

Meeting of Leith Central Community Council

Monday, 16 February 2026 at 7pm

at the Nelson Hall, McDonald Road Library



DRAFT Minutes

Summary of Actions

Action	Who
Liaise with local resident on data collection for police reports.	HT
Continue development of LCCC Licensing Policy.	KK
Discuss at a future meeting how to widen LCCC's outreach and engagement with the community.	All
Finalise proposed addendums to LCCC's PBSA policy to also cover "aparthotels" and policy on Short Term Let Licence Applications.	CE
Feedback on LCCC comments on LLPP to CE.	All
Respond to planning application 26/00310/CON to demolish an existing dwelling at 50 Pilrig Street EH6 5AL, stating that dwelling must not be demolished without a commitment to build.	CE
Draft letter urging council to address Breach of Control at 10 Croall Place.	HT
Draft letter to escalate issue of Elm Row cycle lane.	HT

Attendance: Alan Dudley, Avril Ewing, Charlotte Encombe (chair), Harald Tobermann, John Wilkinson, Kara Killeen, Luci Holland, Jack Kerr, Andy Shipley, Westaly Duignan, Paul Fisher Cockburn, Alan McIntosh, Rachel Hutton, PC Campbell Blackmore, PC Callum Clark, Catherine Anderson, local residents

Apologies: Sheila Kennedy, Simon Preston, Jed Milroy, Kutulu Balci, Cllr Jack Caldwell, Cllr Susan Rae, Cllr Amy McNeese Mechan, Cllr James Dalglish

1. Welcome, introductions, attendance, apologies

a. Declarations of interest in any items on the agenda were noted.

With regards to agenda item 6:

- HT notes that the licensing section talks about licences which two companies he works for are involved in.
- KK notes she occasionally works in a bar, off licence and in events, but none in the ward.
- A local resident notes that she works for the Fringe.

b. The order of business is agreed.

c. With JM giving apologies, there is no musical overture to today's meeting. Data received from SP is noted.

2. Approval of Minutes of the Ordinary LCCC Meeting ([19 January 2026](#))

- Minor errors in the minutes are noted, which will be corrected by CE.

- RH requested adjustment to text, which she will send to CE.
- Minutes are proposed by AD and seconded by LH.

3. Matters Arising from previous minutes (included on agenda below where noted)

No	Action	Actor	Status
1	Charlotte Encombe to correct typos in November minutes.	CE	
2	Provide an update on plans to turn the Powderhall railway line into a cycle lane.	JC	See item 9 below
3	Contact Edinburgh City Council to remove graffiti in Pilrig Park.	JW	
4	Share information about Edinburgh Garden Partners on LCCC socials	SP	
5	Provide an update on LCCC Licencing Policy.	KK	See item 6 below
6	Raise issue of accessibility of footpath through 162 Leith Walk development with council officers.	JC	
7	Add sentences on 'hotelisation' of LCCC area as an addendum to PBSA or short-term let policy - to be agreed.	AE	See item 8 below
8	Send a formal request to councillors to address the issue of the Elm Row Cycle Path in a meeting of the transport committee.	SP	See item 9 below

4. Policing Matters

- a. The local (ward) Police Report Leith Central CCM ([January/February 2026](#)) is noted.
- b. PC Campbell Blackmore and PC Callum Clark provide an update on local policing matters:
 - Officers are currently policing public transport links including buses and trams.
 - The police are continuing high visibility foot patrols in the area.
 - Officers are attending Friday Night Lights at the local YMCA in plainclothes, mostly playing football and sometimes tennis with young people. This helps them engage with young people at a different level, being less authoritative and giving them positive interactions with officers.
 - The police are running a traffic operation focused on the Leith Walk area. An unregistered motorbike rider was seen on Leith Walk by a plain clothes officer. The 15-year-old rider was apprehended and charged with six offences and the bike seized. Police are aware of significant concern locally and nationally about unregistered motorbikes on public roads and their use in criminality.
 - Traffic police in the area also issued a fixed penalty notice and seized three vehicles in relation to road traffic offences, charging one driver for failing a roadside drug wipe.
 - The police work closely with Lothian Buses, and partners from the service went on patrol with officers to experience frontline policing firsthand.
 - Locally, police are focussing on retail crime working closely with the newly-established Retail Crime Taskforce, who are focussing on high-tariff offenders. In the area, a number of arrests have been made, including the no.1 top offender in Edinburgh for retail related offences.
 - They note two new arrivals to the force: Chief Inspector Alison McDonald and Inspector Gary Reid.
 - AE requests further information on the difference between recorded incidents and official crime statistics, the PCs explain one example could be a house break-in being reported mistakenly as it's actually a painter with a key to access the property.
 - A local resident asks for more information about the data provided, as it's not clear whether there have been increases or decreases in statistics. HT said he has previously raised this issue and it is difficult to get traction on improving data collection. AE notes they have previously discussed trying to analyse this data themselves. A local resident who works in data volunteers to action this.
 - JW asks for clarification about how often the 20mph speed limit is imposed, the PCs respond that they are not out to criminalise people if they don't have to, and hope to educate people on the risk

