

The Southside Association

**117 Nicolson Street
Edinburgh
EH8 9ER**

Founded 1972

Scottish Charity No SCO12262

www.southsideassociation.co.uk

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

Minutes

Present: Colin Christison (Chair), Jo Scott (Vice Chair), Hilary McDowell (Treasurer), Moira Gibson (Minutes Secretary), Philip McDowell (Webmaster), Jan Fraser, Kenny McLeod, Tom Bonallo, Ethel Murray, May Linton, Maggie Bagan, Fran Gifford, Carol McHugh, Colin Symes, Sam Campbell, Dora Lola-Luz, Bob Hodgart.

Also present: Steve Gent and Garry Coutts from City Centre Posters (guest speakers), Cllr Burgess.

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed all those present. Apologies were received from Nino Lola-Luz.

2. Police Report

No police representative was able to attend the meeting.

3. Guest speakers: Steve Gent and Garry Coutts, from City Centre Posters

Established 20 years ago, City Centre Posters (CCP) grew up as a result of advertising and flyposting by clubs, and during festival periods. A 'Unight' partnership was formed with clubs, the police, and Council Licensing to develop a model whereby charges for postering would fund the subsequent clean-up. In 2009, CCP was appointed by the Council to put up and take down show posters and to ensure that the city was returned to a 'normal' and clean state after the festival. With their city-wide knowledge, and long track record, the outcomes were successful <http://www.citycentreposters.co.uk>. Three years ago, the contract was put out to tender and was won by a Bristol company which only operates in Edinburgh during festival periods and around Fringe venues.

Since then, the company has developed a special bio-degradable wax coating for surfaces such as the windows of empty shops which prevents posters from adhering to surfaces, thus

improving the appearance of streets. It has installed 'drums' for posters alongside a pledge to clean and tidy the area within 100m radius of the drum. CCP also offers *pro bono* poster to community groups eg Gang Show, Fostering campaign.

In light of ongoing local problems with flyposting, CCP asked the Southside Association to consider supporting their proposal to erect drums in five locations on the Southside. Alternatives, depending on location, could be wall panels. The Association agreed to make this recommendation to Paul Lawrence, the Council's Director of Place, and to Sarah Burns, Manager of the South East Locality.

The Chair thanked Garry and Steve for their presentation.

4. Minutes of meeting held on 7 February 2017, and matters arising

Agreed; proposed by Maggie Bagan and seconded by Jan Fraser.

Item 3.1 (*relocation of the Southside Surgery*). The NHS has issued a press release announcing that the Southside Surgery team is now under direct NHS management and has agreed to relocate the surgery to the Conan Doyle Medical Centre at Cameron Toll in May or June this year. The announcement says that this solution will provide a significant improvement on current premises; offer suitable consulting and waiting space for staff and patients, improved car parking and better disabled access; and is served by excellent bus links. Information on the new arrangements will be sent directly to all patients (around 5000 currently registered) once all the details have been finalised. The full text is at <http://www.nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk/MediaCentre/PressReleases/2017/Pages/Plans-for-the-future-of-Southside-GP-Surgery.aspx> The status of the proposal for Kittle's Yard is unclear.

Item 6.4 (*Southside Community Council*) – The Chair of the Southside Association had a meeting with the Chair of the SCC, and it was agreed that they would take on planning as a part of their statutory role. While the views of the SCC, as statutory consultee, carry more weight, the Southside Association will continue to express views on relevant licensing and planning matters.

5. Chair's Report

5.1 Preparatory work on the Holyrood Brewery is expected to start in the summer, once all the approvals are in place.

5.2 Breast Cancer Care is offering to come and talk to the Southside Association, if there is interest.

5.3 The Spokes cycling magazine was circulated.

6. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer reported that, with the closure of the local branch, SA business will be conducted via a bank card, online banking and the Post Office. There have been no changes to the balance.

7. Planning & Licensing matters

Nothing of note to report.

