

# LEITH LINKS COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES Monday 28 April 2025, 6:30pm

in person @ Duncan Place

**Present:** Andrew Ballantine, Abigail Cunningham, Avril Ewing, Aric Gilinsky, Angus Hardie (online), Barbara Kerr, Aimee McInnes, Andy Mackenzie, Sally Millar, Jim Scanlon (Chair), Eileen Simpson.

**Elected Members:** Councillor Chas Booth

**Apologies:** Gail Clapton, Teresa Perchard, Councillor Katrina Faccenda,

**Police Scotland:** 0      **Members of the Public:** 1

**Minute Taker:** Sally Millar

- Welcome, and Apologies** received as above. Special welcome to two new Councillors Andrew Ballantine and Aimee McInnes.  
No word has yet been received from our third newly elected Community Councillor Jacob O’Sullivan.  
**ACTION:** Secretary to email Jacob to enquire
- Adoption of Previous Minutes.** Proposed: Aric Gilinsky, Seconded: Eileen Simpson
- Police Scotland Report** – No officers present. Brief report has been sent and circulated.  
Barbara Kerr reported that a robbery had recently taken place from a flat on her stair, on Restalrig Road. Residents need to be warned to be careful about ‘buzzing people in’.  
Police were asked by CC to provide information about the recent RTA on Hermitage Place, but Community Police Officer had no knowledge of it. **ACTION:** Secretary to follow up with photographs. Police Scotland were definitely in attendance at the scene.
- Update from Elected City Councillors.** Cllr Chas Booth reported that Green Party were proposing to Transport Committee that free bus passes should be issued to some parents/carers accompanying people with additional support needs. The matter is currently with Council Officers, to look at eligibility criteria etc.  
**Licensing** – 2 new alcohol licences granted locally, Shop at bottom of Restalrig Road (that was East Coast meats, now an off licence) and Barry Fish (sharing with Mimis, at the Shore. Consultation currently ‘live’ on the consultation hub re over-provision of alcohol in the Leith area (calculated on indicators from NHS Scotland re admissions to hospital, crime, density per 1,000 population, etc.). While community councillors agreed that there is a problem in Leith generally, it is not actually a major problem in our particular area as there are so few outlets selling alcohol that are actually on ‘our patch’. Also some local on-sales businesses are shut for Monday and Tuesdays, which reduces sales further.  
**ACTION:** Chair Jim Scanlon will submit LLCC response to consultation, supporting the Licensing Board’s current position of a presumption to refuse any new licences in this area unless special circumstances.  
**Cruise Ship Levy** (like visitor levy) - Scottish Government is currently consulting “ those with views and knowledge in this area, including local authorities, those involved with the cruise ship sector, ports, island communities, those involved with tourism and others, including businesses large and small”. City of Edinburgh Council supports the levy idea. See <https://www.gov.scot/publications/consultation-potential-local-authority-cruise-ship-levy-scotland/>

## 5. Issues Raised by Local Residents

- Barbara Kerr mentioned the robbery on her stair, and the concern this has caused local residents.
- Aimee is a youth worker and has a special interest in matters relating to youth. Community Council welcomes her expertise and hopes for new ideas leading to better engagement. Maybe approach the Scottish Youth Parliament? Approaching the Pupil Council at Leith Academy in the past was not productive as school pupils seem reluctant to engage with Community Council.
- Chair invited and encouraged the new Community Councillors to join and work with which ever sub-committees most interested them, see following reports.

6. **Bins and Street Cleanliness:** Teresa Perchard has drawn attention to the 'Spruce Up this Neighbourhood' scheme, which will be for Leith in May. A Website post has been done. Discussed the various different ways of reporting problems and their effectiveness. Chas Booth said Council is developing a new App.
- ACTION:** Secy and Engagement Officer (& Teresa P?) to discuss with new members the possibility of working together to revive the idea of a series of informative "How/where do I Report it? / What do I do?" pages on LLCC website.

## 7. Transport and Mobility:

*Tramworks:* CCTT meetings continue, to press the Council to resolve some of the many outstanding faults, problems and snags still left over from the tramworks. The Council may go for 'quick wins' that can be most easily achieved. Particulars to be announced at next month's meeting.

*Parking* – There was an earlier consultation on CPZ plans for Easter Road area, Council has decided not to do any more pre-consultation at this stage, but comments will be invited when the temporary TROS go out for this area. Cllr. Booth thought the 'West Leith' (now renamed 'Lochend'?) CPZ plan has been paused indefinitely, but local residents have heard otherwise (rumours), so that needs clarified.

