



OLD TOWN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

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Committee Meeting

Tuesday, 11 December 2007, 7pm, Edinburgh City Chambers

MINUTES

Present: : Peter Sharma (Chair), Anja Amsel (Vice-Chair), Julie Logan (Planning), Catriona Grant, Murray Forgie (Licensing), Bruce Borthwick, John Thompson, Sally Richardson.

CEC Councillors: *David Beckett (SNP)*

Scottish Parliament: *No one present*

Lothian & Borders Police: *No one present*

Plus 3 public visitors, including two ladies researching the use of public spaces.

Peter Sharma Chaired the meeting. *Bruce Borthwick* took the Minutes.

1 Apologies: John Stewart (Secretary), Bill Cowan (Treasurer, Planning), Graeme Fairbrother.

Action

2 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (13 November 2007).

Minutes of previous meeting approved following agreement to remove reference to Murray Forgie regarding licensing issue of Green Room establishment.

3 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING:

a. Publicity

Notice boards – Publicity discussion deferred as Ken Smillie not present.

b. Christmas Lights – Christmas Lights in Canongate, information becoming more positive for 2008 but must be pursued vigorously at the beginning of 2008 with Cllr Dundas, CEC Winter Festival, Holyrood Parliament and The Palace of Holyroodhouse.

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c. Constitution - was to be addressed at cancelled away day.

d. Number 60 bus - Letter from Lothian Buses intimating insufficient use at present and further Council subsidy required. However perhaps not taking into account elderly members of public and infirm having to cope with significant hills out of Cowgate and Holyrood Road areas. Council to be approached to increase subsidy. Liaise with Southside Community Council to take up with CEC Cllrs. When next present with particular regard to both Health Centres for the area are at the top of steep hills therefore a risk factor for elderly and other patients.

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e. Johnston Terrace – Ken Smillie (not present) not able to update on one way street plan becoming no through road. Not acceptable as vital west-to-east route thought Edinburgh World Heritage proposing no through traffic letter to be sent to Council Department for clarification of any proposals being considered. Cat asked, what is strategy for traffic management (if any) for Old Town? Anya stated we must get strategy details from

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Highways and Roads Department We must get senior manager such as Andrew Holmes of City Development to attend January or February meeting. Matter of concern and urgent consultation Bruce to progress.

BB

f. **Away Day** – Away day cancelled due to lack of facilitator. In any case agenda too unstructured. Cat asked, can it be fixed for a Saturday and an agenda proposed beforehand. Murray stated, prior liaison with facilitator essential and suggest 1 or 15 March 10am to 4pm. Chair proposed acceptability of budget funds being used for facilitator / accommodation. Cat to progress with Cllr Beckett.

CG
Cllr
DB

g. **Royal Town Planning Institute** – Julie will put together a summary of contact at her meeting and forward to members.

JL

4 **CORRESPONDENCE**

1. Evening News proposing series of features on local residents who have special interest as characters, activities, achievements etc. Members to think of list of local unsung heroes etc.

ALL

2. Murray reported receiving curt letter from Licensing Department at his temerity of raising issues. This is unacceptable as Department failing to appreciate our present status in the process of license application appraisal. Have previously asked for applications to be sent to OTCC early in time frame but little co-operation. Tone of correspondence from Licensing Department, not helpful and implying process has nothing to do with OTCC. Not acceptable. There is also significant lack of transparency therefore scrutiny in the process of license applications. Historic methodology of data handling is inadequate in License Department and must be addressed. Chair to contact Emma MacNab regarding above. Cat suggested, we could consider raising petition to Scottish Parliament to address the issue of changing License application procedure. Initiate early 2008.

PS

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3. Regarding letter sent to Edinburgh World Heritage and their ideas for City development not being perhaps as strong as expected in defence of their remit - no reply. However, Julie explained World Heritage are forceful in objections in many circumstances, however, this is in fact beyond their remit. They are active in pushing the content of the management plan. They are not statutory consultees. Historic Scotland are statutory supervising body, CEC have withdrawn funding from World Heritage. It was felt that an invitation should extend to World Heritage to invite representation at our next meeting. As a consequence of a letter having been sent to World Heritage by Bill Cowan, including a reference to status as an 'executive' this was not felt to be appropriate. Discussion of this matter was summarized by the Chair in future all letters sent out by office bearers to have wide circulation to all members before being sent. As a guide, matters of new business should be given 48hrs for comment and reply and ongoing business 24hrs for same.

5 **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

a) **Official/Community Group Reports** - none

b) **Licensing** – Murray explained problems of implementing and altering existing licensing situations such as fish and chip shops open to 3am on historic rights only. There appears to be no requirement of City Council to let the public or anyone know of their activities. Lack of transparency again an issue. Murray has written with objection to the present policy. Problem with Geoffrey The Tailor Shop having tables and chairs on pavement - do

they have license, Julie to check on this issue, contact planning enforcement officer.

JL

c) Planning

Caltongate – copies of latest objection letter from OTCC supplied by Julie to those present.

Cat stated Caltongate Liaison Group has come to the end of it's year and now defunct. Not sure what it achieved if anything.

Julie commented, process of consultation not followed well and in fact felt provided little opportunity for input.

Cat - if Liaison Group replaced then stakeholders should have more input into arranging meetings and agenda.

Grassmarket – Murray stated, stakeholder meeting three weeks earlier to set up group with purpose of overseeing management of Grassmarket redevelopment and subsequent street activities.

Recycling and waste management at last going to be addressed but not public toilets as permanent feature.

Concerned that Grassmarket Area Traders Association will be supervising the use of the space and feel that resident groups, OTCC and Cllrs should have a place on body by right. Agenda should reflect equally input and requirements of businesses and residents. Leaflet currently being circulated for a meeting on 17 December at 6pm, venue, Dance Base with the aim of electing four residents representatives to the newly established Grassmarket Stakeholders Group.

Provision of public toilets as permanent presence in Grassmarket still being resisted, however temporary toilets can be plumbed in for events in the space.

General Planning Applications – No report.

6 OPEN FORUM

Recycling bins scheduled to be installed early 2008 in eight locations throughout Canongate, however still seems to be problem with Lochend Close location, Cllr Beckett will investigate reason.

Cllr
DB

Will only be for paper and packaging - bottles too noisy for residential area facility.

Julie reported having become aware of idea to gate Chessel's Court as way to resolve anti-social behaviour there. Must be resisted particularly on grounds of City permeability.

Anya to investigate.

AA

Murray, rat infestation in central city? Significance of small piles of white powder on pavements? Public Health implications of both. No-one seems to be discussing this issue if extant.

General concern at failure of community police attending our meetings. Matter seemed to be resolved previously but must get back to liaison officer to give priority for officers to attend our meetings. Julie and Cllr Beckett to progress.

JL
Cllr
DB

Murray particularly concerned at cyclists anti-social and illegal behaviour on pavements and at traffic light controlled intersections. Fears accidents inevitable.

NEXT MEETING

8 January 2008 7pm Venue Edinburgh City Chambers.

Next dates: 12 February 2008, 11 March 2008 and 8 April 2008.