

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of Leith Central Community Council, held in the McDonald Road Library on Monday 16 February 2015 at 7:00pm

Actions and decisions are ***RED ITALIC UNDERLINED SMALLCAPS***. ***NEM CON*** means that no-one spoke or voted against a decision. URLs added by minutes secretary.

1 Introduction, attendance and apologies

1.1 Attendance

Marion Donaldson	LCCC	Jeremy Darot	resident
Charlotte Encombe	LCCC secretary	Susan Dougal	resident
Anne Finlay	LCCC treasurer	David Jacobsen	resident
Adrian Graham	LCCC	Jim Kelty	resident
John Hein	LCCC chair	Willie Mavers	resident
Leah Lockhart	LCCC (Greener Leith rep)	Peter Mellors	resident
Ross McEwan	LCCC	CLlr Deidre Brock	Leith Walk ward (SNP)
Julian Siann	LCCC	CLlr Nick Gardner	Leith Walk ward (Labour)
Irene Sweeney	LCCC	Malcolm Chisholm MSP	Edinburgh North and Leith (Labour)
Harald Tobermann	LCCC vicechair	Ian Buchanan	Central & Leith Neighbourhood Partnership
Bruce Ryan	minutes secretary	Iain MacPhail	City Centre Programme Manager
Anne Chalmers	resident		

1.2 Apologies

None

2 Minutes of the meeting of 19 January 2015

2.1 Adoption

The draft minutes were adopted without changes (proposed C Encombe, seconded A Graham *nem con*)

2.2 Matters Arising

2.2.1 Police interventions at HMOs across Edinburgh (item 2.2.1 in December minutes)

H Tobermann's enquiries are in progress.

2.2.2 Shrub Place – contractor's portakabins (item 7 in January minutes)

Carried forward but see item 9.2 below

3 St James Centre/Picardy Place; presentation and discussion with Ian Buchanan, Central and Leith Neighbourhood Partnership and Ian MacPhail, Senior Project Manager City of Edinburgh Council

Iain MacPhail (IMP) made the following points either in his presentation or in response to questions.

- IMP's work as City Centre Programme Manager includes Picardy Place (PP) because it links current public realm/transport projects, ensuring they are joined up from Leith to Roseburn, to give Edinburgh a better sense of place. PP is a link between LCCC and New Town & Broughton CC, hence his attending this meeting.
- He seeks to apply design principles 'with integrity' to PP, as elsewhere (e.g. George Street), so that the richest competitor doesn't necessarily win the day. For example, the active travel action plan will take up land in PP and elsewhere.
- The starting point for PP plans is that Henderson Global (HG) have existing outline planning consent, from building line to building line. Edinburgh Council (CEC) is pre-emptively deciding design principles (e.g. inclusion of cycle routes, working on traffic flows, access to tram-stops) for PP, bringing in expertise (e.g. from Sustrans and CEC's planning department) to avoid clashes later in the process. This process is being facilitated by Keith Gowanlaw. He was not hired as a designer but as a facilitator via the XL framework. There was a small competitive tendering process (2 or 3 competitors). KG will receive around £4000 for this work – he is paid an hourly rate.
- HG now has to work within these principles, as IMP and colleagues are now ready to react quickly to HG's detailed proposals, rejecting them if they are unsuitable or accepting them if they are not. Such decisions will be based on evidence and the developed design principles.
- LCCC and other relevant CCs will be consulted when planning applications materialise, as these matters do affect local businesses and people.

ACTIONS: IMP TO SUPPLY MINUTES OF STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES, B RYAN TO ADD THEM TO LCCC WEBSITE.

- The relevant group (originally called the *Picardy Place Working Group* but now called the *Leith Programme and Tram interface Working Group*) first met in August 2014, meeting frequently until November. There

was rapid work because in August it was not ready to consider a planning application. The group has not met since November. However, there was a report to CEC by IMP's colleague Alasdair Sim in December 2014. These meetings were private, technical discussions to 'get CEC's house in order'.

