

# LEITH LINKS

## COMMUNITY COUNCIL

### MINUTES

MONDAY 25 NOVEMBER 2019

6.30pm

LEITH COMMUNITY CENTRE (NEWKIRKGATE)

**Councillors Present:** Tangila Akter, Gail Clapton (Treasurer), Abby Cunningham, Rafiqul Islam, Andrew Mackenzie, Sally Millar (Secretary), Chrissie Reid, Eileen Simpson, Michael Traill (Engagement Officer).

**In Attendance:** Community PC Margo Darling, PC Lauren Mitchell, 1 member of the public,

**Minute Taker:** Kay Goodall.

#### 1. Welcome, Apologies, Update on CC Election Results, Introductions

Chair (Sally) welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the newest Community Councillor, Tangila Akter. Apologies were received from Cllr Chas Booth, Angus Hardie, David Igoe, Cllr Adam McVey, Cllr Gordon Munro and Jim Scanlon.

#### 2. Police Report

*Safer Leith at Christmas:* a joint operation between police, fire services and CEC are carrying out road fitness checks for taxis & private cabs, and checks on licensed premises. There will be public drop-ins in December, advising on safety matters such as online shopping, and offering bike marking.

Vandalism and theft of bikes is a massive problem across the city.

**ACTION: PC Lauren will report back on the reasons for removal of the Just Eat Bikes station from the Kirkgate.**

#### 3. Adoption of Minutes of last meeting on 28 October 2019

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

##### ***Matters arising***

Sally wrote to CEC about how consultation re events on the Links is carried out, as per the motion at last meeting. Two supportive replies were received from elected councillors, but CEC did not reply or indicate how this would proceed.

**ACTION: Sally will re-send the letter, asking how this will be moved forward.**

#### 4. Parks and Green Spaces Sub Committee

##### ***Applications to use the park for events***

The deadline for the Gung Ho proposal closed before the sub committee meeting, but a short response was submitted by Secy (objecting). There is a new application for June for the funfair, traditionally part of the Leith Festival week (deadline extended till 29 November). The funfair does not cause problems in the past and subcommittee do not see a problem with the application. Members agreed that consultation deadlines are too short to allow for full consultation with the public.

**ACTION: Chrissie Reid will liaise with David Igoe to collate thoughts and for sub-committee to submit a response.**

##### ***Friends of Leith Links – next steps***

Members have compiled a list of all the groups that use the park (c20). The first step will be a small planning meeting in mid-January, to include the head of an umbrella group for Friends groups. The next step will be to email users in mid-February to arrange a meeting of Links groups and inviting Friends of other parks such as Figgate, Pilrig..

Pathways and lighting could also be a priority. Individual lights are repaired quickly when reported,

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but there is a problem when a whole string / section of lights fail as the reporting system does not cover this.

### **Updates: Vanilla Pod coffee van, John Rattray statue**

CEC has informed Jim Scanlon that it will take responsibility for the statue once the landscaping problems are sorted out – but that means keeping the fencing up and waiting until next year to see if the marram grass comes up OK.

Sally held back on enquiring to CEC about the coffee van as issues like diverted traffic causing congestion on road around the park are more important.

### **Annual Review of Major Events in Parks 2018/19 and Consultation on Future Events**

This CEC consultation is open until 18<sup>th</sup> December, for all groups and all individual citizens at <https://consultationhub.edinburgh.gov.uk/sfc/copy-of-copy-of-parks-events-review-2018-19/>

CEC is reviewing past events and also now proposing to actively ‘procure’ events for public parks such The Meadows and Princes St Gardens, and also now including Leith Links, Inverleith Park, Calton Hill, Gyle Park and Sighthill Parks. The number of days on which events can be held annually will no longer be capped.

**ACTION: Chrissie or another sub-group member will respond for LLCC**

### **Plans for a mural on the old Leith Academy building**

The Residents Association at Academy Lofts is interested in getting a mural done on the outside wall facing the Links. THELMA has offered reminiscence sessions to help gather ideas. CEC via Steven Blacklaw had offered to fund a pavement art project; perhaps this could be spent on a mural instead?

**ACTION: Sally will pass on contact details of local mural artists to Abby for the Residents Association, and will contact Steven Blacklaw to explore possible CEC funding support.**

## **5. Planning Sub Committee**

### **Current planning applications in our area and other parts of Leith**

Another application has been made for Latto’s Garage in Constitution St. and and derelict buildings in Johns Lane. LLCC is a statutory consultee. The previous application was for demolition and the construction of a tall and high-density structure. The latest application proposes to keep the stone building for commerce, and create a smaller building for rented accommodation - it is better than the previous (now withdrawn) application but still very ‘dense’. It would consolidate the applicants’ ownership (Mir Group) of a large part of the area, LLCC is still trying to arrange a date for a meeting with this landowner, who should be engaging with the community (as per Scottish Land Reforms).

