

LEITH LINKS COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES Monday 27 January 2025

in person @ Duncan Place

LLCC Members Present: Gail Clapton (Treasurer & Vice Chair), Aric Gilinsky, Barbara Kerr, Sally Millar (Secretary), Jim Scanlon (Chair), Eileen Simpson.

Apologies received from: Abigail Cunningham, Angus Hardie, Andy Mackenzie, Teresa Perchard, Chrissie Reid

No Apologies – Sarah Barnard, Cllr. Adam Nols-McVey

Elected Representatives: 2 - Cllr. Chas Booth, Cllr. Katrina Faccenda

Police Scotland: 0 **Members of the Public:** 0 **Members of another CC** – 1 (Leith Central)

Minute Taker: Sally Millar (Secy)

1. Chair's Welcome to attendees

2. 2 Adoption of Minutes of November 2024 meeting & Matters Arising

Previous Minutes were adopted. Proposed by Gail Clapton, Seconded by Eileen Simpson

Actions from previous Minutes:

Action – Teresa Perchard, to write to identify and invite a speaker to explain the Green Free Port

Action - Chair will contact Councillors about this with a view to CCs being given advance notice of works planning in their area and to also raise whether upgrading of roads could also incorporate work on pavements at the same time to minimise disruption.

Action – re Seafield Waste Water Treatment Works. Eileen Simpson to draft a letter to be sent by LLCC Chair to Ben MacPherson MSP, to express concern in case changes to Ministers in Scottish Government and financial cuts meant that money earmarked for Seafield improvements could get 'lost'.

3. **Police Scotland Report** – 2 Officers attended, PC Campbell Blackmore and a colleague, and gave report. Written report available via www.leithlinksc.org.uk/). Efforts have been directed to anti-social youth behaviour, e.g. on buses & trams, worse in school holidays. There was a long discussion about how the lack of serious consequences for youth offenders (under 16) encouraged continuation of bad behaviour. Could bus passes be removed / suspended? Police also frustrated by ever increasing illegal use electric scooters but lack capacity to do much – new legislation is needed.

Clarified that throwing large amounts of bread on the street (to feed birds) is not a criminal offence.

Questions asked about constant illegal pavement parking at Elm Row (which is private land, not public).

Apparently, this is not a Police matter but one for Council Parking Attendants

ACTION: Cllr. Chas Booth will follow up with Council.

Asked about an assault on a woman on Leith Links that was reported in the press. Officers not aware but suggested that an 'Information Disclosure Request' could be sent in

ACTION: Chair to submit an Information Disclosure Request to ask about ALL crimes committed on Leith Links in, say, last 5 years.

4. Open Floor – issues raised by local residents

Avril Ewing from Leith Central Community Council is keen to foster links between the Leith Community Councils and see mutual support on each other's campaigns. She drew attention to a paper recently written by LCCCC to the Council on the subject of Purpose-Built Student Accommodation, which she will forward to LLCC. The aim is to achieve reconsideration by the Planning Dept. of the draft Guidance on PBSA. The new City Plan now stipulates (so not just guidance). There will be a protest outside City Chambers re Daltons site application for PBSA on Salamander Place. Pierre Forissier has now left LCCC area, unclear who has taken this on now.

ACTION: LLCC will write to support, and try to attend the Daltons site protest.

Chair to attend Living Rent Leith meeting this month, to try to persuade them to join CC

Manhole cover on Salamander Place – this is rattling very loudly every time a vehicle goes past (Comex 2000 – temporary traffic lights, road works?)

ACTION: Chair to report via Council web-site. Chas Booth to follow up.

5. Planning Matters

Temporary Homeless Accommodation – New Convener of Housing & Homelessness Committee is Lezley Marion Cameron. Noted that Harbour Homes demolished a care home and accommodation on Wellington Place but have not built the planned new homes, due to lack of resources.

ACTION: Chair to write to Housing & Homelessness Convener suggesting that Council buy the site, or build homes on the site for Harbour Homes to manage, maybe as part of new funding to come from TVL (from 2026).

Planning Permission has been applied for 'Change of Use' for Assembly Street (Old Mongolian, then pizza restaurant) to turn into an 'Apart Hotel'. Discussion of whether an 'Apart-Hotel' is really a hotel or just a block of STLs – should the definition be changed?

