

**Minutes of meeting held in the South Side Community Centre  
on Tuesday 4 November 2014, at 7pm**

**PRESENT:** Lisa Sibbald (Chair), Moira Gibson (Minutes Secretary), Colin Christison, Hilary McDowell, Tom Bonallo, Ethel Murray, Tim Pogson, May Linton, Jan Fraser, Jo Scott, Isobel Leckie, Maggie Bagan, Bob Hodgart, Elizabeth Williams, Ola Oduku, Stephen Carter.

Also present were: Councillor Ian Perry; PC Ross Stewart, Police Scotland; Kevin Hawes, Community Safety Officer.

**1. Welcome and apologies for absence**

Lisa Sibbald welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received from George Pitcher, Linda Femister, Kenny McLeod, Colin Symes, Tom King (Vice-Chair), David Wood, Susan Brown, Derek Suttie, Pamela Spiers.

**2. Police Report**

PC Ross Stewart said Police Scotland had received over 550 calls from the public during October. 173 crimes were reported including drugs, robbery, shoplifting, cycle theft and assault. 98 were solved (relating to drugs, all robberies and some thefts), and 75 were unsolved or deemed as not crimes. He emphasised the importance of fitting good locks on properties and bicycles.

**3. Community Safety Report**

Kevin Hawes from the South Central Neighbourhood Partnership's Environment and Community Safety Team reported that the ongoing work with the police to curb sales of legal highs and needle use was yielding great results, with fewer than five needles found in October. They had responded to break-ins to properties in the Grange area and to increased bike theft.

A schools campaign encouraging people to pick up after their dogs, called 'Don't Blame the Dog', was ongoing, and there had been a clear-up in Montague Street. Jan Fraser asked about aggressive sellers of the Big Issue on South Clerk Street and at the St James's Centre. Kevin replied that these could be unauthorised sellers, so the public should ask to check passes for photo and location. Aggression can be an offence and concerns should be reported to Kevin.

**4. Minutes of Meeting of 7 October and Matters Arising**

4.1 The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting. Proposer: Margaret Bagan; Seconder: Tim Pogson.

4.2 Section 4.2 of the previous minutes referred to University responses to questions asked at a previous meeting. Derek Suttie, who was unable to attend the meeting, had emailed requesting some further consideration of the issues raised. Moira agreed to this.

4.3 Section 7.3 of the previous minutes referred to the former Odeon cinema. An update on its condition and status will be given at a meeting on 13 November at the City Chambers. A report has been prepared which assesses whether or not Council officers acted correctly in framing the conditions for operating within the Odeon premises. Cllr Perry has also had a meeting with Duddingston House, owned by Bruce Hare and Sir Tom Farmer, which owns the Odeon. The Council has no powers to force Duddingston House to renovate the Odeon, only to ensure that the building is kept wind- and watertight, though some members felt that this basic condition was not being met. No inspection of the interior of the Odeon has yet taken place, but that should shortly be possible. Cllr Perry confirmed that the Odeon, along with nine other buildings in Edinburgh, is on the 'Buildings at Risk' register. The Council believes it does not have the power to compulsorily purchase the Odeon; it therefore wishes to work with the owners to achieve the best possible solution for all parties, including the community.

4.4 Section 6.2 of the previous minutes refers to the grant from the South Central Neighbourhood Partnership. The Chair confirmed that a cheque for £599 has been banked. An application for funding from Castle Rock Edinvar, which demonstrated how more and better publicity about the activities of the Southside Association would benefit local residents, had been lodged and Lisa was hopeful of a positive outcome.

## 5. **Secretary's Report**

Correspondence had been received about the following matters:

- Colin Symes had emailed to say that Community Church Edinburgh was hosting the Bethany Night Shelter on a few evenings over the winter; it is also hosting the showing of a film about modern slavery and sex trafficking on 19 November at 7.30pm;
- Canongate Youth was asking for support from members in voting for the People's Millions money for the Old School Café, a social enterprise run by unemployed young people for the community;
- The Council had notified the Association about proposed amendments to disabled bays on various roads and to eligibility for residents' parking permits;

## 6. **Treasurer's Report**

The Treasurer confirmed that funds currently stood at £1,639.23.

