

## Minutes of the ordinary meeting of Leith Central Community Council, held in the McDonald Road Library on Monday 20 January 2014 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	Bruce Ryan	minutes secretary
Charlotte Encombe	LCCC (secretary)	Peter Mellors	Resident
Pamela Grant	LCCC	Keith Hales	Leith Business Association
Ross McEwan	LCCC	Cllr Angela Blacklock	Leith Walk ward (Labour)
Julian Siann	LCCC	Cllr Nick Gardner	Leith Walk ward (Labour)
Irene Sweeney	LCCC	Ella Taylor-Smith	Broughton Spurtle
Harald Tobermann	LCCC (vice-chair)	Jim Scanlon	Leith Links CC
Alex Wilson	LCCC	Gary Sleator	Lidl

Two architecture students from Edinburgh University also attended part of the meeting.

#### 1.2 Apologies for absence

Anne Finlay	LCCC (treasurer)	Samuel Barron	LCCC
John Hein	LCCC (chair)	Cllr Deidre Brock	Leith Walk ward (SNP)

The meeting was chaired by the vice-chair, except for item 5 which was chaired by the secretary.

### 2 Minutes of the meeting of 16 December 2013

Adopted without changes (proposed A Wilson, seconded C Encombe)

### 3 Matters arising from previous month's minutes

This section doubles as Secretary's report. Items not reported on or not yet achieved are **highlighted in cyan**.

#### 3.1 Planning training/team building (item 3.4 in December minutes) – Secretary

This has been arranged for Saturday 1 February, 10am-1pm at McDonald Road library.

#### 3.2 Communications subcommittee (item 4 in December minutes) – Chair and Secretary

**Chair not present to advise on cellphone arrangements.**

Edinburgh Council has been advised of land-line number. ***ACTION: M DONALDSON TO REPORT ON POTENTIAL COSTS***

#### 3.3 Community PO's report (item 5 in December minutes) – Secretary

Priorities for Leith Walk are listed at <http://www.scotland.police.uk/your-community/edinburgh/edinburgh-north/leith-walk>.

#### 3.4 Friends of Pilrig Park (item 6 in December minutes) – Treasurer

**FoPP have not yet received the £200 mandated in December.** ***ACTION: CE TO CONTACT AF/JH TO MAKE SURE PAYMENT IS PROCESSED.*** (Secretary has emailed AF/JH.)

#### 3.5 248 Easter Road (Lidl) (item 7.1 in December minutes) – H Tobermann

See item 4 below for Lidl representative. **H Toberman to expedite submission of complaint.**

#### 3.6 Pre-application process/Tennent St application (item 7.2 in December minutes) – J Slann

Not done – missed deadline for submitting comments (6 January).

#### 3.7 Cheque-signing (item 8.1 in December minutes) – Chair

***ACTION: SECRETARY TO CHECK WITH CHAIR/TREASURER THAT PAYMENT PROCESS IS WORKING.*** (Secretary reports it is now working.)

#### 3.8 Trade waste uplift pilot scheme (item 8.2 in December minutes) – Cllr Brock

Cllr Brock emailed that Lisa Paton (business manager for Cleaner Leith initiative) reports that this pilot will be running from March to September (6 months)

#### 3.9 Submit complaint about Leith Walk stakeholder meetings (item 9 in December minutes) – H Tobermann

Done: - see <http://leithcentralcc.co.uk/2014/01/05/lccc-response-to-tro1351-pilrig-street-to-duke-street>

#### **4 Potential Lidl store at 248 Easter Road**

This is the former B&Q store. Gary Sleator, a surveyor for Lidl, spoke about their plans for converting this to a Lidl food store. For such stores to work, they need 20,000 potential customers. Leith's high population density is suitable for this. GS has met with relevant councillors, Neighbourhood Partnership, is writing to about 10,000 local people to obtain their views. There will also be a website. Lidl hopes to lodge planning application in mid March, decision being made in about 2 months. The following topics were raised:

1. Parking time restraints at Lidl stores are usually 90 minutes but GS sees this one as a 'basket' store and is consulting with Edinburgh Council transport officials. J Scanlon and C Encombe prefer shorter parking times
2. Deliveries: to minimise inconvenience, there would be 1 delivery per day, outwith shopping times. The lorry would not be articulated.
3. In addition to the normal range of groceries, there would also be an in-store bakery
4. The shop is 8000 square feet (equivalent to a large Tesco express). GS believes its presence would improve the area, hence increasing footfall and other shops' trade. The evidence for this is based on GS's research in Kilsyth where a new Lidl store either made no change or slightly increased footfall in other local shops. GS will forward this research to LCCC.
5. Opening hours would be 8am-10pm (at the latest), 7 days per week.
6. Recycling bins were present when the site was a B&Q store. GS knows councillors and NP officials want bins back and suggests LCCC insists to planners that requirement for such bins is included in planning permission. Rubbish would be taken away by the delivery lorries mentioned in point 2.

