

Minutes of the annual general meeting of Leith Central Community Council, held in McDonald Road library on Monday 22 June 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	Cllr Nick Gardner	Leith Walk ward (Labour)
Charlotte Encombe	LCCC secretary	Malcolm Chisholm MSP	Edinburgh Northern & Leith (Labour)
Anne Finlay	LCCC treasurer	Jeremy Darot	resident
Adrian Graham	LCCC	Alan Lyall	resident
John Hein	LCCC chair	Don Giles	Leith Harbour & Newhaven CC
Ross McEwan	LCCC	Jim Scanlon	Leith Links CC
Julian Siann	LCCC	Alan McIntosh	Broughton Spurtle
Harald Tobermann	LCCC vice-chair	Sgt Nick Davies	Police Scotland
Bruce Ryan	Minutes secretary		

1.2 Apologies

Irene Sweeney LCCC | Cllr Deidre Brock MP Leith Walk ward (SNP), Edinburgh North & Leith (SNP)

2 Minutes of the AGM of 20 April 2014

2.1 Approval

The minutes were approved with no changes (proposed C Encombe, seconded A Finlay, *nem con*).

2.2 Matters arising

2.2.1 Shrub Place contractor's portakabins (items 2.2.1 in April minutes)

Cllr Gardner spoke about the comments people can make about site management, and the potential for advance community input. He is still pursuing this. H Tobermann noted two approaches in current projects: the Haddington Place site accommodation is above the pavement (as normal) but there is no pedestrian way underneath it. However, on the Shrub Place site, pedestrians are forced into the road and effluent is emerging from the site. A Graham reported that large amounts of polystyrene pollution are also emerging from that site. It was suggested that this is a health and fire hazard, while HT questioned why roads officers were not tackling this. C Encombe reported that she had phoned Considerate Construction and was put through to a person in charge of that site. She suggested that LCCC should contact this person again.

2.2.2 Community beat officers, policing statistics (item 3 in April minutes)

- Cllr Gardner reported that there are now 2 named and appointed CBOs per Edinburgh Council ward.
- Sgt Davies reported that Police Scotland will no longer give out statistics, due to data protection reasons. However, they are hosted on Police Scotland's website. LCCC members stated that Fairmilehead, Stockbridge & Inverleith and Newtown and Broughton CCs do receive local crime statistics. C Encombe suggested that LCCC makes a respectful request for relevant statistics. Sgt Davies said that yearly figures had just been published by Edinburgh Council. Cllr Gardner suggested that now we have CPOs, statistics would become available through this relationship. J Scanlon reported that he is chair of Safer Leith: he offered to pursue this. H Tobermann noted that reports must be consistent to understand trends.

2.2.3 CCTV camera in Kirkgate (item 5 in April minutes)

Cllr Gardner reported that Alan Dean had found that it would cost £10,000 to move, so this will not happen.

2.2.4 Customs House (item 4.1.1 in April minutes)

Held over – no news

2.2.5 Advertising LCCC in *The Leither* (item 4.2 in April minutes)

The advert was created but did not appear in *The Leither*. ***ACTION: M DONALDSON TO ENSURE LCCC IS NOT BILLED INAPPROPRIATELY AND THAT THE LEITHER DOES NOT CARRY INCORRECT INFORMATION ABOUT LCCC.*** D Giles noted that local press is always looking for copy – why not get *The Leither* to run a feature on CCs.

