

Minutes of the Leith Harbour and Newhaven Community Council ordinary meeting, held at Trinity Room, Leith Community Centre, Kirkgate on Wednesday 4 February 2015 at 7.45pm

Actions and decisions are ***RED ITALIC UNDERLINED SMALLCAPS. NEM CON*** means that no-one spoke or voted against a decision.

1 Introductions

1.1 Attendance

Sandra Burns	LHNCC treasurer	Ron Cattell	Resident
Heather Ford	LHNCC	Don Giles	Resident/FOWLB
George Johnston	LHNCC	Nicola Haynes	Resident
Denise Jones	LCCC	George Rosie	Resident
Allan Mackie	LHNCC secretary	ClIr Chas Booth	Leith ward (Green)
Robert Weir	LHNCC chair	ClIr Adam McVey	Leith ward (SNP)
Neil Wilson	LHNCC (FOWLB rep)	PC Matt King	Police Scotland
Bruce Ryan	Minutes secretary	PS Trish Hamilton	Police Scotland

2 Apologies for Absence

ClIr Gordon Munro Leith ward (Labour) | Mark Lazarowicz MP Edinburgh North & Leith (Labour)

3 Minutes of previous meeting

Approved nem con

4 Matters arising

4.1 International Women's Day

D Jones and N Haynes spoke about how this day will be celebrated in Leith. (Details of international events can be found at <http://www.internationalwomensday.com>.) The Leith event will take place on Monday 9 March at South Leith Parish Church Hall, Kirkgate (10:30 – 4:30), and will include various dancing demonstrations, ‘remembering her-story’, tai chi demonstrations and a health fair. (See posters on LHNCC website at <http://lhnc.co.uk/2015/02/05/international-womens-day-leith> for more details.) DJ and NH requested help with funding publicity, suggesting that LHNCC (and other Leith CCs) could have a stall/table at the event. The secretary said that he might be able to attend.

DECISION: LHNCC TO CONTRIBUTE £100 TOWARDS THE COST OF PUBLICITY WITH THE OPTION TO ‘RENT’ A STALL ON THE DAY

4.2 Water of Leith Silt

ClIr McVey reported that £45,000 has been committed by Edinburgh Council to re-run a flooding computer model, but using updated, better climate data. A tender for this work will be issued soon. The report on this work will be issued in spring 2016 (possibly earlier).

ACTION: CHAIR TO MEET WITH G JOHNSON, D GILES TO GET A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THIS ISSUE, AND OF THE CUSTOMS HOUSE.

4.3 Speeding on Ocean Drive

This matter was discussed during the Police report (item 5.1 below).

4.4 Custom House/Leith Museum

G Johnson made the following points: the idea of a Leith museum is decades old, and it is very positive that Leith CCs and other community groups have come together to form a stakeholder group (chaired by ClIr Richard Lewis). At a meeting last year, it was suggested that 7% of the Custom House building would be dedicated to museum use but this was pushed back to over 50%. Purchase of the CH was completed around 10 days ago, with funding coming from the Common Good Fund. (But see <http://www.edinburghnews.scotsman.com/news/council-buys-custom-house-for-leith-museum-1-3479053> of 16 July 2014.) Contrary to some media reports, decisions about what to put in the museum have not been made.

It is a legal requirement that an option appraisal is now undertaken. Scottish Historical Buildings Trust has agreed to do this. There are potential issues because other bodies (e.g. Forth Ports) own land and paths immediately adjacent to the building. However a ‘gentleman’s agreement’ has been made that these bodies will not interfere with the project. (ClIr McVey confirmed that Edinburgh Council had bought the building with ‘its eyes open’. The

building is in need of much repair – although the building will be purchased using Common Good money, 5 years' running costs must now be raised.

The next stakeholder meeting will be in March. Out of the Blue is due to run the building, replacing the building in Portobello that they are about to lose.

The chair noted that LHNCC generally supports the Museum project

5 Reports

5.1 Police

Sgt Trish Hamilton, who is about to move on from her Leith role, introduced her colleague PC Matt King. They made the following points, either in their main talk or in response to questions.

