

# ***The Southside Association***

**117 Nicolson Street  
Edinburgh  
EH8 9ER**

*Founded 1972      Scottish Charity No SCO12262*

[www.southsideassociation.co.uk](http://www.southsideassociation.co.uk)

**Members' Meeting  
Tuesday 7 February 2017 at 7pm  
Room 1, Southside Community Centre**

## **MINUTES**

**Present:** Colin Christison (Chair), Jan Fraser, Moira Gibson (Minutes Secretary), Tom Bonallo, Ethel Murray, May Linton, Kenny McLeod, Maggie Bagan, Dora Lola-Luz, Nino Lola-Luz, Fran Gifford, Gordon Duffy, and Ola Uduku.

**Also Present:** Cllr Rose; PC Neil Mackay.

### **1. Welcome and apologies for absence**

The Chair welcomed all those attending. Apologies for absence were received from Hilary McDowell, Philip McDowell, Isobel Leckie, Jo Scott, Colin Symes, Cllr Perry, and Carol McHugh.

Cllr Rose was kind enough to attend the meeting at short notice because first Cllr Perry and then Cllr Orr were unable to do so. However, because he had another engagement, his report was taken early in the meeting.

### **8. Report and Q&A with attending Councillor**

- 8.1. The Council's budget will be set this Thursday, 9 February. Some 15% of the Council's £968m budget for 2017/18 is raised through local taxes, with the rest coming from general taxation via the Scottish Government. An extra £12m has now been awarded: £10m in revenue funding and £2m for capital expenditure. It is hoped that some of this might be put towards reducing closing times at libraries.  
[http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/news/article/2248/council\\_budget\\_continues\\_to\\_prioritise\\_residents\\_needs](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/news/article/2248/council_budget_continues_to_prioritise_residents_needs)
- 8.2. Cllr Rose was pleased there had been a reduced number of complaints about bins.
- 8.3. The issue raised at last month's meeting, about the lack of sanctions for retrospective planning applications, was raised by Gordon Duffy. Cllr Rose said that

this was a matter for Scottish Government legislation and that there was currently a consultation to review the Planning Act to which members were welcome to contribute <https://consult.scotland.gov.uk/planning-architecture/a-consultation-on-the-future-of-planning/>

- 8.4 Maggie Bagan drew the Councillor's attention to the urgent need to resurface Montague Street.

## **2. Police Report**

- 2.1 PC Neil Mackay gave his update on the past month's activities. Several protests against US President Trump, often with little or no notice, had stretched police resources and it was likely that this would continue. Police are monitoring anti-social behaviour at Nicolson Square amongst those who have been displaced from Hunter Square, and speed checks for the 20mph limit were also continuing.
- 2.2 In response to questioning, PC Mackay confirmed that begging is not an offence unless it is aggressive: any alteration to this approach would require a new bye-law. Members alerted PC Mackay to an aggressive beggar dressed up as a kangaroo, and he noted this, saying that police are aware of many begging rackets where beggars are known not to be homeless. However, he also said that the police are sensitive to beggars in genuine distress, often with mental health issues, and they liaise with Streetworks and night shelters to find solutions.
- 2.3 A man had been apprehended in connection with a serious assault in Buccleuch Place. Operation Penitent had recovered £60,000 worth of drugs and £22,000 in cash: this very successful operation will continue and members are encouraged to ring 101 if they suspect any illegal activity.

## **3. Minutes of meeting held on 10 January 2017, and matters arising**

Agreed; proposed by Jan Fraser, and seconded by Fran Gifford

### Matters arising:

- 3.1 Item 4: the proposed relocation of the Southside Surgery from Bernard Terrace to part of the Mackenzie Medical Centre will not now take place. Cllr Rose reported that his investigations had yielded the information that the future of the Surgery was assured, even though the new location is not yet clear.
- 3.2 Item 6.1: the application for an extension to the Salisbury Hotel has been withdrawn.