2.2.6 Wire mesh on Waterworld

R McEwan has contacted Waterworld – no response yet

2.2.7 Leith Festival shop on Duke Street

Cllr Gardner will raise this matter with the LF board

3 Leith Walk repairs and improvements

- H Tobermann reported that on 25 June, Edinburgh Council (CEC) would vote on the preliminary business case for extending trams. The options are extensions to (1) McDonald Road road, (2) foot of Leith Walk, (3) Ocean Terminal, or (4) Newhaven. Forecasts suggest that option 1 is not financially viable but options 2, 3 and 4 are. (In fact, CEC chose to delay the decision – see <http://leithcentralcc.co.uk/2015/06/27/when-will-it-end>.) HT also questioned how CEC would pay for any tram-line extension.
- HT noted that obstacle analysis has been a desktop exercise so far – reality is likely to be very problematic. (See <http://greenerleith.org.uk/blog/144m-leith-tram-decision-put-off-until-autumn-5423>.) HT stated that all of the options include tearing up recently installed road surfaces. A Graham reported that Cllr Hinds had stated that trams could be installed without tearing up. J Darot recalled that there had been two ground surveys. HT responded that one set of results had been lost and that such surveys are insufficiently reliable.
- The next Leith Programme stakeholder meeting on will take place on Thursday 25 June (evening). A Greener Leith blog-post has flagged potential issues with the current design, along with potential overspend. (See <http://greenerleith.org.uk/blog/latest-leith-walk-plans-water-down-cycle-safety-measures-5394>.)
- C Encombe had collated comments on the current design, which are apparently still under review:
- Key issues – cycle lane at major junctions ends
 - Closure of rat-run at Brunswick Place
 - Reinstatement bike-friendly signalised junction at McDonald Road
- Particularly poor at McDonald Road Junction
- Cycle priority at minor junctions is confused
- A Graham stated that the crux of the 20mph limit is that pedestrians and cyclists are vulnerable: the current designs do not make them safe. D Giles supported this view, stating that Edinburgh Council has committed to 20mph, but that some of the plans for junctions do not look safe. He suggested that if Edinburgh Council is committed to 20mph, cyclists and pedestrians should get most protection.
- J Siann noted that the government does not encourage mixing pedestrians and cyclists, and that segregative kerbs between pedestrians and cyclised are apparently unsuitable in urban situations in the UK.
- J Darot commented that there are different sorts of cyclists using Leith Walk: commuters who wish to be fast (but safe) – these will not use mixed-use features; others, including children, who wish to be/slow. In JD's opinion the current plans do not suit either group.
- A Graham stated that the plans would do away with the 'over-complicated' refuge at Pilrig Church. He supported the planned changes to traffic lights here.
- J Siann asked about the process for submitting comments, and what happened to comments made at a previous meeting about the plans? A Dean had informed an LCCC member that plans should be finalised by the end of June, then circulated to CCs in mid-July. However, this timetable may be for the 20mph scheme.
- C Encombe noted the lack of pedestrian crossings. R McEwan stated that the plans were not pedestrian-friendly (e.g. too many bins, too much car parking), and hence would not support the local economy. He also stated that the existing and planned pedestrian crossings will not slow cars to 20mph, so other ways (e.g. speed bumps and raised junctions where pedestrians have priority) are needed. **ACTION: M DONALDSON TO CROWDSOURCE VIA TWITTER WHETHER LEITH CENTRAL RESIDENTS WANT MORE PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS.**
- H Tobermann suggested that the two best-designed parts of Edinburgh (the old town and the new town) are easy to understand, but that the Leith Programme phases have different design philosophies, leading to confusion. A consistent philosophy should be (or should have been) applied throughout Leith Walk.
- One LCCC members concurred with a suggestion that Brunswick St is used as a 'rat-run' by HGVs. Others who live nearby have not seen this.

ACTION: LCCC (i.e. C ENCOMBE) WILL SUBMIT COMMENTS/OBJECTIONS AS FOLLOWS:

- **MIXING OF CYCLISTS AND PEDESTRIANS IS UNDESIRABLE.**
- **MORE PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS ARE NEEDED.**
- **PEDESTRIANS SHOULD HAVE MORE PRIORITY/SAFETY FEATURES, E.G. RAISED JUNCTIONS.**
- **A SIMPLE, UNIFORM DESIGN ALL ALONG LEITH WALK IS NEEDED.**
- **THE PLANS ARE NOT CURRENTLY CONDUCIVE TO SHOPPING, WALKING AND ACTIVE TRAVEL.**
- **THE NEW DESIGN OF PEDESTRIAN CROSSING AT PILRIG STREET IS THE ONLY COMMENDED FEATURE OF THE CURRENT PLANS.**

4 Community Police Officer's Report

(See also item 2.2.2 above.)