*Transparency:* Local people have been outraged by the manner in which the Duncan Place road /pavement repairs has been handled – no warning, no apparent need / justification for the repairs (compared with urgent need on other nearby streets eg. Duke Street), no awareness of local road closures affecting the resilience of local roads to adapt to the change on traffic patterns. This CC has asked before if it could have sight of a list of all the road repairs planned, with timescales (so we can inform the local residents well in advance, and ideally, even have some input into identifying priorities), but this has never been forthcoming. Overall, there needs to be better transparency and more coordination between different agencies (TROs, Parking, Active Travel projects, planned utility works etc.) so that the local community can be informed of upcoming work that will affect them.

Our area has been profoundly affected in recent years by tramworks, CPZs, Leith Connections road closures and cycleways, bus diversions etc. but has always felt like the various different departments at the Council do not communicate well or put together an integrated overview of how all these different schemes will interact and affect local residents. There is also a need for better provision of information that can be shared with the local community, eg. more accessible, and visual (up to date and accurate maps etc.) Councillor Chas Booth agreed that more visual information and better maps would be helpful.

**ACTION:** LLCC will write to Director of Place Gareth Barwell and ask for a meeting and start of a discussion based on "What is planned for Leith in the next few years? What are the timescales? Is there an overall picture of it all, and of how all these schemes will interact with each other and affect local residents (intended and possibly unintended consequences)? Is there an overview from the point of view of effects on the community (rather than convenience of the operators)? How will this be communicated to local residents and businesses? How well do the various bodies that plan and carry out the schemes communicate and work with each other? What monitoring of this interaction will take place? Basically – who is in overall charge and taking responsibility for the aggregated effect of all these separate schemes?"

**ACTION:** Cllr Chas Booth agreed to support this.

Barbara Kerr suggested that the CC could perhaps put together a simple survey to be circulated locally regularly every year or two, to try to identify problems and track the effects of changes in the area.

*Place Plan?* Leith Harbour & Newhaven CC are hoping to start working on a Local Place Plan, and keen for

the other 2 Leith CCs to join with them on this. LLCC has wanted to do a Place Plan but felt (when last discussed) that it does not have the capacity meanwhile. Also feel that perhaps a Place Plan should be for a small specific area rather than for an area as big and diverse as 'Leith' as a whole. **ACTION:** Secy to add this item to the Agenda for further discussion at next meeting.

- 8. Planning:** Thanks are due to Avril Ewing who compiled and submitted a very comprehensive response to the consultation on Edinburgh Local Housing Strategy, on behalf of LLCC.  
*Salamander Place* - The developers have appealed to the Scottish Government Reporter re their planning application for the Daltons site on Salamander Street / Place, denied by Council.  
*Assembly Street* - The Reporter will be doing a site visit on 21 May to the site where developers wish to build an ApartHotel. May have been an appeal on the grounds of non-determination by the Council Development Management sub-Committee, in time? Unclear at this point if anyone (CEC or CC?) gets to accompany the Reporter on the visit. Andy Mackenzie thought LLCC had got a letter inviting him, last time the Reporter visited (Johns Place).  
*Seafield Master Plan* – current consultation closes on 30 April, so individuals should respond if possible asap, but CC should get an extension and can respond a bit later. Angus Hardie knows most about it. Sally Millar highlighted the need to build a community, not just housing, importance of greenspace and community infrastructure, transport infrastructure, interesting and coordinated / cohesive building design.  
**ACTION:** Angus Hardie to put together a response from LLCC, to be submitted by .
- 9. Parks and Greenspaces:** Permanent public toilets to be installed - hopefully functional by mid June but possibly not in time for the Gala Day, sadly. Abigail Cunningham stressed the many positive opportunities available and urged new members to join the Parks & Greenspaces sub-committee (currently just herself, Barbara is keen but short of time) and bring new energy and new ideas, leading to new initiatives. We still have £12K (from the Proclaimers) to spend on a permanent improvement to the Links – ideally this year.  
**ACTION** – Secy will send round the short list of projects arrived at last year, and this can be worked up by sub-committee into a 'poll' for Gala Day participants to say which they favour.
- 10. Seafield Sewage Plant:** Eileen Simpson reported that Craig Carr of Scottish Water said they had still not found any contractor to take on and even start doing any of the promised upgrade works (£10million, 2022-2025) as all the costs have soared too high. A commitment from Scottish Government is needed to cover this. Meanwhile, important to keep up the level of complaints, as that is what demonstrates the need. Last year they claimed that complaints had dropped (but that was because the complaints system was down).
- 11. Licensing: covered under item 4. Above**
- 12. AOCB:**  
Barbara Kerr reported that for various good reasons, the Leith Festival Pageant will break with earlier tradition and will this year not take place on Gala Day but at the end of the Festival, on Tattoo Day 22<sup>nd</sup> June (will change route – starting Taylor Gardens –Duke Street, Kirkgate – Tolbooth Wynd – Malmaison). The AGM of Leith Festival will take place on 22 May in the Bowlers Rest. The Launch Party (by invitation only) will take place in the Lioness of Leith 29<sup>th</sup> May.