

LEITH LINKS

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES

Monday 29th August 2022

6:30 pm, online via MS Teams

Councillors and Members Present: Jim Scanlon (Chair), Gail Clapton (Treasurer & Vice Chair), Angus Hardie, David Igoe, Andrew Mackenzie, Sally Millar (Secretary), Christine Reid, Teresa Perchard

Elected Representatives: Councillor Chas Booth, Councillor Katrina Faccenda, Councillor Adam McVey

Minute Taker: Mary Gordon

Members of the public - 7

1. Welcome, Apologies

Chair Jim Scanlon welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Deidre Brock MP, Tommy Sheppard MP, Ben MacPherson MSP, Abigail Cunningham, Eileen Simpson, Robert Cormack of Leith Rotary.

2. Adoption of Minutes

<https://leithlinksc.org.uk/> Proposed by Angus Hardie and seconded by David Igoe.

3. Police Reports

No report this month, one community officer is ill, and the other on holiday. Jim spent an 8 hour 'Ride Along' shift in the police car with the 2 community officers. He thought they are doing an amazing job, but was struck by how very limited police resources are, overall.

4. Travel and Mobility

A representative from Lothian Buses was invited to this meeting but nobody attended. Proposed changes to the Leith bus routes were announced without consultation and at very short notice, swapping 34 and 49 from Lochend Road to Restalrig Road and the 25 and 21 from Restalrig Road to Lochend Road. This will allow the 34 to provide a service along the north side of the Links. Councillors report a lot of response into their inboxes regarding the changes. Changes to routes will come in on the 11th of September. All local responses to this have been negative. It is unclear why all the services need to be changed, causing maximum disruption for Leith Links residents.

LLCC sent an email, but the LB response cited financial pressures on the service due to changing travel patterns (Covid, working from home, tram works etc.) rather than addressing community concerns. There is information about length of journey time in the LRT letter but no mention of the frequency of buses which will be crucial for locals planning journeys. LLCC will send another email asking about bus frequency and location of bus stops, also about whether / how the new routes will be monitored. It seems unlikely that Constitution Street is going to be open any time soon. Cllr. Chas Booth thought it would be likely a bus gate would be put in on Links Place / Links Gardens as the 34 is routed through the proposed low traffic neighbourhood.

5. Bins and Street Cleanliness

The bin strike will finish on the 30th August but will resume on the 7th of Sept. Staff may not get to the backlog of bins outside the centre of Edinburgh. Councillors Chas Booth and Katrina Faccenda expressed solidarity with the striking workers. Katrina had had discussions with workers, things were not working for them before the strike as they were struggling with longer routes and fewer men in the team, and their pay had effectively been cut, over time. After the strike finishes, Chair Jim Scanlon planned to litter pick on the Links on Tuesday evening and Sally Millar would do Wednesday. A bigger litter pick will be more widely promoted later on. Gail Clapton pointed out that recycling had been ruined during the strike as people are putting all sorts of rubbish anywhere they can find a space.

6. Parks and Green Spaces

Trees in pots saga update from Sally Millar. Scott Thomson (Council Parks Dept.) will take the pots from Leith Links and replant the trees. One has died due to lack of water. Nobody is taking responsibility for the remainder of the pots (on the streets).

David Igoe reported that the Arboretum is looking good but lacks signage and labels for the trees. Jim Scanlon said he would email the Edinburgh & Lothian Greenspace trust and see if Ross Woodside can sort something out.

Teresa Perchard said that there is a real issue with lack of bins particularly in the centre of the Links. We need separate poo bins and much bigger bin capacity. Saughton Park has bins twice the size of the ones on Leith Links.

7. Planning

Andy Mackenzie, Jim Scanlon and Sally Millar are meeting with Planning regarding the proposed Leith Harbour 31 Project on Friday at Salamander St. Jim said there is another proposal near the Bullfinch (ex Pond) Pub. Also other proposals for more housing on Salamander St all along to Farmfoods will be coming in

Sally reported a request for support from Craigentiny Community Council regarding a huge student flat development proposed at Jocks Lodge. They would be very grateful for objections.

Angus Hardie reported that Seafield Development Masterplan will have input into design team. They will have access to a design advisor to help the community with the masterplan.

Trams - on schedule apparently. The quality of finish of public realm is not up to scratch and it looks like some of it will be finished later, like the cycle path. Still aiming for completion Spring 2023.

8. Reports from representatives

Chas Booth reported on 134 Constitution St planning application as not appropriate but it was passed by planning.

Katrina Faccenda reported back on the 1000 new residents on the Victoria Ship in Leith Docks. She feels they are relatively well housed but wondered what the community might be able to do, to tell them about local amenities (like how to get to the Links) and to help them get integrated into the local community?

Katrina is meeting Forth Ports and will take any questions to them. She has also been elected to 'Edible Edinburgh' which produces and distributes food.

9. AOCB

The Community Council currently has two vacancies. Amy Fairbairn is interested in becoming a member of the Community Council - Sally Millar had spoken to her but unfortunately Chair couldn't make the meeting. It is unclear when next CC elections will be, so cooption is needed, meanwhile.

Two internal positions unfulfilled - Licencing and Community Engagement. Gail Clapton volunteered for Licencing.

Gala Day successful. Mela went well and the clear up was good on the whole but small coloured plastic imbedded into grass, possibly from ice cream spoons, which needs to be raked out.

Sally mentioned 'Leith Chooses' has been brought forward so does not clash with Christmas season and asked that the word be spread that £49,102 is available in grants of up to £5,000 each for to community groups. Theme is 'Sustaining Leith - protecting and supporting the most vulnerable in our community.' There will be online and postal voting in January 2023.

Jim was contacted by Samantha Rose of Leith Police about the Emergency Services Day which will be advertised on the website.

Also the History Society is meeting again in September. Agreed it should be put on website. Currently the website is not automatically sending notifications to Facebook and Twitter.

Gail reported that the Community Council has recently received the Edinburgh Council annual grant payment for 2022. Sally wondered if the Community Council should /could have a role in the cost of living crisis.

Attention drawn to several live council consultations - Women's Safety in Public Spaces, Ending Poverty and Short Term Lets - the last is a second consultation not on the planning process but on policy. We need a policy to be able to turn down AirBnB applications where short term letting is removing homes from the available housing stock for residents.

A member of the public, IC, wondered if takeaways could provide bins outside their premises to reduce litter. And if a paper Community Council newsletter could be revived, for older residents who are not online. She was reminded that delivery of a newsletter is onerous.

10. Date of next public meeting: Monday 26th September 2022, 6:30pm