

LEITH LINKS COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES Monday 30 March 2026, Duncan Place

Present: Abigail Cunningham (Chair), Avril Ewing, Aric Gilinsky, Angus Hardie, Barbara Kerr, Sally Millar, Jim Scanlon, Eileen Simpson

Elected Members: Councillor Chas Booth,

Apologies: Aimee McInnes, Andy McKenzie, Teresa Perchard, Councillor Katrina Faccenda

Police Scotland: 0

Members of the Public: 2

Chair: Abigail Cunningham

Minute Taker: Sally Millar

1. Welcome and Apologies

2a Adoption of Previous Minutes. Proposed: Jim Scanlon, Seconded: Angus Hardie

Rolling Actions List:

Re Parks and Greenspaces

- Abigail Cunningham will try to negotiate possible collaboration between two local artists (for mural on public toilets) – currently seeking background, permissions etc.
- LLCC will try to do a quick consultation of local people re a theme for the mural. Agreed informally to try to steer towards 'neutral' themes such as nature / wildlife/botanical (rather than local history of culture which can become controversial....).

RE CPZ plans

- Councillor Booth will keep following up to find out Council actions

Re Seafield Sewage Plant

- Aric Gilinsky will investigate LLCC website issue re complaints form – working on this.

2b. Police Scotland Report – PC John Anderson had submitted a Powerpoint report (circulated). Query was raised as to why our report does not include statistics, as apparently PS reports to other Community Councils (eg. LCCC) do.

ACTION: Secy will write to enquire whether LLCC may have statistics even if pertaining to the wider Leith area not just our own patch.

3. **Guest Speakers** – Michael Johnstone of Leith Food Festival joined remotely via Teams to provide information about the event to be held on the Links 30 & 31 May 2026. See <https://leithfoodfestival.com/> LLCC keen to know what benefit this event might bring to the local community. He apologized that it had been advertised and tickets selling before permission obtained; he was unaware, his team was unaware of local application / planning permission process. His team is experienced - they did 9 of these last year but this is the first in Scotland. He tried to reassure members on concerns that had been raised in the LLCC objection to the event. Set up will be Wednesday 27th May- Traders arrive Friday 29th, main event is Saturday 30/Sunday 31st – clean up and take-down will be finished by end of Monday 1st June. It is very different from 'Foodies' festival in Inverleith Park, not elitist but very family friendly, lower entry prices, balancing food & drink events with and music and entertainment. There will be a big marquee (Cookery Theatre), a smaller tent for family magic shows, a stage with live music, a 'market' of gazebo based stalls (70% of stalls food and drink based, 30% of stalls crafts etc.), and street food trucks and trailers. His team could provide 'references' if required, they have never had to pay a reinstatement fine as they take very good care of the grass, using special mats to protect grass as necessary. Trucks and trailers should be once on, once off, not driving around on the Links. They are providing security staff and staff for litter and clean up (in partnership with local NWH who will supply bins and removal services etc.) Tickets – still selling at the Early Bird rate (this will expire nearer the time).

He will double check with Lindsay Grant of CEC that monies paid to CEC for parks will definitely be ring-fenced for Leith Links and not Edinburgh parks in general. **Update** – confirmed by Lindsay Grant
ACTION – LLCC to feed back to Michael any further concerns that are raised, and any ideas they may have on how to provide a discount on tickets fairly to local near residents (post code is too broad and can be falsified).

4. Update from City Councillors

Cllr. Chas Booth reported from CEC committees and council meetings. Council budget includes a 4% council tax rise (was to be 5% but lowered due to Conservative amendment). Meeting to be held in April about not for profit heat networks. Council asking for Scottish Government help to close legislative loophole that allows STL operators to get a licence to operate without having planning permission. CEC supportive of Scottish Government licencing Vapes sales, if at no cost to the Council. Kirkgate and Shore had been 'audited' for accessibility by a wheelchair user (result - poor).

5. Issues raised by local residents – Roadworks on Restalrig Road – queries were raised as to what exactly are they doing? Why are local residents not informed better about when roads will be closed, buses diverted etc.? Are pavement repairs going to be included in the roadworks, they are in a shockingly bad condition in places, especially down towards the traffic lights? There are some details on the website <https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/road-projects-improvements/restalrig-road>
Councillors have been informed the work is ahead of schedule so far but workers will have a long break over Easter.

ACTION: Secy to write to Roads dept. to ask if members of LLCC could have a 'walkabout' session on-site with the Council officer allocated to the works. To copy in Councillors.