## 7. **Planning and Licensing Matters**

7.1 Lisa introduced Stephen Carter from *Living Southside* who spoke about the aims of the group and his own personal legal action to initiate a judicial review against the Scottish Government Reporter's decision on the Lutton Court development.

Stephen was very involved in the original work to reject the Lutton Court developer's application to the Council for planning permission. Following the public meeting in July about student accommodation in the Southside and a subsequent smaller meeting, the Living Southside working group was formed. It is primarily an email group, using Google Groups, aimed at co-ordinating an overview of planning applications relating to student housing. Anyone can join the group and Colin Christison volunteered to circulate details of how they could. Additionally, the group is prepared to canvass door-to-door to raise awareness of the issue and encourage more people to become involved.

Cllr Perry informed the meeting that the forthcoming meeting of the Planning Committee would review the guidance on student housing. In relation to the Homebase application which has been lodged, the Council is likely to apply the current policy and guidance when the decision is taken on 8 January 2015.

7.2 On a separate issue, Jo Scott asked for members' opinions on an application at 38 St Patrick Square where the kitchen was to be made into an additional bedroom, and the kitchen incorporated into the sitting-room. This would possibly entail alterations to the plumbing systems for the entire tenement and perhaps generate additional noise (ie kitchens were formerly above each other, but now a noisy kitchen might be above a bedroom). Jo asked whether the Council could review the regulations on this matter. Cllr Perry's feeling was that special consideration could not be given to HMOs but would have to apply equally to all buildings like this.

## 8. **Environmental Matters**

8.1 Hilary reported that:

- Traffic lights at the junction of Newington Road and Salisbury are due to be upgraded at the end of January, with the carriageway repaired at the same time.
- Repair of the surface near the bus stop at St Patrick Square has been authorised.
- The No Right Turn notice at Hill Place needs to be turned again so it is visible. A further sign across the road has been requested.
- The Gifford Park mural scheme is being progressed.
- The next meeting of Friends of the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links is at 7.30pm on 11 November at the German Church in Chalmers Crescent.

8.2 Ola Oduku stated that the bins at Hamilton's Folly Mews were not being emptied often enough with rubbish overflowing from bins and inviting fly-tippers. Broken glass was not swept up and was a potential danger to children and car tyres. Cllr Perry sympathised and said that, where regular Council routes for complaints were ineffective, residents should complain directly to Councillors.

8.3 Tim Pogson highlighted the need for traffic lights and a safe pedestrian crossing at the junction beside the Nelson Hall. Members said that the Southside Association, and the former Community Council, had tried unsuccessfully to achieve this several years ago. Cllr Perry offered to revisit this.

#### **9. Reports from other meetings**

There were none.

#### **10. Question and Answer session with the attending Councillor**

Cllr Perry gave an update on the Crags cycle way. An application for a Road Traffic Order has been lodged.

#### **11. Any other business**

11.1 The Christmas Party will take place at 6pm on Tuesday 2 December. Colin Christison, who is convening the organising sub-committee, hoped to have in attendance the University brass band and choir, and a choir from Preston Street PS, with Tom Bonallo switching on the lights to celebrate his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. There had been frustrating delays in getting confirmation of the date so that the various consents and arrangements could be put in place.

11.2 Isobel Leckie reported that the Causey Development Trust had received a grant from the Edinburgh World Heritage Trust (EWHT) and this was enabling them to commission a Design Team. The Causey Steering Group, along with representatives from the Council, the EWHT, Sustrans, Living Streets and Buccleuch Church, held monthly meetings which the public are welcome to attend.

#### **12. Date of next meeting**

The next formal meeting will take place on Tuesday 6 January in the Southside Community Centre at 7pm as usual. We hope to have artist Kate George to speak about the Gifford Park mural at the January meeting.