

Minutes of the Leith Harbour and Newhaven Community Council ordinary meeting, held at Custom House, on Tuesday 23 January 2024 at 6:30pm

Actions and decisions are RED ITALIC UNDERLINED SMALLCAPS. *Nem con* means that no-one spoke or voted against an item.

Summary of actions (to be omitted from web-published version)

Item	Actor	Action
3.a (row 1)	J Scanlon	Forward to LHNCC the police report received by Leith Links CC
3.a (row 3, 4)	D Tharby	Chase for map of NE locality and its clusters, map of LHNCC GP changes
3.a (row 9)	Cllr Booth	Chase for a CCTT/trams team meeting date
3.a (row 10)	Cllr Booth	Chase for information on electric vehicle charging points
4.b	D Tharby, J Ran	Arrange a meeting about local place plan
4.b	LHNCC	Discuss its local place plan
6	D Tharby	Enable F G-Q to take over secretary duties <i>gradatim</i>
6	E Dick	Give F G-Q access to the secretary email address, and the laptop
8.a.i	D Tharby	Pursue planning upskilling
8.a.v	E Dick	Ask Ocean Terminal to present about the application in February
8.a.vi	LHNCC	Work on local place plan
8.c.i	E Dick	Contact H Tobermann to follow up about CCTT
8.d.iii	friends of Western Harbour ponds	Share their objection to development here with LHNCC
8.e.iii	E Dick, D Tharby	Collaborate on LHNCC's work on Discovery Gardens
11	D Tharby	Arrange for F Geoghegan-Quinn to become a signatory of bank account
13	E Dick	Arrange a business meeting for LHNCC

1 Introductions and attendance

Elaine Dick	LHNCC	Neil Tulloch	LHNCC	Sheona Fothergill	Oberlanders
Frank Geoghegan-Quinn	LHNCC	Arthur Young	LHNCC	Alan Grant	Orbit
Jason Ran	LHNCC	Bruce Ryan	minutes secretary	Deidre Thom	JLL
Douglas Tharby	LHNCC	Keith Davidson	Longstone (2)	6 residents/visitors	

2 Apologies for absence

Don Giles	LHNCC	Cllr Chas Booth	Leith ward	Cllr Adam Nols-Mcvey	Leith ward
Jim Preacher	LHNCC	Cllr Katrina Faccenda	Leith ward	Ben Macpherson MSP	Edinburgh Northern and Leith

3 Minutes of November 28th meeting

Approved as-is (proposed D Tharby, seconded A Young)

3.a Actions from November meeting

Row	Item	Actor	Action	Status
1	6	D Tharby	Circulate police report, if it arrives	Done
2	6	J Scanlon	Forward to LHNCC the police report received by Leith Links CC	<u>HELD OVER</u>
3	7.a.ii	L Clark	Forward to LHNCC map of northeast locality and its clusters	Not done: <u>D THARBY TO CHASE FOR THESE</u>
4	7.a.iii	L Clark	Forward to LHNCC her map of LHNCC's GP changes	
5	7.a.iv	N Tulloch	Chase for new date for sounding board meeting	Done but no date has been set – see item 4.a
6	7.a.v	LHNCC members	Watch out for emailed details of local place plan work	Done but continuing – see item 4.b
7	7.e.i	D Tharby	Inform Custom House/SHBT of LHNCC meeting dates	Done
8	7.f.iii	B Ryan	Circulate his notes of a meeting with CEC Governance.	Done
9	8.a	Cllr Booth	Chase for a CCTT/trams team meeting date	<u>HELD OVER</u>
10	8.a	Cllr Booth	Chase for information on electric vehicle charging points	<u>HELD OVER</u>

4 Matters arising

4.a Seafield

- N Tulloch: SEPA's comments on the draft masterplan raised more questions than they answered about the site's developability. This has halted progress towards a public consultation, because previous assumptions are no longer valid. Also, the sounding board chair (from Craigenfinny CC) has resigned and not yet been replaced.

4.b Local place plan

- D Tharby: this would feed into CityPlan 2040. Consultations have been postponed to May.
 - ACTION: D THARBY AND J RAN TO ARRANGE A MEETING ABOUT THIS.

