

# Minutes of the annual general meeting of Leith Central Community Council, held in Leith Community Centre on Monday 17 August 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

H Tobermann chaired the meeting in the absence of J Hein.

### 1.1 Attendance

Anne Finlay	LCCC treasurer	Iris Hastie	resident
Adrian Graham	LCCC	Lorraine Moore	resident
Ross McEwan	LCCC	Lewis Ritchie	resident
Julian Siann	LCCC	Morvern Cunningham	Leith Creative
Irene Sweeney	LCCC	Duncan Bremner	Leith Creative
Harald Tobermann	LCCC vice-chair	Ben Macpherson	SNP/observer
Bruce Ryan	Minutes secretary	Ella Taylor Smith	Broughton Spurtle
Cllr Nick Gardner	Leith Walk ward (Labour)	Sgt Andrew Johnson	Police Scotland
Malcolm Chisholm MSP	Edinburgh Northern & Leith (Labour)	Elvira Torres	Edinburgh Council

### 1.2 Apologies

Marion Donaldson	LCCC	John Hein	LCCC chair
Charlotte Encombe	LCCC secretary	Alison Johnstone MSP	Lothian region (Green)

## 2 Minutes of the meeting of 22 June 2015

### 2.1 Approval

Approved subject to correcting item 2.2.5's title (proposed R McEwan, seconded A Finlay, *nem con*).

### 2.2 Matters arising

#### 2.2.1 Advertising LCCC in *The Leither* (item 2.2.5 in June minutes)

M Donaldson absent so could not report on this. ACTION: CARRY FORWARD TO SEPTEMBER MEETING

#### 2.2.2 Leith Walk repairs & improvements – crowdsourcing pedestrian crossing requirements (item 3 in June minutes)

M Donaldson absent so could not report on this. ACTION: CARRY FORWARD TO SEPTEMBER MEETING

#### 2.2.3 Leith Walk repairs & improvements – submission of LCCC comments (item 3 in June minutes)

C Encombe absent so could not report on this. ACTION: CHECK WHETHER SUBMISSION MADE AT SEPTEMBER MEETING

#### 2.2.4 Planning subcommittee – Shrub Hill student accommodation (item 7 in June minutes)

C Encombe absent so could not report on this. ACTION: R McEWAN TO INVESTIGATE ISSUES AROUND HEIGHT OF BUILDING

#### 2.2.5 Open forum – advertising banners (item 9 in June minutes)

A Graham is waiting for suitable images. ACTION: CARRY FORWARD TO SEPTEMBER MEETING

## 3 Leith Walk Repairs and Improvements

H Tobermann noted that at the last stakeholder meeting, it was reported that the plans for the stretch from Pilrig St to McDonald Rd are now ready to go into the TRO process. The final changes were about cycle-lanes, although the transition across the Pilrig St junction is still problematic – this should be improved during the approval process, which is likely to finish in March 2016. HT's opinion is that LW repairs are taking far too long – there is lack of clarity on whether trams will come to LW, and this is holding up completion of the repairs.

Several people at the meeting agreed that the current plans involving raised kerbs and mixed-use (pedestrian + cyclists) paths are dangerous – there was discussion of how the Netherlands and Germany accommodate cyclists, pedestrians and powered vehicles, based on B Ryan's recent experience of cycling in those countries.<sup>1</sup> A resident suggested that there are cultural differences between the UK and these countries, where people cycle from a very early age, possibly due to the existing good infrastructure.

J Siann queried whether LCCC's comments have reached Edinburgh Council (CEC) and, if so, whether it takes comments into account. He is keen that CEC knows of LCCC's misgivings. HT described the stakeholder meeting process, stating that the meetings haven't improved (lack of transparency, poor preparation of meetings). JS

<sup>1</sup> Some paths are mixed-use but often (mostly along main roads) powered vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists are separated. Where cycle and pedestrian paths cross main roads, they have traffic lights to ensure cyclists don't clash with cars entering the junctions. Junctions are often roundabouts with cycle-paths all around them. People of all ages appear to cycle skilfully and in safety; shoppers, commuters, cycle-tourists and competitive cyclists apparently mixing without issues.

had resigned from this process due to the poor quality of the work presented. He stated that it is easier to challenge issues during the design phase than during the TRO phase.

R McEwan stated that drivers do not give way to pedestrians on raised roadway areas in the 'repaired' parts of LW even though pedestrians have right-of-way here, and that cars often park on these roadways. A correspondent has alleged that traffic wardens believe the lower region of LW is 'too dangerous to police'. Sgt Johnson stated that parking in cycle lanes is a matter for traffic wardens – it becomes a police matter if a car is causing an obstruction or danger. M Chisholm confirmed that parking in cycle lanes is not illegal.