#### **5 Community police officer report**

No report but see item 3.3 above for local policing priorities

#### **6 Leith Walk repairs and improvements**

H Tobermann presented a discussion paper (appendix 1), aimed at arriving at a consensus that would strengthen LCCC's negotiating position with Edinburgh Council. Discussion generally followed two themes – some people prefer action now, even if the results are less than perfect and visionary. Others prefer a more thorough-going, visionary approach, even though this would be more expensive and would take longer to implement (assuming the money could be found). The following points were made:

- Cllr Hinds has only just responded to an email sent by H Tobermann in November.
- Leith Walk has been deteriorating for roughly 7 years, yet urgent road surface repairs are the most important thing (not) happening in Leith. Programme meetings began in October 2012 – the budget for the work has increased but work has not started and could take up to 3 years to be completed?
- K Hales stated that in summer 2012 Cllr Hinds suggested abandoning the design then in place so that a better design could be generated. KH suggested that if the original design had not been abandoned, the delay in the repairs might have been less. HT stated that the timeline for repairs has not been published, just a statement that works would be completed in January 2016 if there are no further delays.
- A Wilson stated that specifications were still not available and that the drawings currently available now no longer include trams on Leith Walk, something that he thought Edinburgh Council were still hoping to introduce at some point J Siann concurred that a full design documents had not been published.
- R McEwan suggested that LW is one of the greatest streets and that LCCC should tell Edinburgh Council how it should be, and that because Leith is now the most densely populated area in Scotland and has 10% of Edinburgh's population, it should get 10% or more of available resources. (
- HT suggested that the key point is that no work has yet been done – 7 years after tram preparation began. Only £9million is available, not enough for a top class redesign. The design process is being handled by the neighbourhood team, without a strong project manager, whereas a dedicated project manager was appointed for the recently constructed flood defences. The current proposals for Leith Walk have a design life of 7-15 years, partially because they would use cheaper methods and materials, partially because Edinburgh Council envisages trams coming to Leith Walk eventually. By contrast, the design-life for Princes St is much longer..
- HT also suggested that if the TRO mentioned in section b (Foot of the Walk to Pilrig Street, page 3 of discussion paper) was halted, this might delay repairs by another 6 months. KH felt that this option would be disastrous for businesses along this stretch of Leith Walk. In addition HT proposed that the Council carry out urgent and necessary road surface repairs to the section of Leith Walk between Pilrig Street and Elm Row.
- CE agreed with the proposal for urgent repairs as the road is currently very dangerous for cyclists – dedicated cycle paths could be made later. (B Ryan concurred – he believes cyclists don't need cycle-paths but to give all their attention to traffic rather than pot-hole-spotting.)

- J Siann asked what control and/or expectations Sustrans have, given they are providing some of the budget. He suggested that the necessary repairs should be funded from road repair budgets and that the £9million should be used for redesigning Leith Walk.
- J Scanlon suggested involving Leith Links and Leith Harbour/Newhaven to add weight to LCCC's position.
- Cllr Blacklock stated that Leith Walk is very important, connecting Edinburgh to the docks and sea and that it looked good before the tram works started. She prefers the best design possible and believes that temporary works should not be done now if they will be replaced in only a year's time. She would like to keep cycle-lanes and believe the main cause of the delay was the dispute with contractors. HT clarified that he did not intend wholesale replacement of things a year later but that some of the pavement-reinstatement work (max 10%) would be changed if parking spaces were changed after a year's review.
- J Siann stated that there was about to be a crucial stakeholder meeting but that [so far] such meetings are not minuted, no drawings are produced and hence nothing is resolved. KH stated that parking is never discussed at stakeholder meetings. CE responded that Edinburgh Council has agreed to minute these meetings but KH stated that Cllr Hinds has promised only action points, not full minutes. B Ryan suggested that it is better to remain engaged with these meetings to have some chance of influencing matters. JS said he was willing to continue attending these meetings so long as they remain worthwhile, while HT stated he could only continue attending if LCCC adopted point a (page 3 of the paper).
- Cllr Gardner stated that a committed design team wasn't available and that if parking spaces are cut, enforcement would need to be strengthened. CE suggested that LCCC should ask not just for road surface repairs but for yellow lines to be reinstated and parking restrictions to be enforced.
- KH suggested that LCCC should take on board the opinions of the business who oppose the current TRO.
- **DECISIONS (ALL NEM CON)**
  - **PAPER TO BE ADOPTED SUBJECT TO ADDITION OF POTHOLE-FIXING AND REINSTATEMENT OF YELLOW LINES TO POINT A (PAGE 3 OF PAPER)**
  - **HT AND JS TO CONTINUE REPRESENTING LCCC AT STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS**