5 Residents' issues advised to officers prior to the meeting

- A Young: the box junction at the hotel's entrance to Commercial St needs repainted.
 - ACTION: B RYAN TO EMAIL CLLRS.
 - NB since the meeting, B Ryan has emailed cllrs. Cllr Faccenda has asked CEC staff to sort this.

6 Position of LHNCC Secretary

- F Geoghegan-Quinn has volunteered to undertake this role.
 - ACTION: D THARBY TO ENABLE HIM TO TAKE OVER THE DUTIES GRADATIM.
 - ACTION: E DICK TO GIVE F G-Q ACCESS TO THE SECRETARY EMAIL ADDRESS, AND THE LAPTOP

7 Police report

See [police report](#) on LHNCC website.

- There was concern about gang warfare in Granton.

8 Standing reports**8.a Planning****8.a.i Upskill training in planning for LHNCC**

- D Tharby: CEC planning staff have offered to help with this, but I have not received responses from other LHNCC members. This training should be undertaken so that LHNCC can then revitalise its planning committee. Meanwhile I share weekly planning lists.
- ACTION: D THARBY TO PURSUE THIS.

8.a.ii Living Rent

Living Rent representatives reported:

- Living Rent is a pan-Scotland organisation concerned with planning and housing. In Leith, it is campaigning about the former Dalton scrapyard. Living Rent wishes communities to have a say in development. It would prefer it to become residential housing, not build-to-rent or student accommodation.
- So far there are 107 objections to the current plans. There will community events, possibly in April.
- Living Rent does operate elsewhere in Scotland but this is its first Leith campaign. It has ~500 members in Leith.

8.a.iii Former Bingo Hall, Manderston Street

S Fothergill, K Davidson, A Grant, D Thom reported:

- K Davidson/Longstone (2) have owned the hall since 2019. It was then used by Mecca Bingo, then Club 3000 moved in. but it soon realised that the hall would not suit them long-term. Hence it now will start operating in Ocean Terminal in summer 2024, meaning the hall will then become vacant.
- The 2020 Halmyre St place brief, covering the hall, the old tram depot and the CW properties site, has two scenarios:
 - Demolition of the hall, enabling construction of an east-west active travel route, a community site and a new building
 - Retention of the building as-is.
- The place brief asked;
 - whether the building should be listed: Historic Environment Scotland decided against listing in 2020.
 - whether the hall should become part of the Leith Walk conservation area. Following consultation in 2021, CEC made the hall and the bridges became part of the conservation area.
- Since then, Longstone has sought to retain the property basically as-is. It is not in good condition and needs investment in both its fabric and energy efficiency. Hence Longstone needs to find a use that fits with planning conservation requirements. It has considered conversion to mainstream residential, but was unable to find a viable, compliant way of doing so. However, conversion to high-quality student accommodation can be viable and compliant.
 - This would involve removing the roof, demolishing the interiors, creation of a central courtyard, and opening/re-using the existing windows on the retained western façade. There would be 24 'cluster' flats (each with ~8 ensuite bedrooms, a kitchen and a lounge) and 8 studio flats – a total of 201 beds.
 - 16 bedrooms (8%) of the 201 rooms would be accessible, meeting CEC requirements.
 - The art deco cinema façade on Manderston st would be reinstated by stripping back the bingo-hall additions to it. This would be the access to the bike store. Main access would be from Leith Walk via Domino Lane and a new public square. Service access would be via Thorntree Street. (This would require creation of a pend.)
 - Following CEC policy, the site would be car-free, but there would be sufficient space for each student to keep a bicycle, using up to 50% 2-tier cycle-racks. The closest university building is 12 minutes' cycle away.
 - Passive house architecture and air-source heating would be used, to gain an A-rating energy performance certificate.
 - Biodiversity would be enhanced by green roofs, a high-quality amenity courtyard, and a terrace.
 - This would be in line with CEC policy HOU8.
- Mainstream residential housing, without demolition, would not be possible because CEC would require: 35% affordable housing (standalone affordable housing cannot be done); 20% greenspace; a mix of housing types and sizes; direct access to private gardens; more storage; access to play areas; 50% of flats being dual-aspect, leading to a narrower courtyard and hence daylighting difficulties. All of these could probably only be achieved by making the building taller than Thorntree St buildings.
- There was a consultation event on 17 January. Online comments have been posted at www.manderston-street.co.uk. This is a local application, so there is no requirement for a full PAN process. Submission of the full planning application will probably be in mid-February.

