

# LEITH LINKS COMMUNITY COUNCIL

## Meeting of Leith Links Community Council, held at Leith Community Centre, New Kirkgate Monday 26 September 2016 at 7pm

**Councillors Present:** Jim Scanlon Chair, Sally Millar Secretary, Michael Traill, Linda Hutton, Adrian Graham

Councillor Chas Booth,

*In attendance:*

Eileen Simpson, Susan Dougal, Walter Manclark, Evie Murray, Kate Brown, Andrew Mackenzie, PC11182 Corrigan & PC11987 Rowlinson, Police Scotland officers,

*Minute Taker:* Sally Millar

**1. Welcome:** Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Introductions performed.

**2. Community Council Election Results:** Councillor Chas Booth, the Returning Officer, had been held up and was not present yet to announce CC election results. It was agreed to continue with the meeting until he arrived.

**3. Apologies:** Councillor Gordon Munro, Ben MacPherson MSP, Councillor Adam McVey, Phil Attridge,

**4. Adoption of Minutes of last meeting on 29 August 2016:** Proposed by Michael Traill; seconded by Adrian Graham. Available at <https://leithlinkscouncil.wordpress.com/>  
Matters Arising to be taken later, as part of main Agenda.

### **5. Police Report:**

*Crime Patterns (Leith Ward as a whole) April – August 2016:* Overall, crime ‘as recorded’ continues to reduce (by about 5%), with violent crime reduced by 10%, so first impressions are that the figures look fairly positive. However, break-ins are up 22% on last year (though down slightly overall over a 5 year period). **And the rate of crimes being solved is down 25% over a 5 year period**, which is obviously disappointing, perhaps due to the force being in a state of flux recently. Hopefully this will improve soon as more uniformed police officers are being allocated to this area as of next month (patrol cars not foot patrols), and response times should improve.

#### *Underage drinking initiative, Leith Walk*

This plain clothes operation targeting sales to minors and proxy purchasing had led to one adult being charged at one premises.

#### *Street sex work*

Police Prostitute Liaison Officer (Margot) continues to work on this issue. She is developing links with local hostels and addressing various other aspects that might help to get women away from prostitution.

An update / discussion in the meeting highlighted that the street workers seem to have moved from Salamander Place to Johns Place, Wellington Place junction, and Duncan Place. They are often seen especially on Friday nights 9-12 (but this is not a good time for Police Scotland, as officers are usually busy elsewhere then). There are roughly the same number of street workers overall, as before/usual, , or possibly slightly fewer. Police continue to issue warnings etc. but the **Crown** Office and Procurator Fiscal **Service** (COPFS) continues to be reluctant to prosecute.

Evie reported that condoms and drug paraphernalia are still regularly found on the Community Croft.

#### *Other crime and anti-social occurrences*

Adrian reported a very recent event in Assembly Street. (ram-raiding a motorbike shop).

#### *Break-Ins at Dry Dock*

Four or more break-ins have taken place over the past couple of weeks, which has been devastating for the Dry Dock team. This has been primarily vandalism, rather than theft – football kit scattered around etc. and premises damaged. Police view is that this is caused by inadequate security on the building, which is to be addressed. A productive meeting on this had been held at City Chambers, with Edinburgh Leisure. Once security is improved, the group of youths probably responsible will stop targeting these premises (though will probably be displaced elsewhere). Police have noted that they

need to keep an eye on the building, and are also asking local residents to watch the building and to ring 101 if they see lights or movement etc. after 7 pm.

#### *Youth Nuisance*

Groups of youth regularly cause nuisance elsewhere in the area, trying to get indoors for various antisocial purposes. Linda cited numerous examples of students from Leith Academy regularly entering stairs in Burns Street at lunchtimes, to smoke weed. This happens all over, where stair doors are not secure – the police are acutely aware of the problem higher up Easter Road. Linda has spoken to the school and Community Liaison Officer, but no effect noted yet.

**6a. Treasurer's report:** The handover from past to present Treasurer (and new signatories) is about to be completed (next week).

#### *Application for small grant for International Women's Day*

A request for a funding had been made by a group celebrating International Women's Day in Leith on 8 March 2017 and this request was discussed at the last public meeting, but no final decision taken. Subsequently, Councillors had discussed this further, and voted by a narrow majority not to award funding. This was not because the cause was not worth supporting but because (a) it is not the role of the CC to make grants, and (b) it is not appropriate for one group just to ask and be awarded funds (when there are many other local groups equally in need of support). The whole process needs to be reviewed and made fully transparent and equitable, by the newly elected CC.