- CEC has earmarked £400,000 to examine business cases for 4 options for extending the tram-line. IMP's work ought to influence this examination but is separate from it – they are trying to be ready for any outcome about the trams, and do not wish to lose the sense of place already created by the Leith Programme. This £400,000 has not yet been spent, and is part of the tram programme.
- No PP land has yet been sold off by CEC. Even if no planning application covering Picardy Place is submitted, the connections and active travel action plan envisaged by CEC will still go ahead. If no planning application is received, and it is decided to extend the tram line, then things get interesting – the Trams Act predates the outline planning permission for PP. Traffic modelling has been done by HG, but IMP has not seen this.
- Concerning communication between IMP and LCCC, IMP will reconvene the design group in a few weeks.
ACTION: IMP WILL FORWARD MINUTES OF THIS MEETING TO LCCC, AND WILL INFORM LCCC JUST AS HE INFORMS NTBCC, AND TO KEEP LEITH LINKS AND LEITH HARBOUR & NEWHAVEN CCs INFORMED. (B RYAN HAS SENT THEIR CONTACT DETAILS TO IMP.)

Ian Buchanan (IMP) made the following points either in his presentation or in response to questions. The first question was *How do you envisage the St James plans fitting into the Leith Walk works?*

- When the Leith Programme first started, it had £5.5m from CEC to deliver works from Leith dock gates to just north of PP, but saw early on that they couldn't just stop there – the roundabout needed to be included. They needed to understand how to make necessary changes without spending a fortune here. Consultation, challenging designers, fitting together the needs of many groups takes time. This process eventually got Sustrans to contribute £3.6m to enable the Leith Programme (LP) to deliver what people wanted.
- LP has delivered phase 1 (Constitution Street improvements), has almost finished delivering phase 2 (Crown Place to Iona Street) and is about to start work on phase 3 (foot of LW junction). Phase 4 was Pilrig St to PP. As this was being designed, St James (StJ) plans arose, so phase 4 has been split into two (the border is at Annandale St) to deal with the likely impact of StJ on the LP.
- The design was then reconsidered again in the light of the [December] 2014 report on trams, as requested by CEC. LP was originally designed for, not with, tram because the actual plans for trams were unknown. £5.5 million would not be enough for 'with trams' and it was not known when trams might arrive on LW. It is now the right time to seriously consider how trams can be fitted into LW, while retaining LP principles. There needs to be compromise between the many uses of LW. It should not be just a transport corridor to the docks but must retain a sense of place. Also, the tram line [if it happens] would have a significant influence on LW. It cannot change route halfway along LW, nor can cycle-tracks.
- [Since December report] LP is moving apace on design ideas for Pilrig St to McDonald Road. All LP principles have been applied to this work.

At this point, C Encombe noted that tram works began 10 years ago – LCCC citizens want to see works finished ASAP. The current impression is that this may not happen for a few more years.

- LP has stuck to its remit since day 1, combatting mission creep where necessary. The programme will definitely deliver – it was a brave decision to go ahead with phase 3 despite the possibility of trams. If trams do go that far, changes will need to be made at that junction [at that time] to kerb lines. Even if it is decided that trams go that far, it is may be 2-3 years before work starts there. A TRO for Pilrig St to McDonald Road (including the McDonald Rd junction) will go out shortly. Following consultation, IB expects to appoint a contractor at the end of 2015 and that work will start early in 2016. Plans are ready, no matter whether or not trams go down Leith Walk.

At this point, H Tobermann noted that the LP had been approved several years ago. Surely it should deliver as soon as possible – trams on LW are hypothetical and will not materialise for 2-3 years.

- There has been a hiatus in the meetings mentioned by IMP because there were many long meetings August to November 2014, and it was not possible to draw in new people. IB needed his staff to come out of these meetings to work on LP. The original TIE tram designs were did not include other LW uses and so needed to be improved.

At this point HT asked again why IB was working on tram matters and not focussing on LP.

