

Minutes of the Leith Harbour and Newhaven Community Council ordinary meeting, held at Persevere Room, Leith Community Centre, Kirkgate on Wednesday 7 October 2015 at 7.00pm

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

1 Introductions

NTBCC's secretary chaired the meeting in the absence of NTBCC's chair.

1.1 Attendance

Allan Mackie	LHNCC secretary	Gillian Meek	Resident/Victoria Primary School parent council
Evie Murray	LHNCC	Naomi Sandilands	Edinburgh Council
Neil Wilson	LHNCC (FOWL B rep)	Malcolm Chisholm MSP	Edinburgh North & Leith (Labour)
Bruce Ryan	Minutes secretary	Clr Chas Booth	Leith ward (Green)
Don Giles	Resident	Clr Gordon Munro	Leith ward (Labour)
Ben Macpherson	'local SNP'	Sgt Nick Davies	Police Scotland

1.2 Apologies for absence

Robert Weir	LHNCC chair	Heather Ford	LHNCC treasurer	Insp Carson	Police Scotland
Ron Cattell	LHNCC	Denise Jones	LHNCC		

2 Minutes of previous meeting (September 2015)

Approved *nem con*

3 Meeting arrangements

Votes on the options for a larger room were

- 1st Monday in month 2
- 2nd Tuesday in month 0
- 4th Tuesday in month 6

However during the meeting there was confusion as to whether the second options were Tuesdays or Thursdays. It was suggested that the Customs House might be available, and free if LHNCC was a key-holder.

4 Forth Ports Ltd planning application (consent to demolish grain silo at Imperial Dock)

D Giles and A Mackie had been invited to a site visit by Edinburgh Council (CEC). They reported

- CEC was happy for them to attend – there were many CEC attendees.
- Attendees were not allowed to photograph the site, nor to alight from the tour bus.
- Discussion of Forth Ports' past management principles was deprecated.
- The development is speculative, i.e. the demolition would clear the site before a specific end-use is decided. (No end-user has yet declared an interest.)
- However, the area might be used for dismantling oil- and gas-production machinery. FP stated that it would comply with environmental regulations.
- FP would not undertake such work itself – the site would be used by a customer. No customer would be willing to wait several years while the site is made ready, in FP's opinion. This leads to the 'need' to clear the site now.
- FP wishes the area to become a centre for heavy industry, as used to be the case. It is currently used by light industry.
- A representative of FP is willing to speak at an LHNCC meeting.

ACTION: A MACKIE TO ARRANGE THIS

- It is unclear how products from dismantling would be transported from the site

M Chisholm MSP asked whether the Scottish Government has been informed about the relevant planning application (submitted 17 August), noting that ministers can 'call in' such applications.

N Sandilands stated that Historic Environment Scotland should be notified, and that plans for demolishing listed buildings must specify their replacements. ***SHE OFFERED TO LOOK FURTHER INTO THIS ISSUE.***

Clr Munro suggested that FP may be running out of berthage, and that this might be the actual end-use.

DECISION: LHNCC TO KEEP A WATCHING BRIEF ON THIS ISSUE.

5 Fairer Scotland event for community councils

B Ryan reported on this event – see <http://bruceryan.info/2015/09/20/fsc0> and related posts on his blog.

D Giles noted that CC members had been unwilling to travel to engagement events he chaired, so they tried to hold events in local schools. This was thwarted by the costs of keeping these venues open after school hours. Hence resources are needed for such activities.

It was suggested that people will come together around specific projects/issues, or to counter specific threats.

It was noted that the Leith Trust will hold a conference at the end of October, and suggested that output from that might contribute to the Fairer Scotland process.

ACTIONS:

- *B RYAN TO COLLATE AND FORWARD ANY INPUT BY LHNCC TO THE FAIRER SCOTLAND PROCESS.*
- *B RYAN TO TRY TO FIND MORE INFORMATION ON LOCAL OUTCOME IMPROVEMENT PLANS, AND REPORT BACK TO LHNCC.*

