

# ***The Southside Association***

**117 Nicolson Street  
Edinburgh  
EH8 9ER**

*Founded 1972*      *Scottish Charity No SCO12262*

**www.southsideassociation.co.uk**

**Members' Meeting  
Tuesday 8 January 2019 at 6.45pm  
Room 1, Southside Community Centre**

## ***Minutes***

**PRESENT:** Colin Christison (Chair), Maggie Bagan, Elaine Boyd, Jan Fraser, May Linton, Justin MacKenzie, Hilary McDowell, Philip McDowell, Kenny McLeod, Ethel Murray, Jo Scott, Stuart Tooley, and Kim Ward; PC Craig Cairns, PC Euan MacKay, and Cllr Cameron Rose.

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

Colin Christison welcomed everyone to the meeting, and offered his good wishes for the New Year. Reductions to community centre facility management hours mean that meetings now have to start at 6.45pm and must be finished by 8.30pm. Apologies for absence were received from Robert Hodgart, Isobel Leckie, Dora Lola-Luz, Carol McHugh, Maggie Peatfield, and Colin Symes.

### **2. Police Report**

PC MacKay described 'Operation Yuletide', an anti-crime initiative which had taken place in December 2018 in the Southside/Newington ward. As part of this, some police officers were based at Cameron Toll shopping centre, where they gave safety advice, and sold personal alarms. Officers had attended the Southside Carol Service, and meetings of the Friends of Nicolson Square (FONS). Also in December, cyclists failing to use lights were stopped and supplied with temporary flashing lights and asked to buy proper lights; and 220 reflective bands were issued. The usual festive anti-drink driving campaign took place; no drink drivers were caught, and no speeding tickets were issued. The problem of drug taking in stairs continues, as does the thefts of pedal cycles. There were problems with misuse of the 'Just Eat' cycles. (Info on the scheme is here <https://edinburghcyclehire.com/>).

Philip McDowell said that the Community Council has been lent 'Pop Up Bob', the cardboard cutout policeman holding a speed gun, for deployment in the Southside for two or three weeks. 'Bob' will only be out during the day – he has to be taken in at night. The cutout was in Dalkeith Road on the 8<sup>th</sup>, and will be located in other streets including Potterrow, Causewayside, Pleasance, and St Leonard's Street over the period.

Cllr Rose referred to the major problem of designer graffiti which is being targeted at Sciennes House Place and the pend linking Buccleuch Street and St Patrick Square, and asked the police for

their help to catch the culprits. Residents and business owners are greatly exasperated by repeated tagging especially after they have had the areas cleaned.

Hilary McDowell said that there had been a couple of instances of graffiti at the Gibb's Entry mural, but as it and the Haddon's Court mural had a coating of anti-graffiti varnish they were relatively easy to remove.

Justin Mackenzie said that lots of paint had been provided by the utility companies for the public to paint the utility boxes during the recent 'days of action' but no staff from the companies to help. He asked where this paint was now being stored. Nobody present knew. Cllr Rose will enquire. A discussion followed about Community Payback being asked to use this paint on the graffiti covered boxes. It seemed that there was an impasse between the Council and the utility companies, in that neither would take responsibility for looking after the boxes.

### **3. Minutes of meeting held on 6 November 2018, and matters arising**

In section 4.2 (item 7.1 – Southside Corridor deep-clean) – the Causey Development Trust was omitted from the list of participants. Subject to this change, the minutes were agreed; proposed by Hilary McDowell and seconded by Maggie Bagan.

- 3.1 Members greatly appreciated the presentation from the two planners at the meeting, and it was noted with disappointment that so few people attended, including those who had asked for such a presentation.

