

LEITH LINKS

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES

MONDAY 24 JUNE 2019

6.30pm

LEITH COMMUNITY CENTRE (NEWKIRKGATE)

Councillors Present: Stephen Brennan, Gail Clapton (Treasurer), Andrew Mackenzie, Sally Millar (Secretary), Chrissie Reid, Jim Scanlon (Chair), John Tibbitt (Vice-Chair), Michael Traill.

Elected Representatives: Councillor Chas Booth, Councillor Adam McVey, Cllr Rob Munn.

In attendance: PC Margo Darling, PC Lauren Mitchell, Roz Currie (for Tommy Sheppard MP), 12 members of the public.

Minute Taker: Kay Goodall.

1. Welcome and Apologies:

Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Deidre Brock MP, Angus Hardie, David Igoe, Councillor Gordon Munro, Eileen Simpson.

2. Police Report

Possession of air rifle: a male was charged in Leith Links last month.

Parking Warden Initiative on Gordon St: This will take place on 26 June following complaints from residents of the sheltered housing in particular. Ben Macpherson MSP also plans a walkaround to investigate.

Drugs: there was a large drugs capture in the Kirkgate last month.

Trading Standards: an operation in July will tackle local businesses selling alcohol to underage customers and counterfeit cigarettes.

Speeding and unsafe parking around schools: Officers held a competition in schools to design a n eye catching, personalised leaflet. One of the two winners is a student at Pilrig Park. Officers will now hand this leaflet out to drivers stopped for speeding, to try to make them think.

Parking on pavements: it is not an offence to park on a pavement, unless causing a major obstruction, but it is an offence to drive on it - but only if an officer witnesses this. A transport bill tackling this is progressing (slowly) through the Scottish Parliament.

3. Adoption of Minutes of last meeting on Monday 27 May 2019

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

ACTION – Sally will ‘de-merge’ the Minutes of the 2018/2019 AGM from the May 2019 Minutes so there are two separate documents.

4. Redesign of Easter Road / Duke Street / Lochend Road roundabout

The CEC officer who had been coming to speak on this was unable to attend, at the last minute, but sent details of the latest plans. Junction redesign is required as (1) the current roundabout will not cope with traffic re-routing due to the tram works. (2) The current roundabout prioritises vehicles, but not walking and cycling, despite schools nearby. (3) Current design does not conform with CEC transport policies (to promote active travel). Extensive traffic modelling has been done. CEC proposes a ‘staggered’ four-arm junction with traffic lights. The latest design is said to rebalance

LEITH LINKS

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

priorities between different transport modes and improve road safety and will include footway widening, controlled crossing and better facilities for cycling. Work will begin in July and the changes are intended to be permanent.

A number of comments and questions have already been submitted, and, largely, taken into account. Chair invited attendees to make further comment, which will be relayed to CEC. Several issues were discussed, including responses from CEC councillors:

- Traffic (including buses) is to be diverted into congested streets where there are primary schools, eg. Duncan Place and Links Gardens. Some parking will be suspended. There will be a consultation later on extending the Controlled Parking Zone to most of Leith.
- Residents feel that traffic will not flow as well when the junction becomes staggered and signalised. The justification for slowing flow is greater safety. Attendees asked for evidence of current accident rates.
- Residents of Academy Lofts in particular will encounter visibility problems when leaving and entering their premises, and difficulties using timed electronic gating to enter often stationary traffic.
- There can be long tailbacks at the Duke Street bus stops. Staggering the stops might relieve this. The Vanburgh Place bus stop must be retained as elderly people in particular need it.
- Concern was expressed at the speed of the redesign, the difficulty of understanding the plans, and especially about the lack of consultation (beyond this informal consultation organised by LLCC) and the speed of decisions.

ACTIONS: Sally will forward a detailed list of concerns discussed tonight to CEC. Chair will request a further meeting with CEC, preferably in the form of a walkabout onsite, with some concerned residents.

Parking in Leith

Attendees were also asked to comment on the parking situation. At the Gala Day, members of the public were supportive of introducing parking controls of some kind (Residents Permits, shared, or priority parking and stricter enforcement). Attendees commented that double yellow lines on some corners are needed, for safety, and that more grouped City Car Club spaces would be useful, rather than single spaces.

5. Local Democracy – restructuring. Leith Neighbourhood Network / NE Locality Community Planning Partnership / Edinburgh Community Planning Partnership

Feedback from NN meeting & subsequent discussions

Chair explained the new Community Planning structures (Leith Neighbourhood Network (NN), North-East Locality Community Planning Partnership (LCPP), Edinburgh Community Planning Partnership. Representatives of around 40 voluntary groups in Leith attended the recent first Neighbourhood Network, and more will be invited in future. One person to be nominated from NN to act as a conduit to between NN and LCPP. Chair has asked CEC to consider adding a Community Council place to the LCPP, as their role has been weakened.

