

The Southside Association

117 Nicolson Street

Edinburgh

EH8 9ER

Founded 1972

Scottish Charity No SCO12262

www.southsideassociation.co.uk

Members' Meeting

Tuesday 3 October 2017 at 7pm

Room 1, Southside Community Centre

Minutes

PRESENT: Colin Christison (Chair), Maggie Bagan, Tom Bonallo, Gordon Duffy, Jan Fraser, Fran Gifford, Bob Hodgart, Isobel Leckie, May Linton, Hilary McDowell, Kenny McLeod, Ethel Murray, Maggie Peatfield, Councillor Cameron Rose, and PC Greig Stephen.

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

Colin Christison welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received from Kezia Dugdale MSP, Moira Gibson, PC Chris Harris, Philip McDowell, and Jo Scott.

2. Police Report

PC Harris was required to attend an incident, and sent his apologies later.

3. Guest speaker: PC Greig Stephen

Colin welcomed Greig, who has been a serving officer for 23 years. Greig outlined his career with the force; his present role is that of Crime Prevention Officer, covering the security of domestic and business premises. He knows the Southside area very well, and referred to its dynamic mix of daytime and evening/night economies, student population and halls of residence, places of entertainment, shops, bars, restaurants, and takeaways, Royal Commonwealth Pool, proximity to the Meadows, people passing through to go elsewhere, and so on, saying that the 24 hour lifestyle brought its share of issues.

He and his colleagues visit victims of housebreaking and give advice on security measures, indoors and outdoors, such as lighting, locks, and so on. Continuous lighting is preferred, as well as remote sensors outside buildings. Faults with street lights should be reported. They visit business premises where there have been break-ins. They are also happy to visit and offer advice to help prevent problems. They liaise with trading standards in the fight against bogus doorstep callers. Greig looks after the link officers who are present in 12 of Edinburgh's secondary schools. They advise architects on the designs of new buildings to minimise crime.

Greig displayed some security devices such as personal alarms, UV marker pens, and the 'Smartwater' system of marking property with synthetic 'DNA' so that it can be matched to its rightful owner if stolen.

There were discussions on many matters, including graffiti, of which there has been an upsurge in the past nine months; street lighting; partnership walkabouts, or 'EVAs' – environmental visual walkabouts; crime profiles over 6 months are done in certain areas where required; CCTV (there are now 238 fixed cameras in the

city, and the mobile camera van, as well as the possibility of temporary CCTV cameras being installed in problem areas; and the perception of personal vulnerability particularly at night.

After he distributed information on Home Security, Beating Doorstep Crime, and the Edinburgh Trusted Trader scheme www.trustedtrader.scot the members warmly thanked Grieg for his interesting presentation.

4. Minutes of meeting held on 12 September 2017, and matters arising

Approved; proposed by Hilary McDowell and seconded by Jan Fraser.

- 4.1 Item 5.2 (Nelson Hall) – the Council had approved the new lease to SCOOSH on 28 September. See http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/54932/item_82_-_proposed_new_lease_nelson_hall_5_spitalfield_crescent_edinburgh
- 4.2 Item 5.4 (Causey Development Trust) – some members had met David Wood and Kate Leiper from the group on 27 September, when revised draft plans were presented. A new TRO is expected in the New Year.
- 4.3 Item 7.1 (Planning) – an objection had been lodged.
- 4.4 Item 7.3 (Licensing application for Mockingbird at 72-74 Newington Road) – at the Licensing Board meeting on 25 September, it was decided to continue the application so a site visit could be made. The applicant wants it be to suitable for young children. The applicant has withdrawn their request for a change in the noise condition. The next meeting is at the end of October. There was a mix-up by the Department in acknowledging some of the objections, and by not inviting all of those objecting to the meeting, and a letter of apology was sent.
- 4.5 Item 8 (Environmental)
 - Murals – to be continued;
 - Planters in Pleasance were filled on 26 September;
 - Communal bins – improvement can be expected soon when the ‘routesmart’ system is introduced in the cabs of the bin lorries. This shows crews exactly where the bins are and allows them to record collections and missed collections;
 - Neon and LED advertising signs without consent – these were reported all at once and Planning Enforcement rejected them as they wanted an online form or a letter submitted for each one. Their high-handed attitude is now the subject of a complaint to the Head of Planning.

5. Chair’s Report

- 5.1 Colin said that he and some members had attended the AGM of the Southside Community Centre Association on 30 September. Trustees were elected or re-elected for the coming year. It was noted with great concern that the Council is proposing to reduce the hours of the janitorial service from 45 to 24 per week. The Centre Management committee would have to engage staff to keep the premises open; this will push up costs for user groups, and perhaps lead to them seeking other premises. There are major concerns about anti-social behaviour in and around the building. There was a reminder that user groups can nominate a representative to join the Management Committee.