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

- 4.1 **Christmas Event** - We had a very successful Christmas Carol Service and Switch-on of the Festive lights at St Patrick Square. We thank all those who took part – Cllr Burgess as the compere, Rev Liam Fraser for officiating, and Moira Gibson for switching on the lights; and the University of Edinburgh Music Society and Preston Street Primary School choirs. The award from the Community Grants Fund made it possible for the event to take place this year. We acknowledge with thanks support from the Community Centre for printing the programme and for the use of the Hall, and for the support of the Southside Community Council, to local businesses for in-kind support, and to the members of the Southside Association for their help on the day. We are also grateful for the presence of officers from Police Scotland to help with road safety; and to the Council's Parks department, to the Events Licensing section, and to the Public Safety Support Staff and technicians. After the Carol Service at St Patrick Square, people attend the Community Centre for a buffet and light refreshments. The University choir sings carols for an hour or so.

This is an important community event and it is the only one in the area which brings together local children, their parents and grandparents, and other local residents. It gives parents the opportunity to meet and socialise in a venue other than outside the school when dropping and collecting children at the gates. Councillors, teachers, and local business people also attend. This year there were around 200 people of all ages present, and we could see how much they enjoyed the event. The event also contributes to friendly relationships between members of the community and the police. Students enjoy contributing to a community event, and a good number attend.

May Linton was disappointed at the lack of a Christmas Tree and decorations in the Hall (these were thought to be in storage somewhere in the building), and she felt that we ought to bring back Santa to lead the people from the square to the community centre.

Hilary McDowell asked why there had been no notification from the Council about the placing of the structure which displayed children's artwork in the square, and which had damaged the grass there.

4.2 An e-mail had been received from Valerie van Kemenade wondering if the SA could assist her with the setting up of a Community Fridge in Edinburgh. Cllr Rose said that he would be meeting her later in the week, and would get more information then.

4.3 **E-mail from the South East Locality** - "As part of the recent Edinburgh Partnership review there has been a decision that Local Community Planning Partnerships (LCPPs) will be established, one in each Locality, with Neighbourhood Networks at a more local level. The remit and membership of these new structures is still to be developed and so we would like to invite you to be part of the conversation regarding how these will take shape.

**Details of the event:**

Developing new Locality / Neighbourhood Engagement Models – have your say

Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2018, 6pm – 8pm

European Room, City Chambers, Edinburgh

This will be an opportunity to hear more about the new Edinburgh Partnership structures and to provide input to how the LCPPs and Neighbourhood Networks should operate going forward.

The key information/discussion points will cover:

- Who is involved with the strategic groups and what is the purpose of them;
- What will the membership of the new Locality Community Planning Partnerships (LCPP) look like;
- How will the Neighbourhood Networks take shape, who will be involved and how will they feed into the LCPP and ultimately to the Edinburgh Partnership.

This is an open event, and we are keen to encourage participation from a wide representation of the community, including groups such as Friends of Parks, Residents Associations and Parent Councils. All are welcome, please share the invite with anyone that you think would be interested. "

Jo Scott will attend on behalf of the SA.

## 5. Treasurer's Report

Hilary reported that the bank balance is £1075.71 and cash in hand is £64.97. It was noted that there are some membership renewals outstanding.

## 6. Planning & Licensing matters

6.1 18/08050/FUL – proposed alterations of existing buildings to provide improved accessibility and facilities; proposed new link building at 138 Pleasance – application granted.

6.2 Summerhall Management Ltd, 1 Summerhall, EH9 1PL – application for on-sale hours to 3am on Fridays and Saturdays and to delete the current condition on amplified music and vocals

and to replace it with the new condition agreed on 26 September 2016. Many local residents are unhappy about this application, and we objected, as did the SCC.