ACTION: LLCC will object, since what the community wants and needs is permanent residential accommodation not STL.

Tesco on Queen Charlotte Street – this application has been refused by the Reporter at Scottish Government on the grounds of over-provision in the neighbourhood.

6. Transport & Mobility

Leith Connections –

Business Bulletin - report by Leith Connections, with recommendations, to be submitted to Transport and Environment Committee on 30th January. Cllr Chas. Booth said it was just for information - no need for written or verbal deputation from CC.

Action – LLCC will nonetheless make a verbal deputation to Transport and Environment Committee, since recently formed 'Liveable Leith' lobby group is doing so.

TRO Sub-Committee will meet on 18th February to make final decisions on whether the current LTN measures including the bus gate should be made permanent or not. This is a sub judicial committee and cannot receive deputations. Chas Booth said that Councillors are not allowed to speak to them either, or try to influence them. They have the power to make minor changes to the LTN measures or to take measures away, but not to make major ones or to add new ones.

The findings of the LLCC survey are that the bus gate is generally unpopular and should be removed. Chair also suggested that the 'priority' should be reversed at the foot of Johns Place, as it would be better if queuing traffic queued up Johns Place than along Queen Charlotte Street.

ACTION: LLCC will write to members of TRO subcommittee with findings of survey.

A number of other mitigation measures are needed such as crossing(s) on Claremont Park. Chas Booth said that Transport & Environment Committee could 'pick up loose ends' on such matters, after big TRO decisions.

LLCC is due to meet with LCCC, LH&NCC and NT&BCC in the CCTT group to discuss next steps in the 'unfinished business' re Trams to Newhaven – still many outstanding faults to be rectified.

7. Parks & Greenspaces

Official confirmation has been received that there will be permanent public toilets installed on Leith Links this spring / summer. These are constructed as a unit off site and then installed. These will be located between the tennis courts and the playpark. Thriving Green Spaces team is over-seeing, and Leith Links Working Group (which members of LLCC are on) able to input and are kept informed. Questions still need to be answered re cleaning, maintenance, and emergency contact if help needed by a user.

8. CC Elections, March 2025

Community Council elections dates:

- Notices to go out from 5th February 2025
- 6-27 February 2025 for Nominations
- 27 March 2025 for Election

Community Councils will not be dissolved until the election, so business such as commenting on Planning applications continues. Returning Officer still to be appointed.

Actions

- **All those wishing to stand to download and get Nomination forms signed by proposer and seconder from the area.**
- **3 Leith Councillors will decide between themselves who is to be Returning Officer**
- **Chair will organise a stall at Leith Market alongside the other 2 Leith CCs to try and raise public awareness.**
- **Secy. will get more LLCC recruitment fliers printed**
- **LLCC will continue to try to contact local groups such as: Living Rent; group developing the St. Andrews Church project.**

9. Update from Elected Representatives –

Cllr. Chas Booth reported that the City Plan 2030 has now been fully approved by Scottish Government and will be implemented. A new 35% levy on developers for affordable housing is incorporated in the new plan.

Regarding Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA), Council is imposing new conditions on development, which will make them less profitable to developers. For example, requiring more community facilities and less 'cell like'.

A report is currently in front of Transport & Environment Committee re road safety around schools. Audit of Leith schools is still to be completed.

Cllr. Chas Booth announced that he has withdrawn from social media platform 'X' (Twitter) and has instead opened a new account on Blue Sky.

Cllr Katrina Faccenda reported that she has been working hard on making contact and collecting information as widely as possible about the problem of anti-social behaviour in Leith, by meeting up with many diverse community groups to discuss how to build a stronger local community. This is a complex and long-term issue.

10. AOB

Chas. Booth announced Licensing Board has agreed that there is over-provision of alcohol in 'South Leith' and Great Junction Street, so no more alcohol licences to be granted unless exceptional circumstances.

Barbara Kerr announced that bookings for stalls at 2025 Leith Festival Gala Day are now open.

ACTION: Secretary will check with other Leith CCs and book a stall as usual.

11. Next meeting, Monday 24 February 2025, 6.30pm in person at Duncan Place