Sgt Davies reported that:

- He will take LCCC's concerns to Inspector McLean.
- CEC-funded Community Beat Officers (CBOs) have now been appointed. For LCCC's area, they are PCs Colin Spence and Kevin Weaver. CBOs will frequently attend CC meetings and hence build relationships. Leith will have a community policing team as well as the CBOs. Most of Sgt Davies' team can currently be made to

respond to [reported crimes in progress], and hence have few opportunities to 'show face' on beat patrols. CBOs **will** work in communities, and will not be tasked to respond to events, but might be asked to do so.

- He acknowledged public disappointment with Police Scotland (PS) over recent changes. He suggested that they way to get changes is to complain to PS.
- The 101 maximum response-time has fallen from 40 to 8 minutes. Calls are usually answered within 30s.
- Crime figures may be falling due to lack of reportage but sex offences are being reported more.
- Operation Rac is working in Leith and Drylaw (using horses and a helicopter). This is a response to auto-crime and house-breaking. Hence PS can deal with stolen goods being taken from area to area using cycle-paths, because PS can no longer drive on these. PCs go on a 1-day course to become 'bike-police'. Operation Waterlink (dealing with auto-crime) has been subsumed into Operation Rac
- The divisional violence reduction unit is Edinburgh-wide. Officer involved are working in plain clothes. Operation Elbrus focuses on violence and robberies. It is likely to be extended.
- It is now an offence to sell two 'legal highs' ('Blue' and 'Burst'). This should lead to reductions in antisocial behaviour and health-related issues. CEC is probably able to shut down shops selling these substances.
- Concerning a resident's report of very prevalent parking on bus lanes outside La Favorita restaurant (often by La Favorita's own cars, Sgt Davies will speak to the manager.
- Concerning D Giles' statement that Stop and Search (S&S) is 4 times more likely in Scotland than in England and Wales, even though S&S in Scotland has reduced, Sgt Davies responded that S&S recovers many drugs and knives, and that PS officers have recently received much guidance on S&S. While children under 11 years old should not undergo S&S, Sgt Davies will search anyone – including children – he puts in his police car in case they have weapons. PS officers are not required to tell parents if their children have undergone S&S which has found nothing.
- Concerning A Graham's report that police were not wearing their numbers, Sgt Davies stated that this should not occur, and that any incidents should be reported.

5 LCCC Office Bearers' Reports

5.1 Chair, Vice-chair

Nothing to report

5.2 Secretary

She had attended the Quintinshill memorial service, and passed around some memorabilia.

5.3 Treasurer

(See also Appendix 1 – Income & Expenditure below)

- Current balance is £1480.84
- 2014-15 finances have been sent to CEC
- She notes the issue with *The Leither*. (See item 2.2.5 above.)

6 Friends of Parks Report

A Graham had represented LCCC at the Leith Gala. This was a great day, except that contractors had started putting up lighting incorrectly in the cycle path on Leith Links.

7 Planning sub-committee report

H Tobermann has written to Cllrs Blacklock and Brock about letters to CCs when issues go to CEC's planning committee – CEC intends to stop writing such letters. HT wishes CCs to be emailed. Cllr Blacklock will write to the planning ctte's chair.

R McEwan noted that neighbour notification is not needed for permission for demolition in conservation areas, that only an A4 notice on a nearby lamp-post is needed, that this is also true for listed buildings, and that the Scottish Government is looking at legislation around this.

C Encombe suggested that the Shrub Hill student flats are too high for their context. (They are not taller than planned.). Even though this project cannot now be changed, she fears that future projects may also be planned to be too tall. R McEwan stated that such issues have occurred elsewhere (e.g. Canonmills) and that CCs should check drawings for small but significant inaccuracies. He offered to look at the Shrub Hill plans. JS noted that the Shrub Hill place issue may be due to the new building's mass. Cllr Gardner back up CE's concern and suggested that CCs should feed back dissatisfaction they have with 'judgement calls' by CEC planning officials.

ACTION: CE TO WRITE TO CEC ABOUT THIS (RM AND H TOBERMANN TO AIDE HER.). THIS COMPLAINT TO BE CCED TO THE PRESS.

