

LEITH LINKS

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES

MONDAY 30 NOVEMBER 2020

6.30pm

online, via Microsoft Teams

Councillors Present: Gail Clapton (Treasurer), Abigail Cunningham, Rafiqul Islam, Angus Hardie, David Igoe, Andrew Mackenzie, Sally Millar (Secretary), Chrissie Reid, Jim Scanlon (Chair), Eileen Simpson, Michael Traill (Engagement Officer).

Elected Representatives: Cllr Chas Booth, Cllr Adam McVey.

Minute Taker: Kay Goodall.

0. Welcome, Apologies

Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received from Deidre Brock MP, Cllr Gordon Munro, Tommy Sheppard MP.

1. Adoption of Minutes of last meeting on Monday 26 October 2020

Proposed by David Igoe; seconded by Sally Millar. Available at <https://leithlinksc.org.uk/>

2. Reports from Police Scotland and Elected Representatives

Police (Written report read out by Chair)

Road checks Salamander St and Seafield Rd: officers stopped over 50 vehicles, issuing warnings and reporting some offences. Behaviours included e.g. drug-driving and close pass of a cyclist.

100 years since the amalgamation of Leith Burgh and Edinburgh: local officers put together a short video, available on the Police Scotland Twitter and FaceBook page.

Bonfire Night: officers' efforts included high-visibility patrols, speaking to local shops beforehand about firework sales, and working with youth centres to ensure other activities were available.

Events on Links: Socially distanced fitness events have been taking place on Leith Links, and Citadel and Pilmeny Youth Centres have arranged outdoor youth events. No problems.

Upcoming initiatives: bike-marking event at Ocean Terminal on 5th December.

Fire-raising: Meeting discussed a recent spate of fires in Leith, being addressed by police, fire service and CEC. Last Saturday night, recycling bins at Crops in Pots were set on fire. On Bonfire Night, cones were set alight beside Mike English's catering van. Although it is the fire service that attends these callouts, it is important that police are informed.

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Elected Representatives

CEC Budget: Cllr Booth encouraged all to respond to the [CEC budget consultation](#) on choices about what services to cut. The Council has taken a huge hit to finances recently due to Covid-19, on top of pre-existing pressures to reduce spending.

ACTION: Michael Traill will circulate a link to the consultation.

Bowling Green building: CEC officers want to demolish this as it is thought too damaged to renovate and is a magnet for anti-social behaviour. Members of CC felt it was too easy just to demolish it, and this was not necessarily the best way to reduce anti-social behaviour. Several local community groups are still interested in using the space. Angus Hardie pointed out demolition would be illegal, under new legislation, if the local community were not consulted. Cllr Booth thought the views of constituents and potential tenants would be welcome.

ACTION: Cllr Booth will ask CEC officers to contact CC to discuss this.

3. Licensing matters

Short Term Lets regulation response

Michael Traill, with Jim Scanlon and Sally Millar, had submitted a very comprehensive response to the Scottish Government's consultation on Short Term Lets. The plan is to give local authorities powers to license short-term lets and introduce local control areas. LLCC's response is available [here](#) and on social media. CEC has also submitted a response.

ACTION: Michael Traill will circulate a link to the CEC response.

4. Parks & Greenspaces matters

Public Spaces Management Plan Consultation (new deadline 20 January 2021)

The Community Council has serious concerns about the new proposals removing all power from the community to influence decisions, as CCs would no longer be consulted in advance about applications for events in parks. Councillor McVey was surprised to hear this and will re-examine the proposals. The EACC had persuaded the CEC officer to adapt the consultation to make it easier for CCs to respond. An EACC meeting on 10 Jan will seek further input from community councils. There will be a full public consultation in the spring.

ACTION: Michael Traill will draft the LLCC response.

ACTION: Michael will invite public comment online, both to CEC and LLCC.

