

THE SOUTHSIDE ASSOCIATION

117 Nicolson Street
Edinburgh
EH8 9ER

Founded 1972

Scottish Charity No SCO12262

Minutes of meeting held in the South Side Community Centre on Tuesday 5 February 2013, at 7pm

PRESENT: Sandra McCormick (Chair), Margaret Bagan, Caroline Barr, Marco Biagi MSP, Tom Bonallo, Susan Brown, Colin Christison (Secretary), Linda Femister, Jan Fraser, Moira Gibson, Bob Hodgart, Tom King, Isobel Leckie, May Linton (Membership Secretary), Hilary McDowell, Kenny McLeod, George Pitcher, Cllr Cameron Rose, Molly Ross, Jo Scott, Lisa Sibbald (Vice Chair), Pamela Spiers, Derek Suttie, Random Switch, Colin Symes, Ola Uduku, PC Graham Watt, Scott Wilkins, David Wood, and Joan Young.

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

Sandra welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received from Vera Anderson, Sarah Boyack MSP, Ethel Murray, Fiona Scott (Treasurer), and Louise Smith.

2. Police Report

Sandra invited PC Watt to make his report. He said that January had been quiet as usual. A raid in the Dumbiedykes area on 4 February had uncovered drugs (both Class A and Class B) with a street value of £150,000, together with an imitation firearm. A three-pronged licensing initiative was about to start; checks, including at night-time, will be made on public houses, off-sales, and takeaways, with possible serving of alcohol to under-agers, and premises exceeding their permitted licensed hours of trading, being identified. After some questions and answers, Sandra and the members thanked PC Watt for attending.

3. Guest Speaker: Marco Biagi, MSP for Edinburgh Central

Sandra welcomed Marco Biagi (who was elected as the constituency MSP for Edinburgh Central in 2011) to his first SA meeting. He addressed members, and outlined various policies and reforms introduced by the Scottish Government, including those on the economy, energy, tourism, equal opportunities, employment and apprenticeships; and he described his constituency work, which so far hadn't involved much in the Southside area.

He discussed the subject of private residential renting and HMOs, saying that about 40% of properties in central Edinburgh are rented, second only to Glasgow Kelvininside in Scotland. Studies are going on about the benefits of continental (especially German) style long-term occupancy, and rather than concentrating on the relationship between landlords and tenants, more attention should be paid to the relationship between tenants (particularly long-term ones), and the wider community to encourage positive benefits and how they could impact on council services.

There were numerous questions from the floor, with subjects such as the so-called bedroom tax, housing benefit, tenancy associations, unsolicited telephone calls, urban transport, community

empowerment and engagement, community planning and asset transfer, Caltongate, high-speed rail connections, and tuition fees.

Sandra and the members thanked Marco for attending, and for contributing to a varied and lively debate.

4. Minutes of meeting held on 8 January 2013, and matters arising

Agreed; proposed by Jan Fraser, and seconded by Jo Scott. **Item 9** (Nicolson Street junction) – it seemed that some sort of repair had been made to the carriageway, but not a very successful one, and it was agreed to report further defects.

5. Secretary's Report

5.1 Grow your own food – course starting 6.2.13 at Gracemount walled garden and Bridgend Allotments. More information from Colin.

5.2 Lothian Buses had announced that Service 14 would continue on the St Leonard's route, with the frequency being increased to five buses per hour, instead of four, from March. Service 2 would continue to run along the Clerk Street corridor.

5.3 The minutes of the MABLAG (Meadows etc) were available. Next meeting on 6 February, which Linda Hendry would attend.

5.4 The minutes of the South Central Neighbourhood Partnership meeting of 28 January were available.

5.5 Former *Odeon* cinema: Gerry Boyle, the singer Susan Boyle's brother, who is now renting the premises, will attend the Association's April meeting to outline his plans for the venue.

6. Treasurer's Report

Fiona had sent a message to say that the balance remained unchanged, at £1289.83.

7. Planning and licensing matters

7.1 Commonwealth Games 2014

TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 AS AMENDED BY THE PLANNING ETC. (SCOTLAND) ACT 2006. PROPOSAL OF APPLICATION NOTICE, ERECTION OF TEMPORARY OVERLAY TO BE IMPLEMENTED FOR THE 2014 COMMONWEALTH GAMES AT LAND AT AND AROUND THE ROYAL COMMONWEALTH POOL, 21 DALKEITH ROAD, EDINBURGH, EH16 5BB. REFERENCE NUMBER: 13/00265/PAN (SCHEME :) WARD NO: A15

An exhibition (consultation event) will be held on the above subject at the Royal Commonwealth Pool on Tuesday 5 March, from 3pm – 7pm. Some representatives from the Deloitte's Real Estate will attend the Association meeting that evening to discuss the proposals, which relate to the diving competitions over four days in July 2014.