A resident suggested that the 'silent majority' of elderly people do not know how to voice opinions, and that CEC should take into account the area's demographics. (HT noted that LCCC's demographics are very young.)

Cllr Gardner stated that CEC needs to balance the needs of buses, businesses (who need loading bays), cyclists, pedestrians, residents, etc.

#### **4 Community Police Officer's Report**

Sgt Johnson reported that

- He has been a community sergeant at Leith for the last 2 months.
- Inspector Kevin Mclean has now moved to St Leonards. His replacement (Alan Carson) starts tomorrow. Each police station in Edinburgh has an inspector. There is a Chief Inspector overseeing north Edinburgh.
- Community police officers can no longer drill down in crime statistics to ward levels but analysts based at St Leonards can. Edinburgh crime statistics for 2014-15 are now available, but only down to larger areas such as Leith & Drylaw. CS Mark Williams, commander for all of Edinburgh, may be able to order analysts to provide CC-appropriate statistics. **ACTION: M CHISHOLM TO PUSH FOR THIS.**
- House-breaking and car theft levels have reduced but are still challenging. House-breaking solves have risen under Operation Rac. The current trend is to break into a house, steal car keys, then steal cars, because it is harder to hotwire modern cars. Such crimes are often carried out by 15-16-year-olds wishing to joyride but a few cars are stolen to order.
- CEC-funded community officers are now established – 4 of these are in Leith. Their sergeants are trying to not allocate inappropriate work to them. Each of these officers reports monthly to his/her local inspector about their community activities. These reports are then collated and passed on to CEC. HT and NG asked for sight of reports relevant to their roles. It is unlikely that the split between response officers and community officers will change, but it is almost certain that the total number of officers will not increase.
- The Bilston control room has had a slight change in procedures – grade 3 and 4 calls (i.e. those not requiring immediate responses, e.g. thefts of cellphones) will be referred back to local management, and will be closed off once an officer has attempted once to visit the victim
- Two officers Leith have been dedicated to work on hate crimes. This 6 month project has led to a 15% increase in solvency.
- Firearms licensing is now being devolved to local police stations. HT asked about airguns – these will need to be licensed just as other firearms when the appropriate legislation comes into force.
- The Edinburgh community triage is now reducing calls on police time. Previously, if a person was in danger due to mental health issues (MHIs), officers needed to take them to hospital, taking up to 6 hours of police time, even though most such people will not be admitted to hospital. The new system is that officers dealing with people with MHIs can phone the hospital to get over-the-phone consultations for these people. If it is decided that hospital admission is not necessary, the officer can leave them with family, etc.

A resident asked about cars parking 'right under' no-parking signs and hence delaying bus services, alleging this happens frequently. Sgt Johnson stated that In Edinburgh, this is a matter for traffic wardens (who are under contract to CEC), not police. But if police are phoned or come across dangerous issues, they can step in. The resident responded that she has 'never' seen traffic wardens at the foot of LW. HT expressed sympathy for the situation, and advised the resident to contact her CEC councillors.

#### **5 Presentation by Elvira Torres of CEC on the potential impact of integration of public health and social care functions at the community level**

E Torres works at the transformation programme at CEC. For this purpose, Edinburgh is divided into 4 localities. The programme is now investigating how to embed public health functions (any initiatives/services to improve health [e.g. prevention activities]) into localities, devolving resources to Neighbourhood Partnerships and CCs. The aim is that while the NHS deals with actual injuries and illnesses, and social services deals with on-going issues, these are linked matters and so these services should be integrated, and implemented much nearer communities where this is appropriate.

Hence ET asked how LCCC gathers and accesses data. H Tobermann informed her that LCCC doesn't have the resources to gather data. B Ryan confirmed that the majority of CCs lack such resources – he noted that while a

few CCs may be able to visualise data (e.g. his proof of concept at <http://socprojects.napier.ac.uk/edincc/>), most do not. HT stated that LCCC would like to access and use relevant local data – we don't!) ET asked whether if CCs had budget to use data, could/would they do so. HT responded that CCs often touch on matters concerning health, e.g. pushing for easier cycling and walking but they can currently only advise on, not implement, public health schemes.

ET noted that English hyperlocal councils have gathered data on local health skills etc but HT noted that these councils are better funded than Scottish CCs R McEwan noted that Granton Improvement Society is mapping local assets – this is a first step toward local provision. J Siann noted that such work is often done by voluntary organisations – ET could contact such organisations.

## **6 Presentation by Morven Cunningham and Duncan Bremner of Leith Creative**

Leith Late is a public arts organisation responsible for various public arts projects such as murals.