- 'Boy racers' at Ocean Terminal (OT) are being tackled – Police Scotland (PS) need to build up evidence to justify installation of CCTV. The Chair responded that this issue had been going on for a long time, and that there were also issues with speeding on Ocean Drive, and the Secretary noted that the problem was greatest at night and at the weekend, while a resident noted that a quad-biker has been regularly speeding near Granton and motorcyclists often speed near Trinity Academy. PS are giving such issues as much attention as possible, using camera vans to gather evidence whether speed reduction measures are necessary.

Cllr McVey suggested that chicanes might be an attractive challenge to speeders, and asked for PS's view. Sgt Hamilton suggested that speed bumps were more likely to deter boy racers' lowered cars. However, Edinburgh Council would be most likely to know what measures would be best.

A resident asked whether number-plate recognition could be installed on existing cameras. Sgt Hamilton replied that this would be up to owners – OT is privately owned. A request for traffic monitoring cameras has been made. (Speed-trap cameras are owned by Edinburgh Council and Transport Scotland.) However, Edinburgh Council may not have enough mobile cameras, so it needs to prioritise. It was suggested that LHNCC should keep asking Edinburgh Council to assist, and that the Neighbour Partnership could also be asked.

ACTION: LHNCC TO KEEP BRINGING SPEEDING ISSUES TO POLICE SCOTLAND'S ATTENTION

ACTION: CLLR BOOTH TO PURSUE THIS MATTER WITHIN EDINBURGH COUNCIL

ACTION: LHNCC TO FOLLOW UP THIS ISSUE NEXT MEETING

- There had been an operation at Christmas to tackle shoplifting at OT.
- Operation Quarterlight is targeting vehicle crime, cycle theft, house-breaking, using high-visibility and plain-clothes patrols, intelligence-gathering and publicity about property safety. Publicity is available for electronic distribution – it was suggested that LHNCC might pay for and distribute hard copies. G Rosie offered to distribute. Joint work with the other Leith CCs was suggested.
ACTION: H FORD TO LOOK INTO PRINTING COSTS
- There have been complaints about dangerous parking at Victoria Primary School – PS is liaising with the head teacher, and patrolling appropriately.
- There are long delays between cars illegally parked in disabled parking spaces being ticketed and being taken away because this is not a police matter.

The chair asked about reported increases in roadblocks following the advent of new drink-driving laws, and whether random stopping was now legal. The secretary suggested there were civil liberty issues. Sgt Hamilton said that they PS can stop any car that gives cause for suspicion of offence, e.g. using cellphone when driving, broken lights. However, PS will then use discretion over whether to take matters further. The recent campaign against drink-driving was in line with such campaigns around Christmas in all previous years, but was designed to educate about the new laws.

A resident asked about

- Some 101 calls are not being answered – citizens have had to go and find police, while Leith Police Station is not open overnight. Sgt Hamilton suggested that issues were due to call-centre changes and cutbacks, and that PS is frustrated by this issue too.
- Police attendance at LHNCC (and other CC) meetings has not been consistent. Sgt Hamilton had not seen the minutes of the last meeting, while shift patterns mean that different PS members will attend from time to time. It was suggested that the general Leith police station email address (edinburghleithcpt@Scotland.pnn.police.uk) was added to the circulation list.

ACTION: SECRETARY TO SUPPLY THIS TO MINUTES SECRETARY

- stop and search potentially corroding police-community relationships. Sgt Hamilton stated that guidelines insist on the need for genuine suspicion of crime, and that PS must only stop 'the right person at the right time'. There are no S&S quotas. Sgt Hamilton was uncertain whether statistics could be provided.

The secretary asked whether drink-driving figures (December 2013 and December 2014) could be provided, so LHNCC could understand whether this offence was increasing or decreasing.

H Ford stated that her building (West Cromwell St) had no door on its main stair, and so there are ongoing problems with drug abuse and the stair being used as a toilet, often by private taxi drivers, and that lack of CCTV = lack of security. She has seen a report stating that a resident who has lived there for 30 years has seen no such abuse – yet the building is less than 30 years old. Sgt Hmailton responded that PS will look into this.