## **7. Environmental matters**

- 7.1 The next meeting about improving Nicolson Square will be held at 6pm on 30 January in the café in the community `centre.
- 7.2 There are a number of utility chamber covers which have not been reinstated properly, including one outside the Royal College of Surgeons and one outside the Police Station. Vehicles driving over these cause loud clattering noises. Several people have reported these to the Council and Scottish Water to no avail
- 7.3 Efforts are being made to persuade Lothian Transport to reinstate the north-bound bus stop near the Queen's Hall. The SA had received an analysis of bus stop provision along the route of the service 5 in comparison with the main corridor through our area. A brief discussion followed.
- 7.4 Report by Hilary McDowell

"Some of the posters and stickers would appear to have been scraped and torn off some items of street furniture, probably by members of the public as the clean up promised by the council has yet to happen. I was told that resources had been concentrated on the City centre though why that should affect the cleaning in our area I don't understand as outside contractors are to be used. I have seen photographs of a sample lamp post which was cleaned by the method under consideration. Although the stickers had gone the graffiti was still present and more worryingly, the paint appears to have been stripped off by the heat used in the treatment. Unless the plan is to repaint all the street furniture at the same time, this seems a questionable method of cleaning. I and others are planning to meet with the member of council staff, Gareth Thomas, out on the street in the next week or so. Steven Cuthill had spoken of asking the barrow beat staff to take down posters as part of their work but I have yet to hear if progress has been made on that.

There has been a lot of flyposting on the main corridor through the area by a religious sect calling themselves the Followers of the way Missionaries. I have removed some 40 to 50 of their laminated posters over the last few months. These are A4 size and stuck up with long lengths of Sellotape wrapped round mostly lamp posts. As fast as I remove them, they are replaced. I have phoned to ask them to stop but the man at the end of the phone claimed that they have permission. As far as I can tell this can't be true as there is no way to get such permission. The council's planning department doesn't give permits and even for organisations, such as charities, the council would need to give permission for any posters to be attached to street furniture. We are told that there is no structure in place for this 'deemed consent' to be given. We need the council to take action by writing to businesses and organisations to insist on the removal of flyposting done by them with the threat of fines and action through the courts. Many of the posters and stickers do give identities and so could be contacted. There is no point in asking members of the public to do litter picks and street cleaning if the council itself will not do anything to deter the offenders. We shouldn't be paying through our council tax for private contractors to clean up this mess because someone thinks it too difficult to try to stop it.

Abandoned bikes are being removed by the roads department staff and bikes are being labelled if the bike's lack of use become apparent.

There are much fewer A-boards now on the street but there are still some businesses refusing to comply and some new boards appearing. Do please report A-board misuse to Paul Baxter and ask him to take action. However, more other street clutter is appearing such as the two large barrels outside Mockingbird on Newington Road. The Southern Bar had 16 large plant pots when I last counted as well as an advertising bike. The Whitespace gallery on East Crosscauseway also advertises by flyposting and a bike. I called in to tell the artist that this isn't permitted but he is still putting it out, locked to the post on the corner of Nicolson Street in the middle of the cycleway. Newington Pharmacy on the corner of Rankeillor Street now has a new A-board. Other large plant pots are appearing elsewhere. We need controls on these and a way to see which businesses have current table and chairs licenses.

Waste Department has failed to collect the Xmas trees on the advertised dates yet again this year. Big wraparound notices to tell us to put them out each Friday but no collection of garden waste or Christmas trees so far for 4th January. Glass / bottle banks full and overflowing and failure to empty many other bins is very disappointing."

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

Cllr Rose had participated fully during the meeting. Additionally, he said that the Council's budget meeting will be in February as usual, and although final figures are to be provided by the Scottish Government, it looks as though there will be a 2% cut in funding. He noted that the second-hand dealer licence for the premises at 3 Clerk Street had not been renewed. Hilary asked about Capital Roads projects, such as the proposed zebra crossing at Bernard Terrace, and funding for future ones; a reply will be sought. Maggie asked about the Nelson Hall lease, and it seems that there is more work to be done.

#### **9. Any other business**

9.1 Elaine Boyd said that a meeting will be held at the Charteris Centre at 4pm on 16 January to discuss ideas for a spring weekend at which the garden adjacent to Briery Bauks could be transformed.

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

Tuesday 5 February at 6.45pm.

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