

THE SOUTHSIDE ASSOCIATION

**117 Nicolson Street
Edinburgh
EH8 9ER**

Founded 1972 Scottish Charity No SCO12262

www.southsideassociation.co.uk

Minutes of Members' Meeting held on Tuesday 6 September 2016 at 7pm

Present: Colin Christison (Chair), Jo Scott (Vice-Chair), Lisa Sibbald (Treasurer), Moira Gibson (Minutes Secretary), Jan Fraser, Fran Gifford, Kenny McLeod, May Linton, Tom King, Maggie Bagan, Ethel Murray, Tom Bonallo, Hilary McDowell, Philip McDowell, Bob Hodgart.

Also present: Guest speaker Dan Rous, Greyfriars Charteris Centre, PC Brian Leavy, Cllr Rose.

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

Colin Christison welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received from Colin Symes, Ola Uduku, Isobel Leckie, Stephen Carter, and Joan Carter.

2. Guest speaker – Dan Rous, Development Manager, Greyfriars Charteris Centre

Colin welcomed Dan, the Development Manager for the Charteris Centre in the Pleasance, an offshoot of the Church of Scotland's Greyfriars Kirk.

Dan, in post since February, gave a brief history of the Centre, named after Archibald Charteris, a pioneer of women's ministry, founder of the Life & Work magazine and the Board of Social Responsibility, a man ahead of his time. Nowadays, although it offers a campus ministry to students, the Centre no longer functions as a church.

The vision of the Centre is 'connecting communities', offering space to groups serving the community and filling the gaps, spiritually and socially. A strong theme at the Centre is Wellbeing, of body, mind and soul; examples of activity include weekly coffee mornings, Heart for Art dementia therapy, the Southside Elderly Club's weekly curry, Scottish Country Dance club, fencing club, NHS physiotherapy for those with head injuries, Counselling and Communities, IT support for the elderly, and a parent and child choir.

In addition, the Centre hosts the Edinburgh Japanese Church, the HQ of charity SLA which works in India, Amina – the Muslim Women's Resource Centre. It supports social enterprise - mainly student associated, and hosts a theatre group for people with learning difficulties.

The building has plenty of capacity for more activities, with three halls, several rooms and kitchens, and is drafting a business plan to upgrade the building and support more participation. Dan was

asked whether, when the Southside Community Centre has more booking requests than it can accommodate, referrals could be made to the Charteris Centre, and he welcomed the proposal.

Colin thanked Dan for such an interesting glimpse into the valuable work of the Centre.

3. Police Report from Police Scotland

PC Leavy reported that police resources are currently stretched to capacity. From 17 October, there will be three funded community officers at St Leonards and three more at Howdenhall, with Graeme Nisbet still the local Inspector. Subject to the need to support response officers, community police will be out and about, visible and connecting with local people.

In June, 168 crimes were reported (slightly down on June 2015), of which 72 (42%) were solved thus far. Most were theft (bikes, shoplifting), housebreaking, motor offences, with some assault and vandalism. Figures for July and August will be collated in due course. Enforcement of the 20 mph zones is patchy and mainly confined to warnings (66 motorists stopped so far). The surrender of airguns is open until the end of the year.

Cllr Rose drew attention to a rise in shoplifting during the Festival. Members had concerns about speeding cyclists and abandoned bikes. PC Leavy said cyclists would be stopped if they had no lights. In relation to bikes, disposal of locked bikes was a matter for the Council (contact Kathy Evans) while police should be notified about stolen bikes by calling 101.

4. Minutes of meeting of 7 June 2016, and matters arising

Approved; proposed by Jo Scott and seconded by Fran Gifford.

Matters Arising:

- 4.1 *Item 2 (Odeon)* – work continues. Jan Fraser was pleased with her hard hat tour.
- 4.2 *Item 6.1 (SCVO Awards)* – Hilary attended an enjoyable awards evening. Although the Association's mural was a worthy finalist, Oban Playground was the winner.
- 4.3 *Item 7 (OSCR submission)* – accounts submitted and accepted.
- 4.4 *Item 8.1 (Amplified music)* – decision deferred on 29 August for further consultation at a hearing at 11.30am on Monday 26 September in the City Chambers. It should be noted that 'amplified' music does not include live music.
- 4.5 *Item 8.2 (Planning walkabout)* – This took place on 30 July. Jo Scott accompanied Southside Community Council (SCC), from whom a report is awaited. At the new Greek Orthodox Church location, there is no longer any sign of drugs use/needles. The pavements are filthy and cluttered and in need of clearing and cleaning, especially the bins.
- 4.6 *Item 9.1 (BHF recycling bin)* – this has been removed.
- 4.7 A report was made about a dangerous paving slab outside Kilimanjaro restaurant. Jan had tripped and fallen, had to go to hospital and now has a bad back. Cllr Rose to follow up on this.

5. Chair's Report

- 5.1 MSPs and MPs have become involved in the future of the Southside Surgery. The suggestion of relocating premises to the Unite building at the former Homebase has foundered because of the huge rent demanded. There is a possibility that a firm will buy the premises and lease them back to the practice. All options are being explored.
- 5.2 Members' suggestions for future speakers were sought. Care and Repair Edinburgh has not yet responded to an invitation. Hilary suggested some of the new staff from the NP. Other suggestions were the Council's Head of the refuse and recycling department, and the developers of the new hall at the Greek Orthodox Church.
- 5.3 After confirmation that the Council will provide the usual festive lighting at St Patrick Square, it was agreed that the Christmas Event will go ahead on 6 December, although two members thought that it should be discontinued. This is a popular fixture in the local calendar, well-attended and an opportunity to attract new members. The Association will make the necessary arrangements. We will look into the formality involved in offering an opportunity for guests to give donations.
- 5.4 Edinburgh Doors Open Day 2016 – Saturday 24 and Sunday 25 September - see www.cockburnassociation.org.uk

6. Treasurer's Report

Lisa stated that the balance was £1,426.65.

