

# ***The Southside Association***

**117 Nicolson Street**

**Edinburgh**

**EH8 9ER**

*Founded 1972*

*Scottish Charity No SCO12262*

**www.southsideassociation.co.uk**

## **Members' Meeting**

**Tuesday 6 June 2017 at 7pm**

**Room 1, Southside Community Centre**

### ***Minutes***

**PRESENT:** Colin Christison (Chair and Secretary), Jo Scott (Vice-Chair), Hilary McDowell (Treasurer), Jan Fraser (Membership Secretary), Maggie Bagan, Laura Bird, Tom Bonallo, Moira Gibson, Fran Gifford, Bob Hodgart, May Linton, Dora Lola-Luz, Philip McDowell, and Kenny McLeod.

**Also present:** Councillor Alison Dickie, PC Stuart Fraser and PC Neil Mackay.

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

Colin Christison welcomed everyone to the meeting, and introduced Alison Dickie, who had been recently elected as one of the four Councillors for the Southside and Newington Ward. Apologies for absence were received from Isobel Leckie, Carol McHugh, and Ethel Murray.

#### **2. Police Report**

Colin welcomed the officers. PC Mackay reported on various matters. Class A drugs and cash had been seized in Hill Place, Richmond Place, Pleasance, East Crosscauseway, and the Prestonfield area in May and early June, and some arrests made, as well as stolen property recovered. Two men were charged following an assault and robbery in Nicolson Street in early May. Patrols in Nicolson and Hunter Squares continue to discourage anti-social behaviour. After the terrorist atrocities in the UK, there has been a significant increase in the number of armed officers in Scotland, although so far there has been no actual intelligence of a threat.

A sentence of four and a half years was given in early June following a serious assault on a member of the SA in his own home last year.

Maggie Bagan asked about cyclists not wearing helmets, and it was stated that it is not a legal requirement. She was also concerned about some cyclists who wear earphones being oblivious to traffic. There was a discussion about the 20mph speed limit, and its enforcement, in the city, and in Holyrood Park, for motorists as well as motor and pedal cyclists. Police have fixed powers and do stop people for various reasons.

#### **3. Minutes of meeting held on 4 April 2017, and matters arising**

Agreed; proposed by Jan Fraser and seconded by Tom Bonallo.

- 3.1 *Item 4.3* (Traffic Regulation Order etc relating to West Crosscauseway and thereabouts): revised plans detailing two possible new options had been drawn up and displayed at a drop-in event on 1 June. A further TRO for comment will appear in due course. Questions were raised about the invitation list to attend the drop-in event, and it was clear that some people and a group who had objected to the first TRO had not been asked. Bob Hodgart said that he thought the Council had issued invitations but as was pointed out they came from the CDT. It was wondered why the two options did not at present feature on the CDT's website.

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

- 4.1 Nelson Hall – the management committee of the Southside Community Centre has decided not to continue the lease of the Nelson Hall from the Council when it expires at the end of June 2017. Council cutbacks mean that there is no longer a Community Learning & Development worker for the two centres. Efforts will be made to relocate classes and groups to Nicolson Street. There will be an open meeting in the Community Centre on Saturday 17 June, at 10.30am, when views can be made known and questions answered. Jan Fraser said that the lease for Nelson Hall had been extended to September. This was news to the SA.
- 4.2 Copies of the booklets "Memories of a South Side Schooling" published by the Association in 2001, and "Memories of Nicolson Street Church, the Community Centre and the South Side" published by the Community Centre in 2007, have come to light, and some copies were distributed.
- 4.3 Former *Odeon* Cinema – **see 6.3 below**, and the following report

A meeting had been held on 1 June with Alison Burns, from G1, which owns the property at 7 Clerk Street. She explained that she was originally appointed as general manager for 7 Clerk Street, but has taken on responsibility for all G1's cinemas, one in Glasgow, one in Perth, and eventually two in Edinburgh, and a general manager will be appointed for the day to day running of 7 Clerk St.

The drawings of the *Odeon* refurbishment were displayed and described. There are to be 5 cinemas with dining and casual eating, and bars serving alcohol and coffee etc.

The venue, to be called 'Spotlight', will host films of many types, concerts, satellite projections (ballet, opera etc) children's club, club with special membership fees for people living within one mile radius of the venue; there will be late night and overnight projections, and special showings of new releases. The venue will also host live performances, comedians etc, conferences, meetings, and private film showings with bar and food if wished.

Alison explained that the building has to be multi-purpose in order to succeed. She wants a visit to be an 'Experience'. Capacity is not huge – 260 seats in screen 1, 67 in 2, 100 in each of 3 and 4, and 60 in 5. Total seats 587.

The possible opening date is autumn 2018 - this has to wait until the Scotsman Hotel, also owned by G1, is completed. (G1 use their own workmen apart from specialist cinema installation). No dancing or disco is planned, and seats are not designed to be moved.

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

Hilary reported that the bank balance stood at £1155.80, with cash in hand of £14.00.

Jan said that 18 memberships had been renewed or begun, with more renewals to come in.

