



OLD TOWN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

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Committee Meeting

Tuesday, 8 April 2008, 7pm, Edinburgh City Chambers

MINUTES

Present: : Peter Sharma (Chair), Anja Amsel (Vice-Chair), John Stewart (Secretary), Bill Cowan (Treasurer, Planning), Murray Forgie (Licensing), John Thompson, Jane Yeoman, Bruce Borthwick

CEC Councillors: *Cllr Joanna Mowat (Con)*

Scottish Parliament: *No one present*

Lothian & Borders Police: *Lyll Downie Community Beat Officer.*

In Attendance: *2 people from St Giles Neighbourhood group and Claire Milne from The Green Room Guthrie Street.*

Public visitors none.

Peter Sharma Chaired the meeting *John Stewart* took the Minutes.

- 1 **Apologies:** Julie Logan (Planning), Catriona Grant, Sally Richardson, Sarah Boyack MSP
- 2 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING** (11 March 2008).
Minutes of previous meeting moved as accurate by Anja, seconded by John T.
- 3 **MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING:**
 - a. **Publicity – Newsletter** – Cat not here but she has said she is still having computer problems. She was able to send John T and John S a copy of some of the content she had in an email but the remainder of the content is lost. John S and John T agreed to continue to draft a newsletter but further up to date content will be required. Murray said he would send something to include and Anja said she supplied a list of community organisations.
Notice boards – John S and John T are progressing this, having made contact again with Annabel from the Royal Mile Primary School. John S discussed notice boards during the Neighbourhood Partnership walkabout. Police Inspector Bruce Johnston suggested we could use the 2 police boxes they were going to open, one at Hunter's Square and the other in the Grassmarket. John S also contacted Cllr Beckett about using space on the City Chambers notice boards. Claire Milne from the Green Room spoke about UNITE, the organisation representing a number of Edinburgh clubs and the possibility of getting space for advertising our meetings. John S added information on how Claire came to be at the meeting. This was due to meeting Claire when on the Neighbourhood Partnership Walkabout. Bruce Johnston and Lyall Downie of Lothain & Borders Police with John S, John T and Julie were looking at the 'graffiti' on Hastie's close. The art work was commissioned by Claire and The Green Room for a filming session. John S stated other ideas for notice boards were discussed with other officials on the walkabout, namely a free standing

Action

**JS
JT
MF
AA**

notice board in the Grassmarket as part of the re-development and using railings on Jeffery Street and on the Mound. John S and John T to continue to progress this with the priority on Royal Mile Primary School since this has been ongoing for some time.

JS
JT

- b. **Constitution** – John S gave some feedback about the group that agreed to meet to discuss the constitution and standing orders on 27 March at 8 St Mary's Street, home of The Canongate Project. Those present, John S, John T, Julie and Bill discussed the 'model constitution' as produced by the CEC and amended by John S. All agreed it would be fine to propose we adopt this as our official constitution at our AGM in May. They went on to discuss possible policies/standing orders and what they should be about. The list is included at Appendix 3. Anja reiterated her view to get the constitution adopted as soon as possible so allow us to apply for funding. All agreed. More work needs to be done on the standing orders and any planning policies we wish to put in place.

- c. **AGM** - venue to be confirmed. John S suggested we ask for nominations by email before the AGM so that we can better plan for the meeting, We will know if there is to be voting. Set deadlines say 14 days before AGM John S will email everyone with a view to sending out the Agenda around 7 days before. Murray asked about co-opting members anytime or at the AGM. We can Co-opt at anytime. John S wanted clarification was Murray talking about 'nominated members from groups'? John S stated we can have 12 members and 6 nominated members.

JS

- d. **Johnstone Terrace** – Joanna Mowat received an email from Andrew Holmes, which she was "rather embarrassed" to read out so passed to John S to read. See Appendix 2 for the full text of the email. The new person is willing to attend or send the Traffic Manager. Joanna agreed to get him to contact John S about fixing a date, but not in May since AGM. Bruce and John S refuted the email contents.

Cllr
JM

- e. **Christmas Lights 2008** - Cat and Cllr Dundas not here and no update supplied.

- f. **Number 60 Bus** – we were going to link with the Southside Community Council to work together on the issue. They haven't discussed it. Peter sent papers in Dec 07 and sent a new set recently. Peter invited them to have a meeting to see if we can work together, still awaiting a response. Bruce asked when will the service be stopped? Unknown. Joanna said there was a 'motion' before the CEC about 'Supported Transport'. A review is under way to see if the system can be made more efficient. This will probably be ready for the full CEC meeting in June. In the mean time Joanna expects the supported transport services to continue. Peter to continue to liaise with the Southside CC.