**ACTION: Andrew will co-ordinate an LLCC response to the Planning Application. SubCommittee will progress to a meeting with Mir group**

### **Update on Leith Place making**

Notes from the recent Leith Conference are available and there is a call for volunteers to help move matters forward, under various different topic headings.

**ACTION: Sally will circulate to see if anyone wants to volunteer.**

Planning Democracy held a place making workshop and have put out a declaration on place plans.

**ACTION: Sally will distribute this to LLCC for discussion, and hopefully, eventually support.**

### **Other parts of Leith**

The Sundial PAN for Baltic Street will be a drop-in on 28 November, 3-8pm, at the Customs House. The developer has already carried out substantial consultation and has a good reputation for conversions of historic buildings. It will include some affordable housing but is mostly student blocks. Save Leith Walk and other groups are automatically hostile because of the student accommodation component. LHNCC are quite supportive of Sundial’s plans. LLCC will put in a response in due course

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when the planning application goes in (soon).

The big Iona Street development is not in the LLCC area but is close by and will affect us. A very dense student block is planned. Similar plans are mooted for Montrose Terrace (also in LCCC area, not LLCC)

### ***Save Leith Walk update – community buy-out plans***

Leith Depot lease has again been extended for a further month. The Scottish Government Reporter should report soon as to whether it is supporting or rejecting Drum Property's appeal against CEC refusal to grant planning permission.

### **6. Licensing Forum**

There was nothing to report for this meeting. Michael regularly reviews the applications.

### **7. Transport & Traffic**

#### ***Tramworks updates***

Steven Blacklaw has provided information updates on Easter Rd/Duke St. roundabout, and LLCC feeds back the views of residents about progress. So far the works have caused delays but the junction is not finished yet. It is safer for pedestrians and bikes. Any new specific points should be raised now. Academy Lofts residents find that the enlarged pavements make it hard to turn right into their carpark, so they have to make a diversion round the already congested block to enter by turning left.

**ACTION: Michael will consider creating a webform to encourage views from the local community on roadworks.**

Bus diversions mean that the north side of the Links is no longer served by buses heading into town, making life difficult for those that can't walk far to reach the nearest alternative bus stop. The Constitution St closures are causing access problems and badly affecting local businesses. Businesses are meeting with the Trams team, including a CEC communication rep, Chris Wilson and actively considering initiatives to stimulate business in the area. Ideas are welcomed.

#### ***Controlled Parking Zone for Leith***

CEC will hold a formal consultation and it will be very important for LLCC to participate, but it is unlikely that a single view can be put forward, as views clearly vary greatly among members of the community.

#### ***Bus lane workshop***

Abby attended this. The main focus was the proposals for bus lanes 7am-7pm, 7 days a week. An East Lothian Council rep observed that commuters into Edinburgh need bus travel to be faster than driving. Parking in the bus lanes is a problem. A UNITE rep argued that parking for loading and unloading is essential for businesses. A recent FOI request about fines in bus lanes in Edinburgh found that there had been thousands - but none in Leith as it has no cameras yet.

### **8. Local Democracy, Community Engagement**

#### ***Feedback from EACC***

Jim attended this. LLCC nominated John Tibbitt to be the Chair of EACC: he was elected both as Chair and as the rep to go to the Edinburgh Community Partnership Committee.

#### ***Leith Neighbourhood Network***

Sally will attend as part of Leith Chooses, but encouraged other councillors to also take part.

### **9. Seafield Sewage Works**

Eileen emailed the September odour complainants on LLCC's behalf. She received some positive responses, but found that night-time noise has also become a problem. A stakeholders' meeting

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with Ben Macpherson MSP is due. Michael will adjust the form to separate the noise and odour problems. LLCC will send out a regular digest of ongoing complaints. A press campaign could feature video interviews with noise sufferers. LLCC could produce business cards detailing how to complain.

**ACTION: Eileen will email those who complained about noise about how to contact Environmental Health.**

Leith Links Residents Association crowdfunded a long and detailed technical / legal letter to SEPA.

**ACTION: Sally will circulate the lawyer's letter and Michael will share it on the LLCC website.**

### **9 Any Other Business - Open Forum**

Kirkgate Christmas Tree lights event: this will take place on 5 December at 4pm.

**ACTION: LLCC will add this event to the website.**

The deadline for Leith Chooses applications is 6 January. Volunteers are invited / welcomed for voting day on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2020.

**11. Date of Next Public Meeting: Monday 27 January 2019, 6.30pm. Shore Room, Leith Community Centre, Newkirkgate. PLEASE NOTE START TIME 6.30. THERE WILL BE NO MEETING IN DECEMBER.**