5.2 Secretary

There is a planning issue around telecoms at the former wine warehouse on Dock Street: Vodaphone and Telephonica need agreement from all residents to increase the height of a cellphone mast from 13 to 20 meters, and increase the number of exchange boxes.

ACTION SECRETARY TO CONFER WITH NEIL WILSON (PLANNING REP)

5.3 Treasurer

Main account balance: £1,298.80 Special Events account balance: £35.03

5.4 Events

No report

5.5 Planning

No report

6 Proposed POLHA development adjacent to 2 Ocean Drive

Residents near to this proposed development have submitted an objection (see appendix). The following points were discussed:

- Housing is needed, and this land is zoned for housing
- The design may be too intrusive – there is a right to light (but no right to a pleasant view).
- The planned number of parking spaces may be insufficient
- The planned building may not be set back far enough from the road – nearby residential buildings and industrial units are set back. Cllr Booth recalled that the developers had agreed to set back the proposed buildings more – an objection could be raised if this was not on the revised plans.
- It was suggested that the proposed building would take away open space.
- Any new building would be better than the former slums.

ACTION: N WILSON TO SUBMIT OBJECTION: ON THE GROUNDS OF LACK OF SET-BACK, ISSUES WITH FRONTAGE LAYOUT BUT MAKING IT CLEAR THAT LHNCC DID NOT OBJECT TO EXTRA HOUSING IN GENERAL.

7 Future of liner terminal

Carried forward to next meeting

8 Capacity building

Carried forward to next meeting

9 AOCB

ACTION: SECRETARY TO TRY TO FIND A VENUE ENABLING MEETINGS TO START AT 7PM

10 Date of next meeting

4 March 2015

11 Appendix: residents' objection to Ocean Drive proposed development

Proposed 57 Unit Residential Development by the Port of Leith Housing Association

Application No 14/05127/FUL

- to request that the applicant (POLHA) be instructed to consider a new layout that respects that history of the site, and contributes to an improvement of this public area for both residents and existing Leithers
- to highlight the facts that the Dock Walls and Entrance Pillars are historic structures and for many years, the Leith Docks Mortuary building was located on the application site, alongside the wall and across the road from the Gatehouse building. That this area should be treated with respect and retained as open public space - not simply built over.
- that several years of extensive consultation on the Leith Docks Development Framework confirmed a strong desire that development should improve the public realm for all Leithers, and not just those in new developments. It was about creating an inclusive community that integrated the old and new with no boundaries. The proposed development fills the site and does nothing to improve the public realm for others.
- that the site is the main entry point to the Docks from the city centre (Scotland's capital city) and should be celebrated, rather than create a 'canyon effect' of buildings stacked high from the back of the footpath. The site should open up the vista to the Docks and the Cranes - it should be low to the front and rise to the rear, not close off the views and the light.
- that Barratt Homes Trade Winds site has open landscaped space alongside Ocean Way, and a large and pleasant landscaped courtyard along Ocean Drive, creating a feeling of openness for people who live both in the building and those in the community who walk past. The Casino also has space, with the building at the back of the site. Each of these sites face on to the application site, and should help inform how the new site should be developed. The Gate House building which has been carefully conserved would be simply dwarfed by the development currently proposed.
- that this is a great opportunity for the City of Edinburgh to expand on brown field land in Leith Docks, but if all the sites were developed as proposed in the POLHA current application, there would be blank frontages backing on to footpaths, with no quality of public realm whatsoever - no space left for quality of life for the people in the community itself.
- that it is an excellent site for affordable housing, however the layout is mediocre, does not address the pressing issues of lack of parking spaces for the new building residents which will negatively impact on existing Leithers in the surrounding area - it is simply not good enough for the location.
- that the Scottish Government headquarters in the Docks bring people in from around the country, and the Royal Yacht Britannia attracts 300,000 visitors a year from around the World. It is important to preserve the entrance to Leith's historic Docks not only for the existing people of Leith and Edinburgh but for future tourism. The design team for POLHA should be sent back to the drawing board to prepare a layout that does justice to this historic site.