PS

- John S asked if Sarah Boyack replied to us about this? She was talking about linking with the CEC to keep going with the services. She is quite supportive but feels it needs to be done through the CEC.

- g. **Declaration of Interests** - John S stated 6 people had completed forms and 7 had not. People at the meeting then asked who were the people who did not complete a form. They are: Julie, Sam, Murray, Sally, Bruce, Ken and Jane. John S asked if we should be including 'Gifts and Hospitality' since this has already applied to a number of members present. CEC Councillors declare this. Joanna stated items over £10 in value are to be declared for CEC Councillors. The meeting agreed we should do this.

ALL

- h. **Scotsman Steps** – Letter sent and reply received. Edinburgh World Heritage (EWH) quoted the cost since CEC did some work. Peter asked should we apply for funding. John S reiterated his issue as stated at the

previous meeting, concerning “securing funding to give to another organisation, surely they should be applying for funding directly, with our support. We should only be applying for funding for projects which we will manage”. Claire asked if the OTCC had the expertise to oversee this job. No.

Bruce suggested John S’s concern is just “semantics”. Joanna urged us not to give any funding from our resources or to apply for funding, the CEC should be funding this work and she is prepared to write a letter stating this. The OTCC give enough of their resources in terms of time spent doing things. Having a representative on the panel for the feasibility study is contributing enough. Anja stated Joanna has persuaded her to change her mind about contributing money. Bruce asked what happens if they don’t find funding?

Joanna will speak to people from EWH if we give her the contact details. Murray proposed we move on and vote on the issue YES to give money, NO not to. Bill seconded this. Vote took place one in favour and 6 against. Peter to let EWH know we will not be funding or seeking funding but will have someone on the panel.

PS

4 CORRESPONDENCE

- a. **Canongate Community Forum** were planning to give John S something to read out about their plans to take part in the Old Town Festival and letting us know about their programme of events, but nobody supplied a statement to read.
- b. **Postwatch** sent us their newsletter, it is on the table for viewing. Anja is on the board of Postwatch and suggested we should engage with them about Post Office closures when the proposals are up for discussion in our area later this year.
- c. **Community Council Training Programme** has been circulated and printed copies are available on the table.
- d. **Planning letters** these have been sent to Bill - see 5 (b).
- e. **Community Councils Joint meeting on 24 April 2008.** Letter received from Eileen Hewitt about this, John S interested in going

5 DISCUSSION ITEMS

a) Official/Community Group Reports

The second Neighbourhood Partnership (NP) ‘walkabout’ took place as did the next NP meeting. Julie was at the Cowgate fire site presentation so couldn’t go. See Planning for report on the fire site from Bill. John S picked up information leaflets presented at the meeting and these were available for all to pick up – Trams, Organising a Clean up. John S mentioned a presentation was given on the Princes Street Block 10 Development Brief (the old Royal High School area).

Lothian and Borders Police – Pc Lyall Downie supplied the meeting with copies of the crime report for the area he covers, he gave a brief account of it’s contents:-The police are endeavouring to tract the people for the housebreaking and vandalism down the Canongate. On Friday he caught one person responsible for graffiti and investigations are ongoing as to where they got the paint and to other incidents to which they confessed. Also, Lyall is pushing for compensation from the youth’s parents. Most thefts reported are of bags or mobiles being left unattended in clubs and pubs. Auto crime is an issue where number plate theft and falsified plates are on the increase. Stolen number plates are not being reported, it is very

important people report their number plate being missing. Lyall urged us all to report incidents to the police.

Licensing – No report

b) Planning

Canongate

The Evening News printed an April Fool article about the Caltongate site being developed into a new sports stadium with an underground train station, they had art work too!

Grassmarket

Bill gave an update on the Grassmarket re-development. There will be trees as part of the re-development works, however only 4 of the original trees will be retained. Replacement trees will be planted. They will be very big at least 10m high and coming in from Germany. They have been specially chosen to suit this location. Existing trees if left in place will be deprived of rainwater since the new surfaces will be impermeable. If the existing trees were left in situ and were replaced later the cost would be 33% higher than replacing them now. The new design allows rainwater to run into the ringed area around each tree.

Jane said she was amazed at Bill's remarks. He stood up to save the trees, supporting an independent report – all trees had at least 40yrs life in them. There was an agreement from Gillespie's to do all they could to preserve the trees. This makes a nonsense out of the public consultation. Bill agrees, consultation has not been followed but he is just reporting back to us what has been said to him.

Jane asked why did they not explain this to us at the time of consultation? Joanna said various departments of the CEC and developers did not talk to each other causing problems. The CEC should have worked smarter. Joanna apologised on behalf of the CEC since it makes a mockery of the consultation. Consultation has not been adhered to. We had 17 trees, we will end up with 14 good sized new ones and 4 of the best originals. All agree consultation was poor.