6 Leith town centre supplementary planning guidance

N Sandilands (NS) of CEC reported that

- CEC recognises 8 town/shopping centres within Edinburgh
- Leith's town centre is from Elm Row to the foot of Leith Walk. It does not include The Shore because the boundary is specified in the current local development plan. However, the boundary might be changed in the next LDP.
- Planning guidance to supplement local development plans is being developed for each town centre. These will be appropriate to their individual subjects, not one-size-fits-all.
- This process uses criteria developed by Jan Gehl (<http://gehlarchitects.com>) to study how places are used and how people interact in such spaces.
- This process is to fulfil a Scottish Government policy of putting town centres first as the hearts of communities.
- The remit of these guidances does not include atmospheric pollution *per se*, but the process will include town centre health-checks, which will include atmosphere checks.
- All Edinburgh town centres are tenemental and hence are already populated. They are also all on main transport routes.
- NS is leading production of Leith's guidance. She intends to publish a 'for consultation' version on 3 December. Consultation would run from December to January 2016.
- Leith's guidance will emphasise other uses, sites and opportunities. The aim of the guidance is to prevent unproductive planning hindrance and promote reinvigoration of Leith town centre. It will not be concerned solely with retail, but with a balance of uses, reducing vacancies, increasing town centres' appeal and accessibility (especially for pedestrians)
- Leith's guidance may emphasise some uses and discourage areas. Planning requirements may halt certain changes of use, e.g. retail to residential. However, regulations cannot prevent a retail premises changing the type of products sold.

NS asked LHNCC about any events at which the supplementary guidance process can be promoted, and how LHNCC engages with its citizens. Suggestions included using a currently empty unit on Great Junction Street, Leith chamber of commerce and letting agents.

N Wilson asked how shop-owners might be incentivised. NS responded that CEC's Economic Development unit has done some relevant work but has not focussed on returning vacant shops into use.

Cllr Munro suggested that the process would need to influence properties that are in private ownership, and that this is difficult.

ACTION: LHNCC SECRETARY TO ADVISE NS OF DECEMBER MEETING DETAILS, SO SHE CAN SPEAK ON THE PUBLISHED DRAFT GUIDANCE.

7 Reports

7.1 Police

Sgt Davies reported that

- CEC-funded will now attend CC meetings, so there should be consistency in reporting.

- Reporting of local crime statistics should soon start. See also letter to M Chishom MSP: <http://bit.ly/1LdMpu5>
- Some statistics are on Police Scotland websites.
- There have been successes combatting violent crime.
- Drugs, alcohol and 'legal highs' (aka *new psychoactive substances* – NPSs) are still issues. Police Scotland (PS) is warning all shops about cannabis replacements. (The are not stocked by 4 out of 7 e-smoke shops on Leith Walk.)
- Needle-use near schools is still an issue – needles have been found in a local school's playground. It is likely that these were used for NPSs, which are not illegal. There is anecdotal evidence of dealing in NPSs.
- There have been numerous calls about youth antisocial behaviour in Giles Street. Increased PS patrols in the area have led to some reduction of this issue.
- Motorcycle theft is an issue but PS has apprehended some perpetrators, and recovered £4000 of stolen bikes.
- There has only been one recent call about boy racers in Ocean Drive.
- Housebreaking in the Trinity area is becoming an issue, and is seen as a priority.
- Arson of waste bins is the latest 'craze'. PS is waiting on CEC's CCTV van to start work in Newhaven, Bonnington and Giles Street areas.
- The bus lane at Ocean Terminal will remain as such 24/7. (Most bus lanes in Edinburgh are peak time only, and can be used by motorcycles.)
- PS will work with CEC and the fire brigade on Bonfire night.
- He will look into the lack of removal of a burnt out car reported at the meeting.
- Response times (i.e. time for calls to get through to PS' control room) are improving.
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7.2 **Secretary**

All items dealt with previously

7.3 **Treasurer**

Absent, so no report. The current account balance remains £757-47. The special events account balance is £35-03

7.4 **Events**

No items

7.5 **Planning**

N Wilson reported that there were no contentious issues in recent planning application lists.

8 **Material for website**

B Ryan has recently reviewed the website, using a questionnaire devised by Communities, Parishes and local Councils (<http://www.cpalc.org.uk>). There is some scope for improvement. He requested LHNCC members' help, e.g. providing histories of the area.

ACTION: B RYAN TO PROVIDE CHECKLIST OF ITEMS NEEDED TO IMPROVE WEBSITE.

9 **AOCB**

A Mackie has been asked by the Edinburgh *Evening* News about naming of streets in the Fort development. He responded that he is happy for people to be consulted, and that LHNCC has no strong views on this matter.

Cllr Munro stated that there is a bank of potential names.

Action: B Ryan to ask L Duckworth of Leith Partnership for this bank.

10 **Date and venue of next meeting**

To be advised