

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of Leith Central Community Council, held in the McDonald Road Library on Monday 23 September 2013 at 7.00pm

Agreed actions are italic underlined. Uncertain/incomplete items are in **red**. URLs added by minutes secretary.

Attendance

Charlotte Encombe	LCCC/Greener Leith
Anne Finlay	LCCC (treasurer)
John Hein	LCCC (acting chair)
Roland Reid	LCCC (vice-chair)
Julian Siann	LCCC
Harald Tobermann	LCCC
Bruce Ryan	minutes secretary
Jane Hay	resident
David Jacobsen	resident
Elaine Love	resident
Sarah Marsh	resident
Ross McEwan	resident
Ella Taylor-Smith	Broughton Spurtle
Irene Sweeney	Friends of Pilrig Park
Alex Wilson	Leith Business Association
Jim Scanlon	Leith Links CC
PC Mark Wilson 5992	Police Scotland
CLlr Nick Gardner	Leith Walk ward (Labour)
CLlr Angela Blacklock	Leith Walk ward
CLlr Deidre Brock	Leith Walk ward (SNP)
CLlr Maggie Chapman	Leith Walk ward (Green)
Malcolm Chisholm MSP	Edinburgh North and Leith (Labour)

1 Introductions and announcements

John Hein welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2 Apologies for absence

Annette O'Carroll	LCCC
Peter Mellors	resident
Keith Hales	Leith Business Association
Mark Lazarowicz MP	Edinburgh North & Leith (Labour)

3 Approval of minutes of the meeting of 26 August 2013

At this point and later in the meeting, there was discussion of August's ratification of the June meeting minutes. It was queried:

- how these could be ratified subject to an change that had not been seen. (The minutes secretary read out and obtained approval for the change as he made it during the August meeting.)
- who had said the contentious piece (section 9.6, bullet 3, parenthesis about expected migrations). It was suggested that CLlr Brock may have done so but the piece in question is in CLlr Gardner's section.
- whether the credit crunch was the main cause of the expected migrations failing to occur.

For information, the draft and approved pieces are reproduced in Appendix 1. The change is highlighted.

The August minutes were eventually ratified (proposed H Tobermann, seconded R Reid).

4 Community Police Officer's report

Following a meeting of the **Feeling Safe Community Forum** came up with 6 priorities to make Leith a safer place.

- Leith Links area:Address antisocial behaviour caused by persons drinking alcohol.
- All Leith Primary schools:Run a safe parking initiative at drop off & pick up times.
- Kirkgate area:Address antisocial behaviour caused by persons drinking alcohol.
- Leith Walk:Address antisocial & intimidating behaviour by beggars.
- All Leith & Leith Walk area:Run a Halloween bonfire & firework initiative to address unsafe practices & antisocial behaviour.
- Leith Walk:Run a road traffic initiative to address speeding motorists and cyclists on pavements.

Further information about the Forum can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/q5dtxfx> and <http://tinyurl.com/q237uc8> and <http://tinyurl.com/puuzav8>.

The ban on drinking in public outdoor places is a recent bylaw and formerly was not utilised except in small areas. Now, following discussions, it will be used in Leith but will not be imposed as a blanket ban. Police have discretion to use it if officers believe the drinkers are likely to engage in antisocial behaviour as a result of their drinking. Such drinkers may receive fixed penalty tickets or be arrested if they refuse to stop drinking when told to do so – they get 1 warning. This use of the bylaw has been going for about a fortnight.

A Councillor asked whether there is a grey area about drinking outside pubs. PC Wilson replied that his Inspector had stated that 'a glass of wine during a picnic on the links' is OK, especially people stop drinking when requested.

Another Councillor supported this policy, having been intimidated by local drunks. She feels that the bylaw allows suitable intervention.

Concern was expressed about drinking by eastern Europeans in Junction St, who then go on to damage things and urinate in public. PC Wilson said that such behaviour would be tackled.

5 Leith Walk repairs

H Tobermann reported that the work being planned just now is intended to rectify damage from tram work in previous years. This work, when completed, would have a lifetime of 5-7 years, making it suitable for if/when trams are brought to Leith Walk, which might occur in about 5 years' time.

The work has 3 phases:

- The most northerly one (to the Foot of the Walk) is going reasonably smoothly and is just about completed.
- The next stage is Foot of the Walk to Pilrig Street. This has been subdivided to separate out the big junctions. To allow more 'rapid' progress, City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) working group (Leith Central and other relevant CCs, Leith Business Association and local councillors), chaired by Cllr L Hinds, recently approved relevant plans subject to approval by local Ward Cllrs. This approval was given and Traffic Regulation Orders etc are in progress. Sustrans' contribution has not yet been finalised, so Cllr Hinds is pressing them to do so. Meanwhile CEC is proceeding as if Sustrans' contribution will happen. HT contacted Sustrans separately: they are waiting for approval from Transport Scotland, their 'paymasters'.
- The final stage will be from Pilrig Street upwards.