Feedback from EACC

LEITH LINKS

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Chair and John attended the last meeting of EACC on 20 June, at which Cllr Cammy Day spoke. Cllr Day's view was that, in some parts of the city, bodies such as residents' associations would be better placed to provide representatives than Community Councils would. There was further discussion about the scope of the network. This and the role of community councils need clarified. A chair also needs to be appointed to each network before the next meeting. CEC has not been prescriptive about the process.

6. Planning & Licensing Sub-Committee

Planning applications – Johns Place, Johns Lane, Coatfield Lane

LLCC has objected to both the Johns Place / Lane applications. The proposal for Coatfield Lane is for much-needed council housing but the plan to cut down all the trees at the back is presently unlawful, so the full application is temporarily on hold. A Tree Preservation Order is being made.

Trams & tramworks

Meetings continue between the three CCs and the tram team. Neil McDonald, the managing director of the contractors, will attend the next meeting on Thurs 27 June.

ACTION: Andrew will arrange for Michael to be sent minutes to be added to the LLCC website.

Buses

All are urged to respond to the City Transformation consultation (closing date 28 June). It is proposed that buses avoid the city centre and travellers be taken in from 'hubs' by shuttle. Edinburgh Bus Users Group (EBUG) argues that bus users don't want to have to keep changing / transferring buses.

The EACC meeting on 3rd September will focus on transport and traffic management, including buses.

7. Parks & Greenspaces Sub-Committee

Edinburgh wins Future Parks Funding – how can Leith participate & benefit?

Nearly £900,000 has been awarded to the city. This funding is 'high level' (for long term strategic city-wide projects). Leith Links as a premier park will be included if any funding is allocated directly to particular parks. Adam McVey pointed out that sometimes parks with active 'Friends' Groups can attract new funding better than parks without. A Friends Groups has been discussed many times for Leith Links, but there are so many stakeholders that it has been difficult to progress.

ACTION: planning a new meeting of stakeholders will be carried over to the next agenda.

Playpark

Work is in progress. There is a gap between the estimated cost of the playpark and the total amount of funding available – will this come to Leith Links for other uses, or be returned to the Neighbourhood Network for use in another park that was 'next on the list' after Leith Links?

ACTION: Chair will contact Evelyn Kilmurray to follow up and find out about where the extra funding has gone

John Rattray Statue

This is planned to be unveiled on 11 September.

LEITH LINKS

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Bowling Club

Evelyn Kilmurray has replied to LLCC complaints about deterioration and has arranged for cutting the hedge and surrounding greenery. It remains unclear for the moment who will take the premises over. Residents continue to complain about the site (via social media).

Mela

The Mela has applied to use the same site as last year, at the far eastern end of the Links. As long as parking issues are managed, LLCC is supportive of this. Dates are 31 August-1 September 2019. Litter was relatively well managed last year, although there was a distressing amount of single use plastic and polystyrene, with no recycling. Noise (late evening) was an issue for nearby residents.

Leith Rules Golf event takes place on 5/6 July. LLCC has entered a team (Andrew & Angus).

8. Community Council Elections

Michael has updated the website with information about the election, and has leaflets ready. Last year, the LLCC Councillors themselves hand-delivered c5000 leaflets. This attracted 17 candidates and led to an election.

ACTION: agreed to hand-deliver leaflets over the summer period, to try to encourage new volunteers.

ACTION: Michael will produce a spreadsheet of streets to share out the delivery work.

ACTION: Michael will liaise with the other Leith Community Councils about possible shared pop-up stalls in libraries etc. to inform the public and possible new volunteers/nominees.

9. Seafield Sewage Plant

The smell continues. Chair met with Ben Macpherson MSP, who plans another meeting with the Minister. Chair, Michael and Eileen met with the heads of comms for Scottish Water and their PFI element. Veolia are keen to meet.

10. AOCB

John has recently moved home to just outwith the LLCC area. Meeting agreed unanimously to co-opt John by the specialist procedure as a member representing LLCC at EACC until the October 2019 election.

The Elizabeth Wardlaw Leith Citizenship Award was awarded this year to Jim and Annie Scanlon. All present offered their congratulations. Chair thanked LLCC colleagues for their support in his work. Roz Currie, chief of staff of Tommy Sheppard MP, relayed his willingness to deal with any concerns.

11. Date of Next Public Meeting: 26 August 2019, 6.30pm. Shore Room, Leith Community Centre, Newkirkgate. PLEASE NOTE NO MEETING IN JULY.