## 7 Friends of Pilrig Park report

- Another clearance day has taken place (date not supplied)
- Benches are due to arrive by the end of January
- See also item 3.4 above

## 8 Planning Sub-committee

According to the local plan housing allocation, Edinburgh Council is to provide 10,000 extra homes. There has been much lobbying by developers who want to build a 'garden city', which could jeopardise building on the brownfield sites available in Leith.

There will be a meeting with Irene Beautyman about the Leith local plan in February – the secretary has suggested dates towards the end of February. LCCC will have 3 months to respond to the plan. **ACTION: ALL MEMBERS TO RESPOND TO DOODLE EMAIL TO SCHEDULE THIS EVENT ASAP**

## 9 Officers', Councilors' and MP/MSP reports

### 9.1 Treasurer

Current financial status is in appendix 1. See also item 3.7 above.

### 9.2 Cllr Brock

See item 3.8 above. K Hales noted that businesses have been told about the pilot scheme but not informed of the dates. He says that enforcement will be needed for the scheme to work. Cllr Blacklock said that businesses have been asked to suggest pick-up times, so these have not yet been decided. KH responded that there should be 2 times, one early for diurnal businesses, one late for pubs and restaurants.

### 9.3 Cllr Blacklock

Most current council activity is about the 2014-15 budget. She asked LCCC to promote the Leith time bank: <http://www.edinburghtimebank.org.uk/timebanks/leith>

### 9.4 Cllr Gardner

Leith Decides event is scheduled for 1-3pm February 15 at Leith Community Education Centre at New Kirkgate. <http://www.edinburghnp.org.uk/neighbourhood-partnerships/leith/about/leith-decides/>

## 10 Open Forum

It was asked whether LCCC is a member of the health and social care partnership, and whether LCCC should be in similar partnerships. Anna Herriman (Partnership and Information Manager, City Centre and Leith) could be invited to next meeting. **ACTION: SECRETARY TO ARRANGE THIS**

S Barron had given some feedback on the recent community council training day. (See appendix 2) He was unsure of the difference between neighbourhood *teams* and neighbourhood *partnerships*. He also suggested forming stronger links with LCCC's neighbouring CCs (Leith Links and Leith Harbour/Newhaven CCs, Trinity, Stockbridge/Inverleith, New Town/Broughton, Old Town (currently defunct) and Craigentinny/Meadowbank?)

Training day materials are now on the LCCC website at <http://leithcentralcc.co.uk/information>.

## 11 AOCB

No items

## 12 Dates of future meetings

17 February 2014, 17 March 2014, 28 April 2014, 19 May 2014 (AGM), 16 June 2014

## Appendix 1 – current financial position

DATE	DESCRIPTION	Cheque No	Credit	Debit	Balance	Bank Balance
2013	Balance b/f					£1,221.80
09-Apr	Minutes B Ryan	351		30		£1,191.80
20-May	Minutes B Ryan	352		£30.00		£1,161.80
15-Aug	Minutes B Ryan	353		£30.00		£1,131.80
14-Sep	Minutes (June) B Ryan	354		£30.00		£1,101.80
14-Sep	C Encombe- domain renewal	355		£20.94		£1,080.86
10-Sep	Edinburgh Council		989.06			2,069.92
21-Oct	LGBT	356		18.68		2,051.24
31-Oct	Minutes (Aug/Sept) B Ryan	357		£60.00		1,991.24
27-Dec	Affiliate Mem Cockburn Assoc	358		40		1,951.24
27-Dec	Minutes (Oct/Nov) B Ryan					
	plus domain link	359		68.26		1,882.98
TOTALS			£989.06	£327.88		

Balance b/f	£1,221.80
Income	£989.06
Total Income	£2,210.86
less expenditure	£327.88
BALANCE	£1,882.98

## Appendix 2 – S Barron's thoughts re CC training day

The event was billed as an induction meeting and indeed the content followed that route. However there did appear to be a disproportionate number of "time served" CC members there. Although they did bring experience with them, some tended to talk too much and extol their own personal gripes. This was worth viewing from a distance - with many coming over as moaners and objectors. Planning problems, which we experience in our own CC, came over as a major problem. However all comments tended towards negative and in one case a CC member (not from LCCC) accused the planning system of being corrupt. I think Harold at a recent meeting encouraged us to not fall into the trap of always objecting, as such practice did not endear us to Council members or officers. From some of the attitudes I experience on Saturday this is something we need to be careful about.