Q&A

- D Tharby: the white buildings on the display do not yet exist.
 - This area has been cleared, and CW now has planning permission for the buildings.
- B Ryan: could all the building be done at the same time, to minimise impact on residents?
 - CW is further ahead than we are, and timing is uncertain. Hence CW is likely to be on-site shortly. However, some co-ordination may be possible.
- F Geoghegan-Quinn: there is very little nearby parking, so could the site have blue-badge spaces for disabled students?
 - We are looking into this, and into access to university health services. CEC mandates no parking, but we see the point of the question. The CW development (which will house 230 students) is likely to have some accessible parking places.
- A Young: could the building become a hostel for the homeless? Student accommodation is likely to be a financial 'bubble'.
- D Tharby: is student accommodation the only way to use the site?
 - If the walls are to be retained, it is hard to see what else is viable. Restoration and re-letting to a music operator will not work. The music academy does not want this site.
 - E Dick: could it become a GP surgery?
- D Tharby: Why would the original entrance become a bike-store?
 - Very little of the original foyer was left after a strip-out in the 1990s.

8.a.iv Upgrading of Cables Wynd and Linksview

Collective Architecture reported:

- CA is working with CEC. The work aims to put people at the heart of the retrofit, by enabling residents to be stakeholders. CEC is their client and the majority owner of these buildings.
- There are four aims: energy efficiency, comfort (improved indoor air quality, future-proofing), health and safety (improved public realm, fire safety), place-making. Hence the project will balance architecture, energy and conservation.
- Cables Wynd was built between 1962 and 1965. It is category A listed, and is in Leith conservation area, as an example of Brutalist architecture.
- There has been much information-gathering and engagement to understand opportunities and constraints, using the place standard tool, in-person events, flyers and online engagement.
 - The need for care and repair, and outdoor space, are particular concerns – mould is present, and the flats are hard to heat. However, overall, residents like the flats.
- Proposals include: (for placemaking) improved ground floors and community hubs in both buildings, a large overhaul of landscaping; (for health and safety) access control and CCTV. Overall, they will feel like whole new buildings, and their lifetimes will be extended by ~30 years. Changes are inspired by passive house methods, but the full passive house standard can't be achieved.
- Stage 2 (concept design) is complete, so CA is working on phase 3 – obtaining LBC or permitted development consent.
- Energy-efficiency calculations are in progress. Wider public consultations are due.

8.a.v Ocean Terminal

D Tharby reported:

- This application was heard on 10 January, following a pre-meeting between LHNCC and the Ocean Terminal team. The application was passed after some debate. Phase 1 is underway, with demolition due soon.
 - F Geohegan-Quinn: the plan is to build 531 residential units: 400 build to rent; 131 'affordable' We would prefer more social housing.
 - ***ACTION: E DICK TO ASK OCEAN TERMINAL TO PRESENT ABOUT THE APPLICATION IN FEBRUARY.***

8.a.vi Local Place Plans

See item 4.b above. Discussion held over to the meeting mentioned at 4.b.

8.b Licensing

No matters raised.

8.c Transport8.c.i Update on Edinburgh Tram work

- D Tharby: CCTT has not met recently, to my knowledge, despite the work not being complete yet.
 - E Dick: I've had no replies to my enquiries about landscaping.
 - ***ACTION: E DICK TO CONTACT CCTT.***

8.c.ii CCTT

See item 8.c.i above

8.c.iii Update on EBUG

No matters raised.

8.d Environment8.d.i Edinburgh Green Spaces

D Tharby: this is about Edinburgh 2050. I have circulated relevant information by email.

8.d.ii Friends of Water of Leith Basin update

E Dick: Its committee will meet next week. Then it will hold an AGM.

