of the tram team for the lack of consultation with LLCC, compared to that given to other community councils.

Cllr Booth emphasised that it would be helpful if LLCC wrote in support of moving the tram stop from Constitution Street to the foot of the Walk, where there would be more pedestrian space. Support for this move is shared with residents of Constitution Street.

ACTION: Cllr Booth will press for a meeting between Rory Garriock and the Constitution Street residents, and LLCC.

ACTION: Chair will look into a meeting during July between LLCC and members of the tram team.

ACTION: Cllr Booth will forward to LLCC the responses to answers and the materials that he has received.

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ACTION: Cllr Booth will copy LLCC in to his email requesting that the Constitution Street tram stop be moved to the foot of the Walk.

Trams to Newhaven: Joint Community Councils Manifesto & action; Workshops

Andrew and Angus summarised the outcome of the initial meeting of all the community councils affected by the trams route. There has also been a second meeting and exchanges of emails. The concern is that communication has been poor from the tram team to the community councils. Contracts are meanwhile going out to tender and there is anxiety that decisions may be being made. The community councils are seeking a dialogue. The aim is to create a community platform for communication.

Meeting discussed the tone of the initial approach, which should be constructive. Also, it would be valuable to emphasise the business case for the tramline, which is based on benefit to the local residents and businesses. Meeting agreed the manifesto in principle.

ACTION: LLCC will vote on the final version of the manifesto by email.

#SaveLeithWalk – Drum Property applications

A planning application is in preparation to demolish the red sandstone building, and Save Leith Walk are asking everyone not only to object online but also to write to each member of the planning committee to voice an objection. There will also be a planning application to build the new development. Meeting agreed that LLCC as a body should submit an objection. Save Leith Walk have provided a list of planning reasons for objecting, drawn up by architects.

ACTION: Planning sub-committee, on behalf of LLCC, will put in an objection.

Baltic Street development – special meeting

This is very close to LLCC's area. The pricing of the flats is aimed at local, first-time buyers and includes affordable accommodation in partnership with Links Housing. Barratt Homes will meet with LLCC and Leith Harbour and Newhaven CC, Monday 2 July, 6pm.

Meeting discussed whether LLCC should have a policy on infrastructure as a starting point for this and future applications.

ACTION: Chair will circulate a draft when available.

Forth Ports and new plans for Western Harbour

Forth Ports is planning to redevelop the area around Western Harbour. This appears to be a result of the plans for the extension of the tram. They are making a presentation to Leith Harbour and Newhaven CC on 26 June, LLCC members will attend.

6. Leith Chooses project – Update

Reports

Two reports have been submitted. One report, written by Angus, has been sent to Scottish Government Community Choices, providing feedback on the participatory budgeting process. A second report, written by CEC, has gone to the Leith Neighbourhood Partnership. Sally has put both reports on the Leith Chooses website.

Scottish Government Community Choices Funding 2018/2019

The Scottish Government has decided to put money up again, applications must be in by 13 July. The conditions have not changed much for community councils and groups, but there are now no grants for local authorities. The aim is to move towards bigger mainstream projects rather than small community projects, with funding to be between £20,000-£100,000.

Meeting discussed whether to apply again and whether to consider a joint bid. The second successful application had been a significant development from the first, in that it involved working with the City Council. The chances of success this time are likely to depend on further significant innovation in participatory budgeting. This will require a large input from CC volunteers. The City Council would be supportive of another partnership but the workload would be very high. An application would have to be designed to be both innovative and to reduce this workload, The Scottish Government expects local authorities to move to distributing 1% of their discretionary budgets via participatory budgeting: a major shift. There has been concern that mainstream services will effectively face budget cuts if public services are transferred to the voluntary sector through participatory budgeting, so there is also an ethical question to be considered.

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ACTION: John will co-ordinate circulating ideas by email about the nature and possibility of an application by 13 July.

7. Seafield Sewage – Update

Despite several letters, Scottish Water have not yet explained why they terminated Professor Jackson’s contract, other than that there is no need for his input now that they have moved on to a funding application. Ben Macpherson MSP is seeking another meeting with LLCC to discuss next steps. Michael has created a provisional reporting online form which now appears to be working, but will not make it live until it has been further tested. The very dry period has meant no recent odours, but the next spell of rain will make smells very likely.

ACTION: LLCC members will (if possible) make use of this form within the next two weeks to ensure that it works.

8. Any Other Business - Open Forum

Gala Day

Sally thanked everybody who helped in this very successful event. Planning should however begin earlier next year.

Place Matters Workshops

Angus and John have attended two of these. Six potential brownfield regeneration sites were identified at the meetings, including Seafield and Leith Walk. It was not clear how the community input from the workshops would affect the Local Development Plan. Cllr Booth commented that insights from the community can be useful to feed into the Local Development Plan to construct arguments for refusing future applications.

ACTION: Michael will email a link about future workshops.

Community Centre Management

Elizabeth Mola has left and at least two members of the management committee are resigning. The Centre is in danger of having its opening hours cut back, which would have a huge effect on the local community.

Leith Neighbourhood Partnership

John commented that it is important to make this more of a partnership by involving community councils in creating the agenda for meetings. The North East Locality Committee is however more influential now.

9. Date, time, location of next meeting, 28/08/18, 7pm, Shore Room, Leith Community Centre

Chair thanked all attendees. Meeting ended at 9pm.

Date of Next Public Meeting: 27 August 2018, 7pm. Shore Room, Leith Community Centre, Newkirkgate.



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 www.leithlinksc.org.uk

 contact@leithlinksc.org.uk