

LEITH LINKS

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES

MONDAY 29 MARCH 2021

6.30pm

online, via Zoom

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

Elected Representatives: Cllr Chas Booth.

In attendance: Rafiqul Islam, members of the public.

Minute Taker: Kay Goodall.

1. Welcome, Apologies

Chair welcomed everyone. Apologies were received from Tommy Sheppard MP and Cllr Gordon Munro. Rafiqul and Tangila have moved to East Lothian so can no longer represent the community as Leith Links CC Councillors. Chair wished them well. CEC has approved co-opting two new councillors.

ACTION: Michael Traill will put a web form on the website to encourage applicants.

2. Adoption of Minutes of last meeting on Monday 1 March 2021

Proposed by Angus Hardie; seconded by Abby Cunningham. Available at <https://leithlinksc.org.uk/>

3. Reports from Police Scotland and Elected Representatives

Police

Community Officers PC Kris O'Donnell and PC Lauren Mitchell provided a written report, see Appendix 1.

Elected Representatives

Council rents: Councillor Booth reported that the CEC budget includes a freeze on council rents for a year in response to the pandemic. The Greens had argued that there should not be a higher rise in following years, and there was a compromise agreement that this would be a last resort. Michael Traill asked how many council tenants actually pay rent (as opposed to getting Housing Benefit)? About 70-80% of tenants get support with their rent; around 50% get full support.

Volume of traffic on Salamander Pl: A member of the public again raised a previous query regarding this and felt that the street is dangerous. **ACTION:** Cllr Booth will follow this up.

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4. Parks & Greenspaces matters

Discussion on action re Bowling Green area

LLCC has repeatedly contacted CEC to clarify what development is permissible regarding common good land and the Confirmation Act and has had no reply. A belated partial response from CEC states that Peter Watton will present a paper on this to Finance & Resources Committee on 20 May and the Council will then take a decision on what to do about the area. It was decided that the CC needs to consult the local community for their views and present these to the same committee as a deputation, to inform the decision taken. Meanwhile a letter has been sent reminding CEC that they have a legal obligation to consult the community before taking steps that affect Common Good land.

ACTION: David Igoe & Abby Cunningham will draft a statement for the website, and Michael Traill will set up a public meeting (online) for 19 April.

Millennium plaque

This had been removed by persons unknown but happily has now been re-discovered undamaged and David Igoe now has it in his possession.

ACTION: David will notify Scott Thomson, the Parks Officer, in order to get it reinstated in place.

Winter Festivals Consultation Q16

CEC plans to disperse these across the city. Leith Links might be targeted, without benefiting from the income.

ACTION: Michael Traill will draft a response on behalf of LLCC.

5. Travel & Mobility matters

Consultations and Responses

Leith is being bombarded with separate radical schemes for transport and traffic management. There appears to be a lack of coordination between Trams to Newhaven/ Spaces for People/ Leith Connections/ Low Traffic Neighbourhood/ and Controlled Parking Zones (CPZ) Phases 1 & 2. Local people have many concerns, eg. traffic congestions, house removals, loss of parking spaces, loss of bus routes., lack of provision for the rapidly expanding population etc. There is no integrated map that shows how all the schemes would interact and impact on local residents. The meeting approved sending a letter to ask for a meeting

ACTION: LLCC & LH&NCC will write to Paul Lawrence, Executive Director of Place.

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Alternative routes in Leith when there is a major accident: a recent incident caused major traffic chaos due to there being only a few major road routes in and out of Leith. This type of problem is relevant to the plans for an LTN and needs to be considered.

Leith Connection Community Reference Groups: Chair (for LLCC) and Sally Millar (for EBUG) attended this meeting, also attended by lobby groups such as Spokes, Living Streets. Spokes highlighted Queen Charlotte Street as an ‘accident hotspot’, but this is not supported by police records. The influence that lobby groups have is concerning in the absence of wider public input.

6. Seafield Sewage Plant – update

Since November 2020 there have been no major odour incidents in the community. CEC also confirmed they had received no odour complaints. It has taken years but Veolia have reviewed the maintenance programme for the plant and have been attempting to carry out “odour sensitive” work outwith warmer periods (April to September 2021). Full cleaning and refurbishment of digestors and upgrading of aeration basins and blowers should make equipment quieter and more efficient. Scottish Water have improved communications, using social media to alert the community when work is due to start on areas like cleaning storm tanks and again when work is completed.

They also confirmed that design work and licence permissions will continue during 2021. Pre construction work will start in 2021/22. Construction of new sludge storage and cake thickener equipment will start in 2023. This is part of the additional funding allocated by the Scottish Govt. The site also generates 9300mw of green energy making it 90% self sufficient equivalent to powering 9300 homes. Work is at an early stage. The new sewage plant is planned to be built on the same site in the 2030s. Scottish Water will operate it directly when Veolia’s contract ends in 2031.

7. Planning Matters

Applications and meetings with developers

Salamander St, Redpath & Maclean garages site: there is an application in principle for 280 flats.

Constitution St GPO: an application has been submitted to extend the hotel.

Rennie’s Isle: a PAN has been submitted for an 18-floor ‘tower’ building.

Climate change predictions of a rising sea level are relevant to these expansions at the shore.

Outwith LLCC area: work on Farmfoods has begun at the junction of Salamander St/Seafield Pl.

Ropeworks: Residents were not notified of height increases, as variations need not come back up for consultation. The public space as originally proposed has shrunk. LLCC has requested a full history.

ACTION: Andrew will send LLCC’s materials to the allotment association.

ACTION: Chair will email Cllr McVey to ask about ownership and management of the greenspace.

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8. Open Forum/ News & Events in the community/ AOCB

Hustings for Leith and North Edinburgh, 12 April: five candidates will take part. LLCC will collect questions for the candidates from a web form. The link is <http://www.leithlinksc.org.uk/hustings/>
E-newsletter: readers can subscribe at <http://www.leithlinksc.org.uk/enewsletter/>

Meeting ended at 8.25pm.

Date of next public meeting: Monday 26th April 2021, 6:30pm via Microsoft Teams

APPENDIX 1

Community Police Report

OFFICIAL

Leith Community Council Meeting

Community Beat Officers: PC Kris O'Donnell and PC Lauren Mitchell

Licensing checks

Local licensing issues have been identified, and checks have been carried out by both Police and Edinburgh Council Licensing staff.

Beat Hunger Campaign

North East Community Policing Team are still continuing with the "Beat Hunger" campaign. Since the launch, over 100 food parcels containing both fresh ingredients and cooking utensils have been distributed across the Leith area.

School Parking Patrols

School parking patrols have been carried out during peak times. No major issues identified; however a number of drivers have been spoken to and advice given.

Anti-Social Behaviour

Following ASB complaints raised by local members of the public, work has been carried out around an address in the Leith Links area. Police and Port of Leith Housing Association have worked with residents effected by the ASB and have successfully gained an eviction notice for the address in question.

Support for the evictee has been provided.

Tram works:

Tram works continue in the area of Constitution Street causing temporary disruption to the main road route.

Ongoing...

PC's Mitchell and O'Donnell have noted the issues raised around potential drug dealing in the Leith Links area, and plain clothes patrols have been arranged.