

# Meeting of Leith Central Community Council

Monday, 16 March 2026 at 7pm

at Nelson Hall, McDonald Road Library



## DRAFT Minutes

### Summary of actions

Action	Who
Discuss data collection on demographics for licensing engagement strategy scoping.	MP/KK
Consider public engagement strategy for licensing matters.	All
Vote at future meeting on update to PBSA and STL policy.	All
At a future meeting, discuss the induction process for new members on matters including planning.	All
Draft response to Gareth Barwell, Corporate Director of Place at Edinburgh City Council, to outline LCCC's dissatisfaction with the level of service it has received regarding the Elm Row cycle lane.	SP
Share images of the LCCC area with SP to use on Facebook.	All
Give MP access to social media pages.	SP
Format guidance for agenda making and share this with MP.	JK

### Attendance

**Members:** Harald Tobermann, John Wilkinson, Kara Killeen, Kutlu Balci, Simon Preston (chair)

**Non-members:** Cllr Jack Caldwell, Cllr James Dalgeish, Rachel Hutton, Martina Pugliese, Jack Kerr, Paul Fisher Cockburn, Alan McIntosh, Catherine Anderson

### Apologies

**Members:** Alan Dudley, Charlotte Encombe, Jed Milroy, Luci Holland, Sheila Kennedy, Avril Ewing

#### 1. Welcome, introductions, attendance, apologies

- a. There is no musical overture to today's discussion.
- b. No declarations of interest are declared in any items on the agenda.
- c. The order of business is agreed, with no plans to raise anything at the open forum.
- d. SP notes that Martina Pugliese's CV was circulated with members to be co-opted as a member. HT proposes MP's co-option and JW seconds. Martina Pugliese is co-opted as a member.
- e. It is noted that Jack Kerr is resigning from LCCC as he is moving away from the LCCC area. His resignation will come into effect at the end of March. HT notes that it has been a pleasure working with JK.

## 2. Approval of Minutes of the Ordinary LCCC Meeting ([16 February 2026](#))

SP notes several corrections that need to be made to the February minutes with regards to the update on Montgomery Street Park. Firstly, it is the volunteering days that take place every other Saturday, not litter picks. The litter picks are the last Saturday of the month. Secondly, it was stated that the next group meeting would be on February 24th, but 'group' should be changed to 'management committee'.

KK proposes and JW seconds the February minutes with these minor amends.

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

No	Action	Actor	Status
1	Liaise with local resident on data collection for police reports.	HT	See item 4 below
2	Continue development of LCCC Licensing Policy.	KK	In progress
3	Discuss at a future meeting how to widen LCCC's outreach and engagement with the community.	All	In progress
4	Finalise proposed addendums to LCCC's PBSA policy to also cover "aparthotels" and policy on Short Term Let Licence Applications.	CE	See item 8 below
5	Feedback on LCCC comments on LLPP to CE.	All	Completed
6	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	Completed
7	Draft letter urging council to address Breach of Control at 10 Croall Place.	HT	In progress
8	Draft letter to escalate issue of Elm Row cycle lane.	HT	See item 8 below.

## 4. Policing Matters

- a. The local (ward) Police Report Leith Central CCM ([MAR 2026](#)) is noted:
  - HT notes that he received today the report for future police attendance at LCCC meetings. Officers will attend in April, June, September and November.
  - HT notes a series of attacks by young people on North Edinburgh path in recent weeks.
  - JW adds that someone was knocked off their bike in these attacks, and this was reported to the police.
- b. MP presents her data collection work and [trends study](#) carried out for police statistics:
  - MP says she wanted to look at trends from recent police reports. There are only 3-4 months available at the moment. She will add to this as more dates are received.
  - HT comments that there is a downward trend for most of the statistics, but it would be useful to see statistics over a longer period.
  - SP expresses surprise that the theft statistics have gone down, as LCCC had previously heard about shoplifting being on the rise.
  - JC asks if the lighter evenings would have an effect on these downward trends.
  - HT has sent the graph to the police for comment, but they have not responded.

## 5. Open Forum (local residents and businesses)

No issues raised.