## 6. Planning & Licensing matters

- 6.1 Planning Application 17/02140/FUL: Change of use from Class 2, Beauty Salon, to Class 3, Restaurant at 58 South Clerk Street, EH8 9PS - Objection lodged on grounds of over-provision.
- 6.2 Planning Application 17/01876/FUL: Change of use from shop to restaurant at 12 Clerk St, EH8 9HX - Objection lodged on grounds of over-provision.
- 6.3 Licensing application 7 Clerk Street (Spotlight Cinema): for on-sales from 11am to 3am, seven days a week - Objection lodged because of potential to disturb residential amenity. Suggestions were made for shorter hours for Spotlight, to correspond with other licenced premises in the area. This was in line with the objection made by the Southside Community Council.

## 7. Environmental matters

- 7.1 Reports from Hilary McDowell

**Scottish Water** The noisy manhole cover at the junction of Minto St and Newington Road is still unrepaired. First reported on 24/1/17, then 29/3/17, then again 15/5/17. When I phoned again on 5/6/17 I was told that the contractor had reported it repaired on 17/5/17. After some more calls it has become clear to Scottish Water that the contractor hasn't repaired that manhole cover as the yellow paint on the cover matched the road painting and no sign of new tarmac. *Afternote:* Following the meeting further phone conversations with SW showed they were still failing to visit the correct site, despite the location being given every time. Email has been sent to Chief Executive on 9<sup>th</sup> June.

**Flyposting** More photographs of flyposting are being sent regularly to Steve Gent of City Centre Posters. He is logging the offenders, getting areas cleaned up and passing on details to licencing department. If the same venues continue to book offending acts his company will black list them. The council is currently advertising for companies to tender to deal with advertising in the City. CCP are bidding, offering benefits to the communities such as waxing empty shop windows to prevent this problem and cleaning up problem areas.

Not only a problem with flyposting by businesses and events but the council fails to remove its own notices. The poles are festooned with notices about HMOs, changes to TROs, charges for parking, etc and nobody from the council seems to take down an old notice when they put up a new one. There are even still large stickers on poles about the Commonwealth Games baton relay. The HMO notices say that these must be displayed then returned to the council at the end in order for a licence to be issued. If that were to be enforced our streets would be much cleaner.

**Roads & Pavements** No sign of any permanent repair to roads or pavements in the area. Minimal amount of patching which can't be cost effective. Nobody will tell us if the projects voted for last year by the communities will be done. No idea if or when the promised event to choose the projects for the allocation of money entered for this financial year will actually happen.

**Abandoned pedal cycles** Many 'dead' bikes still on the street. Council apparently still doesn't have a grinding machine to remove them. Instead they are putting in new bike parking. What a waste of money! The instructions about how to get apparently abandoned bikes removed from common stairs makes it virtually impossible to do as it requires 100% cooperation from every person living on the stair.

**Mural** Waiting to hear from Castle Rock / Edinvar housing if they wish us to progress with a mural on the pend at the top of St Patrick Square.

**Skelf Cycle project** is proving a great success. As a welcome side effect there is much less antisocial behaviour in the area. The area had been a black spot for drug use with many discarded needles. More people around means a safer area for all.

**Council staff** Apparently some council staff are having to reapply yet again for their current jobs. (It was only a few months ago that it last happened.) Nobody seems to know who is supposed to be doing anything or who is responsible to whom. A senior official of the council told me this morning that the list she was given 10 days ago is already out of date because of yet another reorganisation.

7.2 A member asked what could be done about persistent littering and disposing of kitchen waste such as tea bags and potato peelings into the front flower garden of her tenement block. Cllr Dickie offered to help in the first instance.

7.3 Fran Gifford discussed the seemingly endless and vexatious issue of tree replanting in Lutton Place. There's great difficulty in finding anyone at Unite or the contractors on site with the authority to follow through on earlier promises, and a similar lack of will within council staff.

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

Cllr Dickie said that she had been busy in the ward establishing contacts and having meetings at schools and with local people and groups, and was still participating in the various training courses laid on for new Councillors. She was very interested to hear about local concerns, and keen to make progress with these. She invited constituents to contact her for help and information at any time. She confirmed that the Neighbourhood Partnerships had been wound up, and replaced by arrangements called 'Localities'.

Maggie Bagan mentioned the frequent instances of anti-social behaviour on Sundays in Deaconess Park. Police had been called on several occasions.

## **9. Any other business**

9.1 Bob Hodgart said that a judicial review about the India Buildings planning decision will be held in the Court of Session on 8 and 9 June, at a cost of about £27,000.

9.2 Jo Scott said that a commemorative plaque to honour the formation of the first Professorship of General Practice in Scotland (and the world) will be unveiled at the University of Edinburgh's General Practice Surgery at MacKenzie Medical Centre on West Richmond Street at 5.30 pm on 15 June. The event is being arranged by the Royal College of General Practitioners, and is in memory of her late father-in-law Professor Richard Scott.

9.3 Dora Lola-Luz said that the Lutton Court student accommodation development (now owned by Unite) is to be named 'The Old Printworks'.

9.4 Laura Bird, representing St Peter's Church, said that the renovations taking place in the Church Hall would mean level access for all users.

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

Tuesday 5 September 2017.