

MINUTES

Monday 27 November 2023, 6:30 pm, in-person, Duncan Place

LLCC Members Present: Gail Clapton (Treasurer & Vice Chair), Abigail Cunningham, Amy Fairbairn, Barbara Kerr, Sally Millar (Secretary), Chrissie Reid, Jim Scanlon (Chair)

Councillors: Councillors Adam McVey, Chas Booth

2 members of the public, 2 Police Scotland officers

Minute Taker: Sally Millar

1. **Welcome and Apologies** –Chair welcomed attendees. Apologies were received from Councillor Katrina Faccenda, Rhona Alcorn, Angus Hardie, Andrew Mackenzie, Teresa Perchard, Eileen Simpson. Also, from Deidre Brock MP and Ben MacPherson MSP

2. **Adoption of Minutes** Adoption of Minutes of October 2023 meeting proposed by Abigail Cunningham and seconded by Barbara Kerr. Available at <https://leithlinksc.org.uk/>

3. **Police Scotland Report** – Community Police officers Lauren Munro & Allan MacDonald. Police Report circulated by email.

Officers reported that the closure of Tolbooth Wynd as a through route (Leith Connections) has presented Leith police officers with major problems as it significantly lengthens the journey and therefore the police response time to urgent incidents and frequent callouts (eg. to Linksvie House, Admiralty Street, Coburg Street, and Cables Wynd) which can have very serious implications. Not all police officers are trained / qualified to use lights and sirens so cannot whizz through busy traffic on eg Duke Street / Great Junction Street, the only way of reaching those locations, since Tolbooth Wynd closed. Leith police officers are unhappy and would like this noted as a negative consequence of the LTN. Cllr Booth asked PC MacDonald if he spoke personally or for Police Scotland, and PC MacDonald said for Police Scotland. Councillor Chas Booth said that Police Scotland had been consulted re Leith Connections and had raised no objections. Constable MacDonald agreed that was possible, but asked who exactly had been consulted, as he knew it was not the Leith Police team? Somebody who did not work on the ground locally could be unaware of such issues. Sometimes problems arise in practice 'on the ground' that were not foreseen by planners and administrators. Barbara Kerr pointed out that sometimes lines of communication eg within council, and council / Police did not always link up to ensure that the 'right' people were informed.

ACTION: Cllr Chas Booth to find out who exactly from Police Scotland was consulted on Leith Connections.

Response to query – Leith Links was not designated a 'Dispersal Zone' for fireworks night as there was no evidence of high risk / need, but that does not mean there was no Police Scotland presence there – it was patrolled and monitored. No major issues arose. It was pointed out to Police that Diwali is arguably 'worse' than November 5th in terms of noise, scaring pets, children & teenagers obtaining fireworks etc. across an extended timescale, not just one night.

The circulated report of local crime and Police activities was expanded verbally. Vehicle theft, driving offences and shop lifting figure prominently.

PS are well aware of the escalating drug dealing / use problems in tenement stairs on Duke Street (as raised by a local resident, see 5. below), take this very seriously and will update further by / at next meeting. Some are persistent offenders well known to PS who get arrested then bailed without 'conditions', so are free to then return to same place and re-offend. Frustrating. They may eventually possibly get a 'refuse to desist' notice which might tighten up the procedure. Police do their best but drug offenses are not prioritised over 'immediate response' calls. Very important though to always report to 999 if emergency (or 101 though police unlikely to make it quickly). Also please use email to report every case, with details, as even if police can't attend at the time, this helps PS to build a solid case. Email: EdinburghCPTNorthEast@Scotland.police.uk

This is a long term health / Social Work / Housing issue as much as a Police issue. There was a discussion on the pros and cons of possible 'safe' drug consumption rooms as trialled in Glasgow. Feasibility study may be considered for Edinburgh in 2024.

4. Update from Elected Representatives

Cllr Chas Booth reported some public health gains and some losses with Licensing Policy. Total continuous trading hours (alcohol) now 14 hours not 16, but extended hours over festive period maintained.

The Short Term Let industry lobby is attacking council hard, taking to legislation again.

'Respect Her Space' campaign launched, focusing on mens behaviour.

Pavement parking ban to be enforced sometime in January 2024. Community Councillors expressed concern about very narrow streets such as East Restalrig Terrace which can only work if made 'one sided parking' only, but this will take a long time as it needs a TRO. Meanwhile – safety? Emergency vehicle access? Delivery vehicles? Cllr Booth thought 48 streets in Leith Ward have been marked as 'red' street i.e. problems if no pavement parking. Meeting pointed out the huge issue of delivery vehicles which now park on the pavement far more often than they ever did before (especially beer lorries on Constitution Street!) simply because there is simply nowhere else for them to park. Cllr Booth said delivery vehicles get a 20minute exemption

Chair Jim Scanlon asked how many constituents represented the '75% strong support' of the Leith LTN that Cllr Booth had quoted in the press, and how many of those lived locally? Cllr Booth could not recall exactly, but it was people who had contacted him in person and by email.

5. Open Floor

Local resident reported ever escalating (due to colder weather?) problem of serious anti-social behaviour in tenement stairs along Duke Street – drug taking, littering, drug paraphernalia, fouling etc. Police already aware (see Police Report above). Advised to keep reporting, but sadly only immediate measure possible is installing better security stair doors.

6. Bins

Teresa Perchard outlined Bin Hub review taking place at Council. Now is the time to report bin hub placements that are unsatisfactory and to suggest better locations.

ACTION: Jim Scanlon will go and speak to Links Gardens residents about the bins outside houses there, and near the Primary School. Amy Fairbairn will use Whats App group to consult Duke Street / Gardens neighbours.

7. Planning

Sally Millar will attend meeting with Living Rent. LLCC will send in an objection to the proposed build to rent and student accommodation blocks at Salamander Place/Street.

Bingo Hall at Manderston Street (in Leith conservation area but not a listed building) is now being proposed as student accommodation. Developers keen to try and rush this through, Leith CCs are trying to postpone discussions until after New Year.

New businesses are moving into the 'red sandstone shops' at Steads Place, including a new Tesco Metro. It had been suggested that the big Tesco at Duke Street was to close, but apparently this is not so.

8. Travel, transport, mobility

The LLCC survey of LTN / CPZ effects on residents is now ready to go public. It will be publicised on website & social media, and via leaflets and posters locally, as soon as poster and QR code sorted out. Possibly after Christmas, so it doesn't get 'lost' in holiday postings etc. All Community Councillors to promote to their neighbours. Current plan is for the survey to run until the end of February. Collation of results and report writing to take place February - March

ACTION – QR code – Amy. Poster /leaflet design – Abigail. Publication – Sally.

9. AOCB

- Improvement of Coalie Park including small skate ramp is starting. This skate ramp does not replace the bigger one planned for Leith Links Activity Park.

- CCTT (Chair Harald Tobermann) continues to lobby Council about all the unfinished faults and hobs needing completed.

- Leith Chooses voting online opens on 22 January 2024 and in person voting day is at Leith Community Centre on 27th January.

10. Next meeting: Monday 29 January 2024, 6:30pm at Duncan Place