It was evident that throughout the city there are many groups working for the betterment of our city. However many people were not clear exactly what each group was doing or indeed of their existence. In particular there was a speaker about Neighbourhood Partnerships. Many were unaware of the NP role, when they met and the outcome of meetings. If this is the situation of "well informed" CC members, I wonder what the situation is for the average mam/woman in the street. Perhaps it could be a role for LCCC to be a hub, where all our residents could find out about the various groups involved in our area, how they can be contacted, what roles they play etc.

The workshop I attended showed that many CC felt inadequate in assessing local opinions. Even the most experienced member (I think about 15 years as a CC member) did not feel that his CC members were truly representative of their community. One person commented the City Council members can more clearly claim to represent local opinions (as they had been voted for) whereas CC members had not been voted for. I don't know what measures LCCC take to accurately obtain local views so that we reflect local opinions rather than our own.

## Appendix 3 – ORIGINAL VERSION of Leith Walk repairs discussion paper

### LCCC and Leith Walk Works: a discussion paper

#### Purpose of paper

- to remind ourselves of how we ended up where we are and to inform discussion
- to help us arrive at a position that commands support of LCCC members and to recommend the best way forward

#### Background: how did we get here?

Since **August 2007 (2,363 days ago)** Leith Walk has suffered from an increasingly deteriorating public realm, impacting on every aspect of normal city street life usage. Most of the following problems are still unresolved as of today, January 2014:

- uneven and unsafe pavements
- pockmarked road surfaces
- temporary (and frequently changing) pedestrian routes and crossings
- unpredictable parking loading arrangements, impacting on retailers and waste collection
- poor drainage, especially near pedestrian crossings
- litter caught in the temporary road patches (notwithstanding the recent astonishing road cleanliness survey)

These problems started in the **summer of 2007** with the commencement of the underground multi-utility works (MUDFA) in preparation for laying tram tracks and were caused by contractors merely patching any holes that were dug, or constructing and shifting countless temporary kerbs, build-outs and pedestrian crossings. Routine maintenance of Leith Walk was also suspended in the expectation that the public realm works planned in the wake of the core tram infrastructure works (rails, overhead lines, signalling and tram stops) would fix these issues by **summer 2010**. The tram budget provided nearly £20m for such public realm works.

A three year wait for getting back a decent public realm was a big ask in 2007/8. The reality of subsequent events and delays is even more disappointing:

- 2009, February: **tram works halted** due to the notorious contractual dispute between CEC and the construction company
- 2010, March: TRO published, seeking to implement changes to Leith Walk as if the tram lines were still about to be laid
- 2011, June: CEC finally **votes for shortened tram line** (airport to St Andrew Square), thus clarifying the position for Leith Walk. Simultaneously, a **budget of £3.2m** for reinstatement of Leith Walk/Constitution Street was approved
- 2011, November: Transport, Infrastructure and Environment Committee notes that report that “north of York Place” “the majority of the carriageway and footway reinstatement works will be carried out in **Spring/Summer 2012 [sic]** after the utility-related works<sup>1</sup> are completed to avoid abortive works.”
- 2012, July: Finance and Resource Committee agrees a **budget of £5.5 million** to “upgrade roads and pavements and carry out a range of environmental improvements along Constitution Street, Leith Walk and Picardy Place”

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<sup>1</sup> refers to “abandonment of redundant Scottish Water installations”

2012, October: occasional “**Leith Programme**” **update meetings** commence  
 2012, November: design/scope public realm **consultation** commences  
 2013, January: utility works in Constitution Street works finally get underway  
 2013, June: regular Leith Programme Stakeholder meetings commence  
 2013, September: **£3.6m is added to budget** from Scottish Government funds towards a design that “prioritises pedestrians, cyclists and sustainable modes of transport, creating a vibrant and lively street which will benefit local residents and businesses as well as those visiting the area.”  
 2013, December: TRO for Crowne Place to Iona Street published  
 2013, December, **draft Leith Programme Stakeholders Group remit** issued  
 2014, January: controversial **Leith Walk petition** launched

Given the current serial phasing and slow design process, it is projected - **provided there are no further delays** - that the Leith Walk works will complete in **January 2016**, nearly 9 years after the start of the tram works, nearly 7 years after tram works came to a halt amidst the contractual dispute, 4.5 years after it was decided not to build a tram line along Leith Walk and money for reinstatement was available, nearly 2 years after the trams will have started running on the line to York Place.