**6b. Secretary's report:** Efforts over the last month had been put mainly into matters concerning the Community Choices application / proposed project planning, Leith Decides Steering Group and Volunteer meetings, and the LLCC election.

#### **7. Community Choices Fund grant application**

Sally reported that the Community Council has just been notified that the LLCC application to the Scottish Government Community Choices Fund has been successful. This is a major achievement, as LLCC is only one of 2 single Community Councils in the whole of Scotland to have received the award, and to be participating in the new £2million participatory budgeting (PB) initiative. LLCC's is the smallest project, but will provide over £15,000 to small-scale local projects, increasing community engagement and improving people's quality of life (plus £5,000 needed for administrative expenses - publicity, outreach, the PB process and event, venue etc.).

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/engage/CommunityChoicesFund>

The money will be allocated to projects on the basis of the number of votes from local people i.e. the same principle as Leith Decides, at a community event. However, projects will be smaller and hyper-local. Individuals and groups will be able to apply (not just larger constituted organisations and formal projects). Applicants could propose to plant up green space, carry out repairs or redecoration, hold social event(s), arrange training, organise a trip, host a show - or whatever. Susan and Gordon described an existing Gordon Street residents' project, bringing mince pies, presents etc. to sheltered housing tenants on Christmas day – that might be the sort of thing that could be developed by other groups. There will be face to face events to meet local residents and groups to explain the aims and to help work up suitable ideas and applications. Small projects may apply for up to £400, and larger projects up to £2,500. The process and the project outcomes will be monitored and reported.

**ACTION: Sally Millar proposed that the LLCC accept this award, Seconded by Adrian Graham. A vote was taken, the motion was carried, and the funds will be claimed forthwith.**

The LLCC project title is **Community Links**. A logo is being designed.

Project planning has already started, as there is a very short timescale between now, and when the money has to be distributed to projects (March 2017).

Michael and Adrian have attended a training day, organised by Scottish Government, and a further event on PB is due on 20 October (Adrian and Sally attending).

**ACTION: Michael proposed that a sub-committee be set up to administer and manage this project, with the power to meet as often as necessary and to take decisions autonomously and quickly (i.e. without having to refer every decision to monthly public meeting). The sub-committee to be composed of all Community Councillors (or as many as are able/willing to participate). (Seconded by Jim Scanlon) A vote was taken and the motion was passed.**

**ACTION: Sally Millar proposed that Michael be designated as Project coordinator, with responsibility for leading the Community Links sub-committee ((seconded by Adrian Graham). Motion carried.**

## **8. Leith Decides**

The next "Leith Decides" main launch event will be held in the Leith Community Centre, New Kirkgate on Saturday 8 October 2016, from 12 noon. There will be online e-voting for the first time. This can be done on the day, on personal phones or tablets, and/or there will also be laptops available on the day in the Community Centre, with volunteers to help. Paper voting forms will be available for those that can't vote online. There will be no postal paper votes after the day, but people can vote between 8 October and 22 October online, from home or via a local library computer (where help will be available). Total funding available = £44,184

- £8,000 for grants of up to £1,000 (16 projects, total value of £11,455)
- £36,184 for grants of up to £3,000 (40 projects, total value of £103,590)

See <http://www.edinburghnp.org.uk/neighbourhood-partnerships/leith/about/%C2%A3eith-decides/>  
See <https://edinburgh.participare.io> to Register, and then vote online.

A number of LLCC Councillors will be volunteering on the day.

## **9. Community Council Elections**

Councillor Chas Booth, Returning Officer, arrived and shared information about the election. 18 nomination forms were received, 1 was invalid (not on electoral roll). 17 valid candidates had been nominated for 12 places, so an election will be held. This is unusual, but a good sign that the CC has engaged effectively with the local community (mainly due to the leaflets distributed in August, and social media posting?) and very healthy for local democracy.

### **ACTION: Meet the Candidates Event, Monday 10 October, Community Centre, 6-8pm**

- LLCC will organise and publicise an informal 'Meet and Greet' event on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> October (in Shore Room, Community Centre) with refreshments and biscuits, for all the candidates, and for members of the public. 6-8pm
- Councillor Booth to forward contact details, Chair to invite all the candidates to take part,
- Michael to create an information 'booklet' with a photo and 200 word statements from each candidate (which will also go on website etc.).
- Candidates asked to submit photo and statement to Michael by 6<sup>th</sup> October.