## 6. Licensing

- a. KK provided an update on progress towards the LCCC Licencing Policy:
  - A fuller update will be provided in April.
  - In a recent meeting on the policy, the issue of public engagement with LCCC licensing work was discussed. It has been proposed that some work be done to understand demographics of the area to ensure local residents can be best engaged.
  - MP agreed to support this data collection work.
  - KK outlined other suggestions that have been put forward around engagement and local outreach, and notes that the first step will be investigation before a strategy is formulated.
  - HT asked for clarification on how engagement links to licensing, and KK responded that it is important to engage with local residents to ensure LCCC is making decisions on licensing that best reflect community views.
  - SP notes that when licensing was first discussed, it was felt LCCC was not fully representing the whole community, and better engagement will help.
  - RH notes the importance of face to face engagement alongside online.
  - SP notes that the council has sourced funds to improve engagement between community councils and residents, but worries volunteers would be asked to do more volunteering rather than getting necessary support.
  - HT says the role of elected community council members is to represent local residents and they have a mandate to make decisions in their interest. He notes LCCC members' capacity needs to be balanced against the need for more engagement.
  - KK agrees and notes that there will be a scoping exercise and a decision will be made only after an investigation is done.
  - SP notes that other CCs hold online meetings which are much better attended, and this may support community engagement.
  - PFC notes that in other CC meetings he attends, online and offline meetings have similar levels of attendance.
  - RH notes that research has been done by the council showing the number of people in Edinburgh who are in digital poverty or do not have confidence in their tech skills, and will not engage online, but agrees others won't engage face to face.
  - AM notes that some demographics, including older people, attend more CC meetings in the winter months when they are virtual.
- b. No other licensing matters relevant to the LCCC area are raised.

### Actions:

- **MP to support KK with data collection for engagement strategy scoping.**
- **LCCC members to consider public engagement strategy for licensing matters.**

## 7. Planning

- a. (Over) Tourism and Commercial Student Accommodation
  - I. JK presents LCCC's [PBSA Paper with highlighted update](#):
    - SP notes an email received today from the Edinburgh Association of Community Councils with an attachment from Leith Links CC asking for a city-wide CC strategy on PBSAs and apart-hotels.

- SP also notes the lower attendance at today's meeting, and the fact that CE, who wrote the update, is not present.
- SP suggests, given all the above, the vote on this matter is pushed back.
- HT says the vote is not time critical and notes that in June there are plans to review LCCC policies, and new policies will be reviewed then.
- RH notes that when people started pushing back against STLs, developers adapted, and the same should be expected from pushback against PBSAs. RH suggests it is worth considering what our response to developers will be to avoid an "arms race".
- It is agreed decisions on this policy update will be paused.

li. The LCCC [STL Applications Policy with highlighted update](#) is noted and the vote also paused.

**Action: Members to vote at future meeting on update to PBSA and STL policy.**

- lii. The recent [STL applications](#) that have been objected to in line with LCCC's policy are noted.
- liv. It is noted that the application for a PBSA on the land to the east of 139 Leith Walk, Edinburgh to be used as an STL (25/05825/FULSTL) was [granted](#).
- HT notes that decisions around establishing a tougher planning policy lie largely with the Scottish Government and Parliament, and encourages everyone to vote in the upcoming Holyrood elections.
  - AM notes that the Spurtle will be organising a hustings for the Edinburgh North Eastern and Leith constituency, chaired by CE, on April 16 from 7-9:30pm, and more details will follow.
- B. The LCCC Planning Report ([March 2026](#)) is noted:
- SP notes that this contains the revised scheme of delegation for local developments, regarding which planning applications will be delegated to councillors and which will be handled by officers.
  - SP notes that the report also refers to the responsible construction review which the council has undertaken and has now been published.
  - HT notes previous discussions around a local place plan, and adds that the "Call for Ideas" which will take place in summer 2026 will also help feed into the preparation of City Plan 2040. He notes this may be the time when local residents have the most room to influence the City Plan 2040.
  - HT notes that there is an influx of new members to Edinburgh City Council every five years who may have limited knowledge of planning but are expected to sit on the planning committee. HT welcomes the fact that training on planning is now obligatory for councillors, and notes that training is also available for CC members.
  - SP suggests having an induction process for new members to help them get up to speed on matters such as planning. MP welcomes this suggestion.
- c. No other Planning matters relevant to the LCCC area are raised.

**Action: Members to have discussion at a future meeting on an induction process for new members on matters including planning.**

## 8. Transport & Clean Streets

- a. HT presents the LCCC Transport & Clean Streets Update ([March 2026](#)):
- The coalition of the four CCs along the tram extension from York Place to Newhaven are monitoring the progress being made in resolving the outstanding issues identified along the route.
  - A meeting of stakeholders took place in February to consider potential options to improve loading and servicing arrangements on Leith Walk along the tram line.
  - An official comment was received further to LCCC's questions on St Mark's Path.

