

# ***The Southside Association***

**117 Nicolson Street  
Edinburgh  
EH8 9ER**

*Founded 1972      Scottish Charity No SCO12262*

**www.southsideassociation.co.uk**

**Members' Meeting  
Tuesday 5 February 2019 at 6.45pm  
Room 1, Southside Community Centre**

## ***Minutes***

**PRESENT:** Colin Christison (Chair), Maggie Bagan, Gavin Donoghue, Jan Fraser, May Linton, Dora Lola-Luz, Hilary McDowell, Philip McDowell, Kenny McLeod, Ethel Murray, Maggie Peatfield, and Jo Scott; PC Stuart Fraser, and PC Neil Mackay.

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

Colin Christison welcomed everyone to the meeting, and introduced Gavin Donoghue, the Head of External Affairs, Communications and Marketing, University of Edinburgh. Apologies for absence were received from Fran Gifford, Bob Hodgart, Isobel Leckie, Carol McHugh, and Stuart Tooley.

### **2. Police Report**

PC Mackay said that a 29-year-old female had been charged with possession and supplying of drugs such as crack cocaine in Dumbiedykes. A culprit had been identified following the attempted robbery at the TSB in Clerk Street; he was on remand for a similar exploit in the Luton area, and will be brought to Edinburgh in due course. Some individuals caught smoking and selling cannabis from a car had been remanded. There will be a plain clothes task force operating in the area for the next two months.

Three males had been identified and will be charged with graffiti spraying in the city (notably for the "King James the Lord" ones). They were caught in the act at 2.30pm and pictures were taken which helped identify them. Efforts are being made to identify the perpetrator of the "Lurk" tag (written vertically) which is appearing all over the place. One of the SA members had removed some of them. There was a discussion about tagging and how to deal with it effectively.

Good news from a policing point of view is that there has been a reduction in ASB at Nicolson Square. The Police will be present at Pollock Halls on 19 February to give advice on personal safety, crime prevention, and hate crime to students.

He said that Inspector Graeme Nisbet had now retired, and his successor is Inspector Norman Towler, who knows the area well.

Maggie Peatfield expressed her thanks to the Police for their diligence in keeping problems out of Nicolson Square; she said that there was a big difference there without all the unruly behaviour.

### **3. Minutes of meeting held on 8 January 2019, and matters arising**

Agreed; proposed by Ethel Murray and seconded by Jan Fraser.

- 3.1 *Item 2* - (Police Report - 'Pop Up Bob') – Philip McDowell said that the cardboard cut-out policeman depicted holding a speed gun had been deployed in various local streets for two weeks in January.  
*Item 2* - (Police Report – supplies of paint) – Gareth Thomas is exploring getting 'Community Payback' scheme to repaint utility boxes. It is suggested that the Council should require maintenance of boxes to be part of giving consent for any new development / scheme/ upgrade of e.g. telephone exchange boxes, traffic light control boxes etc. The whereabouts of the donated supplies of paint is still unknown.
- 3.2 *Item 4.1* (Christmas Event report) - the structure at St Patrick Square has been taken away but no work done to deal with the loss of grass and the muddy patch left.
- 3.3 *Item 4.3* (Local Community Planning Partnerships) – Jo Scott had attended the meeting on 10 January, and said that there still seems to be a lack of understanding of the new governance structure for the city. Many suggestions were made by groups attending the meeting about Neighbourhood Networks and Locality Planning Partnerships communicating effectively so that all voices are heard. Papers are available from the SA secretary.
- 3.4 *Item 6.2* (late hours etc at Summerhall) – many objections had been submitted. The LA has been withdrawn, in the meantime.

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

- 4.1 Spotlight Cinema, Clerk Street, formerly the *Odeon*. The scaffolding which was put up at the end of the 2018 Edinburgh Festival was removed in the third week of January, and it does not appear that any work was carried out.
- 4.2 A brief response was made to the South Side Conservation Area Character Appraisal Consultation, supporting the suggestions made about extending the boundary.

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

Hilary McDowell said that the bank balance stood at £1135.71 with £4.97 cash in hand.

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

- 6.1 PA 18/10468/FUL - Proposed change of use from 4 bedroom flat to 6-bedroom (maximum 9 persons) HMO flat at 2F2 22 West Preston Street Edinburgh EH8 9PZ: objection lodged on grounds of over-crowding and potential noise nuisance.
- 6.2 LA 382788 – Street Trader Licence at 'Street Record', St Leonard's Street – it was agreed to object as there are numerous takeaway premises in the area already, and there is likely to be an increase in litter.

6.3 The Mockingbird PH on Newington Road closed in January but there are still barrels and plants in the street outside the premises.

## 7. Environmental matters

Hilary McDowell made the following report:

“I have written to several council staff to ask questions but received no answers to the following.

On 26 January I asked about a date for the **zebra crossing of Bernard Terrace**, the renewal of the **paving outside Lidl**, our proposal for a pedestrian phase of the lights to allow **safe pedestrian crossing of Salisbury Road** and whether there will be **future funding for projects** suggested by the public as there has been for many years. I wrote to Alan Dunlop as Cllr Burgess told us some months ago that he was working on the Bernard Terrace crossing and copied in Steven Cuthill, Sarah Burns and the councillors. Not even an acknowledgement received from anyone.

