

**MINUTES**

**Monday 30 January 2023**

**6:30 pm, online via MS Teams**

**Councillors and Members Present:** Gail Clapton (Treasurer & Vice Chair), Abigail Cunningham, Amy Fairbairn, Angus Hardie, Barbara Kerr, Andrew Mackenzie, Sally Millar (Secretary), Teresa Perchard, Chrissie Reid, Jim Scanlon (Chair), Eileen Simpson

**Elected Representatives:** Councillor Chas Booth, Councillor Katrina Faccenda

**Minute Taker:** Sally Millar

**Members of the public –3**

**1. Welcome, Apologies**

Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Councillor Adam McVey (technical problems accessing), Robert Cormack (Leith Rotary), Deidre Brock MP, Tommy Sheppard MP.

**2. Adoption of Minutes**

Adoption proposed by Angus Hardie and seconded by Abigail Cunningham. Available at <https://leithlinksc.org.uk/>

**3. Police Report** – Brief report received and circulated by email immediately preceding meeting.

**4. Seafield Sewage**

Guest speakers Adam Warner and Iain McMenemy from Scottish Water and Tracy Byford of Veolia presented an update of Seafield Sludge Improvement Project (see separate file for the full presentation), including key milestones, delivery timeline and stakeholder engagement points. Things are currently at the pre-planning stage, detailed designs are likely to be submitted as a planning application to CEC and SEPA by the end of February and hopefully approved by end of September. Plans include upgrading of three primary tanks; 2 new storage tanks, a new odour control unit. Construction (while the plant is fully operational, will commence in 2024 and will be finished by/before 2029 when the current Veolia PFI contract ends. The aim is to reduce odours. Decisions about what happens next (Scottish Water takes over?) are political. In the long term, Scottish Government has promised a new plant in the same site (£100million).

The speakers answered a number of questions including about noise, disruption and odours during the construction phase, and about the possibility of providing heat (e.g., District Heating scheme) - SW are looking into the technological possibilities of this, longer term. Scottish Water will join the Seafield Masterplan / Sounding Board discussions.

The next Seafield Stakeholders meeting will be in March 2023. Seafield will take a stall at the Leith Gala Day again in 2023 to engage with the public.

**5. Update from Elected Representatives**

Councillor Chas Booth reported that the issue of saving / renovating the Lindsay Road bridge will be coming to the Transport Committee on Thursday for a decision. He also stated that the Scottish Green Party do not support the new Forth Free Port initiative, regarding it as a 'race to the bottom' on workers' rights and on environmental protection. The City Plan 2030 has been finalised by City of Edinburgh Council (though it will be about 9 months until full approval by Council and by Reporter), and the National Planning Framework 4 has been signed off by Scottish Government (this may affect some aspects of the Council's STL policy). Until both are operational, the latest 'trumps' any others, so currently the Local Development Plan, then the NPF4, then City Plan 2030. Re Leith Connections, there is discussion about setts in the cycle lane (Henderson Street, Conservation Area); Chas is looking in to this.

Councillor Katrina Faccenda had met with Lothian Buses but had no good news to report except that they are working on improving the accuracy of their App. She recognises community concerns about 'ghost buses' that disappear en route (the 35) and that the 34 and 49 are too infrequent. She also has concerns about the Forth Free Port, as have the Trade Unions. She has been following up the issue of overprovision of temporary homeless accommodation in our area. Concern about Planning – a recent decision by Council to refuse student accommodation at Gorgie has been overturned by the ScotGov Reporter, ignoring both the Council and the community.

#### **5. contd. Open Floor (local residents)**

Don Crichton wished to complain about the congestion on Leith Walk that delays and sometimes diverts buses, and problems caused by not being able to turn left on to London Road, but having to go all the way up round the Picardy Place gyratory. Angus reported that the Tram Team is aware of this but for some reason the traffic signals cannot be changed to allow left turns. Good news is that the leftover Heras fencing has finally been removed from Don's Road.

#### **6. Transport & Mobility**

There is a general feeling that previously great bus services are disappearing. Chas Booth pointed out that Council does not control Lothian Buses, and they have to make commercial decisions, but hopefully better services will be restored eventually.

Jim Scanlon pointed out that you can't turn right from the north end of Constitution Street to drive westwards, you can only turn left and go directly eastwards, for some distance. If the LTN comes in, you won't be able to turn westwards again until the traffic lights at Seafield, causing more unnecessary extra driving and congestion. He is also worried that if the proposed Leith Connections cycleway is as wide as the Roseburn one, it will take up too much room.

#### **7. Parks & Greenspaces**

David Igoe reported that the Pavilion restoration on the Croft is going well, and they now have water and electricity supply. Heras fencing still needs to be removed from paths into the Ropeworks, using Twitter@edinhelp is recommended for reporting such issues. Sally Millar reminded the meeting that LLCC will receive c.£12K from the community levy on Proclaimers concert tickets and we need to plan what to spend it on. Abigail Cunningham suggested a mural on the Bowling Green Building. Chair reported that ex Councillor Gordon Munro has handed over a copy of the Leith Links Masterplan of 2007 that shows we are re-inventing the wheel, and nothing was done last time round. There was discussion about bulb planting for 2023/24. We can order bulbs in June (crocuses, daffodils, also? snowdrops? ?bluebells?). Scott Thomson of CEC Parks Dept. wants us to identify gaps amongst existing planting. Barbara Kerr suggested dropping 'pins' on Google map to geotag the spots. Snowdrops around the base of trees. We

should also ask Scott for wild flower seeds as well (but not poppies, as these tend to dominate all other flowers and don't last long). Barbara Kerr will help Parks & Greenspaces Sub-group but has limited time available. Sub Group to meet soon.

#### **8. Bins and Street Cleanliness**

Teresa Perchard reported unwanted dumpster on Somerset Place has at last been removed. The Restalrig Railway Path is in a terrible state with fly tipping and litter. There are not enough bins and the Council have mowed the verges and chopped up rubbish. Sally Millar will try to contact RRP Group about a possible litter pick. Even if a litter pick were done, help would be needed from the Council (motorised equipment) to move large items and heavy rubbish bags up to the street, as the distances from parts of the path to the ramps can be long.

Drew Bain of Duncan Place is asking LLCC to partner up on another Links Litter pick in March - agreed in principle.

#### **9. Planning Issues**

Andy Mackenzie has submitted some responses (Johns Place, Johns Lane) and there are more to deal with (Ocean Terminal). He struggles to deal with all the applications in the short timescales provided. Teresa Perchard will join the Planning sub-group, subscribe to Planning Lists, and help to identify and respond to applications earlier.

#### **10. AOCB**

Amy Fairbairn has been drafting a survey to explore public awareness of the CC a short survey in the new year, members will comment and survey should go out soon.

Gail Clapton reported that LLCC now has debit cards for each of its two accounts, which might make some payments easier.

#### **12. Date of next public meeting: Monday 27 February 2023, 6:30pm in-person at Duncan Place**

We will try to do a 'hybrid' meeting, but we don't have 'broadcasting' equipment (microphones and speaker)