7. Planning and Licensing Report

- 7.1 PA 16/03428/LBC and PA 16/03430/FUL – restoration of former cinema and proposed alterations to the façade at 7 Clerk Street: the SA had written to support both applications (important to offer support as well as to object).
- 7.2 PA 16/02874/FUL – retrospective PA for an ATM and shop front alterations at 46-48 Clerk Street: the SA had objected to these, and to the appearance of an advertising sign set in concrete on the pavement outside the shop.
- 7.4 PA 16/03236/ADV – Card Factory shop at 72 Nicolson Street: it was noted with surprise that the Planning Department had refused the shop front sign.
- 7.5 Consultation on statement of licensing policy about amplified music in licensed premises – the SA had objected to the proposition to relax the rules (*see Item 4.4*).
- 7.6 Holyrood Park Distillery – planning application granted.
- 7.7 Chapel Street – Edinburgh Orthodox Community of St Andrew: proposed new church hall which follows the footprint of the old hall. The Church is making a positive contribution to the area (fewer needles etc). SA to support this and invite a speaker.
- 7.8 The Association laments the inefficiency of the Planning Department. It's very difficult to contact anyone: emails are unanswered, no phone numbers are available, written (ie not emailed) letters are not logged into the planning database, therefore cannot be viewed and

are not used in evidence. Either the system is at fault or the staff are not implementing procedure. Certainly, customer service is absent. Cllr Rose offered to investigate why written submissions are not logged into the system.

8. Environmental Report (8.1 – 8.8 from Hilary McDowell)

- 8.1 Recycling facilities have now been provided at 81 Newington Road.
- 8.2 Need clarity about whether blue food waste bins should be stored close to owner's premises or whether they can be stored on the other side of the road. Cllr Rose to investigate.
- 8.3 East Preston St closed for four weeks of major reconstruction. Request submitted for junction of Newington Road and South Clerk St to be done as part of the same project. Cllr Orr has arranged for this to be considered at the monthly city-wide traffic management group meeting on 6 September – outcome unknown as yet.
- 8.4 We welcome the news that all three of the main north/south road corridors are due for resurfacing or surface treatment in 2016/17 financial year – exact dates unknown. Careful planning required because of need to reroute buses.
- 8.5 A meeting is being set up to co-ordinate efforts to replant trees on Lutton Place. The developers are willing to donate and plant but this needs approval by the Roads Department. Cllr Rose is working on this and says things are moving forward.
- 8.6 Flyposting during the Festival is less of a problem now than previously because the Council contracts a company to provide boards and remove illegal posters. The rash of posters in the last week from the Scottish Socialist Party advertising their Nelson Hall meeting is ugly and illegal. Request for SA to ask the Southside Centre Management Group to insert into their letting agreement a clause that there should be no flyposting associated with any meetings in the halls - public, election or otherwise – on pain of the let being cancelled? Would SA make a similar request to the Council, Edinburgh Leisure and Ingliston in relation to events (eg circuses) taking place on public premises, including parks. There's a successful precedent in relation to nightclub advertising and the issuing of licences. Prevention is better than cure and, if the posters don't go up, money isn't wasted on enforcement and removal. Colin agreed to write a letter to the Council and Lisa agreed to take this up with the Southside Community Centre Management Group.
- 8.7 Notices have been put on a number of apparently abandoned bikes and some have been removed. Other bike racks are cluttered with rusty bikes (*see discussion in Police Report above*). Cllr Rose agreed to report back.
- 8.8 A deputation from FoMBL attended the Transport and Environment Committee to ask if events on the Meadows could be shortened to 15 days only and to ensure more of the monies raised were spent on the park. The only concession obtained was a promise of further discussion on how money is spent on the Meadows.
- 8.9 The Buccleuch Street over-sized bus stop has been removed. Philip believes the problem relates to misleading/inconsistent guidance being issued by Council staff.
- 8.10 The advertising banner between a burger shop and a parking sign on Nicolson Street is inappropriate. Cllr Rose to enquire about enforcement proceedings.

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

CLlr Rose reported that a pilot in Princes Street/Royal Mile/Rose Street about removing A-boards and street clutter had been carried out and a report was due next year. Four new localities will work with local NPs to serve citizens (Southside is in South East Locality).

No good news on bins. The Evening News is running a campaign on 'disgusting' and 'unhealthy' effects of overflowing bins and uncollected rubbish. Inefficient staff practices are being investigated. Best way is to work through the Councillors rather than the staff.

10. Any other business

10.1 Around 200 responses to the consultation on the expansion of Edinburgh Airport have been lost in an IT glitch. People were advised to re-send.

10.2 Tom King proposed that the Southside Association be wound up. With the creation of the Southside Community Council, he believes it no longer serves any useful purpose and that the funds should be distributed to classes in the Community Centre or to a local charity. The proposal was not supported by the wider membership present. Tom resigned his membership with immediate effect.

11. Date of next meeting

Tuesday 4 October at 7pm.