HT reminded the meeting that the work will be finished at the earliest in 2015. The estimated budget is over £7million, which is not 'a huge sum for a high class job'. So the work will be completed to a standard that's acceptable but a bit more superficial than other repairs around Edinburgh. Also, it appears that Lothian Buses are not against the current plans.

There was discussion of some recent plans being 'incompetent': there are issues with, for example, bus stops, so Leith Business Association has expressed serious concerns. It was requested that the latest plans were supplied to LCCC's webmaster so she could put them online.

D Jacobsen asked why the budget had increased over 2 months. He suggested that there should be a thorough investigation of contracts between contractors and CEC due to substandard earlier work, and that the results of this investigation should be made public. (The investigation would be in parallel with the current works so they were not held up. J Hein pointed out that this was not an issue for LCCC – they were not party to these contracts – but that CEC should be the target of such questioning.

6 Matters arising

6.1 Shrubhill House planning applications

H Tobermann reported on the Strategic Development Plan that covers Edinburgh and its commuting area for next 10 years. The SDP gives guidance and targets to Local Authorities. The key issue is housing allocation: the SDP envisages an additional 100,000 houses, with a large proportion of these being built in Edinburgh. This would put pressure on the green belt, such as the area between Edinburgh airport and Maybury. The issue for LCCC is that there are empty sites such as SHH. HT recommends this brownfield site (and others) should be used first.

Cllr Gardner asked whether LCCC wanted an SDP-aware planner to speak to it. He suggested that even if all brownfield sites were used, CEC would still need to build on the green belt. A resident attending the meeting suggested that CEC may have space for 50,000 houses if densities increase. In general, the meeting felt that LCCC can only influence 'on the edges' but it should promote use of brownfield sites.

R Reid suggested that the issue had a transport dimension – if there was no call, there would be no trams on LW. Also there was a commonality of interest in that western CCs don't want the green belt to be developed and so should use joint meetings to express this to CEC.

Cllr Gardner wanted to know more about the arguments around density and stated that there is concern about high density from residents, so there is a debate to be had.

Cllr Chapman agreed that there are objections to local housing schemes due to proposed densities and other issue, so LCCC could not greenlight every application – the community might object.

It was asked whether CEC could trim the trees at SHH. This area is not owned by CEC but they had trimmed the trees in the past and so might well do so again if asked.

It was reported that CEC should soon lend money to the developers, allowing building to be started. (See also August 2013 minutes, item 6.1)

7 Open forum

No items.

8 Post Community Council Elections

8.1 Role of CC after elections

J Hein had learned that there will not be a contested election for LCCC and there would be some vacancies. He suggested that the first post-election meeting could co-opt members.

8.2 Development of website

The minutes secretary (B Ryan, who is studying how CCs use online to communicate with citizens) outlined his suggestions for making the website more accessible. Ideally a website would be fully accessible and searchable – not only the text in posts but also the content of any attachments. This might involve recreating the site in a Joomla-based content management system and transcribing all attachments into that format. This massive task would cost more than it benefitted. (Cost here is the time to make such changes: Joomla is free, while the domain and webspace have already been paid for.)

However, some things can be done to improve the current Wordpress-based site fairly easily:

- Use of tags, so that visitors can click on a tag such as 'Shrubhill House' to get a list of all posts containing relevant material. Going back through the last 12 months' posts to apply tags might take 2 hours.
- Similarly, when minutes are posted to the site, the minutes secretary could add a short bullet-list of items mentioned in the minutes, so that visitors could see whether it was worthwhile opening full minutes attachments. Doing so would take only a few extra minutes per new minutes post, while going back 12 months would add maybe 2 hours to the tagging time.
- Wordpress may have a search widget. If so, that should be enabled.

The meeting seemed content with these, so BR and C Encombe will meet soon to implement what they can. CE asked people to subscribe to the site – subscribers are emailed as soon as new posts are made. She also requested others to supply content. It was pointed out that the most important issue is to refresh the website (i.e. add new, interesting content) frequently to get attention.

It was noted that the website is up to date but some content corrections were needed and that LCCC should have only one email address.

8.3 Meeting procedures – locking up library

R Reid is standing down after this meeting. In the past, he has made arrangements for meetings. He pointed out that the Library has allowed LCCC to use the meeting room at zero cost, and has allowed meetings to run on after 9pm. He stated that now someone else would need to obtain keys and the alarm-code, arrange tables for the meeting and make sure that the Library was vacated securely after meetings. He offered to hand over to whoever was nominated at the next meeting.

8.4 Storage of CC marquees

R Reid currently has these but strongly wishes to hand them over to someone more appropriate. They were bought by the Neighbourhood Partnership on the proviso that they would be available to other local groups. Cllr Chapman asked whether the marquees could be stored in the Library.