On 25 Jan I wrote to ask about **flyposting** to find out if anything is being done to remove the flyposting I reported. I had been told not to take down the posters put up by the Followers of the Way Missionaries as they were required for evidence. The council website tells you to report flyposting via 0131 608 1100 but flyposting doesn't come up on the list of options offered, and when I managed to speak to someone it turns out that I have to phone the environmental wardens at the local office. However, he told me by email on 8 Jan that he doesn't deal with flyposting and I should report it via the planning department. They told me that they don't have the staff to deal with giving permits for putting up any posters or dealing with flyposting. So it would seem that all flyposting is illegal as nobody within the council gives permission for any posters to be put up but nobody takes anything down. The council adds to the mess by putting up notices about traffic, planning, HMOs, licensing and nobody is tasked with removing anything. Even notices which have a section on the bottom to be signed and returned to the Council are not taken down, and it would seem that the licenses are still issued even without them. No idea if anyone is doing anything about flyposting. The Scottish Socialist party is putting up lots more as is the Mash House. A few months ago Steven Cuthill said that he was thinking of asking the barrow beat staff to take down flyposting but nothing has happened. All the council seems to think should happen is that the community should be organised to do 'clean ups' but isn't doing anything to stop the people, businesses and organisations which fly post. Is anyone doing anything about the stickers? We don't see other towns and cities looking a mess like Edinburgh does.

**Tables and Chairs permits** – *Afternote* - Gareth Thomas had kindly provided a link to the Community Council <http://www.sccedinburgh.org.uk/scc1.php> which lists all the licences in the city.

I keep reporting **A-boards** via various routes but the A-boards and advertising bikes stay on the pavements. Enforcement is needed.

The complete **resurfacing of East Crosscauseway** was due to be done under Steven Blacklaw's instructions but he has been moved to another project. The street should be done this April but with another member of staff in charge.

A consultation is taking place with residents about the possibility of **planters** being installed at West Crosscauseway.

A **walkabout** with Gareth Thomas and James Gilmour took place on 14 January to look at a trial cleaning of street furniture in the Cowgate area. Gareth is considering using the same company to

clean part of the Southside area. James and I were not impressed with what we saw. The treatment had removed a considerable amount of the paint and left the lamp posts looking very scruffy. In other places the gluey mess left after the stickers were removed was still there and so we have asked for a further test area to be done in the Southside before large areas are treated. It didn't seem to us that a lot of money should be spent which left the place looking just about as tatty as before. Gareth is going to find out if community pay back scheme could be used to repaint our street furniture after any treatment. Many of us feel that a proper attempt should be made to stop flyposting, stickers and graffiti happening and appropriate treatment of surfaces done to stop things sticking.

There was meeting of the South East Localities Improvement plan, Southside Corridor Small Area Plan Working Group on Tuesday 12 June 2018 called by Sarah Burns. Nicholas Oddy of the SCC and I went on behalf of the SA. We were told at the meeting that we were expected to meet every 4 to 6 weeks. That was the one and so far, only meeting of the group, and no minutes have been issued."

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It was noted that efforts by the SA to facilitate many improvements to the environment in the Southside were remaining unfulfilled. It was decided to write to the Leader of the Council to express our concerns about the amenity of the city being ruined by fly-posting and graffiti.

Cllr Rose had addressed the Culture and Communities committee on 29 January 2019. Part of what he said was read for us at the meeting. The full text can be read on his blog here <https://cameronrose.blogspot.com/2019/01/council-boots-graffiti-into-long-grass.html#more>

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

It was disappointing to note that there was no Councillor present, nor had any apologies for absence been received. There were a number of items about which a Councillor could have helped, or taken forward, during the course of the meeting.

## **9. Any other business**

9.1 Maggie Peatfield asked about the scaffolding at a new building on Potterrow. This has been in place for almost two years and not much is happening. It is thought that there is a fault with the building. She also said that she thought that cost of annual trade parking permits at £1,000 was too cheap.

9.2 Gavin Donoghue said the University of Edinburgh provided an interactive online map of campus developments. Here is the link <https://www.ed.ac.uk/estates/campus-development/central-campus> He also said that the University is happy to help with any heavy digging for the new garden at the foot of Brown Street.

9.3 Dora Lola-Luz said that James Gillespie's High School would welcome support from the SA in its efforts to secure more classroom accommodation for Gaelic Medium Education. It was agreed to write. Rising rolls in the feeder primary schools contribute to the already increasing demand for tuition in Gaelic.

9.4 Jo Scott mentioned the consultation on the use of fireworks being carried out by the SG. See <https://consult.gov.scot/safer-communities/fireworks/> The closing date for comments is 13 May 2019. She asked Gavin for information about the Viking Swedish Runestone which

was removed from Princes Street Gardens to a location in George Square to allow much greater accessibility. See <https://www.scotsman.com/lifestyle/edinburgh-s-forgotten-viking-stone-to-get-new-home-1-4613517> *Afternote:* Stuart Tooley on behalf of Gavin reported the next day “that the University is working with the Director of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland to finalise the relocation. The agreed location is outside of 50 George Square, and we are hoping the placement will take place this summer.” He also said that the graffiti on the hoardings at Old College would be removed.

**10. Date of next meeting**

Tuesday 5 March at 6.45pm.

***Future Dates*** – Tuesdays – 2 Apr, 7 May (AGM), 4 Jun, 3 Sep, 1 Oct, 5 Nov, 3 Dec.