In summary, we have not only witnessed, but had to live through and with nearly a decade of deterioration of vital public infrastructure and parallel devaluation of public assets, as well as serious problems for the many thousand daily users of Leith Walk - 40,000: as many as the Forth Road Bridge - ranging from inconvenience to physical injury, from increased costs and time wasted to the loss of livelihood.

The length of time it has taken for the remedial process to reach the present stage - 2.5 years since approval, preceded by a year of lobbying - has exhausted the patience of local residents and retailers. While the present scheme is far from perfect (£9m - even with the most efficient project management - was never going to go very far), any further delays would be unacceptable and in fact insulting: nobody wants to see Leith Walk reinstatement works still being argued over two years after the tram route has been completed.

## **Recommendations**

In order to provide a **clarify and refresh the mandate** and **lend force to future interaction with CEC**, it is recommended that LCCC

1. notes that
  - a. Leith Walk is the most densely populated area in Scotland
  - b. less than 25% of Leith Walk’s population has regular use of a car
  - c. Leith Walk (ward 12) and Leith (ward 13) represent over 10% of Edinburgh’s population
  - d. Leith Walk has seen a 30% increase in population since the 2001 census
  - e. Leith Walk houses over 300 retail premises
2. agrees that the highest priority for Leith Walk is the **speedy implementation of physical improvement measures**, fixing the serious deterioration of the public realm since 2007. In



particular, LCCC agrees to pursue implementation of measures with a design life of 7-15 years in the following order of priority:

- a. **for Pilrig Street to Picardy Place and Foot of the Walk - the most heavily used sections of Leith Walk**, implementation of **immediate basic pedestrian measures starting at the northern end**, reinstating pavements to what was there *before* tram works/MUDFA disruption - same materials, same layout and **requiring no TRO** and using simplified procurement procedures and the initial £3.2m budget
  - b. **for Crowne Place to Iona Street**, approval of present TRO and subsequent speedy implementation - despite possible design shortcomings, **followed by a review in light of first 12 months experience**, in particular the option of locating a number of communal bins in suitable side streets.
  - c. using projected remaining funds and coordinated with implementation of recommendation 2a (accepting minor duplication of work), create a more ambitious design **for Pilrig Street to Picardy Place and Foot of the Walk** that meets the Scottish Government funding criteria and benefits in the first instance local residents, particularly pedestrians, then public transport and cyclists, then retailers and visitors to Leith Walk and finally road users who are passing through.
3. agrees to renew the nominations of LCCC members Julian Siann and Harald Tobermann as LCCC representatives on the Leith Programme Stakeholders Group with the following remit:
- a. support a programme for Leith Walk works that meets the priorities set out in para 2 above
  - b. support a Stakeholder Group remit and standard agenda that provides transparency and certainty and meets the programme priorities set out in para 2 above
  - c. support the present TRO for the northern section of Leith Walk in the interest of speedy progress, while arguing for an early review following physical implementation
  - d. support a strengthened and more focussed programme team, as was agreed recently for the similarly delayed Water of Leith flood prevention scheme
  - e. consider a deputation to the next Transport and Environment Committee in March 2014

#### Appendix: References and Links

- [EDINBURGH TRAMS: A CASE STUDY OF A COMPLEX PROJECT](#), John G Lowe, Department of Construction Management and Economics, Glasgow Caledonian University
- [Trams Update 24 April 2008: Programme](#), TIE Ltd
- [Forgetting Leith Walk in tram project would be 'cart before the horse'](#), Harald Tobermann: The Guardian Edinburgh Blog, 23 November 2010
- [2011 Census: Population Distribution and Density in Edinburgh](#), CEC Planning Information Bulletin 2013 No.11
- [Edinburgh Trams](#), Wikipedia
- [TIE papers](#), archived on historical LBA site
- [Leith Programme 2012-2014](#), CEC website
- [Leith Programme estimated phasing schedule version 2](#), produced December 2013
- [Trams troubleshooter to help flood prevention](#), Evening News, 8 January 2014
- [Item No. 7.6 - The Leith Programme Consultation and Design](#), TEC Report.March 2013