8.d.iii The Ponds at Western Harbour

- Two friends of the ponds noted that they are a site of natural rewilding, in foundation pits that were dug out but then not used. The plots are now for sale, and developers are interested.
 - Their next step is to lodge an objection to development here.
 - **ACTION: THE FRIENDS TO SHARE THEIR OBJECTION WITH LHNCC.**

8.d.iv report from SOS Leith

The report was noted. Ben Macpherson MSP is creating a forum for relevant groups.

8.e **Heritage****8.e.i** News from Scottish Historical Building Trust

- D Tharby: the role of chief executive is still unfilled. LHNCC's current venue is owned by SHBT.

8.e.ii Tower Place

- E Dick: during the pre-Xmas winds, a building on the corner of Tower Place, opposite the *Fingal*, that flew a Ukrainian flag was damaged – the top half of the pole fell into the street. Who is responsible for safety, reinstatement etc?
 - A resident: I live there. It is privately owned. We hope to get it fixed. I will keep LHNCC informed.

8.e.iii Discovery Gardens

- D Tharby: the gardens are a mess. At the hearing mentioned in item 8.a.v above, there was a public commitment to improve them. There may be legal action.
 - E Dick: the tram company has not met its commitment of 2-for-1 tree planting.
 - **ACTION: E DICK AND D THARBY TO COLLABORATE ON LHNCC'S WORK ON THE GARDENS, TREES ETC.**

8.f **Community****8.f.i** Leith Chooses Voting Day, 27th January

- D Tharby: in-person voting is on Saturday 27 January (12 noon to 3pm), in the Kirkgate. There is also online voting. All LHNCC members should vote.
 - B Ryan: volunteers to help run the day are very welcome. There is a briefing later this week.

8.f.ii North East Locality Community Planning Partnership, Locality Improvement Plan development

- D Tharby: work is in progress to draft this plan for 2024-2029, so it should emerge in the spring. There will be a meeting on Monday. The aim is to get more community involvement.

8.f.iii Review of Edinburgh Community Council scheme and boundaries

- D Tharby/B Ryan: I (DT) have responded to CEC governance's suggestion of changes to boundaries, saying 'leave them as is'. This is because there is no point in simply changing boundaries. Splitting CCs would risk the resultant smaller CCs becoming unviable. Instead, use the resources to help existing CCs do better.

8.f.iv Survey by Leith Links CC on Low Traffic Neighbourhood and Controlled Parking Zone

- D Tharby: there is a survey on LLCC's website.
 - B Ryan: I have circulated this [link to the survey](#).
 - E Dick: the CPZ regulations are not the same as the legislation banning pavement parking.

9 **Edinburgh City Councillors' reports****9.a** **Cllr Faccenda (by email)**

The Council's Shared Repairs Service was made aware of a potential structural issue with [4 Anchorfield/Lindsay Road]. Following inspection by Council appointed Structural Engineers, it was established that the tenement carries a high risk of structural failure that could pose significant health and safety risk to residents and public both inside and outside the property.

Action has been taken to vacate all residents and close the commercial premises (pub) on the ground floor. A cordon will be created around the property to implement an exclusion zone to protect the surrounding space. This will require the temporary closure to Lindsay Road to traffic but the tram service will continue as normal. Diversions will be put place for traffic in both directions and Edintravel will be updated shortly.

The next stage will involve the creation of a specifically designed structural scaffold that will help support the building in the short/medium term until a long-term solution is established and implemented by the owners. This measure should allow the Council to remove the cordon and reopen the road.

10 **Local MSP's and MP's reports**

none

11 **LHNCC Treasurer's report**

- D Tharby: bank balance £935.32, as of 28 December. F Geoghegan-Quinn will become a signatory.
 - **ACTION: D THARBY TO ARRANGE THIS.**

12 **EACC update**

- D Tharby: this organisation has issues.

13 **AOCB, issued raised during this meeting etc**

- D Tharby: LHNCC can't meet at Custom House in March.
- **ACTION: ELAINE TO ARRANGE A BUSINESS MEETING FOR LHNCC.**

14 **Dates of future meetings**

Tuesday 27th February 2024, Tuesday 26th March 2024