

Minutes for meeting of Leith Central Community Council held in the McDonald Road Library on Monday 17th December 2012 at 7.00-9.00pm

Attendance

Roland Reid	Secretary LCCC
Charlotte Encombe	LCCC and Greener Leith
Anne Finlay	LCCC
Anne Munro	LCCC
Harald Tobermann	LCCC
Alex Wilson	LCCC and Leith Business Association
Annette O'Carroll	LCCC
Julian Siann	LCCC
Harald Tobermann	LCCC
PC Simon Daley	Lothian & Borders Police
Cllr Deidre Brock	Leith Walk Ward (SNP)
Cllr Nick Gardner	Leith Walk ward (Labour)
Peter Mellors	Resident
Liz Ballantyne	Resident
Ken O'Neill	Resident
Ella Taylor Smith	Broughton Spurtle
Senga Armstrong	Leith Time Bank
Jagdeep Bhogal	Unite Group
Dave Sinclair	City of Edinburgh Council

1.0 Introductions and Announcements

Roland Reid, secretary welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2.0 Apologies for absence

Juan Garcia Navarro	LCCC
Cllr Chapman	Leith Walk ward (Green)
Cllr Blacklock	Leith Walk Ward (Labour)
Malcolm Chisholm MSP	Lab. North Edinburgh
Mark Lazarowicz MP	Lab. North Edinburgh
Ann McPhail	Acting DHT, Tollcross GME PS
Jim Scanlon	Chair, Leith Links Community Council

3.0 Approval of Minutes of 19 November 2012

Approved. Subject to a correction to £614.46 to the Item 7.2 of the amount stated in the Treasurer's Report.

4.0 Pilrig Park Update

Dave Sinclair of the City of Edinburgh Council outlined the proposals for Pilrig Park. Mr Sinclair works with Ian Buchanan and their section has local responsibility for roads, parks, green spaces, and street cleaning. Mr Sinclair manages a small parks team.

He has a particular interest in Pilrig Park. It is classified as a Community Park and he has been managing it for the last 18 months. It has recently scored “very good” but he acknowledged that improvements could still be made: “clean”, “safe” and “welcoming” are his targets. He is looking at the bins, tree management and berry hedge maintenance, redundant signage, and specifically the waterlogged path from Cambridge Gardens. An improvement plan needs to be established before management plan can be implemented.

He referred to his recent meeting with Councillor Brock and Charlotte Encombe. He noted that there had been a Friends Group in the past and he would welcome its re-establishment. It was agreed to have a follow up report on the Park at the February or March LCCC meeting.

5.0 Leith Time Bank

5.1 Senga Armstrong , Leith Time Bank Development Worker, reported on the project’s progress. Following a launch in July 2012, there are now 22 volunteers. Skills are now being exchanged. These include basic hairdressing, cake decorating, knitting and sewing. Funding is now in place for a second year. The aim is to increase the number of volunteers to 50 including languages students. The project is based at the Pilmeny Development Project’s offices in Buchanan Street. Leaflets giving contact details were circulated. Email contact: sengatimebank@btconnect.com.

6.0 Shrubhill House Site

6.1 Julian Siann referred to his letter of May 2012 to Unite. He revived the content of his letter at the recent public exhibition. The purpose of this exhibition was to consult on the site owners intention to seek an extension under a Section 42 Variation of the Planning Consent . Julian expressed a wish to see the currently derelict area to the front of Shrubhill House temporarily used for public amenity. In early December, Julian met Mr Bhogal of Unite and suggested that he attended our meeting.

Mr Bhogal advised that Unite had made a strategic decision to sell all its vacant sites in Edinburgh and focus on its London projects. There had been a number of interested buyers with one student accommodation developer now seriously negotiating. This is confidential. Any future development would have to be programmed to meet the academic year.

The public exhibition expires in early January and an application for an extension will follow on. Harald Tobermann noted that security concerns had been voiced by neighbours. Mr Bhogal advised that there is a mobile security team making night time visits. Reference was made to Sarah Woodford and the potential use of the building for a public art installation.

Harald Tobermann had met the Architect for the site. He felt that it may be better for the site to be sold on without a Consent so that a fresh approach could be made.

Charlotte Encombe expressed doubts over Unite’s belated engagement with the local community. It was agreed that the LCCC would make a response to the formal application in due course.

7.0 Community Police Officer's Report

PC Simon Daley reported on the recent issues regarding anti social behaviour at McDonald Road Library. The police had received a number of calls from the library where staff had suffered considerable distress. Some homeless individuals have fallen through the net in as much that they have no recourse to public support. They have nowhere to go other than the library. Suggested that an insulated container could be provided to offer a day-time refuge. Cllr Gardner will seek advice on this.

Three arrests have been made at Hawkhill Close. No-one else at risk.

Harald Tobermann referred to the recent crime at the Drill Hall and wished to express gratitude for effective policing both in respect of dealing with the break-in and being kept informed during the investigation.

8.0 Matters Arising

8.1 Leith Walk Improvements. (Drawings were on display) Charlotte Encombe advised that Leith Business Association and Greener Leith were working together with a view to making a joint response. The London Road roundabout was a particular concern in respect of cycle safety for the LBA. Harald Tobermann suggested that the City Council should prioritise pedestrians, cyclists and bus passengers in that order. To satisfactorily upgrade the entire length of Leith Walk would cost more than the current budget. A better approach may be to focus on a section of the street in order to demonstrate what could be achieved in the longer term. Ann Munro made reference to the City's commitment to a "City for all Ages". Increasing crossing times and the installation of Puffin crossings is crucial for the elderly and less able. There is also a need to address pedestrian issues such as uneven pavement surfaces, blocked gullies and water ponding. Responses must be submitted by the 9 January 2013. LCCC planning Sub-Committee to meet prior to that.

8.2 26 Pilrig Street

Charlotte Encombe attended the Committee Meeting and appreciated their understanding of the situation for neighbours. She reported that the Committee deferred a decision. Meantime the premises will be monitored and the Landlord must make building improvements, institute staff training and demonstrate continuity in staffing.

8.3 Bridge over Powder Hall Line

There are still lorries but the site is only being used for storage. It was noted that the developer for this site, BL, are now in administration and that the Deloitte are now in charge. Again, as with the adjacent Shrubhill site, there is now an opportunity for a new vision for redevelopment.

8.4 Pilrig Park Family Centre Relocation. No opposition to relocation received. Secretary will write requesting the security of the site be safeguarded whilst premises are vacant

9.0 Officer's Reports

9.1 **Treasurer.** Starting balance was £1421.80 which includes the City Council Grant. Donation of £200.00 made to Leith Festival Christmas Light event resulting in a current balance of £1221.80.

10.0 Date of Next Meeting

10.1 Monday 21 January 2013