8. Environmental matters: Hilary's report

- 8.1 We await information via Sarah Burns, South East Locality Manager, from Planning about who owns various local walls that currently carry graffiti. We would hope to paint more murals on these walls, similar to Gifford Park.
- 8.2 We were promised that various apparently abandoned bikes would be ticketed last week prior to removal by Council staff if they weren't taken away by owners. No tickets have appeared. Once two weeks have lapsed these bikes can legally be removed by Council staff – hopefully to be recycled. Reminder sent 6 March.
Post-meeting note: the bikes have been removed, although unticketed.
- 8.3 Air monitoring equipment is to be installed on the main Nicolson Street/Clerk Street corridor. It must be near a junction or traffic lights, which is rather difficult as there are 13 sets of traffic lights in the mile or so between Princes Street and Salisbury - possibly to be put opposite Tesco's or in the garden of the Community Centre. Cllr Burgess promised to report back on progress prior to the election.
- 8.4 Nothing seems to be done to remove fly posters advertising night clubs that are supposed to be covered by the Unight scheme that liaises with Licensing. Very disappointing. Hilary has twice asked to be part of a promised review of the Council policy on flyposting - Cllr Perry has again agreed to chase this.
- 8.5 The surface of Newington Road by the junction with Preston Street and the bus stop going south would appear to need to be patched at least once a week at present as the temporary patching is not sufficiently robust. A proper and sustainable remedy would surely be cheaper – “do it once and do it right”.
- 8.6 Still no sign of last year's voted-for Roads Projects being started nor any information about when this year's vote is to be held or who will be allowed to vote.
- 8.7 The Pleasance Triangle (at numbers 69 to 73) is being upgraded although it's unclear what will happen to the perfectly good paving slabs. Raised flower beds are being installed, and a new stone and resin surface is to be laid. A picture of work in progress can be seen on the Southside Association's website which contains much useful information <http://www.southsideassociation.co.uk/>

9. Report and Q & A with the attending Councillor

- 9.1 Cllr Burgess commented on the Southside Surgery decision and suggested the Association might wish to consider writing to NHS Lothian to welcome the temporary solution, to record concerns about the distance, and to express hopes that the surgery will in due course return to the Southside.

- 9.2 Everyone is encouraged to vote in the Council election on 4 May (registration closes on 14 April). Local boundaries are changing: Dumbiedykes is now in City Centre ward, and Nether Liberton is in Southside/Newington. Dumbiedykes is considering whether to be part of the Old Town Community Council rather than the SCC.
- 9.3 Cllr Burgess hopes that 'South Central Decides' participatory budgeting will continue.
- 9.4 The SKELF bike track will open on 31 March, with a barbeque from 1-4pm.
- 9.5 Maggie Bagan flagged up that the table, chairs and A-boards on the pavement outside the cafe near Timpson's were blocking the pavement, exceeding the agreed area, yet Environmental Wardens did nothing. She had seen a wheelchair user have to manoeuvre out on to the road because progress on the pavement was impossible.
- 9.6 Several members complained that binmen created mess when emptying bins, including broken glass, and did nothing to clear it up. At Haddon's Court, it would make sense for the two large bins by the hedge to be set beside the two constantly overflowing bins close to Tesco. Cllr Burgess agreed to liaise with Sam on this.

10. Any other business

- 10.1 Bob Hodgart drew attention to the development of a large hotel at India Buildings which will block light from the Central Library. The Council's disposal of public land in pursuit of this is being investigated with a view to a possible legal challenge for which funding will be required. In wider terms, the Old Town has a declining community, with fewer residents each year: can the SCC and the Association consider a coalition to support our neighbours? A similar situation exists with the proposal of a hotel at the Old Royal High School, and the Association agreed to write to the Council in support of the alternative proposal for St Mary's Music School.
- 10.2 Colin Symes flagged up the Newington Churches Together food bank at the King's Hall: donations of canned and dry food are very welcome and can be donated on Thursday mornings.

11. Date of next meeting

4 April 2017 at 7pm.