General Planning Applications

The **Science Museum** plan has been withdrawn. Joanna said there will be a new plan drawn up and is more likely to be an extension to the City Arts Centre going into the 'science museum' space.

Planning application for **8 St Mary Street** we put in an objection on the grounds of loss of retail. However, this space was not retail, it was an office so this reason is not valid. The other comments were not material. Permission was granted.

Tron Square – discussion about a flat in Tron Square to be split into 2 small flats – objection on the grounds of the loss of family housing.

Cowgate fire site – report about the presentation by Allan Murray Architects which Bill and Julie attended. This was on the brief for developing the site. As agreed last month Bill was there as rep for OTA and Julie for the OTCC. The whole site belongs to one Development Company based in Edinburgh.

Claire from the Green Room said Edinburgh Settlement own Hastie's Close and above and all the way to the next building, Faith Night Club. Claire owns the property next to Hastie's Close and Faith Night Club. She explained the improvements she has done for the close after the lack of action from CEC – painted and lighted the close, removed needles and

installed CCTV. She has worked with a graffiti artist to do something with the close which the vandals respect and will not damage. The police want to remove art work that is inappropriate (violence) and that which has not been granted permission. This was all highlighted during the Neighbourhood Partnership Walkabout (Julie, John S and John T were present).

Claire wants a contact person who she can approach to organise young people to work with their award winning artists. She also gave an open invitation to anyone who would like to see their premises and visit their gallery. The gallery is through the pub, The Green Room.

We need to keep an eye on the fire site since the plans are different from a year ago.

See **Appendix 1** for the full list.

6 OPEN FORUM

No items discussed.

NEXT MEETING

13 May 2008; Venue: to be confirmed, but expected to be Edinburgh City Chambers. Time 7pm. This will include our AGM.

Appendix 1

OTCC LIST of PLANNING APPLICATIONS up to Tuesday 8th April 2008

08/00931/FUL & LBC Last Drop 74 - 78 Grassmarket 5no canvas awnings to frontage, awning to each individual window recess and above door, ...

08/00976/FUL 18/03/2008 36 St Mary's Street (Copy shop) Change of use to office (class 2)

08/00875/FUL 11/03/2008 Monteith's Bar 61 High Street. Introduce courtyard stairs, make good lower level and introduce traditional box lanterns

08/00813/ADV The Filling Station 235 High Street New externally illuminated projecting hanging sign, new menu boxes

08/00941/LBC Mitre 131 - 133 High Street Addition of 2 No. canvas awnings to frontage awning to each window recess fitted on central transum,...

08/01028/FUL 25/03/2008 Flat 9 15 Tron Form 3 flats from existing flat including conversion of attic space. Form new roof lights and front...

08/01092/FUL 27/03/2008 17 Market Street Erection of balcony to rear of public house

(continued over)

RESULTS:

08/00036/FUL Change of use to cold food and hot food take-away point
13 West Port **REFUSED**

07/00923/FUL Renewal of planning permission 01/01991/FUL 6-8 Market Street Science
Centre **WITHDRAWN**

08/00042/FUL 04/01/2008 8 St Mary's c/u office to private day nursery **GRANTED**

08/00035/FUL 18 South Bridge C/u un-occupied shop to office space. Streetwork UK.,
GRANTED

Appendix 2

This is the text of the email Andrew Holmes sent to Cllr Joanna Mowat in response to her letter regarding Andrew Holmes or his representative not showing up for the meeting they had agreed with us.

Dear Councillor Mowat

"I refer to your letter of 27 March. I regret to say that not for the first time the representation you received are a tissue of lies or at best wilful misapprehension. I had a personal commitment on the night in question. I informed them 2 weeks in advance (happy to show the e-mail trail) and offered them either the Head of Transport or other senior member of staff. This was not acceptable and I heard no more.

From their general disorganisation I suspect the relevant individuals had not been communicating with each other. I am happy to pass any invitation onto my successor.

Andrew"

Appendix 3

Possible Policies/Standing Orders for the OTCC:

- Objecting to the demolition of useable buildings
- Objecting to the change of use of premises to become commercial premises such as pubs, clubs and entertainment venues.
- List of our aims and objectives – a detailed list for us and 'bullet point' list for the public.
- Monitoring of the effective use of the Local Plans and take action when necessary.
- Engaging with the Community, Business and neighbouring Community Councils.
- Membership of the Association of Scottish Community Councils.
- Promoting the 'National Standards of Consultation' Policy.
- Scrutinising the managing of Common Good and Public Assets.
- Monitor licensing and planning applications in our area and respond to the CEC as appropriate.