of speeding and there is discretion for them to decide what measures to take. They are particularly concerned about speeding around areas such as schools.

Action: HT to liaise with local resident on data collection for police reports.

- c. Upcoming attendance by Community Police Officers is discussed:
 - HT says the police previously agreed to three visits per year, but new dates have not been established.
 - PCs say they value the meetings and will endeavour to attend when possible.

5. Open Forum (local residents and businesses) - No issues raised.

6. Licensing

- a. The update on progress towards a LCCC Licencing Policy is noted. CE welcomes KK's comprehensive [discussion paper](#). KK provides an update:
 - The policy will help LCCC be more consistent and stand by licensing decisions with more confidence.
 - The discussion paper was to find out what licences will be subjected to the policy, what considerations should be made, and what additional engagement LCCC needs with the local community.
 - The first part of the paper was to determine what types of licences the policy should focus on. KK opens this up to the floor.
 - HT says he favours a limited remit due to LCCC's limited resources. He notes that the area has changed considerably in recent years in terms of hospitality and tourism, especially with the introduction of the tram. He says focussing on alcohol, late hours catering and public entertainment would be the best use of LCCC's time.
 - CE notes that a lot of bars in the area are applying to open later, and LCCC should consider the impact of this on local residents.
 - KK says that if LCCC goes ahead with this remit there are a few issues to consider. Firstly, that the council has stopped using overprovision as a way to automatically reject an application. It may be helpful for LCCC to have a view on overprovision. Secondly, in terms of late night catering, the metric to determine how the potential for public disturbance is determined has changed.
 - KK says over the past three years, issues the council has focussed on in their considerations on licensing have included characteristics of the area, including whether it is residential; if there are already anti-social behaviour issues; and if there will be live music. When premises are sitting empty, this may be something that is presented as a point in favour of granting a licence.
 - KK says that the main things for LCCC to consider are how LCCC will determine characteristics of an area, and whether their approach to a licence will vary depending on this.
 - JW notes that overprovision can get complicated when it comes to temporary licenses.
 - HT says that it is possible to come up with a metric on what the concentration of pubs should be in different areas, such as residential areas or busy thoroughfares, and this is something LCCC should work towards.
 - CE notes a recent application by the Tourmalet to extend their licence on weekdays which was rejected.
 - KK says it will be possible to come up with a workable solution to respond differently based on the characteristics of the area, and will look into the criteria on which the council bases decisions.
 - KK raises a final question around the timeframe in which licences are submitted, and how LCCC can best gather public feedback.
 - HT raises the difficulty of getting statistically valid input from social media. He says it is better for residents to submit evidence in other ways, such as attending a LCCC meeting.
 - LH emphasises that there must be public input on LCCC decisions, and part of the purpose of this policy is to have guidelines on how they can best represent the local community, but there is a right way to do this.
 - RH agrees with the issues around social media but says there should be as many channels as possible for people to express their opinions as people may not be able to attend LCCC meetings for many reasons. RH notes housing associations could help publicise methods of public input.
 - CE says LCCC would be grateful to work with local partners to make this process more public.

- KK outlines actions: to do more research on council classifications, to talk to JC about improving the council's licensing portal. For the next iteration of the policy it will be important for LCCC to explain the background of how licensing works, what LCCC support or opposition means, and how people can get in touch with their views.
- KK notes that SP is not present but it would be helpful to discuss how best to publicise requests for public input.
- HT notes that the decision on the licence is not made by LCCC, but it does give its input.
- RH raises the importance of engaging with new people beyond those already engaged with LCCC.
- CE states that LCCC is currently making this process visible on its website, but this policy is being developed to make this process better.
- LH notes a wider issue with how many people know about LCCC.
- CE says under-resourcing means it's not always possible to extend LCCC's reach further.
- PFC says that it is good this issue is being worked on and acknowledges limited resources but expresses concern about LCCC members stating it is difficult to reach more people, as it's the role of LCCC to represent the community.
- RH adds that it is worth considering having a wider discussion about how LCCC engages the community more widely and can get additional resources.
- KK notes the hard work SP has done on engagement, and suggests picking this up as an agenda item when SP returns.
- HT notes that the number of licensing applications LCCC engages with is small and represents a small amount of LCCC time.