D Bremner represents citizen curator, which has investigated history of Leith/north Edinburgh since 2013. Of late CC has been doing more Leith-based work, e.g. working with FoPP, alomenteers. CC and LL have been working together under the name Leith Creative to map arts activities in Leith (i.e. postcode areas EH6 and EH7). Their results have been put online at <http://www.leithcreative.org/#findings>. The headline is that Leith is 'incredibly culturally involved' – this may be linked to Leith's industrial history. There is concern about lack of money and hence potential loss of benefits to Leith from creative activity. Other issues include lack and cost of studio space. Some recommendations have been made to counter such issues – some of these would work via the Leith Economic Framework.

## **7 LCCC Office-bearers' reports**

Secretary and chair were not at this meeting. Vice-chair had nothing to report here.

### **7.1 Treasurer**

LCCC has received its council grant (£989.06). Hence current balance is £2369.90. See appendix 1 for details.

## **8 Friends of Pilrig Park report**

Meadows are being very successful, sporting rare flowers from a French seed mix. Two new benches are ready but are not yet installed. A tidy-up day is scheduled for Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> August, starting at 10:30.

## **9 Planning sub-committee report**

### **9.1 SESplan meeting 24th August (venue TBA)**

H Tobermann noted that SESplan tries to plan ahead comprehensively for the Lothians, Edinburgh, Fife and Scottish Borders on matters such as power stations, roads and schools. (See <http://www.sesplan.gov.uk> for more detail.) This is necessarily a very complex process, including (for example) increasing the urban area from 105 to 120 square miles. The Cockburn Association has issued a survey – this is now on the LCCC website at <http://leithcentralcc.co.uk/2015/08/22/edinburgh-greenbelt-sesplan-and-cockburn-association/>. HT also noted that while LCCC has previously responded to SESplan, it has tried to restrict its comments to matters affecting the LCCC area.

A Graham asked when brownfields sites will be used. HT responded that its dependent on landowners – even if they have planning permission they are not obliged to implement it. Also brownfield sites aren't taxed, so such land may be being banked. R McEwan stated that now planning permission will now fall if it is not used. Cllr Gardner stated that CEC has battles to produce acceptable outcomes. For example, the Brunswick Rd site has had 3 different planning applications, due to the site's shape, size and history.

A resident asked why there are so many student accommodation projects in this area when there is demand for family housing? H Tobermann responded that this may be due to CEC fear of being over-ruled by Scottish Government (M Chisholm noted that SG is pushing an upper limit of 50% student population density, rather than CEC's 30% limit) and due to student accommodation being more profitable for developers. R McEwan stated that Forth Ports has planning permission for 25,000 houses but CEC is not enforcing this development. (HT noted that CEC does not have such enforcement power.) It was noted that student accommodation schemes are not subject to the 25% affordable accommodation rule. Cllr Gardner stated that even if all the available brownfield sites were used, there would still need to be building on the greenbelt to provide the amount of accommodation needed according to SESplan.

J Siann stated that SESplan does not consider social factors (e.g. doctors, schools) needed for the proposed development – these matters are left to individual local authorities. JS stated that SESplan is an outdated and difficult to use methodology.

R McEwan asked why LCCC had not objected to the plan to demolish Canonmills Bridge. (This is not in LCCC's area.) There will be a hearing on 26<sup>th</sup> August about this, with presentations from relevant CCs. There will be a preparatory public meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> at Baptist Church 7pm.

## 10 Councillors' Report, MP/MSP report

Cllr Gardner noted that there will be weed spraying over the next two weeks in Leith to clear paths and roads.

M Chisholm reported issues with seagulls attacking people. He requested views on the proposed demolition of the listed imperial grain warehouse at Leith docks. Details of this proposal are on the Edinburgh planning portal at <https://citydev-portal.edinburgh.gov.uk> (reference 15/03779/LBC).

## 11 Open Forum/AOCB

No items

## 12 Date of next meeting:

21 September 2015

## 13 Appendix 1: Income & Expenditure

DATE	DESCRIPTION	Cheque No	Credit	Debit	Balance	Bank Balance
<b>2015-16</b>	<b>Balance b/f from 2014-15</b>					£1,655.44
25.3.15	Minutes(Feb 2015) B Ryan	439		£50.00		1,605.94
1.5.15	Minutes(Mar 2015) B Ryan	440		£50.00		£1,555.44
22.6.15	C Encombe (gift+wreath)	442		£74.60		£1,480.84
22.6.15	Mins AGM (May 2015)	441		£50.00		£1,430.84
9.7.15	Minutes(Apr 2015) B Ryan	443		£50.00		£1,380.84
3.8.15	CEC grant - bank transfer		£989.06			£2,369.90
<b>TOTALS</b>			<b>£989.06</b>	<b>£274.60</b>		
	Balance b/f		£1,655.44			
	Income		£989.06			
	Total Income		£1,644.50			
	less expenditure		£274.60			
	<b>BALANCE</b>		<b>£2,369.90</b>			