

Minutes of the meeting of Leith Central Community Council held in the McDonald Road Library on Monday 22 April at 7.00pm

Agreed actions are *italic underlined*.

1 Attendance

Charlotte Encombe	LCCC and Greener Leith
Anne Finlay	LCCC
Anne Munro	LCCC (treasurer)
Annette O'Carroll	LCCC
Roland Reid	LCCC (secretary)
Julian Siann	LCCC
Harald Tobermann	LCCC
Alex Wilson	LCCC & Leith Business Association
Liz Ballantyne	resident
Fiona McRae	resident (Shaws Colonies)
Peter Mellors	resident
Lorna Simpson	resident (Shaws Colonies)
Heather Wilson	resident (Shaws Colonies)
Bruce Ryan	minutes secretary
Malcolm Chisholm MSP	Edinburgh North and Leith (Labour)
Jim Scanlon	Chair, Leith Links CC
Ella Taylor-Smith	Broughton Spurtle
Keith Hales	Leith Business Association
Cllr Nick Gardner	Leith Walk ward (Labour)

2 Introductions and announcements

Roland Reid, Secretary, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

3 Apologies for absence

Juan Garcia Navarro	LCCC
Cllr Maggie Chapman	Leith Walk (Scottish Green Group)
Cllr Angela Blacklock	Leith Walk Ward (Labour)
Cllr Deidre Brock	Leith Walk (SNP)
Mark Lazarowicz MP	North Edinburgh (Labour)
Sophie Brown	Friends of Pilrig Park

4 Approval of minutes of the meeting of 25 March 2013

One correction was requested: page 3, item 5, final paragraph changed from

Anne Finlay and Alex Wilson described experiences where neighbour pressure and complaints to landlords quickly resolved issues.

to

Anne Finlay and Alex Wilson described experiences where neighbour pressure and complaints to CEC HMO licensing ctte finally resolved issues.

A mistake in item numbering was also noticed. The minutes were approved subject to these corrections being made. (Proposed C Encombe, seconded Anne Finlay)

5 Community Police Officer's report

No report – no CPO has been appointed

6 Shrub Place 13/01070/FUL

This topic was introduced by L Ballantyne and spoken to by three attending Colonies residents.

The former tram-shed site next to the Shaws Colonies is now in administration – the administrators wish to sell the site with planning permission for re-development. The site has a brick wall, the remnant gable ends of the former tram-sheds. In recently submitted plans, the developers propose reducing this wall's height to 2m.

Such action would, according to the residents present at the meeting, 'completely alter' [for the worse] the Colonies' streetscape and character which are currently quiet and peaceful, and harm the privacy of Colonies residents because the proposed new buildings would be the height of the original wall. The residents stated that the wall was 'iconic; a link back to the time of the tram sheds'. Hence the residents request that LCCC opposes this action.

The residents reported that the wall is not listed, so the proposed lowering cannot be opposed on such grounds. A planning officer had informed them that if the site was sold with consent for lowering in place, this consent would be hard to reverse. It appears that the wall demolition/lowering was added to the plans after they had been submitted for planning permission. Supporting documentation maintained that the site was only viable for development if the wall could be removed, due to its maintenance costs – it is currently in poor condition.

C Encombe advised that 7 or more objection-comments would be needed to bring the matter to the planning committee's attention, and that any submission by LCCC would carry no more weight than any other comment.

R Reid suggested that LCCC comments that wall removal should have its own planning application.

H Tobermann pointed out the original application 'attempts to be nice', and that the wall [in its current state] increases the cost of the site. The cheaper the site can be sold (due to the wall remaining), the more money the developers can put into the new buildings hence improving the finished development.

P Mellors asked whether this site could be put into or associated with a conservation area?

J Siann noted that the wall is in a precarious state, having been affected by work on the site, and hence needs expensive rebuilding. Hence demolition is the cheaper option.