6. Draft Leith Place – Meeting had been held in early March with authors Joanne and Aythan, and Abi, Angus, Teresa, Barbara & Sally to discuss LLCC comments of the first draft which had been circulated. Teresa had collected further comments from LCCC members on the primary 'asks' relevant to the Place Plan. Teresa and Sally had forwarding comments in writing. Authors seemed open to revising various aspects of the structure and various content items, and had just today circulated their revised version – no time to look at it yet. They want feedback on it if possible by 13th April. Councillor Booth said he and Cllr Faccenda had met with the author and broadly supported the Place Plan, but had made comments about 3 specific issues: the CPZ comments, the idea of a ferry to Fife (preferred 'public transport' wording as left other possibilities open). (He had forgotten the third.) LLCC would like to be able to back the Place Plan but feel there are still outstanding concerns.

ACTION – Secy to arrange a further online discussion meeting asap between the existing discussion group and any other CC members who have read the revised version, to formulate further feedback.

7. Parks and Greenspaces – Abigail Cunningham has applied to register a 'Friends of Leith Links' group with CEC, and has submitted a Constitution. This is key timing, and should make it easier to participate in distribution of TVL monies or to attract other funding. The LLCC plus a few individuals are now committed, she has already contacted Duncan Place, the Croft, and the Children s Orchard group, and it will be easier to attract new members once it is up and running. Local resident Cathy McCulloch suggested inviting the Allotments Group

Action – Abigail to continue contacting possible new members, e.g Leith Festival, Allotments group, Cricket Club, Leith Rules Golf.

Events in Parks – LLCC had submitted an objection to the proposed Leith Food Festival being held on the Links at the end of May but this was ignored / overruled by CEC. There has been a request to hold a day event by Equality Network. LLCC has no objections providing proper litter and toilet provisions are in place.

Thriving Greenspaces (Marco Galli, Alex Hoadley) will be invited to a future meeting to discuss the mural on the toilets, and to clarify how monies from the Transient Visitor Levy (TVL) would be managed.

Action : Abigail / Secy to contact Thriving Green Spaces.

8. **Planning** –Teresa will be submitting an LLCC comment to planning application for the big Daltons site on Salamander Place / Street, highlighting concerns re lack of disabled parking and emergency exit, but not an outright ‘objection’.
9. **Transport & Mobility – CPZ** - Cllr. Booth had so far got the impression that Council Officers were not rushing into doing anything about the proposed CPZ extensions in our area, but waiting to see how existing provisions are ‘bedding in’. Members reported bad flooding at crossing points on Duncan Place (the newly repaired ones). Members stressed the need for a safe pedestrian crossing at the junction of Duncan Place with Duke Street as this is currently very difficult and dangerous for pedestrians. Members discussed the very bad traffic congestion situation on Great Junction Street, bus-stop still not open, closure of Bernard Street has been disastrous and has highlighted the lack of resilience on Leith streets as there are not enough ‘spare’ routes available for use in emergencies, due to Leith Connections road closures. Leith Connections work is being started (7 months on) on bollard to block Tolbooth Wynd, enhancing crossings lower down on Duncan Place, and pavement build-out on Claremont Park.
10. **AOCB**
 - Email from CC member Andy Mackenzie asked for LLCC backing for a last minute bid for Leith to be UK Town of Culture 2028 (See <https://uk.news.yahoo.com/900-old-scottish-town-bid-142037633.html>, <https://archive.ph/nf3g3>) Members voted to support this bid as a Community Council, although rather surprised for the request for CC involvement to be so much at the last minute. LLCC looks forward to hearing more details about the bid and consortium of Leith organizations and businesses mounting the bid.
 - It was agreed that the 2025-2026 AGM will be held on the 26 May 2026, prior to an ‘ordinary’ meeting. Annual Report and Accounts to be prepared prior / for that date.
 - **ACTION: re Seafield Sewage - Angus Hardie will invite Guest Speakers for the May meeting to discuss their long campaign against using sewage sludge on agricultural land (which can cause microplastics to enter the food chain). This claim has scientific credibility although is dismissed by SEPA, Scottish Water, CEC etc.**
 - Need to encourage new CC members (CC is now down to 9 plus 2 representatives of local community groups).
 - LCCC Meeting with Harbour Homes (Angus, Teresa) will take place on 14 April, agenda being drafted.
 - Various Hustings (Edinburgh North Eastern & Leith) taking place around the area (Secy has circulated a list, with details)
 - Stall has been booked for the Leith Festival Gala Day on 13th June, LCCC and LH&N CCs have agreed to share. Recruitment of new CC members is one issue to be highlighted at Gala Day. Other ideas to be discussed next month.

11. Date of Next Meeting: Monday 27 April 2026, in-person Duncan Place.

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