

The Southside Association

**117 Nicolson Street
Edinburgh
EH8 9ER**

Founded 1972 Scottish Charity No SCO12262

www.southsideassociation.co.uk

**Members' Meeting
Tuesday 10 September 2019 at 6.45pm
Room 2, Southside Community Centre**

Minutes

PRESENT: Colin Christison (Chair), Maggie Bagan, Daniel Fisher, Jan Fraser, May Linton, Liz Logie, Hilary McDowell, Philip McDowell, Kenny McLeod, Maggie Peatfield, Jo Scott, Colin Symes, and Stuart Tooley; and Cllr Cameron Rose.

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

Colin Christison welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received from Isobel Leckie, Dora Lola-Luz, Carol McHugh, and Ethel Murray.

2. Police Report

No officer available to attend.

3. Minutes of meeting held on 4 June 2019, and matters arising

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

3.1 *Item 3.1 – (former Odeon cinema) – restoration works due to recommence very soon. Hilary and Philip were invited to see the new upmarket cinema at the Scotsman Hotel. It is very impressive and plush.*

3.2 *Item 4.2 - (Continental markets in local squares) – licensing applications refused.*

4. Chair's Report

4.1 The next meeting of the Southside Newington Neighbourhood Network is on 17 September, at 6pm. CC will attend. We were asked to vote for a community representative to attend meetings of the South East Locality Community Planning Partnership, and selected Tim Pogson from the Southside Community Council.

- 4.2 Community Council elections will take place in the city on 31 October. Here is a link to the Southside Community Council's website for more information <http://www.sccedinburgh.org.uk/FP/Elections.html>

The Southside Association will register with the returning officer (Cllr Burgess) as a local interest group, and a member will be proposed to attend SCC meetings.

- 4.3 The Cockburn Association's Edinburgh and East Lothian Doors Open Days are on Saturday 28 and Sunday 29 September – www.cockburnassociation.org.uk
- 4.4 The City of Edinburgh Council proposes to promote an order which will amend the traffic order governing the issue of parking-related permits to provide for the issue or grant of permits in a virtual or electronic format. More information later.
- 4.5 Christmas Event – Tuesday 3 December. *Afternote* – the Carol concert and lighting ceremony at St Patrick Square **will take place at 5pm, an hour earlier than usual**. More information on arrangements to follow.
- 4.6 Future speakers – it was suggested that someone from Waste refuse and recycling be invited, and someone from Historic Scotland to discuss issues pertaining to Holyrood Park, including the closure of the Radical Road.
- 4.7 Some of us attended the AGM of the Southside Community Centre on 22 June. The Centre is keen to attract new members, and the fee is just £5.00 p.a. The SA is eligible to nominate a member to join the Centre's committee.
- 4.8 Dates for future meetings have been booked with the Centre, and are listed at the end of these minutes.

5. Treasurer's Report

Hilary McDowell reported that the bank balance stood at £1106.50, with some sundry bills settled or about to be settled. Jan Fraser said that paid memberships stood at 17.

6. Planning & Licensing matters

- 6.1 19/03967/FUL and 19/03968/CON - Demolition of existing commercial garage and erection of new residential tenement of 6 x flatted apartments at 3 Simon Square, Edinburgh, EH8 9HP; it was agreed to object on grounds of overdevelopment of the site, and a lack of refuse and recycling facilities within the site.
- 6.2 19/03972/FUL - Change of Use from class 1 (shop) to class 3 (restaurant) at 47A South Clerk Street, Edinburgh, EH8 9NZ; it was agreed to object, on grounds of overprovision.
- 6.3 19/04134/FUL - Change of use from class 1 (retail) and 2 (professional services) to class 1, 2, 4 (affordable workspace) and 11 (community facilities) at Suite 2 104 St Leonard's Street, Edinburgh, EH8 9RD; no comment required.