C Encombe proposed a vote on whether LCCC should submit a comment that it prefers to retain the wall as-is – carried unanimously. *RR to submit comment on behalf of LCCC.*

L Ballantyne noted that works access in planned from Dryden Terrace, which would make its residents' lives 'a nightmare'.

C Encombe asked the colonies residents to CC their objections/comments to LCCC and to ensure their submissions are individualised.

P Mellors suggested the residents check whether the colonies are listed – if so, the listing might include the wall.

7 Leith Walk repairs

H Tobermann apologised to the meeting that he had not drafted a response to the lack of repairs to Leith Walk. He suggested that there was further evidence of planning incompetence, namely 3 or fewer days' notice for a parking suspension and a road closure. Nothing could be done about these individual incidents now, but he wanted to let CEC know that such short notice was unacceptable. He has submitted some FOI requests about how CEC goes about planning. He reiterated that the main issue was that around 2 years ago £5.5m was earmarked for repairs but nothing has been done – he wants to see a plan showing what will happen and when. Finally he mentioned that a radar survey to discover what's under the surface of Leith Walk was planned and wants to know why not just get on with the repairs?

J Scanlon noted that a radar survey had been done before the tram work was started – what has happened to its findings?

C Encombe suggested that Alan Dean should be at every LCCC meeting. A Wilson replied that he already reports to them and that he is articulate, sensible, approachable and qualified in road engineering and reports to them, so this might be overkill. *R Reid suggested inviting him to June meeting. (This action was agreed.)*

A Wilson noted that CEC wants to delegate decisions about the Pilrig-top of Leith Walk section exclusively to local councilors. LBA has argued for inclusion of stakeholders in any such decisions.

H Tobermann suggested there are far too few CEC employees working on plans for Leith Walk. Alex Wilson replied that this is what Mr Dean does full-time and reiterated that he is accessible and approachable. H Tobermann suggested that the client (CEC) isn't onsite, encouraging work to be completed as fast as possible.

Cllr Gardner noted that Mr Dean & others are due to meet Leith CCs and stakeholders early in May. Also, devolution to local councilors would speed things because the CEC cttee meets every 2 months, while local cllrs can meet more often. There is a lot of pressure on cllrs but they are more likely to communicate.

A Munro noted that the pedestrian crossing at Pilrig street has ongoing serious problem due to water gathering and that people are suffering because of this. She asked whether this is due to work and whether it would be cured. H Tobermann noted this work has been postponed to 2014 and may not happen. A Munro responded that CEC should show commitment by fixing these small issues. Cllr Gardner asked to be shown the problem.

K Hales noted that work on the Pilrig-top of Leith Walk section had been delayed because extra funding is needed. Meanwhile CEC still intends to implement the current, substandard, plans

A Wilson noted that a crossing at Piccardy Place is also poor; he believes that all crossings should be fixed.

C Encombe urged LCCC, its members and everyone else to comment when consultation begins. Cllr Gardner pointed out that the plans for this section aren't finalised, so there is opportunity (the consultation) to submit comments.

8 Community Council elections and May AGM

8.1 Formal adoption of constitution

Edinburgh's CCLO has issued a new (draft) model constitution, which could be formally adopted at the May meeting. The final model may include changes to permitted interest groups.

8.2 Appointment of Election Returning Officer

The Macdonald Road librarian has agreed to take this role.

8.3 Appointment of Post-holders, advertising in the *Spurtle*

H Tobermann, C Encombe, Anne Finlay & R Reid had met to discuss RR's succession. It was felt to be important that LCCC raises its profile, so they had drafted advertising to go in the *Broughton Spurtle* (<http://www.broughtonspurtle.org.uk>), subject to LCCC approval of expenditure (*£65 for a year of adverts in the online edition, £20 for an advert in the next print edition*). *This action was approved.* E Taylor-Smith suggested the adverts should be amended to use LCCC's gmail address (not the blueyonder address)

9 Matters arising

9.1 Shrubhill House temporary-use funding bid.

There had been no progress since last meeting. J Siann had written to CEC's chief planning officer but had not yet received a response. However, J Siann had met with Edinburgh & Lothian Green Space Trust. This body understands the point of a community facility on Leith Walk, so if this site becomes available, they may support LCCC's views to Unite.

