



Minutes of the Meeting on Monday the 8th of May 2023, 7:00pm at Nelson Hall

1. Welcome and apologies for absence, declarations of interest.

CC Members: Daniel Fisher (DF) (Chair), Stephen Roger Benson (SRB) (Secretary), Philip McDowell (PM) (Webmaster), Liz Logie (LL), Nicholas Oddy (NO)

Minutes: David Evans (DE)

Councillor: Pauline Flannery (PF)

Members of the Public: Dr James Gilmour (JG), Harriett Lyle (HL)

DF welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies from Philip Pinsky (PP), Joan Carter (JC), Bob Hodgart (BH), Betty Offerman (BO),

2. Ascertain issues brought by members of the public: determine when and how to deal with them

HL from Merchiston expressed a desire for ongoing, formal contact with SCC, citing importance of Community Councils to local democracy. As a congregant at Salisbury Road Synagogue she noted a decreasing use of the synagogue as place of worship and increasing social use; she noted the synagogue's significance to the heritage of Newington and the need to reach out to neighbours in Newington for the continued development of the building as social hub.

DF sees no reason why a member of the synagogue can't sit on the council as a community representative, and expressed an interest in a visit of the synagogue. General agreement that this would be a good idea.

3. Andrew Field; Head of Community Empowerment and Engagement, CEC

DF believes AF not coming anymore – Hannah Bradley may have been successful in joining AF's team, so may be SCC's main point of contact.

4. Minutes of the meeting held on April 18th 2023 and matters arising

The minutes of the last meeting were approved. Proposed by PM, seconded by SRB.

JC to contact police – this has been complete, but JC is not here to report. LL has not written to councillor, as information published in paper that roads in various areas have been prioritised.

Andrew Kerr's walkabout (16.1) did not have the SCC formally represented. Overall, the walkabout was seen as highly productive. The Southside was represented by the Charteris Centre. The biggest issue to come out of the walkabout was that there is no umbrella organisation to allow the various groups and centres to work collectively, especially on matters such as funding applications and signposting to similar events (e.g. lunches for the elderly that happen on three different days in various locations). DF mentioned that there is an organisation already, but few groups and centres take full advantage of it.

PM did express concern that SCC were not formally invited, however stressed the informality of the event.

5. Councillor's report

PF stated that there is no major change to the status quo with the Council.

PF noted concern about Bridgend Farm, which (along with other organisations) has been placed on a reserve list for community funding – there is difficulty in finding any information as to why. A motion regarding this has been put to the Culture and Communities Committee.

PF noted concern about the expiration of the digital Noise app, an app to make it easier for council tenants to report noise complaints (and hopefully tenants across board). She noted that it is at the “baby end” of development, with issues including GDPR concerns, an inability to keep a copy of any complaints made, and few details on how noise complaints are actually recorded. The Council are exploring other means of noise reporting.

PF moved on to discuss Smart bins – reliably informed there will be 11,000 installations by June 2023, despite there only being 5,500 by the end of March.

PF moved on to discuss the Tourist Tax – there is frustration that Edinburgh has not had the devolved power to implement this. HL sought to clarify what this is – PF clarified that this was a small levy put on tourist accommodation and ploughed into local economy, and has been rolled out throughout Europe.

PF stated that the Transport and Environment Report from 20th April is available, which looks at the various issues around junctions.

Five junctions identified in Newington for refurbishment and ranked in order of need – the highest ranked in Newington (Summerhall) is 13th out of 40 in the city as a whole, with Preston Street 39th. The first 10 will be looked at initially, but different interventions will be examined as well – for example, a simple repaint will be considered to tide through until a full refurb can take place.

PM was questioned about the last several SCC meetings without a city councillor. PF stated there is a rota, but individual diaries and the Southside diary as a whole have not been coordinated properly (with occasional inaccuracies). PM stated that a reminder email is sent out a week before from SCC. PF stated that there is such a range of meetings councillors attend, they tend to be over-reliant that a diary which is inaccurate. Other factors include SCC dates falling on

Bank Holidays. **Action - PF will look into solving these inaccuracies to ensure a city councillor is regularly attending**, and requested a continuation of what SCC is already doing (minutes and agendas, and the email a week before).

PF was questioned on parking, specifically on Salisbury Road and especially with delivery vehicles parking over the whole pavement forcing people onto the road. Complaints have been placed almost continuously, and wardens regularly give tickets. Pauline states this has been discussed often at the Council. JG stated that there is provision in a recent Transport Scotland Act (yet to be fully enacted) making the parking on pavements an offense.

6. Reports from office bearers.

Chair – Coronation Lunch at Charteris went very well. LL echoed the chair's report.

Webmaster – message received from Joan McManus on the website on the 5th. Concern about city being divided into “19 zones” – possibly the 20 minute neighbourhoods. There is a consultation on this, with some nationwide opposition.