7. Environmental matters

- 7.1 Philip McDowell had attended the Scottish Water Annual Consultative meeting on 27 August, and his report is at the end of these minutes. Cllr Rose said that the quality of Edinburgh was superb, there was a plentiful supply, and that domestic metering was probably unnecessary. He had taken part in a SW survey. There is an ongoing programme of infrastructure renewals, but he noted that the firm can be tardy in setting up infrastructure in new developments. He discussed blocked gullies, which can be reported online, and noted that the Council can only clear gullies to a certain depth, after which SW is responsible.
- 7.2 There was a discussion about the impact of the disruption to roads and streets, for vehicles and pedestrians, while the film 'Fast and Furious 9' was being shot in the city at present. There seemed to be a lack of, or conflicting, information about altered bus routes.
- 7.3 Hilary McDowell reported on the following matters -

Festival flyposting Out of Hand contract has made a big difference to the quantity of posters and fliers stuck up in the area. The reporting by e-mail worked well and replies came quickly. We should find out how many fly-posters were removed by Out of Hand. The company has until 20 September to finish the clean-up. Not sure how much impact they will be able to make on the graffiti and stickers as the place was not clean before they started. All offending posters were to be photographed and listed so that the main offenders could be identified. Ladyboys and Evans funfair were out flyposting well ahead of the Festival. Mr Evans was contacted by SCC chair and told this was unacceptable. He apologised. Council Parks officer also contacted. Hope there will be a big question over the funfair being allowed back on Meadows in future years. Our deputation to the Transport and Environment Committee meant that the contract drawn up was much more effective. I would like us to write to the committee to tell them and thank them.

Now the big problem again is flyposting and graffiti aimed at the new students mainly in Pollock Halls. Flyposting especially for events in the Mash House and graffiti in yellow paint advertising Jeanie Deans pub. A resident has been out making this unreadable using council anti-graffiti gel where he finds this. Not acceptable behaviour. A very strong letter on its way from SCC. We need Unight reinstated and paid for by the clubs. Another deputation?

Scottish Gas are working on Craigmillar Park for the next 8 weeks. Buses south diverted.

The **canopy** round the corner of Bernard Terrace and South Clerk Street is delaminating. Council placed emergency scaffolding to prevent serious injuries. Building leased not owned by occupants. Owner must repair.

No progress on **zebra crossing** to report. An outside contractor has only recently been asked to look at this. Question to Councillors - what is the point in wasting time and money on so called participatory budgeting if nothing then happens?

East Crosscauseway – highway resurfacing and street improvements started. **West Crosscauseway** - planters not getting enough watering. Reminded the residents to do this much more. Rain isn't enough. Also asked if they would like the other planters which are on order. No reply to that as yet.

Dead bikes will be removed by the Council once time permits.

The Nicolson Street **murals** need washing. Disappointed to find that the residents aren't willing to do this. Gardens at the rear and backs of shops not being looked after. Perhaps Liam Fraser might be able to get some of his student groups to do this.

Hoarding on **Old College** had lots of graffiti and nothing was being done to keep on top of this. Eventually the Principal was contacted. He replied the same day and graffiti was been painted out the following day. Hoarding has now been removed.

Street litter bins need to be emptied much more frequently. People try to use them but so often they are completely full.

Steps from Holyrood Park out by the Skelf cycle park need a new central handrail. Historic Scotland agrees that they should do this.

Lutton Place at South Clerk St end. Big problem with double parking on both sides of the road. Three members of the public have raised this with the SA and SCC very recently. Needs urgent attention. Cllrs Rose and Dickie both offering assistance.

No action as a result of reporting **A-boards** in the area.

Commercial bins for glass and food waste are to be removed from outside businesses by end of this month. Many businesses now put out waste in plastic bags. This is permitted if the business is still open but many leave them out overnight and the bags are likely to blow into the road or be punctured by birds or foxes etc.

Many complaints by local residents about noise disturbance from the **Black Axe** Throwing Co at Summerhall - the sound insulation on the sides of the building has reduced the noise disturbance of cheering by spectators, but work is still needed to muffle the sound of axes hitting the back wall. Council officers are involved.