9.2 Bridge over Powderhall rail line

L Ballantyne also reported no change in circumstances, namely that the operators of this site were supposed to apply for permission on 25 March 2013, had not done so and yet were still working. *R Reid will check with Val Malone re enforcement.*

9.3 Pilrig conservation area proposal

A O'Carroll noted that

- if a property is not in a conservation area, due to 'householder permitted development rights', and owner can do 'anything', even if this might spoil the look of an area.
- CEC had suggested Pilrig could become a conservation area. (The Colonies are listed and hence considered separately.) This proposal went to CEC in January but no substantive action has been taken. Apparently, there will be consultation 'soon'.
- There is a lack of public support for conservation area – could the number of original/non-original doors & windows be counted? The proposed consultation would be the last chance to get CA status: without it, so many changes would occur that there would be no point in trying to conserve.
- She will contact Jack Gillan and write an article for the *Spurtle*.

H Tobermann suggested that a district heating scheme is very unlikely and is hence a red herring. People needed to be patient until the consultation starts, then strongly support conservation area status. C Encombe reminded the meeting how few people generally respond to consultations.

A Munro suggested that people don't know how to support pro-conservation-status actions and are waiting for consultation to start. Could a reminder go on LCCC's website?

9.4 Concessionary fares on trams

not yet resolved

10 Open forum

- A Wilson thanked H Tobermann, J Siann and C Encombe for contributions to a recent LBA meeting
- C Encombe asked for contributions to the website
- Pilrig Park and Friends of Pilrig Park (FoPP)
 - The recent meeting of Friends of Pilrig Park had been very well attended and good communications had been started with CEC.
 - Cllr Brock wishes such bodies to (be) co-ordinate(d) and aim for 'match-funding', i.e. money spent on parks by CEC should be matched by friends bodies' contributions obtaining from lottery funding and similar.
 - There will be fundraising brainstorming meeting (date TBC). The bodies are working on collecting a joint store of tools (e.g. for litter picking).
 - Cllr Gardner added that the meeting had considered Pilrig Park development plan (deadline for submissions 30 April 2013) and that FoPP's board was to meet 4 times year – the next meeting being scheduled for 10 June 2013 (6pm-8pm).
 - A clean-up had been scheduled for 11 May 2013
- J Scanlon reported that the Scottish Government had agreed to fund work on the tennis courts: this work is for July-September 2013. It might lead to further for regeneration if this takes off.
- J Scanlon also reported that Leith Links would host a circus and Edinburgh Mela in close succession, leading to damage, and so has submitted an objection. C Encombe asked whether the budget for these events included a line for restitution.
- P Mellors asked whether paper minutes could be distributed or at least kept in the library for the benefit of non-online stakeholders.

11 Officers' and Councillors' Reports

11.1 Chair

no report

11.2 Treasurer

Previous balance	£1221.80
<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>£30.00</u>
Current balance	£1191.80

11.3 Secretary

no report

11.4 Planning

no report

12 AOCB

- H Tobermann requested that everyone publicises the need for post-holders
- E Taylor-Smith requested personal testimonies for the *Spurtle*.
- A Wilson had attended the AGM of *SS Explorer* Preservation Society (<http://www.ss-explorer.com>). This body is seeking funds for the ship's restoration. This would be a training scheme for unemployed, unskilled people and so Mr Scanlon is contacting other CCs to publicise the case.

13 Date of Next Meeting

27 May (AGM) & short ordinary meeting

24 June, 26 August, 23 September, 28 October, 25 November, 16 December,
subject to CC election dates

Meeting closed 8;50pm