5.2 Christmas Lights and Carol Service – preparations are now under way for this event on 5 December.

5.3 Sarah Burns, Manager of the South East Locality, will be guest speaker on 7 November.

6. Treasurer’s Report

Hilary reported that the bank balance was £1137.81.

7. Planning & Licensing matters

None.

8. Environmental matters

8.1 Resurfacing of the A7 between Chambers Street and Newington Road

Resurfacing should start in January or February 2018, and will take about 10 weeks, but is weather dependant. (There is also the added complication of new contractors being engaged by the Council.) A Council Officer and some members of the SA walked the above route through the Southside on both sides of the road on 28 September. The Officer was aware of a number of issues already raised by us. Here are some of the details -

Railings at junctions stop pedestrians crossing diagonally and can cause pinch points which make it difficult to get off the carriageway as well as trapping cyclists against them. Safety audits will be done, and it is expected that all or most of these railings will be removed.

Cycle racks will be provided at many sites and may provide some of the same function but allow cyclists and pedestrians to get between them. Bollards will be replaced where missing and in other places where needed.

Traffic signals at three of the junctions will be replaced with more up to date equipment. The new style can be easily changed without digging up the road if the signals are hit by a vehicle, as well as being more efficient.

Traffic islands on Nicolson St will be realigned to make it easier to cross the road and a new pelican crossing introduced at South College St junction. Some junctions will be slightly redesigned to create a more sensible crossing line.

Tactile slabs will be replaced where broken and made to line up with pedestrian lights buttons, and minor pavement repairs carried out, especially at the junctions.

Raised tables will be introduced at East Newington Place, and there will be small changes at the junction of West Newington Place to improve the drainage.

All the gullies will be replaced with a new square design and new style covers which are much safer for cyclists. Gullies will be moved so as not to be at junctions but a little way up the roads and levels checked to make sure they are at the lowest points. All gullies will be cleared twice during the work.

Core samples have already been taken at sites which are obviously subsiding to ensure that a sufficient depth is excavated to give a good foundation. For most of the road a depth of 10 cm will be replaced but more at bus stops and certain junctions.

Work will be carried out in blocks starting from the Newington end, probably in the New Year and may take about 10 weeks or so, depending on the weather and other factors. Temporary traffic lights will be needed during the work and there will be pedestrian phases. The aim will be not to shut the main road completely but do one side at a time. Utilities have been given notice and must carry out any planned work before commencement or wait at least 2 years before they are permitted to dig it up, unless it is a real emergency.

- 8.2 A reminder about the Edinburgh shared repairs service, giving help and advice for property owners on drainage; downpipes, rhones, and gutters; roof, chimney, and skylight; stonework, render, and harling; and matters to do with common stairs. Phone number is 0131-529 6778. Website is www.edinburgh.gov.uk/sharedrepairs Colin had occasion to use the service three weeks in a row, and was pleased with the response times and efficiency of the council staff and their contractors.
- 8.3 Fly-posting – Hilary had written that morning to the managements of the Bongo Club, Liquid Rooms, and the Stand Comedy Club to complain about the number of posters appearing on empty shop windows and other sites in the area, against the conditions of these premises' licensing agreements. The Stand had already replied. **Afternote** - since the meeting a member of the Licensing team has been in touch to offer contact details for the police officer who is dealing with this issue, and Tommy Sheppard MP has also offered help.
- 8.4 There had been no response to our query about licences for tables and chairs mentioned in September.

9. Report and Q & A with the attending Councillor

Councillor Rose had taken part throughout the meeting, and also mentioned the following

- There are 18 advertising drums for the cultural sector located at various sites in the city centre, including the Meadows, which are operated by City Centre Posters (CCP). Council notice was given to CCP to remove the existing advertising drums at the end of September, and a consultation will be launched later this month for CCP to test public opinion on replacement designs for the new drums. This will see the installation of at least six temporary drums at the same sites between October and December, which will allow CCP to trial new drum designs, hold public consultation, and continue live advertising campaigns for their cultural clients. It is CCP's intention to submit a planning application to install permanent, replacement drums in late December, following the consultation period. The drum trial will help to limit the interruption to CCP's service, allowing cultural organisations the opportunity to advertise on city centre drums in the lead up to Christmas, which is an important time for them.
- He had inspected the Meadows event site with Mike Shields that morning and they were satisfied that the surface was looking good, with the grass growing well
- The 61 flats at Carnegie Court were having problems with drug users, poor lighting, weeds, and a major effort was underway to help improve the place
- The ramp at Hill Square which had been taking up a parking space was to be removed.

10. Any other business

None.

11. Date of next meeting

Tuesday 7 November 2017.