- A collapsed boundary wall in the area, which LCCC first raised with the council over a year ago, has still not been dealt with.
  - There has been a proposal to introduce additional secure on-street parking in the area. KK notes there are long waitlists for this type of bike storage, and welcomes the proposal for additional facilities to be added.
  - JC notes that the Newhaven tram project relied on 90% contractors instead of council staff, making the defects process complicated.
- B. SP provides an update on the [latest Elm Row correspondence](#):
- CE contacted Gareth Barwell, Corporate Director of Place at Edinburgh City Council to raise the issue.
  - Councillor Stephen Jenkinson responded, saying he is also frustrated by the length of time it has taken to resolve the issue.
  - Gareth Barwell responded saying he was aware of the issue and assured LCCC that action would be taken as quickly as possible.
  - A few days after Gareth Barwell's response was received, a temporary barrier was placed across the path.
  - SP expressed concern that this has taken so long to do when the path has been in a dangerous state for so long, and also raised concerns that the temporary barrier is not suitable and could be confusing for cycle lane users.
  - SP offers to draft a response regarding the level of service LCCC has received since last summer.

**Action: SP to draft response to Gareth Barwell, Corporate Director of Place at Edinburgh City Council, to outline LCCC's dissatisfaction with the level of service it has received regarding the Elm Row cycle lane.**

C. No other Transport & Clean Streets matters relevant to the LCCC area are noted.

## 9. Parks & Green Spaces

- a. SP notes the [Common Good Fund expenditure reported](#) for FY24/25 (FY23/24):
- Pilrig Park £130,067 (£37,120)
  - Montgomery Park £12,428 (£8,682)
  - St Mark's Park £13,627 (£48,503)
- HT explains that the Common Good Fund is a fund administered by the council and generated from properties and land held as part of the common good, and this includes some parks in the LCCC area. If these assets generate income, it will be reinvested into the common good.
  - HT notes the reported expenditure on LCCC parks and says these figures are worth interrogating.
- b. JW provides an update from Friends of Pilrig Park (FoPP):
- There is a litter pick on the last Saturday of the month, and if any changes are made to this schedule it will be noted on the noticeboard.
  - There's a fair amount of graffiti which needs to be sorted.
- c. SP provides an update from Friends of Montgomery Street Park:
- Volunteering happens every two weeks, this group started in January 2025 with only two members, there are now fifteen members attending, and it's a really good social group.
  - The magazine Park Life 3 is in production, it will be out in the next couple of months.
  - Following engagement with the local community, it was identified that the play park needed more for under twos, so a smaller play area for toddlers will be installed.
  - HT notes this is a good example of community engagement.
  - JC commends public engagement work of the Friends of Montgomery Street Park

on this issue.

d. No other Parks & Green Spaces matters relevant to the LCCC area are noted.

## 10. LCCC Governance

- a. SP notes the monthly update on LCCC's on- and offline engagement ([MAR 2026](#)):
- SP notes the issue raised in a previous meeting about Facebook comments being unreliable, but notes that local residents do use the page to engage and raise matters.
  - SP says the Facebook page remains active and well used.
  - SP asks members to share any images they take in the LCCC area for use on the Facebook page.
  - MP offers to support SP with social media, especially Bluesky.

### Actions:

- **Members to share images of the LCCC area with SP to use on Facebook.**
- **SP to give MP access to social media pages.**

- b. HT addresses arrangements of future agenda making, asking for members to support with preparing agendas for future meetings:
- MP offers to support.
  - JK offers to format and share guidance on agenda making.

**Action: JK to format guidance for agenda making and share this with MP.**

c. No other LCCC governance issues are raised.

## 11. AOCB (LCCC members)

- JW addresses JC's previous remarks about the lack of council capacity. JW asks if there is a defined line between what activities council members do and what volunteers do.
- JC said his comments specifically referred to the transportation budget with regards to the tram project.

No other matters are raised.

## 12. Bulletin

- a. How Leith Walk will take a hammering from rates ([Edinburgh Inquirer, 7/2/26](#))
- b. Agreeing Visitor Levy spend is just the start ([Evening News, 16/2/26](#))

## 13. Future Meetings and planned meeting topics/presentations

- a. It is noted that meetings are always the third Monday of the Month  
**2026:** April 20, May 18 (AGM), June 15 (policies review)
- b. It is noted that there will be no meeting in July and December; more 2026 meeting dates (and venue) to be fixed

## Appendix

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