7.4 Other matters raised – plastic bag recycling facility stopped at Tesco Metro; Briery Bauks gardens in a mess; people sleeping in tents on Middle Meadow Walk and in Holyrood Park (Cllr Rose said that the Homeless team was aware); littering including discarded pizza boxes (Colin Symes said that he and some colleagues had collected a bagful on a recent litter pick at the east end of the Meadows), and Domino's advertising material aimed at new students; the roadworks on East Crosscauseway are spasmodic and holes full of rainwater, and Council vehicles are having difficulty getting in and out of Cowan's Close because of these roadworks; and reports of someone residing among boxes and raiding bins at Potterrow.

8. Report and Q & A with the attending Councillor

Cllr Rose had participated fully throughout the meeting. He mentioned that he was writing to the Council's Regulatory Dept about the fly-posting by Evans Funfair and he hoped that the SA would also write. He said that the Council had appointed a graffiti officer in July, and that there were plans to address numerous issues, including perhaps the reinstatement of the Unight scheme.

9. Any other business

9.1 Sarah Boyack MSP has replaced Kezia Dugdale on the Lothians list of Scottish MSPs.

10. Date of next meeting

Tuesday 1 October 2019, Room 1.

Future Dates – Tuesdays – 5 Nov, 3 Dec, 7 Jan, 4 Feb, 3 Mar, 7 Apr, 5 May, 2 Jun.

Report from 7.1

Scottish Water Annual consultative meeting 27/8/19

The meeting started with a report from the Chief Executive, pretty well along the lines of information that is available on the Scottish Water website, for example <https://www.scottishwater.co.uk/en/About-Us/Who-We-Are/Our-Chief-Executive>.

After that the meeting opened up for questions, and a number of issues were raised.

On sewer capacity, particularly with respect to new housing developments, we were told that housing growth is about 1% per annum, and that waste water and rain water would have to be separated in these new housing developments. This is standard in other parts of the UK, and reduces the quantity of waste water going through sewage plants. Scottish Water are in discussion with the local councils in Edinburgh and the Lothians to find ways of reducing the amount of rain water going into the sewers.

A question was asked about sewage discharge into rivers, and while it was admitted that this was sometimes a problem, particularly at times of very heavy rainfall, they are working to reduce the problem. Diversion of rainwater from the sewers will help. There is also a problem of what goes into the sewers such as nappies, wetwipes and fat, all of which stop the sewers working properly. Scottish Water are working on educating people not to misuse the drains. When asked about the impact of the trams on sewer maintenance, the reply was that yes, the old Victorian sewer does lie under the tram line in places, but manholes had been created to access the sewer from the side, and that repairs can be carried out from inside the sewer, even where it lies under the tram tracks. This work has also been done along Leith Walk in preparation for the tram line being extended there.

Fraud was the subject of the next question – apparently there have been reports of Scottish Water employees making use of Scottish Water vehicles for private activities. The Board was apparently shocked to discover what had been going on, and told us they are doing their best to ensure all 4000 employees keep to the rules.

One local resident asked about the cost of a metered supply. She had moved up from England a couple of years ago. In England it seems the majority of the domestic water supply is metered, to encourage economic use. When she moved to Scotland she thought she should get a water meter fitted, that it was the right thing to do. She was surprised to find it cost £600 to get the meter fitted (it is usually fitted free in England), and there after the cost of water was much higher than she had expected. In answer to that, Scottish Water said that the vast majority of domestic customers are on an unmetered supply, 21/2 million of them, compared with about 600 on meters. Water pricing is agreed with Scottish ministers, so there is a political aspect to this. People pay according to their council tax band, so the better off pay more for their water. It costs Scottish Water about £50 per year to provide the metered service, over and above the normal costs, so the higher price for a metered supply reflects this. One other member of the audience said she also had looked at getting a meter, but saw the costs and decided against doing so.

Another problem raised was that of blocked gullies, and roads flooding as a result. It was said that Edinburgh has only one working vehicle for clearing gullies, and because of this lots of gullies that needed to be cleared had not been done. Chief Executive Douglas Millican said he would be meeting the Edinburgh City Council chief executive later this week and would raise the question.