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5. Travel & Mobility matters

Spaces for People

Chair enquired whether there is a map that clarifies what is proposed for the 'Leith Low Traffic Neighbourhood'. Cllr McVey said there was not, but on the CommonPlace online tool, the proposal for Leith most popular with businesses and individuals is pedestrianisation of the Shore. School Streets are another key focus. Lothian Buses have concerns, however, as several of their key routes run through the Shore and alternative routes are not available due to tramworks. There will be a consultation when Leith plans are further developed. Meeting discussed how the elderly and people with disabilities have been cut off by road closures. A very local concern is vehicles constantly turning at the top of Links Gardens and people moving the barriers at the bottom of Links Gardens (and cars then using the reclaimed space as a car park, especially at school drop off / pickup hours, and when Leith Athletic clubs are active). Councillors agreed this was not the intention behind closing the road.

Action: Cllr McVey will enquire as to whether Council has been involved in moving barriers.

6. Planning matters *(See Appendix 1 for full report from Planning sub-committee)*

Bath Road / Salamander Street: This development will have a considerable negative effect on an already busy and polluting road. The Planning subcommittee has responded to the PAN consultation, with strong objections.

Merith House Hotel, Hermitage Place: this has permission for a new 2-storey hotel extension and parking, but seeks to convert to an HMO (or part-hotel, part-HMO?). It has previously housed homeless residents from outwith Edinburgh, and the size suggests a large hostel rather than an HMO. More detail has been requested. Cllr McVey was not aware of any new Council agreements for homeless accommodation but acknowledged that Leith houses significantly above its 'quota' (in policy terms) out of necessity, i.e. desperate need. New legislation recently has also increased the pressure by removing the criterion of link to the city, there are currently about 1,000 people on the list for urgent temporary accommodation.

ACTION: Michael Traill will contact CEC to find out whether there is an HMO licence application.

ACTION: Planning sub committee will invite comments from local community via LLCC website, and prepare a response to CEC (deadline 18th December).

Proposal to establish CCC Seafield Ltd as a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) (see Appendix 2)

It is proposed to create a business limited by guarantee to act as a special purpose vehicle in order to give the four CCs an efficient shared platform to respond to very large scale proposed

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development at Seafield. It would create a single point of contact for other stakeholders, and for the CCs' participation in the 'Sounding Board' set up by CEC for landowners, developers, etc.

Meeting discussed the model and the reasons for adopting it now. The company would be owned by the 4 CCs and responsible to them. As a company limited by guarantee, the liability of the CCs would be limited. The SPV could apply for money e.g. from Scottish Government or elsewhere, perhaps in partnership with CEC. It could draft and issue tenders eg. to architects, planning consultants etc. (CCs alone can sometimes take such action, but this would be more complex when there are 4 CCs involved.) (8.15: Abby had to leave the meeting.)

After debate, those present unanimously agreed to support the motion to register CCC Seafield Ltd as a Company Limited by Guarantee with Companies House. Motion carried.

7. Community Engagement & Website

Discussion of website development will be continued after Christmas.

8. Open Forum / AOCB

Chair and Eileen Simpson are attending the Seafield stakeholder group on Friday 4 December.

ACTION: Chair will circulate a note of the meeting afterwards.

Chair thanked all attendees. Meeting ended at 8.25pm.

Date of next public meeting: Monday 25th January 2021, 6:30pm via Microsoft Teams

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APPENDIX 1

Monthly Update Report from Planning sub-committee, 30 November 2020

1. We submitted a follow-up paper (see papers) on the Spaces for People programme (including the closure of Links Gardens) to CEC's Transport and Environment committee (12/11). The paper was also lodged for consideration by the full CEC council meeting held on 19/11.

2. We have returned feedback (see website) to a consultation held by Rydens acting as agent for the development of a large site at Salamander St/Bath Rd (for a housing-led mixed-use development of approximately 285 apartments in buildings up to seven storeys high, with provision of some 106 car parking spaces).

Our paper was also sent to CEC's Development Management sub-committee (25/11), where it was taken into account.