- IB was testing all options, looking at what might happen to create a design that works for everyone, including potential trams.

At this point, HT suggested that this used time that would have been actually progressing the existing, voted-for stretch from Pilrig St to PP.

- Progress has been made on this stretch – plans have been shared via the stakeholder group. *(HT & J Siann stated that they have **not** seen plans [other than early outline drawings], while the road surface and pavements have continued to deteriorate – the budget exists, so why not carry on with the repairs now?)*
- Even though drawings have not been seen at stakeholder meetings, this does not mean that no progress has been made. They have been mindful of other considerations, such as an order from CEC to consider trams. If they have to ditch work because it does not allow for trams, this will waste a significant amount of money. LP has been put back a bit, but far less than if they had not allowed for trams.

At this point, a resident mentioned a letter from CEC to Leith residents 2 years ago, saying that LW would be repaired – it did not mention trams would come to LW. Action such as filling potholes would show that CEC understood that action was needed to repay the 'debt' CEC owed to citizens due to the damage to LW. The slow **visible** progress was an insult to Leith citizens, and the possibility of trams was distracting from finishing the repairs. Another resident pointed out that it the very short time it took to lay 30 miles of Border Railway track. (See <http://bit.ly/1Ee1RTX>: track-laying started in October 2014 and was finished in February 2015.)

HT then pointed out that Audit Scotland has noted that tram-enabling works cannot be funded from non-tram budget. Hence if IB and colleagues do too much to enable trams, they might fall foul of AS. He reiterated that the money voted for LP had nothing to do with trams, and asked what is stopping IB from spending this money?

- IB replied that HT was familiar with LP's original aims, which have been stuck to. IB stated that there was agreement with the stakeholder group to a time-extension for the Pilrig St to PP stretch. *(HT strenuously denied agreeing to such extensions. See previous minutes at <http://leithcentralcc.co.uk/reports>.)* A lot of the LP is complete, e.g. Constitution St, foot of the walk to Pilrig St. It can't go faster without unacceptable traffic disruption.
- Potholes can't be just patched [from LP money] because Sustrans might then remove their contribution. Hence LP needs to be careful, and mindful of the possibility of trams. There is no hiatus to the works.

At this point, J Siann reiterated that LW was deteriorating as works continued to not happen, and that Sustrans had not come to LCCC to understand citizens' concerns.

- Extra money (£48,000) has been spent on repairs. Movement will happen because of buses and factors below the road surface. There are annual inspections of pavements. Dangerous pavements should be reported immediately – IB will get them repaired with the week.

At this point, HT reminded IB that phase 3 of LP (foot of LW) is going ahead, and other parts of the LP have been completed, even though taking trams through them would need corrective works in the future, which would have be paid for from the tram budget. Does the same logic not apply to the Pilrig-to-PP stretch? The LP should continue *(as IB insists it is)* to PP as fast as possible.

- It's more than just about money, traffic and pedestrians, it's about design principles and people. We are keeping options open in case trams do come to LW but we are not delaying. Cllr Gardner noted that lessons have been learnt from the ghastly disruption since 2005 – disruption due to current work has been less.

4 Community Police Officer's Report

There was no police representative. **ACTION: SECRETARY TO WRITE TO LEITH POLICE, ASKING THEM TO PLAN TO ATTEND LCCC MEETINGS, AND NOTING THAT THEIR PRESENCE AT THIS MEETING WOULD HAVE HELPED IN ITEM 11.1**

5 LCCC Office Bearers' Reports

5.1 Secretary

LCCC has received a community grant for a noticeboard – this would be installed outside McDonald Road when LW had been repaired. As this has not yet happened, should it be installed anyway? It can't be put next to listed buildings, but ideally would be near McDonald Road library – perhaps across LW. **DECISION: POWER DELEGATED TO SECRETARY TO INSTALL THE NOTICEBOARD AT THE MOST SUITABLE AVAILABLE POSITION.**

5.2 Treasurer

Balance is £1,755.44. See Appendix 1 – financial statement for details.

