

Minutes of the meeting of Leith Central Community Council held in the McDonald Road Library on Monday 21 January 2013 at 7.00-9.00pm

Attendance

John Hein	Acting Chair LCCC
Roland Reid	Secretary LCCC
Anne Finlay	LCCC
Anne Munro	LCCC
Juan Garcia	LCCC
Charlotte Encombe	LCCC and Greener Leith
Alex Wilson	LCCC and Leith Business Association
Keith Hales	Leith Business Association
Julian Siann	LCCC
Cllr Nick Gardner	Leith Walk ward (Labour)
Malcolm Chisholm	MSP (Labour)
Sarah Marsh	Resident
Peter Mellors	Resident
Liz Ballantyne	Resident
Ken O'Neill	Resident
Jim Scanlon	Chair, Leith Links Community Council
Stuart Buchanan	Cardross Asset Management Ltd

1.0 Introductions and Announcements

John Hein, Acting Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2.0 Apologies for absence

Cllr Deidre Brock	Leith Walk Ward (SNP)
Cllr Blacklock	Leith Walk Ward (Labour)
Mark Lazarowicz MP	Lab. North Edinburgh
Harald Tobermann	LCCC
Annette O'Carroll	LCCC

3.0 Approval of Minutes of 21 January 2013

Approved. Proposed by Cllr Nick Gardner, seconded by Julian Siann

4.0 Elliot House, 8 Hillside Crescent, Edinburgh

Stuart Buchanan was welcomed to the meeting. He advised that he represents the developers and owners of Elliot House; Rockspring Hanover Property Unit Trust. This property is unlisted and dates from 1959. It is now completely vacant but for the mobile phone masts. The NHS lease expired towards the end of 2012. The first application for change of use to residential was granted and this is valid until 2014. This is subject to a Section 75 agreement.

The Developers are now considering to redevelop the building for student accommodation either

entirely as studios or as a mix of studios and flats. The previous elevational treatment in terms of scale, height and finishes would remain similar. It is hoped to remove the masts when the mobile phone companies rationalise their mast installations.

The area is well served by public transport to the university campus. Cycle racks but no car parking will be provided. The Council have a policy limiting excessive concentration of student accommodation within designated areas. This is set at 30% and within this area this level stands at 10.4% including sites with consent such as the Gateway Theatre development. The earliest completion date is August 2014. The current aim is offer accommodation suited to final year and post graduate students with provision for couples.

Alex Wilson queried if the proposals could appear less office like. Julian Sciann queried if the glazed “penthouses” were in character with the surrounding area. Mr Buchanan advised that the existing office structure was sound and will be re-used. The elevational treatment therefore reflects the existing floor to floor heights.

The development once completed would be professionally managed with a view to maintaining good relationships with neighbours. Summertime use of the accommodation is still under consideration, however post-graduates will be resident for virtually the entire year. (There was concern express later in the meeting that the lack of car park provision may be an issue for mature students).

5.0 Community Police Officer’s Report

5.1 No Report

6.0 Matters Arising

6.1 Leith Walk Repairs Consultation Charlotte Encombe advised that following considerable discussion, a joint Community Council/Greener Leith response was finally submitted. Alex Wilson advised that the LBA response was submitted in the previous week. He saw the repairs and improvements as two separate issues. The LBA wished to see a focus on re-instatement and utilities work as a priority. Scottish Water may make a February start. The LBA had pressed the City Council to appoint a site presence. Alan Dean, who works at the Neighbour Partnership offices in Ferry Road has been given this post. The Council are looking for premises for him, possibly the Library.

6.2 Shrubhill House Julian Siann reported that he did not foresee any site redevelopment before 2014/2015 and so was continuing to pursue a temporary use of part of the site. He had discussed proposals with Sarah Woodford but she had now been relocated. Establishing a social enterprise on the site would be welcome. He now hoped to work with Ann Munro to submit a bid for funding to the Forestry Commission which he will report on at the next meeting. Unite had expressed a continued interest in supporting any application.

6.3 Bridge over Powder Hall Line Liz Ballentyne reported that the rear of the site is still open, the padlock having proved ineffective. She was not aware of any night-time security visits. Materials are still being stored on site and Dryden Terrace residents continue to be disturbed by lorry movements.

6.4 Pilrig Park Family Centre Relocation. The Secretary had written requesting the security of the site be safeguarded whilst the premises are vacant.

6.5 Pilrig Park. Clean-up to take place on Saturday 26 January, weather permitting. Meeting held with representatives of the Parks Dept. and attended by Cllr Brock, Liz Ballentyne and

Charlotte Encombe. A very simple consultation was sought prior to the commencement of improvement works. With a limited budget, the focus should be on the benches and bins. Members agreed to invite Dave Sinclair of the Parks Dept. to a future CC meeting.

6.6 26 Pilrig Street. Reference was made to the article in the Scotsman. Charlotte Encombe reported that the City Council were taking the issues associated with hostels more seriously. Jim Scanlon of Leith Links CC was of a similar opinion. Residents had previously been given little support in dealing with hostel premises where staff were often inexperienced and not trained to deal with tenants. Cllr Gardner advised that the City Council are to take a more co-ordinated approach but changes to the housing benefits could impact on homeless accommodation needs.

7.0 Officer's Reports

7.1 **Treasurer.** No change from previous month. Current balance is £1221.80.

7.2 **Councillors Gardner** reported on Leith Water World. Splash Back submission will be considered on the 31 January. Implementing private property repairs following on from the problems at the City Council Repairs Section continues to be an issue. The application of concessionary fares on the trams has yet to be clarified. Situation may be similar to that of the Glasgow Underground.

8.0 AOCB

8.1 Charlotte Encombe had just attended the social media workshop. Had been advised that LCCC could obtain its own domain name for a sum of £130.00. Proposal to pursue this made by Cllr Gardner and this was approved by members.

8.2 Climate Challenge Fund. Grants of up to £150k are available for projects that can reduce carbon footprints. Closing date is March 2015.

10.0 Date of Next Meeting

10.1 Monday 25 March 2013