

LEITH LINKS

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES

MONDAY 24 FEBRUARY 2020

6.30pm

LEITH COMMUNITY CENTRE

Community Councillors Present: Gail Clapton (Treasurer), Abigail Cunningham, Angus Hardie, David Igoe, Rafiqul Islam, Andrew Mackenzie, Sally Millar (Secretary), Michael Traill (Engagement Officer).

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

In Attendance: PC Callum Clark, Evie Murray (Crops & Pots), Roxana Romero (Croft Carbon College), 1 member of the public.

Minute Taker: Kay Goodall.

1. Welcome, Apologies

Chair (Sally Millar) welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Chrissie Reid, Jim Scanlon, Eileen Simpson.

2. Police Report

Death of Margaret Grant at Restalrig Cres: a 39-yr-old man has made an initial appearance in court.

Leith Community Team initiatives: over the festive period, stopping vehicles and static road checks, over a dozen vehicles were seized or clamped. They also checked over 20 licensed premises. At the Safer Leith at Christmas event they provided public safety advice. At Leith Market, community officers security-marked several bikes. For more, see their Twitter, @EdinPoINE.

Youth engagement: PCs Mitchell and Knox received national awards at Holyrood for their work. Chair offered congratulations on behalf of LLCC.

Blue Light community disco, 27 March: Drug, alcohol & sex education will be provided at this event for 10-15 year olds.

ACTION: PC Clark will send flyers for LLCC to circulate.

Impact of the new CEC budget on policing: Cllr McVey outlined changes in the new CEC budget. Less will be available for community policing and for acute resource working with housing and social work for families in need. Community officers will still be placed in schools, as these are funded separately. Chair stated for the record that LLCC greatly values our community policing service.

Condition of buildings at Leith Town Hall/Police Station: scaffolding is up for scheduled maintenance.

ACTION: PC Clark will look into what work is being carried out on the building and update LLCC on this

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3. Adoption of Minutes of last meeting on Monday 27 January 2020, and Matters Arising

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

4. Parks and Green Spaces Sub-committee

DIY Skateparks – Ruairi did not attend, to speak.

Crops and Pots

Evie Murray noted that there are 64 supportive comments on the CEC planning portal for their planning application to convert the old pavilion. The building would expand their office space and aid initiatives such as the Croft Carbon College and the “Minecraft” skills programme for children struggling within the schools system. Evie outlined Crops and Pots’ main sources of funding and described their future plans. These include the Croft Food Hub (café, farm shop and market garden), feeding into government and NGO plans to prepare for COP26, and an e-bike retrofit scheme.

Roxana spoke about the Croft Carbon College, which has among other things delivered 120 green skills workshops so far. They also deliver carbon literacy training for local primary children and a food growing trainee programme. Chair thanked Evie and Roxana for coming along to share this.

New applications to use the park for events – Leith Festival Gala Day, Leith Rules Golf

The Gala Day has been approved and LLCC will support Leith Rules Golf too. The Circus application is still live and controversial. The majority of comments on the LLCC website from the community are opposed, and LCC response reflects this.

Question was raised as to whether CEC releases enough information about applications. There are gaps in what LLCC receives, such as predicted traffic, noise, costings and timings; we receive only a condensed version of what the applicants send to CEC. However, the full applications can be long and overwhelming.

ACTION: Sally will write to CEC asking for full disclosure of information received.

LLCC’s policy on external event bookings should be reviewed annually. It was formally proposed, seconded, and unanimously agreed to re-adopt the current policy until the AGM in 2020.

ACTION: The policy will be reviewed and possibly revised before May, and a further vote to adopt for 2020 and beyond will be taken at the AGM.

Authorisation of hire of stall for Gala Day (13 June 2020)

Leith Harbour & Newhaven CC is keen to share a stall again, and Leith Central CC probably will too. Meeting agreed to participate again (book a stall). Establishment of a ‘Friends of Leith Links’ group could be a good topic to discuss with the public at that event.

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Friends of Leith Links – feedback from EGSF meeting, next steps

Sub-committee members are meeting with people from other Friends group and had an informative meeting with John Kerr, the main organiser, of Edinburgh Greenspaces Forum and have identified Saughton Park as most similar in character to Leith Links. The next step will be to visit the Saughton Friends Group. LLCC will call a public meeting locally in March/April. CEC councillors offered support.

ACTION: The sub-committee will arrange a date and place for the public meeting.

Future meeting with Lindsay Grant (Parks Programmes Manager), March 2020

Lindsay will attend LLCC next month to talk about the Owl project, and the newly completed **Review of Parks Events Manifesto**, and to discuss the Friends Group plan.

