**Leith Links Community Council**

**Minutes of online meeting held on Monday 28 March 2022 from 18.30**

**Members present:**

Jim Scanlon (Chair), Gail Clapton (Treasurer), Sally Millar (Secretary), Teresa Perchard (Minutes), Abigail Cunningham, Angus Hardie, David Igoe, Barbara Kerr, Chrissie Reid, Eileen Simpson, Michael Traill, Cllr Adam McVey, Cllr Chas Booth

**In Attendance:**

7 members of the public, Police Scotland: PC Lauren Mitchell, PC Allan MacDonald

**Guest Speakers** - Rory Stephens, Cruden Homes, Alex Orr, Orbit Communications

1. **Apologies:**

Deidre Brock MP; Tommy Sheppard MP; Ben McPherson MSP; Cllr Gordon Munro; Robert Cormack, Andrew Mackenzie

1. **Minutes of meeting on 28/02/2022 –** The minutes were agreed with no amendments. Proposed by Michael Traill, Seconded by David Igoe
2. **Report from Police Scotland**

A written report on recent crime incidents in the LLCC area had been circulated. PC Lauren Mitchell and PC Allan MacDonald were in attendance to take any questions from CC members. One member asked if the incident mentioned in the report involving the arrest of an individual carrying a knife after an incident in the Newkirkgate was the same incident of extreme violence outside the BHF shop one afternoon, of which film had circulated widely on social media. Clarifying this was a different incident and acknowledging the issues of concern raised about perceived crime and anti-social behaviour in the Newkirkgate a brief discussion followed about what action was being taken to make the area safer and more welcoming for people simply wanting to go to the shops. There was also a discussion about whether the businesses there shared CCTV footage with the police. Another member also raised once again the issue of concerns from residents in the Ropeworks development about having to walk a long way from bus stops in the dark and across a park to get home at night and feeling unsafe. The LLCC would welcome further views from the Police about what could be done to improve safety after dark in this area, since their response so far seemed to be focused mainly on improving safety for street sex workers rather than for local residents – both are equally important.

1. **Update on planning – Guest Speakers Mr. Rory Stephens and Mr Alex Orr to discuss development proposals for 124 Salamander Road and 1-3 Salamander Yards**

Mr Orr of Orbit and Mr Stephens of Cruden Homes provided a presentation on their plans to redevelop a site on Salamander Road/Yards, formerly a carpet warehouse, to deliver 96 new homes (flats of various sizes). Online public consultation (PAN) will commence with an online session on 27 April (UPDATE – now changed to Thursday 28th April 3:30 – 7:30 pm), and the developers then plan to submit a planning application in June 2022. They believe the proposed development accords with the City Plan 2030, involving re-use of a brownfield site with ‘housing led’ mixed redevelopment. The development would promote well-being and active travel by bicycle and be designed with a protected courtyard facing Leith Links. They want to create a direct link from the development into Leith Links, if Council will cooperate.

Members asked a range of questions about the proposals at this stage which yielded the following information:

* The flats would not have gas and would be heated by air source heat pumps
* There will be parking for 18 cars, with 7 or 8 spaces available on the Salamander Street frontage (though this is not a controlled parking area). 1 in 6 spaces will have EV charging points
* Bins/bin stores will be enclosed (not underground)
* Access to public transport – developers were asked to note the limited bus services adjacent. When asked what they were doing to improve this they said this would come out in the planning process.
* Height of blocks and extent of overbearing to the Links– advised this would be 6 and 5 storeys
* Connection through to Ropeworks? (we were told this will be there) and also Restalrig railway path - how this would be achieved given the ramp?)
* Cycle storage/security
* % affordable housing? – CC requested minimum 35% not 25%. Developers have not decided yet, could be up to 100%
* Façade treatment – told the 4 blocks will have slightly different bricks from each other to break up the look
* ‘Mixed development’ – what is mixed about this? It is all housing.
* Flood risk?

LLCC members expressed disappointment at this proposal to build housing on a very polluted street with heavy traffic and limited public transport options, that is in close proximity to the Seafield sewage treatment plant renowned for odour problems. The Community Council thanked the developers for their presentation, noted the proposed timetable for public consultation and asked to be kept informed.

1. **Update on Parks and Greenspaces**

**Arboretum -** Jim Scanlon reported that he had met Ross Woodside of ELGT and Scott Thomson of CEC at the Arboretum as new planting is starting, and a lot of new trees are also being planted elsewhere on the Links. JS had also undertaken a tour with Scott of the pre-existing caged and trapped or dying trees on the Links. As part of this, it was agreed that some were definitely dead but some were trying to survive and would remain, some would be freed from their deforming cages, at long last.

**Petanque court –**Thanks to a coordinated approach between a member of the Inverleith Petanque Club, who is a local resident in Leith, LLCC Secy Sally Millar, Cllr Gordon Munro, and the Parks Dept., the Leith Links Petanque Court is being refurbished and has been cleared, redug and smoothed over. It now needs some rain/water and then a top layer of grit and some treatment for the remaining weeds (when the new budgets are operational). Sally Millar pointed out that action is also needed let park users know what the area is for, and to prevent dogs digging up the surface. She will put up some temporary signs re dogs, because the Council had said, disappointingly, that it would not do any signs for the petanque court until there is an ‘established user base’. Huw Withers indicated that members of Inverleith boules club would love to come down and use the pitch and support locals to get going. It was suggested to have an open day to ‘re-launch the Petanque court when it is finished. A member asked if the ‘marketing’ of the pavilion announced by the Council at the February meeting would include a requirement to offer storage for any boules club equipment which is heavy to transport.
**ACTION: Secy will write to Council to remind them of this storage requirement, along with public toilets.**

**Masterplan for Leith Links** – David Igoe reported that the latest meeting on this project had been delayed and he would report back after it had taken place, expected to be on 30 March 2022.