7.2 Planning Application (13/00125/FUL)

Operate an outdoor market with up to 24 traditional market stalls every Sunday (extending to Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays during August and December) on the

public footway near The Royal Commonwealth Pool at Land 58 Metres West of 21 Dalkeith Road Edinburgh.

Objection (on grounds of extra vehicles leading to pressure on residential parking, and detriment to the local amenity) sent and acknowledged as material.

- 7.3 **Planning enforcement investigation (13/00030/EOPDEV)** - shop at 3 South Clerk Street. Investigation into use of shocking pink as an appropriate permitted colour for shop frontages according to the statutory planning guidelines.
- 7.4 This week's planning applications include one to convert barber's premises at Newington Road to an office, and another for extension of restaurant into basement in Marshall Street. Applications will be examined by the planning group.

8. Environmental matters

- 8.1 **St Patrick Square garden:** - David Doig, Local Environmental Manager, had sent a message to say that the bid for Scottish Heritage Funding for the Southside had been unsuccessful. This means that only the previous initial capital funding of £35,000 is available. Sandra and Lisa had met David and his colleagues to discuss the subject, and they outlined the proposals to members, and circulated a photographic representation of the design of the Square. The plans are to replace the railings and insert them in the coping stones, with repairs being made to the coping stones as required. A path will be created, with two new gates (one a replacement) on the east side, two new flower beds, two new small shrub beds, and two new notice boards. The two trees to the north and south will be retained, and it is possible that the middle tree will be replanted elsewhere. A semi-circular shaped bench will be placed outside the square, at the bus shelter, and one park bench will be located in the Square. Further meetings will take place. During a discussion, George Pitcher asked for clarification about a Christmas tree, but it seemed that the LCD lights would continue to operate on the existing planted trees. He also pointed out that the sum of £25,000 per annum is available for the maintenance of the 20 parks in the SCNP area, and Cllr Rose said that a further £2,000 pa would become available. Random Switch repeated his concerns (minuted previously) about the poor quality of the railings, including potentially dangerous gaps in them, around the buildings in the square, but the owners of the buildings have responsibility for these.
- 8.2 Early discussions have taken place to create a mini wildflower meadow on the green space at the front of the Royal Commonwealth Pool. Much will depend on the timing of other matters such as the infrastructure for the Commonwealth Games diving competitions. Partners include the Southside Association, the Blacket Association, Preston Street Primary School, Edinburgh Leisure Staff at the RCP, Edinburgh & Lothians Greenspace Trust, with the lead partner being the City of Edinburgh Council (Children and Families, Community Learning & Development South Central Team).

9. Question and Answer session with the attending Councillor

Cllr Rose, who had contributed throughout the meeting, said that the Council's budget would be settled on Thursday 7 February. Jan Fraser expressed her concern about the persistent double and triple parking around Preston Street Primary School, and her annoyance that parking attendants ignore the matter. She was advised to contact the police.

10. Any other business

- 10.1 Caroline Barr said that building material had been left by workmen in Rankeillor Street following the installation of a replacement lamp-post. Cllr Rose would follow this up.
- 10.2 George Pitcher referred to the Association's Constitution, mentioning some anomalies which had developed in its structure and language because of outside changes. It requires a small amount of tidying and clarification now that the Association is no longer funded by the City Council. It was agreed that George and Colin suggest amendments for distribution to members, in time for the AGM when any amendments can be proposed for adoption.
- 10.3 Derek Suttie asked which local churches provided help and accommodation for the homeless as part of the CRISIS charity's initiative. A list of participants is in the Bethany Christian Trust Shop at 1 Summerhall Place. There is a rolling rota of participating churches, tending to be outwith the city centre. Jo Scott said that the Mayfield Salisbury Church run a monthly meal-and-mattress scheme. Colin Symes said that the Community Church would soon announce news about a new food bank. Cllr Rose said that Streetwork crisis service operate a 24 hour access scheme from their premises at 22 Holyrood Road. May Linton said that the Kirk O'Field have frequent collections for the homeless.
- 10.4 Moira Gibson and George Pitcher made brief mention of matters relating to the University of Edinburgh: the extensive volunteering programme, as well as their social responsibility and sustainability strategy 2010-2012 (information available from Colin).

11. Date of next meeting

Tuesday 5 March 2013, at 7pm, in the same venue.