5. Planning Sub Committee

Current Planning applications in our area

Community Crops in Pots – tennis pavilion redevelopment: LLCC has submitted a supporting comment and the deadline is now past. Even if Planning application is successful, there are still many legal barriers that will have to be addressed / overcome, so nothing will happen quickly.

Proposed change of use from existing offices (Blacklock Solicitors) to form 9 new dwelling flats, 89 Constitution Street Edinburgh EH6 7AS Ref. No: 20/00271/LBC: The same applicant as previously, an agent, has submitted a new application. This reduces the proposed number of units from 11 to 9, but is still problematic. LLCC has a week's extension to respond to the deadline for comments. It was noted (again) that the 3-week period for responses makes it difficult to solicit comments from the public and to incorporate these views into the CC response in time.

Other parts of Leith

Wall at Salamander Street is down: construction of the Barratt flats will likely start soon.

Sundial, 1 - 5 Baltic Street and 7-27 Constitution Street Edinburgh EH6 7BR, Ref. No: 20/00465/FUL: The full planning application for the historic buildings and gasworks is now live. Overall it is a very good and clearly detailed proposal, but some aspects of the proposed development are concerning.

ACTION: Councillors were urged to review the applicant's web site and submit their views / comments to Sally asap. She will prepare LLCC response for 6th March deadline.

48-50 Iona Street (Leith Walk): Ross Manson have responded to the Save Iona Street campaign's arguments and have substantially changed the design, e.g. more green space, lower height, improved stonework. Concerns remain over the high proportion of students. Cllr Booth noted that CEC Guidance on student accommodation is online now, and is included in the City Plan 2030 Choices, where it is proposed to elevate this from Guidance into policy within the new Plan.

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6. Licensing

Views on the Tricia's Snacks van on Leith Walk were not unanimous. It is on private land and increases consumer choice, but it is blocking a busy walkway and the noisy generator creates fumes. A motion to object was carried by a majority present.

ACTION: LLCC will object to the renewal of the licence.

7. Transport & Traffic

Easter Rd./Duke St. / Lochend Rd. junction

Steven Blacklaw of CEC sent a reply after last month's meeting. It does not entirely solve the problems raised but it diligently responds to them in full detail. Local feeling is still that drivers find the junction difficult to use. Changes to traffic signals are planned to improve the visibility of the left filter, as this is causing frustration. Steven has also contacted Lothian Buses about the cornering problem.

Tramworks update

Vibro piling work will be carried out for wall support in Constitution St for two weeks in March. The contractors will be monitoring vibration and noise. A query was raised as to whether the monitors are near enough the noise source.

The No.12 bus service to Leith Links is being terminated at short notice. There was no community consultation by Lothian Buses and the decision has not been adequately explained. The No.1 will extend to Seafield, but on a different route which will require people to cross the Links - a lengthy walk and less safe at night. Also, it seems the frequency of the No.1 will not increase to compensate. Several other nearby streets are also losing their local service (No. 16, Constitution Street).

ACTION: LLCC will write immediately to Lesley MacInnes (CEC Transport Committee) asking her to address the community's concerns and discuss possible solutions with Lothian.

It was suggested that new solutions need to be found for the disruption that the bus diversions will cause, especially to people who can't walk far. For example, a local shuttle bus looping between Leith Walk, Easter Road and Leith Links. In the longer term, more peripheral routes are needed, eg. to Western General Hospital and to Portobello.

8. Local Democracy, Community Engagement

Consultations and deadlines –City Mobility Plan, City Plan 2030,

Deadlines for responses are 27 & 31 March respectively. It is very important that as many as possible people respond (not necessarily to all sections). Information sessions will be held at the YMCA in Junction Pl on Wed 24 February and Leith Library on 9 March, 4-7pm, to help people respond.

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ACTION: Planning sub-committee will meet soon to prepare a collective response. All other Councillors welcome.

9. Seafeld Sewage Works

There is a meeting planned for April but no other updates.

10. Any Other Business - Open Forum

Leith Chooses Results and feedback

Messages of thanks were sent from Caroline Lamond and Councillor Susan Rae to all from LLCC who volunteered on Voting Day. Results available online. Feedback Night is Tuesday 10 March, 6.30pm in the Café and there is also a feedback survey online, for completion. New steering group volunteers are welcome. Meeting approved Sally to continue representing LLCC.

11. Date of Next Public Meeting: Monday 30 March 2020, 6.30pm. Shore Room, Leith Community Centre, Newkirkgate.