6 Leith Walk repairs and improvements

See item 3 above.

7 Friends of Pilrig Park report

- Self-seeded sycamores have been cut down because they are causing problems.
- 12 assorted non-native trees have been planted. There was no consultation with FoPP, because CEC was running out of planting time.

- CEC's Parks department has ignored FoPP's work on what should happen in the park.
- There will be a clearance on Saturday 21 February.
- The secretary and Cllr Gardner noted that similar non-native species have been planted in Montgomery Park. IB stated that the Neighbourhood Team was 'less than happy' with the Forestry section about this. He has asked them to use consultation to develop a masterplan for planting so that if they do get funding, appropriate trees are planted. The secretary noted that Pilrig park is now fully planted.

8 Planning sub-committee report

Nothing to report

9 Councillors' MP's and MSP's reports

9.1 Cllr Brock

- An planning application for a student housing development application in St Leonards has been refused on the grounds of over-provision. This may be relevant to applications in LCCC's area.
- A bin refurbishment programme has started, commencing with Dalmeny Street. It was reported that bins may have been moved inappropriately. H Tobermann noted that the pavement outside Pilrig Church has an bay suitable for 2 bins, yet there are 3 bins in that area currently blocking a bus-route on LW. IB reported that LP preparation included discussions with waste colleagues – this resulted in plans to have fewer but bigger bins in appropriate bays, delivered as the road and pavement repairs were finished. However bins have not been manufactured quickly enough, while the side-loading waste vehicles for these new bins have been less reliable than planned. ACTION: IB TO PROVIDE POST-MEETING UPDATE.

9.2 Cllr Gardner

Concerning the walkways by the Shrub Hill development, Cllr Gardner has received a response from council officials that no further safety measures are required – see Appendix 2 – response from council officials about Shrub Place walkways and item 7 of January minutes. However, HT noted that there are problems such as pedestrians being forced to walk in puddles. Cllr Brock is looking into regulations and possible actions concerning contractors' portakabins occupying pavements.

9.3 Malcolm Chisholm MSP

- Doctors' surgery at Meadowbank need to be relocated due to the age of their buildings.
- Blandfield residents are facing issues with a wall next to the railway.
- Fears over Drummond Academy playgroup may be unfounded – the playgroup is now run by CEC.
- There have been a few cycle-path etiquette complaints – CEC will put up signs.
- Duncan Place – CEC council will know more about when the new building will be arrive.
- The Community Empowerment bill is now going through Parliament – he hopes it can be amended to mention CCs more.

10 Open Forum

- The Secretary noted that the meeting had attracted several residents, and that LCCC is always interested in new members. Anyone interested in joining would be welcome to email her to find out about CC work.
- The secretary suggested objecting to draft TRO experimental orders that would suspend bus lanes at certain times, and permit mopeds and motorcycles in bus lanes. The chair and Cllr Brock noted that this would be an 18-month experiment that would be closely monitored, with an interim report within 9 months. DECISION: OBJECT TO BOTH VARIATION OF HOURS AND CHANGE OF VEHICLES IN BUS LANES (CARRIED 6:1) – THE SECRETARY WILL SUBMIT A SUITABLE OBJECTION.

11 AOCB/digital engagement

- The chair pointed out that LCCC has been using an emergency email address for too long now. ACTION: CHAIR AND B RYAN TO WORK TOGETHER TO REINSTATE CHAIR@LEITHCENTRALCC.CO.UK ETC.
- M Donaldson reported there had been 60 engagements on Twitter during the meeting. Tweeps were asking
 - about a traffic back-up on Leith Walk just now. IB replied that this was due to the new works, but any issues with traffic management will be fixed ASAP.
 - who checks quality of work on LW. IB said the relevant officer is Alan Dean.
 - About enforcement against double-parking, especially on bus and cycle lanes. IB reported that enforcement was not started until all signs were in place. Enforcement will start soon – illegal and bad behaviour will be stopped.