## **4. Chair's Report**

- 4.1 Guest Speaker for 7 March – Steve Gent, from City Centre Posters [www.citycentreposters.co.uk](http://www.citycentreposters.co.uk). This company applies a coating to windows of empty properties which prevents flyposting and has a wide range of methods to stop this

anti-social practice. All, including Councillors and members of the Southside Community Council, are welcome to attend the presentation.

- 4.2 The Chair will investigate whether the AGM in May could include a tour of the former *Odeon*. Other suggestions are welcome.
- 4.3 Newsletters have been received from Lutton Court and Homebase student developments and an initial one from Tommy Sheppard MP: all duly circulated.

## **5. Treasurer's Report**

- 5.1 The Treasurer was unable to attend but had sent a message to say that the balance remained unchanged from January.
- 5.2 The Clydesdale Bank (University) branch at Nicolson Square closes on 17 April 2017, and our account will transfer to 83 George Street. We will take advantage of online banking.

## **6. Planning & Licensing matters**

- 6.1 16/05287/FUL – application for change of use to restaurant at 12 Clerk St (formerly Welch's fishmongers) – withdrawn.
- 6.2 16/05662/FUL – Temporary telecoms mast, 10 Bowmont Place; application for 12-month extension at Craggs. It is required for just 4 months but the PA has to be for a minimum 12 months; no comment required.
- 6.3 17/00290/LBC – some internal alterations at the Royal College of Surgeons; no comment required.
- 6.4 The Chair expressed his concern that the Southside Community Council does not seem to deal with Planning and Licensing matters, even though they are the statutory consultee for planning issues. He asked Dora Lola-Luz, as the Association's representative on the SCC, to raise the matter and report back

## **7. Environmental matters**

Hilary, unable to attend, had submitted her report:

- 7.1 Sarah Burns, the South East Locality Manager, has agreed to investigate who owns the various walls in Haddon's Court and Gibb's Entry and suggested that we might also like to paint murals on the walls of the similar 'vennel' (pedestrian access) at the north end of St Patrick Square through to Buccleuch Street. Once we ascertain ownership, we can look for funding, draw up designs, apply for planning permission, etc with a view to producing more murals to make the area attractive and discourage graffiti.

- 7.2 Obscene graffiti on play equipment in the Magnet Playground on the Meadows was reported to Mike Shields early on Monday 6 February and dealt with the same day.
- 7.3 Still no dates for the repair of the road surface on Newington Road/South Clerk Street/Clerk Street/Nicolson Street. Long stretches are due to be done in the new financial year and Newington Road is due to be early in the schedule.
- 7.4 Bikes which have been abandoned since September were reported for the fourth time - this time via a different route which we hope will be more effective.
- 7.5 Flyposting still a major problem. Working with the Southside Community Council to try to get the Council to make this a higher priority. Speaker invited to March meeting of Association (see above) to tell us what could be done if the will is there.
- 7.6 Much support from various groups for the zebra crossing on Bernard Terrace at Nelson Hall. Lack of transparency as to who chooses between the proposals and when. Also no sign of when the projects chosen last year by the SA will be implemented. The work on pavements near the Royal College of Surgeons is still in limbo, as is the area by Lidl.
- 7.7 The noisy manhole covers (see Item 7.5 in January minutes) appear to be being dealt with. Unlike some other public bodies, Scottish Water responds to and prioritises complaints and concerns from the public so definitely worth telephoning them.

## **8. Report and Q & A with the attending Councillor**

See above.

## **9. Any other business**

- 9.1 The Council had invited office bearers of the Association to discuss its objection to the TRO for West Crosscauseway, and a short meeting had been held recently.
- 9.2 Members reported that the refurbishment of the Odeon is proceeding apace, with meticulous attention to detail.
- 9.3 Ola Uduku reported that University of Edinburgh staff and students, in conjunction with children and their parents, would again be helping upgrade the playground at Preston Street School as part of the Festival of Creative Learning.

## **10. Date of next meeting**

Tuesday 7 March 2017 at 7pm.