

**Members' Meeting**  
**Tuesday 5 January 2016 at 7pm**  
**Room 1, South Side Community Centre**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Colin Christison (Chair and Secretary), Lisa Sibbald (Treasurer), Moira Gibson (Minutes Secretary), Jo Scott, Hilary McDowell, Philip McDowell, Maggie Bagan, Dora Lola-Luz, Tim Pogson, Tom Bonallo, Ethel Murray, Ola Uduku, Bob Hodgart, Fran Gifford.

**Also present:** PC Ponniah, Police Scotland.

**1. Welcome and apologies for absence**

Colin welcomed everyone to the meeting, and wished them a Happy New Year. Apologies for absence were received from Tom King, Isobel Leckie, Nancy Lynner, Colin Symes, Jan Fraser, May Linton, Linda Femister.

**2. Police Report from Police Scotland**

PC Sacha Ponniah said that 103 crimes had been reported to St Leonard's Police Station in December, though not all these took place within the Southside. There were some cases of vandalism in the Bristo Square area and a prolific youth offender was arrested, resulting in the return of stolen property. An operation to deter and detect housebreakings was successful, with a reduction of housebreakings and pedal cycle thefts within the Southside. Extensive checks were made on licensed premises and Nicolson Street was patrolled to curb drugs offences.

In relation to ongoing concerns about beggars, PC Ponniah reported that the Council is investigating the possibility of a dispersal notice for beggars in the city centre but this may just displace beggars out of the city centre and into the Southside and other nearby areas. *(No Councillor was present to ask about this, so this matter will be taken up at the next meeting of the Southside Association).*

Over the festive period, police helped with the lights switch-on ceremony at St Patrick Square and also with the Sciennes Primary School trip to the pantomime. They had also attended the monthly meeting at the Mosque and taken part in three days of community meetings in Dumbiedykes.

**3. Report on Environment and Community Safety from Kevin Hawes, Community Safety Officer, City of Edinburgh Council**

Kevin Hawes was unable to be present at the meeting.

#### 4. Minutes of meeting of 3 November 2015, and matters arising

Agreed; proposed by Jo Scott and seconded by Tom Bonallo.

Item 6.2 (Odeon) – two email invitations have been sent to Stefan King asking if he or a representative can present plans for the Odeon refurbishment to the Association but, so far, we have received no response. The Chair agreed to write a formal letter and send it by post.

Item 8.1 (Doghouse) – a letter had been sent (and acknowledged) to the Council expressing concerns about the colour, but no response has been received so far.

#### 5. Chair's Report

5.1 The Chair thanked everyone who was involved in organising the Christmas Lights Switch-on and the Party, both of which had been a huge success with a larger turnout than ever. The Lord Provost was particularly pleased to have been asked to switch on the lights as he had never done it before. The grass was clean but, next year, we will ask if it can be cut in advance of the gathering.

5.2 Members are invited to a drop-in community event on Wednesday 13 January, between 4pm and 8pm, at the Royal Commonwealth Pool. The event will showcase the plans for the Holyrood Park Distillery which is proposed for the former Engine Shed building on St Leonard's Lane.

5.3 Krzysztof Ciesielka has moved to a new post and this is making it difficult to staff adequately both the Southside Community Education Centre and the Nelson Hall Community Centre.

#### 6. Treasurer's Report

Lisa reported that the most recent bank balance was £1548.39, after deduction of the payments for public liability insurance and for the Christmas Party.

#### 7. Planning and Licensing Report

7.1 The former James Clark School in St Leonard's Lane is now flats of which the majority in a particular section are HMO or private lets. Colin reported that this is causing concern for the one permanent resident. It was suggested that Sarah Boyack MSP be consulted if the lets are holiday lets, and that Councillors help to identify the correct contact person at the Council for HMO lets.

7.2 Colin asked whether anyone knows why the Luton Court development does not seem to be progressing although Homebase is almost completely demolished. Apparently the plan is to move forward with construction over the next six months. It was reported that graffiti has appeared on internal walls.

## 8. Environmental Matters

Hilary reported that she is still following up on some actions identified in the long report written after the Walkabout. Delivery of the long-awaited promise to remove commercial bins will start on 8 January: henceforth these bins can only be presented for waste collection within a one-hour time-slot. The replacement street lights in Rankeillor and Montague Streets, and Lutton Place, are unusually dim, leading to safety concerns. The Southside Association will write a letter asking for enhanced lighting.

Fran has been liaising on some alterations to the front of the Homebase site and suggested that planning gain could be used to ask for more trees to be planted to compensate for those about to be lost. This suggestion was warmly welcomed.

It was noted that there is a section of the road outside St Leonard's Police Station, which has no yellow markings, and a car sits there most of the time. Ola reported that the eight bins at Hamilton's Folly Mews have not been emptied since before Christmas.

Bob updated members on representation at MABLAG. Kaaren Haughton, Vice-Chair of the Southside Community Council, has been appointed as the new representative, with Bob as Deputy. Linda Hendry was thanked for representing the SA on MABLAG for a number of years.

## 9. Report from, and Question and Answer session with, the attending Councillor

No Councillor attended the meeting. In their absence, the Southside Community Council (SCC) members present were asked for an update. The new organisation is now well set up, with three sub-groups addressing Communications, Environment, and Planning. The Environment Group will initially examine bus shelters, bins, bike stores and parking. The SCC is beginning to plan activities including a Community Day in St Patrick Square in May to raise awareness and invite participation. Colin agreed to advertise the new SCC website and meeting dates to his email database – [www.sccedinburgh.org.uk](http://www.sccedinburgh.org.uk), plus the Facebook page.

## 10. Any other business

10.1 Moira reported that the former Surgical Hospital in Lauriston Place, which has been decaying for a decade, has been bought by the University and will be used for teaching and research.

10.2 Jo Scott, who attends meetings of the NHS/Community Group which discusses the re-provisioning of services on the Royal Edinburgh and Astley Ainslie Hospitals sites, reported that building work at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital is progressing apace. In due course all AA activity will move to the REH site, along with the inpatient beds from Liberton Hospital. Liberton Hospital will retain out-patients activity. The Astley Ainslie site will eventually be sold, probably to a private developer for housing. Concern was expressed about preservation of the 'right of way' for walkers

and cyclists through this estate, in case the area becomes a gated community, like Quartermile. Councillors will be asked to revisit how locked gates to the Meadows were permitted in Quartermile, contravening the original planning permission. In addition, Moira was asked to investigate whether the University would have any leverage in effecting access to the Surgical Hospital from the Meadows.

Jo will attend the Southside Community Council to inform them about the hospital plans and invite them to make representations on these issues, both from a health and amenity perspective.

**10.3 Hilary will co-ordinate proposals for wording on the back of the postcard of the Gifford Park Mural and the University will pay to have it printed.**

**11. Date of next meeting**

**Tuesday 2 February 2016.**