11.1 Gordon St/Manderson St

Residents reported that there have been ongoing problems with parking in this area. These came to a head when 2 new garages started parking on 'every conceivable space', causing soured relationships between the

residents and existing garages, and the new garages. The only parking left for residents is behind a barrier holding 24 spaces for 72 houses. Yellow lines are being ignored, while an ambulance recently could not reach a sheltered home due to over-parking. Graham Hall (GH) from CEC has stated that this barrier should go, and the area should become public parking. However, this will not increase the number of parking spaces, and the spaces are likely to be used by the new garages, or by undesirables – GS/MS is currently not a problem area.

The residents asked why removal was being considered now, when the area had been adopted in 2007, without consultation, and with unpleasant communication from GH. Why was he not monitoring the garages' untaxed cars and other misdemeanours etc? Police reactions to untaxed cars have not been helpful, although these were around 50% of the new garages' cars, while CEC will not consider selling the area to residents.

IB noted that G Hall is on his team, and that the barrier blocks the public highway, and is hence illegal. He apologised for the way the matter had been handled by GH, and was happy to meet with residents to look into other solutions, e.g. create resident parking by other means, **AND THEN REPORT BACK TO LCCC.**

R McEwan asked whether the parking area was part of the flats' total site area, and whether it might be purchased under the Community Empowerment Bill.

DECISION: IF RESIDENTS ARE NOT SATISFIED AFTER MEETING IB, THEY SHOULD RETURN TO LCCC, WHICH SYMPATHISES WITH THEM.

12 Dates of future meetings

Mostly 3rd Monday of the month: 2015: 16th Mar, 20th Apr, 18th May, 22nd Jun

13 Appendix 1 – financial statement

DATE	DESCRIPTION	Cheque No	Credit	Debit	Balance	Bank Balance
2014	Balance b/f					£1,432.98
19.5.14	Minutes(Mar 2014) B Ryan	425		£50.00		£1,382.98
16.6.14	Marion Donaldson	429		£100.00		£1,282.98
25.6.14	Minutes(Apr 2014) B Ryan	426		£50.00		£1,232.98
15.7.14	Edinburgh Council grant		£989.06			£2,222.04
16.9.14	Mins(Jun14)BRyan+noads upgrade	431		£68.56		£2,153.48
16.9.14	M Donaldson inv+receipts	432		£79.70		£2,073.78
24.9.14	Minutes (Aug 2014) B Ryan	433		£50.00		£2,023.78
23.10.14	Minutes (Sept 2014) B Ryan	427		£50.00		£1,973.78
20.11.14	Minutes (Oct 2014)B Ryan+WPCH	434		£58.34		£1,915.44
22.12.14	Minutes(Nov 2014) B Ryan	435		£50.00		£1,865.44
30.12.14	Spurtle sub for 2015	436		£60.00		£1,805.44
9.2.15	Minutes(Dec 2014) B Ryan	437		50		1,755.44
	TOTALS		£989.06	£666.60		
	Balance b/f		£1,432.98			
	Income		£989.06			
	Total Income		£2,422.04			
	less expenditure		£666.60			
	BALANCE					£1,755.44

14 Appendix 2 – response from council officials about Shrub Place walkways

I and [colleague] visited the site yesterday and took the above photographs. We also spoke to the site agent and discussed the pedestrian and vehicular arrangements for the site. The pedestrian walkway past the site is provided by a well managed segregated channel which is delineated by water filled 'Rhino' barriers and provides more than double the minimum requirement for safe pedestrian passage. The entrance to the walkway is made safe by a series of five kerb ramps to ensure no trip hazard exists for pedestrians. There is a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) in place to suspend parking from Shrub Place Lane to Middlefield to assist with site and delivery management. Ogilvie Construction have been very cooperative regarding the setting up and maintenance and have provided all traffic and pedestrian management measures we have requested. Given the frontage of the site and the existing provision I would not consider that any further safety measures are required.