Actions:

- **KK to continue development of LCCC Licensing Policy.**
- **LCCC to discuss at a future meeting how to widen their outreach and engagement with the community.**

- b. CE opens the floor to other licensing matters relevant to LCCC area
- CE notes a second-hand dealer application that SK suggested was not worth responding to.
 - KK notes another tattooist application, which LCCC had previously discussed being overprovided, but which would occupy a space currently sitting empty.

7. Parks & Green Spaces

- a. JW provides an update from Friends of Pilrig Park (FoPP):
- The park has a litter pick on the last Saturday of the month, and more information can be found on the park noticeboard.
 - FoPP has a pot of money, approximately £6000, and requests ideas for how best to spend this.
- b. In SP's absence, HT provides an update from Friends of Montgomery Street Park:
- There is a volunteer session every other Saturday.
 - Some planting has been done in the park.
 - The next Management Committee meeting will be on February 24th.
- c. CE opens the floor to other Parks & Green Spaces matters relevant to LCCC - Nothing to note

8. Planning

- a. Hotelisation of PBSAs
- i. CE notes the proposed addendum to [LCCC's PBSA policy should also cover "aparthotels":](#)
- CE explains that "aparthotels" are small apartments looked after by one organisation, and their existence in the area is a relatively recent phenomenon
 - They are not subject to the same licensing as short-term lets, including airbnbs. They also take up land that could be used for residential housing.
 - LCCC would like to be able to object to these developments when they ask for planning permission.
 - A connected phenomenon is PBSA providers applying to use their student housing as hotels in the summer. This would not have been included in the original planning justification for PBSAs, and adds to the hotelisation of the neighbourhood. CE would like to add this addendum to both

the PBSA and short-term let policies.

- KK asks if LCCC has a clear idea of how regulations around aparthotels differ to short-term lets.
 - CE has received information from other community council convenors on the issue. One example is that short-term lets will not be allowed if the building entrance is shared with others, but this is not an issue with aparthotels.
 - CE will approach the council planning officers to determine how regulations vary.
 - HT adds that aparthotels are usually not permanently staffed in the ways hotels are.
 - RH raises the issue of the percentage that is required for social housing within a development, which makes the provision of social housing challenging for developers, and suggests speaking to developers about the matter.
 - LH raises that it is also important to speak with councillors.
 - PFC notes that the use of PBSAs as hotels is not a new phenomenon, but PBSAs are privatised in a new way so the issue has grown.
 - HT says that he would be in favour of adopting changes; language should be tightened, but the sentiment is correct so he asks for clean copy that can be presented at the next meeting.
 - JK questions whether the university should be approached about their charitable responsibilities and whether this practice aligns with these responsibilities.
 - AE notes the moratorium put forward about PBSAs at the council, which was rejected.
- ii. CE notes the proposed addendum to LCCC's policy on Short Term Let Licence Applications, saying this is a shorter version of the addendum above. All are in favour of taking these addendums forward, and CE will work on final copy.

Action: CE to finalise proposed addendums to LCCC's PBSA policy to also cover "aparthotels" and policy on Short Term Let Licence Applications.

- d. CE notes that three short-term let applications have been objected to in line with LCCC's policy. One may not be in LCCC's area.
- e.
- f. Leith Local Place Plan
- g. i. CE notes the Leith Local Place Plan DRAFT 2026.01.30 (prepared by EALA and Leith Harbour & Newhaven Community Council). CE was agreed as the LCCC contact for this project.
- h.
- i. ii. The upcoming exhibition of the LLPP in April/May (TBC) is noted.
- j.
- k. iii. CE notes the LCCC comments on the draft LLPP:
- l. CE notes that the LLPP does not mention that Leith is the most densely populated area in Scotland.
- CE asks council members to read through the comments and give any feedback to CE.
 - HT notes the context of the LLPP, saying that the area covered in the plan covers an area overlapping multiple community councils.
 - CE notes that the intentions in the LLPP are very idealistic, and it is not clear how realistic they will be.
 - KK notes that the LLPP is supposed to feed into the 2040 city plan, which is due in July. KK wants to know how much the 2030 plan was taken into account in the LLPP's development and how evidence-based it is.
 - AE is encouraged by the plan and is keen for those involved to attend a future meeting to discuss the plan further.
 - HT notes that there will be a LLPP exhibition coming up, and JK notes there is an upcoming Zoom meeting to discuss the plan, which he will share with members.
 - PFC notes that he attends four other community council meetings, and all are doing LPPs. Developing one gives you a better chance of your ideas being incorporated into city plans.
 - JK notes JM's comments sent by email.