Questions were asked about how the election would take place. Concern was expressed about the lack of clear information from City of Edinburgh Council, missing and late materials, wrong dates provided, key people missed off email circulation etc..

**ACTION: Proposed and resolved that LLCC will draft and send a letter to Councillor Maureen Childs, Convener of CEC's Communities and Neighbourhoods Committee, asking for a full review of the various processes by which City of Edinburgh Council support Community Councils, for the future.**

Councillor Chas Booth advised that the election will take place between 19 and 27 October 2016. Online voting will be between 8 am on 19<sup>th</sup> October and 8 pm 24 October. In person polling will be 2-8 pm on 27 October, in the Leith community Centre. All eligible voters will receive information by post on how, where and when to vote

Meeting was reminded that as well as individual elected representatives, there are 6 spaces on the Community Council for local interest groups to each nominate and provide a representative. This can be done at any time – it does not have to happen in the same timeframe as the current election of individual members.

## **10. Further Matters Arising / AOCB / Open floor / AOCB**

*Parking in Leith:* Michael had attended the recent meeting of Leith Central Community Council, where they were due to discuss and decide whether or not to proceed with asking for a Controlled Parking Zone in Leith. He reported that, in the event, the matter was barely discussed, and no decisions about further action were taken. The petitions that had circulated in the previous month showed that a large majority of local community were against the idea, which may have affected the matter.

*Seafield smells:* Eileen explained that she has put herself forward as a candidate for the CC and is keen to get involved because of strong feelings about a 'single issue' i.e. the smells from Seafield

sewage works, which are particularly bad where she lives (higher up, in the Pirniefield area). Chair explained about the background to this and invited her to attend with him the next of the quarterly meetings of the Stakeholder Group which includes Scottish Water, Veolia, SEPA, City Council environmental health officers, elected Councillors, the Chair of Leith Links CC and the Leith Links Residents Association, Chaired by Ben MacPherson MSP, (which happened to be this week) so that she could hear at first hand what stage the discussions have reached about this ongoing issue. It was pointed out that whether or not Eileen is elected, she can still pursue her interest in this issue. The new CC will be drawing up a list of the interests of all those who wish to become involved, and will be allocating roles and responsibilities, to share out the duties across members and interested members of the local community.

LLCC secretary has not yet actioned last month's resolve to write to CEC and SEPA re their failure to respond to invitation to the LLC meeting.

#### *Parking Issues*

Susan and Walter reported on parking on Gordon Street and Manderston Street. One garage has closed lately (now used for storage) which has helped very slightly by reducing parked vehicles, but otherwise problems are ongoing. Linda reported problems in Primrose Street and Burns Street due to parking on the pavement, and across dropped kerbs (blocking access for wheelchairs and buggies etc.) – which has also been recorded in Gordon St. and Constitution Street, particularly affecting elderly residents in sheltered housing (Bield and Port of Leith, respectively). Taxis and pizza delivery vehicles are frequent offenders but at least these are short term. It is not illegal to park over a dropped kerb, if there are no yellow line road markings there, so not really a police matter. Unclear what LLCC can do - these are really issues for the Housing Associations to take up with the city of Edinburgh Council. It was suggested that a member of LLCC should go along to gather more information (Adrian Graham volunteered, for Gordon Street Sheltered housing). Also suggested that LLCC invite Gavin Brown, Parking Operations Manager. to come to a meeting to talk about these issues. Councillor Chas Booth suggested that Gavin Brown might be invited to come on a 'Walkabout' of the key areas, with LLCC members, rather than attending a meeting.

**ACTION: Try to set up a Walkabout with Gavin Brown.**

#### **12. Thanks:**

Chair Jim Scanlon recorded sincerest thanks, formally, for all their hard work over a number of years, to Community Councillors that have recently resigned: Angus Miller, Senga Bethune and Gail Clapton.

Chair then thanked all attendees. Meeting ended at 9pm.

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**'Meet the Candidates' Get-Together: 10 October, 6-8 Shore Room, Leith Community Centre, New Kirkgate**

**Date of Next Public Meeting: 31 October 2016, 7pm. Shore Room, Leith Community Centre, New Kirkgate**