

LEITH LINKS COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes, Monday 24 June 2024

In person meeting, Duncan Place

LLCC Members Present: Gail Clapton (Treasurer & Vice Chair), Abigail Cunningham, Sally Millar (Secretary), Teresa Perchard, Jim Scanlon (Chair), Eileen Simpson

Apologies from: Councillor Katrina Faccenda, Amy Fairbairn, Angus Hardie, Andrew Mackenzie, Councillor Adam McVey. Also from Deidre Brock, Tommy Sheppard - currently not officially MPs, pending General Election

Elected Representatives: Councillor Chas Booth

Police Scotland: PC John Anderson **Members of the Public:** 5 (of which, 1 online)

Minute Taker: Sally Millar

1. Adoption of Minutes of May 2024 meeting proposed by Jim Scanlon and seconded by Aric Gilinsky

This would be a short meeting, due to the AGM held previously to this 'ordinary' meeting.

2. Police Scotland Report presented by PC John Anderson (circulated, and available at www.leithlinksc.org.uk/)

PC John Anderson is new to Leith, has been working here with PC Allan MacDonald since April 2024 – welcomed by the Community Council. Talked through the written report previously circulated (not all points applicable as Police beats do not align exactly with CC areas). There was discussion about the recent incident of a dog attack in the Kirkgate, and what powers PS have or don't have in terms of charging dog owners. (Police were quoted at the time as saying they had no power to intervene, but surely they do, under the Dangerous Dogs Act?) The public got the impression that the owner of the Kirkgate dog was not arrested and charged (although John thought he was, in fact). A CC member suggested trust in PS is undermined by inadequate communication: while confidentiality cannot be breached, there could still be an item on social media informing the public generally about the powers of the police and what action was taken in a particular case.

NB. The XL Bully Act comes into force end of July – not only do these dogs have to be muzzled and on a lead, but it is forbidden to breed them, sell or gift them, or abandon them.

3. Update from Elected Representatives

Councillor Chas Booth commented on the City Plan 2030 which will shortly be fully approved. Happy that 35% of new developments should be for affordable housing (but wording was sadly watered down a little, potentially leaving loopholes). Monies raised from developers via Section 75 should be used in same ward or a neighbouring ward, if not on the actual development site. Sadly the budget available for Housing has been slashed, need more in capital grant from Westminster.

- 20 Minute neighbourhoods are meant to be walkable.

- WOL stakeholder group, and Ben McPherson MSP, working with Scottish Water are hopefully making some progress on the issue of sewage going into Water of Leith.

- Licencing – still time to propose Leith as an area of over-provision of alcohol, so that all new applications including supermarket, would be approached with a 'presumption of refusal'. Doubtful how effective this is, given that all new applications for Rose Street (in an area already designated as 'overprovision') were granted...

- Leith Connections next phase is being implemented, works started on Henderson Street for new cycle way.

- Consultations – questionnaire now closing on Council services, but there will be more stages to the consultation, coming soon. <https://theedinburghreporter.co.uk/2024/03/survey-to-ask-edinburgh-residents-their-views-on->

[council-spending/](#)

There was a discussion about the need for housing, and members of the CC proposed that refurbishing empty homes in the existing housing stock should be a priority. Is there any way to identify empty homes in our own area? The Council buying homes would be more cost effective than the enormous sums currently wasted on B&B accommodation.

Fireworks – Leith (Links) has not been put forward by Police Scotland as an area where this is a problem, there have been no incidents or injuries. Members agreed that overall there is more disturbance from fireworks from Diwali, Chinese New Year etc. than at November 5th.

Councillor Booth has been elected Co-Convenor (with Cllr Susan Rae) of the Scottish Greens Group in the council. He will be coming off the Planning Committee (after 7 years there) and will now sit on the Policy and Sustainability Committee and the Transport Committee.

4. Open Floor for Local Residents

There was a discussion about how well local businesses are connected to the network of Community Councils in Leith, and whether there is room for more effort to contact and link with businesses. Member of public attending has started a new business in Leith called 'My Neighbourhood' which curates a directory of local businesses delivered directly, allowing local access offline and online purchasing.

5. Planning

Council (Shared Repair service) has inspected and replied re the dangerous wall in Johns Place Lane, saying there is no immediate danger. Owner is planning to make it safe, but is awaiting a decision on their Planning Application before doing so.

Teresa Perchard and Andrew Mackenzie are liaising with Planning Dept. re properties currently in discussion: 3 Johns Place, 9 Johns Place. Site visits are pending, which LLC will attend. Re 3 Johns Place, LLCC has submitted further written comments.

Re 9 Johns Place, where the developers are appealing a refusal by Planning, the decision has been referred back from Scottish Government Reporter to a 'Local Review Body' which will review the case. Unclear what exactly a 'Local Review Body' is / when and why it is invoked etc. but LLCC has resubmitted written objections to the proposed development and plans to attend meeting if possible.

It was suggested that members of Local Development Sub Committee (Planning) do not seem to have an understanding of the effect of over-provision of ever-expanding hotels and large HMOs for temporary homeless accommodation in this small area.

6. AOB

Public Toilets on the Links – CC is still trying to get information from Council about when these will be opened and functional, and when signs will be put up to alert the public to their existence. Council communications on this issue are extremely poor.

Sally Millar reported that Leith Festival Gala Day had gone well and local people had enthusiastically listed all the things they felt would be needed to make our 20 minute neighbourhood better. Teresa Perchard has written this up, now we need to circulate it widely to website, our councillors, MPs, MSPs etc.

Aric Gilinsky drew attention to Council 20 minute Neighbourhood report and publicity <https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/20minuteneighbourhoods> and suggested the CC might hold a special meeting to discuss this in detail with our own local councillors.

7. Next Meeting: Monday 26 August 2024 6.30pm online