Action: All to send feedback to CE on LCCC comments on LLPP.

- m. CE notes the application 26/00310/CON to demolish an existing dwelling at 50 Pilrig Street EH6 5AL (planning history):
- CE notes that this is an application that got through four or five years ago, and has permission to build nine flats.
 - HT says the motivation behind this new application is unclear, but it may be that their current permission is about to run out.
 - HT notes the company behind it is based in London, and given it has been approved before it is likely to be approved again.
 - HT notes LCCC could bring an argument against it that it should not be knocked down without a commitment to build.

Action: CE to submit response saying that existing dwelling should not be knocked down without commitment to build.

- n. CE notes the Enforcement Report into Alleged Breach of Control at 10 Croall Place (illuminated advertising billboard with expired advertisement consent):
- HT notes that this was approved with a number of parameters including there being no moving images, low brightness, but this does not appear to be upheld.
 - HT notes that should they apply again, LCCC should oppose, and all support.

Action: HT to write letter urging council to address Breach of Control at 10 Croall Place.

- o. CE opens the floor to any other Planning matters relevant to the LCCC area - No other issues

9. Transport & Clean Streets

- a. CE notes the LCCC Transport & Clean Streets Update ([February 2026](#)):
- HT says the biggest item is the tidying up of tram works, which is slowly progressing.
 - HT attended a meeting about dealing with the 'Pilrig muddle'.
 - Another legacy issue from the trams is parking and loading for shops, which wasn't properly accounted for, and HT will attend a meeting on this.
 - St Mark's Path is open on a level crossing-type basis. A permanent solution has been promised but has not materialised.
 - HT notes that the Powderhall to Meadowbank Green Corridor is an ongoing issue.
 - HT notes that LCCC has been nominated to CEC's revamped Transport and Local Access Forum.
- b. LCCC restates the strategic priority of the Powerhall-to-Meadowbank Green Corridor and commits to press for its accelerated delivery.
- c. Elm Row. The [February 2026 update on Elm Row](#) is noted:
- CE states that there has not been a great deal of progress, and she is unclear why it is taking so long.
 - HT suggests the issue should be escalated, and will draft a letter.
 - KK raises an Elm Row-based organisation, which may be interested in supporting the letter.
 - LH notes from SP's statement that this has been escalated before and this has not been effective.
- i. It is agreed that HT, with support from SP and councillors, will draft a letter to escalate the issue.

Action: HT to draft letter on Elm Row cycle lane.

- d. to note: any other Transport & Clean Streets matters relevant to LCCC area - No other issues

10. LCCC Governance

- a. CE notes the monthly report on LCCC's on- and offline engagement [to add].
- CE notes commenter on Bluesky saying she would like to see an LCCC policy on a firework

- exclusion zone in Pilrig Park.
- A local resident notes that other areas have been granted applications in a fairly straightforward way.
- b. Updates on arrangements for agenda making are noted: JK is moving out of the LCCC area so someone else will need to take on agenda-making.
- c. CE opens the floor to any other LCCC governance issues:
 - AE requests a report from the treasurer report on finances.
 - CE explains the limited budget LCCC has is mostly spent on the minute taker.

11. AOCB (LCCC members)

RH notes that Edinburgh Council is putting aside £1 million for community councils and is in talks about recruiting a council officer to support community councils.

12. Bulletin

[to add]

13. Future Meetings and planned meeting topics/presentations

- a. It is noted that LCCC meets on the third Monday of the Month
2026: March 16, April 20, May 18 (AGM), June 15 (policies review)

Appendix

- City of Edinburgh Council Scheme for Community Councils ([March 2025](#)) - our "constitution"
- (interactive) map of LCCC area