Secretary – Dalkeith Road submission. Not much in terms of planning coming up, but not had a chance to look at anything recent. (See 10. below for further details).

7. Reports from Committees and meetings attended

Bob had attended the EACC mtg on Thurs 27th April and had circulated information about it before the SCC meeting which he was unable to attend. This was mainly the material presented by the 3 speakers from CEC at the meeting in the form of 4 attachments plus a 5th attachment with comments on the mtg from Ken Robertson, Secretary of EACC."

The speakers, topics and attachments were:

(a) Christine Downie (CD), Climate & Sustainability Strategy Manager, CEC Place Directorate on *'Delivering the City Mobility Plan within the Net Zero target.'* (in 2 parts);

(b) Daisy Narayanan, CEC; Senior Manager, Mobility and Placemaking, Place Directorate on *'The City Mobility Plan 2030 – the Spatial Policy Consultation'*;

(c) Angus Murdoch (Technical Director, CEC Place Directorate) on *'Driving forward the city's recycling ambitions'*, essentially on waste disposal etc, following up on his presentation about this topic at the EACC mtg on 30th March;

(d) Ken Robertson's summary, notes and comments on the above, mainly on Christine D.'s presentation."

(For information, all these can be accessed and downloaded from the EACC's website, under *EACC Meetings* - then *EACC Documents*).

8. Planning and Licensing applications.

SRB wrote summary of objections and sent it as an updated response from SCC to the Licensing Board proposals.

No invite to licensing board as of yet (SRB), but DF did not have found little use in attending, as not able to add anything beyond what was in pre-submitted proposal.

Regarding the development of flats at Tesco, the SCC has submitted to the consultation that the flats looked small. Developers may have reduced number of flats.

Regarding the refurbishment of the Print Shop on St Leonard's Street into a restaurant, the large number of restaurants in the area was mentioned. PM pointed out there is no upper limit to number of restaurants.

9. Minute takers

DE and two others (Megan and Zara) are all interested, and will have trial week each between now and July.

10. 15 Dalkeith Road development

PF stated that this is moving forward. For objections on a material basis, PF suggested these should be double checked – council will rubber stamp them before passing them to developers. PF noted the number of objections, especially around heights of housing and windows not installed due to health and safety. JG received invitation to speak at development meeting. SRB pointed out no invitation to the SCC has been received.

11. Potholes and pavements

12. Cowan's Close development

LL stated an email had been written to Tim. Day after last brought up, vehicles and portakabins disappeared and increased security was all noted. Hopeful building work will begin shortly.

13. Bins

LL stated that the quality can be seen to be improving.

PF was questioned on bins. It appears as if people who empty bins never report issues with broken bins, fly posting etc. Maintenance of bins a different department to their emptying. LL enquired who one would report issues to, with PF clarifying either Waste and/or Road Management (some overlap between the two). There is a form on the Council website as well – every time DF has filled this out, bins have been sorted within a week. DF hopeful new smart bins will help.

14. Meadow's Festival

SRB has tried to get in touch regarding booking a stall at the Meadows Festival, with no responses as of yet. Stalls need to be booked for a charge. Would need to provide own table etc. Some information has been provided, but difficulty in actually getting a booking due to a "delay in response" to enquiries – now sitting at 3 weeks from SRB's original enquiry (other than automated responses). DF mentioned previously not been charged for stalls, and suggested another email be sent requesting a free space. PM asked about who would man the stall (3rd of June will be the only day SCC is looking to book a stall).

15. Public Question time

No further questions beyond 2.

16. Any Other Business

PM stated that work progressing on the Odeon. According to workers on site there are plans on making cinema and nightclub. SRB mentioned the huge amount of space in there to work with.

PM brought up Sofia's Lounge, a restaurant at the Salisbury Hotel has been problematic. Wedding reception held there recently with very loud music with neighbours complaining.

DF asked when Wetherspoons would be opening in the Bingo Hall, with no firm answer available.

PM brought up the large number of blocked gullies, and that reporting via website seems to have little effect. HL suggested this could be community led – simple clearing of leaves from the top happens in Merchiston. No capability for anything more than this, which requires specialised equipment. DF mentioned this would require closing roads for sake of safety, especially in city centre. JG emphasised the major health, safety and liability issues involved with this type of community engagement.

LL asked if anyone had contact with the Friends of Nicholson Street Gardens, as a community led litter pick would be advantageous.

SRB stated that there are more and more bounce backs to SCC email addresses, especially to City Council emails, so having to send from personal email. JG suggested to take this up with appropriate City Council departments, as emails may well be being shunted to spam folder or blocked.

HL – if there is a litter pick initiative (or similar community action), she can forward this on to those interested in Merchiston.

SRB – election this year at some point for SCC. SRB will not stand due to schedule demands.

General enquiry of whether the upcoming AGM will involve elections.
Action: P F to enquire.

17. Date for Next Meeting: (including AGM) June 12th 2023