8.5 Handover of LCCC documents

R Reid will collate the hard-copy documentation he has accumulated, then hand it over for storage in the Library. He will also hand over his emailing list to the new secretary. H Tobermann has offered to stand in for drawing up agenda.

8.6 Meeting dates

R Reid suggested that meetings could change from the 4th to the 3rd Monday of each month to avoid clashes with other local CCs, thus allowing MPs, MSPs and local councillors to attend all relevant CC meetings

9 Officers', Councillors' and Friends of Parks' reports**9.1 Chair**

No report

9.2 Vice-chair

No report

9.3 Treasurer

Please see Appendix 3 for latest income/expenditure sheet.

Opening balance	£1131.80
Cheques	£0030.00 – minutes secretary
	£0020.94 – domain renewal
Closing balance	£1080.86

Signatory handover is imminent. The annual grant from CEC has been delivered by BACS.

9.4 Secretary

No report – no secretary

9.5 Planning

No report

9.6 M Chisholm MSP

He reported that he has been working on aspects of Shrubhill House and Broughton Primary School. CEC had responded to a Scottish Government publication on how to respond to utility issues.

9.7 Cllr Blacklock

She reported that

- she was working with parents on Broughton Primary School. She had gone with relevant parents to look at the new classrooms and felt they were impressive.
- She reported that following CEC had published a draft budget last year. This process worked well so this year's draft budget is now out for consultation.

9.8 Cllr Gardner

There is a lively Facebook page about Broughton Primary School.

The **Feeling Safe Community Forum** met recently. The priorities set are listed in item 4. The next meeting will take place on Saturday 14 December at the Community Space in Ocean Terminal. (doors open 11am, business to begin at 11:30) Suggestions for priorities and improvement will be welcome.

9.9 Cllr Brock

The Clean Leith Community Forum will meet on 7 October. More information here: <http://tinyurl.com/puxf549>

The Friends of Parks had a 'worthwhile meeting'.

[At this point, there was further discussion of the June minutes.]

H Tobermann asked the elected members how he could join a school group.

9.10 Friends of Pilrig Park

Another clean-up day has been held. This one found less rubbish than previous days. There have been some issues with brush under trees, so the possibility of bringing in a specialist is being investigated. There have also been issues with human waste and men emerging from bushes. The park now has approval to take suitable measures. The park is also to get new benches. CEC has only 6 park wardens for the parks in the central area of Edinburgh, so cannot provide full services.

C Encombe noted that the park is 'so much better' but warned that removal of undergrowth would harm biodiversity. The park would be careful about the millennium forest.

Cllr Garner suggested sudden surges – these have worked in other areas, as do clean-up days.

R Reid asked whether there is felling in the park just now.

10 AOCB

- J Hein noted that Ocean Terminal has a forum community room. Use is free but £100 deposit and public liability insurance are needed. It was suggested that community groups could avail themselves of the Neighbourhood Partnership's PLI.
- The Greener Leith AGM has been postponed to 7:30 on 22 October at Kirkgate.
- A clean-up kit can be borrowed from the Library, on production of a library card.
- Orchard on Leith Links will be a venue on Doors Open Day. It will be open 12noon to 4pm on Sunday 29 September. Leith Theatre also taking part in DOD.
- There will be a Yes Edinburgh event at 7:30 on 3 October (venue?). (This may be the following: <http://tinyurl.com/o8ssudl>.)

11 DONM

21st October

12 Meeting closed at 20:50

R Reid was thanked for his sterling service to LCCC over the years.

13 Appendix 1 – June minutes (section 9.6, bullet 3)

The piece that was expanded/clarified before ratification is highlighted in both the draft and ratified versions.

13.1 Draft version

- There has been concern among parents about Broughton Primary School, and a Facebook page has been set up. 2-4 more classrooms are needed locally to cope with demand (due to unexpected lack of migration – demand had been expected to fall). CEC had investigated several options, such as reinstating the former Broughton High School (McDonald Road) but this property has been sold (subject to exchange of missives) and would need £5million to achieve modern standards. 4 modular classrooms cost £1million, so this is the best option under current circumstances.

13.2 Ratified version

- There has been concern among parents about Broughton Primary School, and a Facebook page has been set up. 2-4 more classrooms are needed locally to cope with demand. (CEC had expected certain migrations around the city, based on previous years' experience. These would have led to reduced demand for classrooms at BPS. However these migrations did not occur – probably due to the credit crunch. That is, the people who would have moved out of BPS' area couldn't afford to do so, so their children will still attend BPS.) CEC had investigated several options, such as reinstating the former Broughton High School (McDonald Road) but this property has been sold (subject to exchange of missives) and would need £5million to achieve modern standards. 4 modular classrooms cost £1million, so this is the best option under current circumstances.

Balance b/f	£1,221.80
Income	£0.00
Total Income	£1,221.80
less expenditure	£140.94
BALANCE	£1,080.86