**Coffee concession** – LLCC had understood the Council was organising a coffee van to be able to park and trade on the Links, however as yet no application for a trading licence has been made or shared with the LLCC for consultation.

**Driving on the Links** - there was a discussion about an ice cream van driving onto the grass on the Links which whilst not a traffic enforcement issue (being off road) is against the by-laws. There followed a brief discussion of barbecues – also against the by-laws – and the effectiveness or otherwise of so-called barbecue bins that had been placed by the Council on the Links in 2021. It was suggested that the relevant byelaws should be displayed on the information boards around the Links.

**Public toilets** - there is as yet no information on the expected arrival of temporary public toilets for the summer season 2022.

1. **Update on Seafield Sewage plant**

Eileen Simpson and Jim Scanlon updated members on the briefing/presentation given by Scottish Water/Veolia on the work they plan at Seafield to build covered holding tanks to help to address the odour problem in future. They had asked for advice on public engagement/communication about their plans. The work is expected to happen in/by 2025. The proposals were welcomed but in the interim there continue to be reports of odour made, including 10 recent complaints. As noted previously the LLCC intends to keep using its own reporting form in addition to Scottish Water having a reporting form. It was noted Bill Elliot has just retired from Scottish Water with his liaison/stakeholder engagement role taken over by Adam Warner.

1. **Other updates if/as available**

**Leith LTN -** Sally Millar reported she had attended a meeting with Council and Sustrans officers about the proposed ‘artwork’ to be painted on the road at the Johns Place junction as part of the LTN plans. These officers were unaware of the Masterplan being developed for the Links and were also apparently unaware of the demand for a bus service to be re-instated potentially using this route (although this is clearly known to the Council corporately as it is flagged in the CPZ policy and decision documents as a need to protect the route for buses). It was disappointing that apparently no comments made about these proposals had been taken on board and that there was so little ‘joining up’ between different parts of the Council working on something affecting the same area. Jennifer Marlborough of LHNC advised that TROs for the Leith Connections project had just been published despite community organisations asking this was delayed until after the tram service is up and running. A discussion followed about the likely timespan of the ETRO; whether the Council should or could be asked to come back to talk to the LLCC about this and what appeared to be a highly top down approach to design of the scheme due to it deriving from/being funded by Transport Scotland via Sustrans rather than by ocal tax payers.

**ACTION: Secy will invite Miles Wilkinson to next meeting to update members of LTN plans, also John White of Lothian Buses.**

**CPZ –** Members asked for clarity about the timing on the CPZ proposals for the area.

**ACTION: Chair will ask to for an update on CPZ proposals as nothing has been heard back since the public consultation closed.**

1. **LLC Online Election hustings**

Michael Traill reported that so far 4 candidates for the 3 Cllr places for Leith Ward (which covers Leith Links and LHNCC areas) are known, but nominations have not yet closed. LLCC proposes to organise an online hustings so that local people can meet and question the candidates. Once nominations have closed, he will contact all candidates to arrange a date and then publicise. Questions will be sought in advance to make the event manageable online.

1. **Update from elected representatives**

In response to a request for a briefing on arrangements for supporting Ukrainian refugees arriving in Edinburgh, Cllr McVey shared a link to the initial information on the Council’s website which would be added to as matters progressed. <https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/ukraine> Families are starting to arrive in Edinburgh; they can come to the UK via a number of sponsorship routes including friends and family sponsors, organisational and individual ‘hosts’ as well as the Scottish Government ‘super sponsor’ scheme. Scotland is expected to host 3000 individuals in due course with 500/600 likely to come to Edinburgh. The Council is working with the police: they will be undertaking checks on properties of individual hosts to ensure they meet standards for the intended residents; are staffing a welcome centre in the west and were providing some accommodation for people mainly in short term lets. He reassured members that Ukrainians arriving in the city are being supported and suggested the LLCC could share the information pages on the CEC website as this will be added to. He reported that Edinburgh City Council had provided sandbags to Kyiv which were sent out on an Easyjet flight, as that is what they had asked for.

Cllr Booth reported that planning application had been refused (retrospectively) for a property in the Lochend Rd. colonies to demolish their front wall to create a front driveway for parking. He also reported that the planning enforcement team had asked Hemingways at the Shore (in LHNCC area) to remove their outside seating deck by June. Planning approval had been given to convert an office building in Maritime Street into 22 flats, though he personally had opposed it.

1. **Open floor –** No items
2. **AOCB**

**De-fibrillator –** Local residentDuncan Stanners attending the meeting asked if the LLCC would support and take forward a proposal that a de-fibrillator be purchased and installed on the outside of Leith Police Station which would be able to use the existing power/connections on the outside of the building as there is an emergency telephone there. Members discussed the pros and cons, including the ongoing maintenance obligations and costs and agreed in principle to support the idea and explore it further/help move it forward. They asked if Duncan could help with more detailed information about purchase, installation and maintenance costs.

**Donation to Edinburgh Association of Community Councils (EACC)** – a motion was put forward and adopted unanimously to make a one-off donation of £15 to EACC to help cover their admin costs this year as they currently have no funding from CEC and have requested help from the 44 Edinburgh CCs who each do receive a small grant for admin.

1. **Next Meeting – 25 April 2022 6.30pm**