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3. We are working on a response to Teague Homes' latest planning application for phase 6 of their Ropeworks development at Salamander Place (20/04907/FUL). Deadline for responses is 11/12.
4. We are working on a response to an HMO application for Merit House Hotel at Hermitage Place (20/03011/FUL). Deadline for responses is 18/12.
5. We have attended two CCTT meetings with the Trams to Newhaven team (29/10 and 26/10).
6. We have attended two meetings of the Seafield: Connecting Coastal Communities steering group (03/11 and 17/11).
7. Members attended the AGM of the Edinburgh Association of Community Councils (19/11).
8. Sally and Andrew met online with a Portobello CC member to discuss creating content for the S:CCC website (25/11).
9. Andrew met (27/11) with Jennifer Marlborough of LHNCC and several CEC officials to discuss a film company's approach seeking permission to film in and around the Shore and by Cables Wynd House (for a new series of the drama Guilt) next February.

The proposal would involve:

- Short traffic holds between Tower Street and The Shore for approx. 100 metres between Malmaison and The Ship on The Shore. Holds would be for 2-3 minutes only between approx 10-11am (avoiding peak time). Camera would be on a tracking vehicle so no infrastructure on the pavement.
- Short traffic holds over a 30 minute period in the afternoon, also for 2-3 minutes at a time, between the junction of St Giles and Parliament St and Sweet Dunedin on Henderson St.
- Crew size is likely to be around 35 people, wearing masks.
- A 'pen' on the pavement outside Café Truva (between Truva and the junction with Shore Place) to allow production to move equipment from Shore Place to the front without coming into contact with the public.
- There's also a scene in the Kirkgate which involves only 6 people and a small 'pen' to keep the crew & kit out of the way of the public.
- They will be asking to put their technical vehicles (x10) on one side of Parliament Street for 100m.

The possibility of a modest financial contribution to the affected community was mentioned and ideas for the most appropriate beneficiary are being considered. Thoughts welcome.

Andrew Mackenzie

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APPENDIX 2

overleaf

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APPENDIX 2

Proposal to establish CCC Seafield Ltd as a Special Purpose Vehicle

Seafield lies between the areas covered by the four community councils of Craightinny, Portobello, Leith Links and Leith Harbour and Newhaven. The four community councils have agreed to collaborate with each other and work in partnership with City of Edinburgh Council towards the co-production of a master plan for the future development of the Seafield area.

To date, representatives from each community council have been meeting on a fortnightly basis - sometimes on their own and sometimes with Council officials and elected members. On one occasion a meeting was held which also included some of the landowners, their agents and potential developers. The community councils have also, on an informal basis, started to work with an architect who has been offering advice and guidance on the process that lies ahead.

To support this process, and in order to keep our communities' interests to the fore, we intend to seek some funding - either to assemble our own design team to provide support to deliver our aspirations for the development of the site, or as our financial contribution to the overall costs of a single master-planning exercise. To this end, and in order to create an efficient mechanism for our community councils to engage effectively in the ongoing negotiations with CEC, developers and other stakeholders as the 'project' develops over the coming years, we propose to establish a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV)

An SPV can take many legal forms but its purpose is to allow our four community councils to act collectively, speak (when necessary) with one voice, and at all times ensure it is accountable to and reflecting the views of its constituent parts - the four community councils and beyond them, the four communities we represent.

*Having taken legal advice, the simplest legal structure for us to adopt is a Company Limited by Guarantee. This form of company provides the advantages of limited liability (£1), a simple membership structure - the four community councils would be the four members - with the company directors (1 or 2 from each CC) comprising the Board. The SPV would be called CCC Seafield Ltd (**C**onnecting **C**oastal **C**ommunities **S**eafield). Reporting and accountability arrangements to and from each community council can be whatever we choose them to be.*

To progress the forming of the SPV, we require each community council to approve the proposal to register CCC Seafield Ltd as a Company Limited by Guarantee with Companies House.

Motion – to approve the proposal.

Angus Hardie