J Siann suggested that certain planning applications may be in limbo – it seems to be hard to find whether there has been any progress about the 'Places for People site'. Similarly, permission to develop a derelict site on West Bowling Green Street will expire in about a year, but nothing has happened here. Similar concerns apply to a site on Brunswick Road. Similarly, Lidl seems to have abandoned a site on Easter Road. (This may have been due to a resident's complaint about their alcohol-retailing license.)

8 Councillors' reports, MP/MSP reports

8.1 Cllr Gardner

- The Edinburgh community solar co-op is nearing fruition. It will include 25 CEC owned buildings, including Edinburgh Leisure buildings. (There aren't many suitable buildings in Leith.) Drummond Community High School and other PPI buildings are harder to include because CEC does not manage them. There will be a share issue (minimum investment £250). The advantages are that buildings will get free electricity and that surpluses can be sold to the national grid. See also <http://www.edinburghsolar.coop> and <http://www.edinburghsolar.coop/contact-us/register-your-interest/>
- CEC's street-naming team asked CEC councillors the development next to Pilrig Park, so Cllr Gardner forwarded this to community members. The new streets will be named Quintinshill Place and Gretna Mews.

8.2 Malcolm Chisholm MSP

- The Community Empowerment Bill has been passed. This makes community planning more local. Community bodies (CBs) can now acquire assets, e.g. Granton has taken over the Granton walled garden. R McEwan has found that CBs can register interests in community assets about a year from now. CEC Edinburgh doesn't currently have a relevant policy, and so CBs should make requests when CEC's framework is in place.
- He is working on parking on pavements and double-parking. This may not be a Scottish Government matter.
- He has asked the SG about CEC's proposed city deal, which would obtain money from SG and the UK government for infrastructure improvements.
- He has also raised the issue of GP vacancies – there seems to be a difficulty recruiting GPs.
- He noted that Edinburgh has the worst housebreaking record in Scotland.
- He suggested that there are many inappropriate small housing developments.

9 Open forum

- M Donaldson asked whether the Leith CCs could collaborate over matters such as Leith Gala and the Customs House. This will change hands on 11 July.
- A Graham is working on banners that could be used at these events and the forthcoming Leith Markets. (See <http://leithcentralcc.co.uk/2015/06/23/leith-stockbridge-grassmarket-markets-every-weekend/>.) However, there are issues around costs (it would be cheaper to buy the banners at Costco but it may be desirable to buy them from a Leith business; also how many should be bought), the logo to be used [B Ryan is waiting on a high-resolution version of the *Persevere* logo.] and whether all three Leith CCs will be mentioned on the banners. (J Scanlon stated that Leith Links CC is happy to contribute to costs.) **ACTION: AG AND CE TO WORK ON WORDING**

10 AOCB

- B Ryan noted the Community Shares Scheme: <http://communitysharesscotland.org.uk> This may aid CBs raising funds to be involved with community assets. He also thanked LCCC members who had had commented on a draft submission to the Local Tax Commission. (See <https://bruce martinryan.files.wordpress.com/2015/06/lcc-call-for-written-evidence-cruickshank-ryan.pdf>.)
- C Encombe reported that LCCC's noticeboard is installed. It will be moved next to the library entrance.
- The secretary asked what is happening to the Duncan Place resource centre. Cllr Gardner stated that a community centre will be built here.

11 Date of next meeting:

17 August 2015

12 Appendix 1: Income & Expenditure

DATE	DESCRIPTION	Cheque No	Credit	Debit	Balance	Bank Balance
2015-16	Balance b/f from 2014-15					£1,655.44
25.3.15	Minutes(Feb 2015) B Ryan	439		50		1,605.44
1.5.15	Minutes(Mar 2015) B Ryan	440		50		£1,555.44
22.6.15	C Encombe (gift+wreath)	442		£74.60		£1,480.84
TOTALS			£0.00	£174.60		
	Balance b/f	£1,655.44				
	Income	£0.00				
	Total Income	£1,655.44				
	less expenditure	£174.60				
	BALANCE	£1,480.84				