



OLD TOWN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

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Committee Meeting

Tuesday, 10 June 2008, 7pm, Edinburgh City Chambers

MINUTES

Present: : Peter Sharma (Chair), Anja Amsel (Vice Chair), John Stewart (Secretary), Bill Cowan (Treasurer), Julie Logan (Planning), Sam Piacentini (Licensing), Bruce Borthwick, John Thompson

CEC Councillors: *No one present*

Scottish Parliament: *No one present*

Lothian & Borders Police: Pc Lyall Downie, *Community Beat Officer.*

Plus 1 public visitor

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

- 1 **Apologies:** Sally Richardson, Catriona Grant, Cllr David Beckett, Sarah Boyack MSP

Action

- 2 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING** (13 May 2008).

Minutes of previous meeting approved as accurate.

- 3 **MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING:**

Attendance: Jane submitted her resignation by email. John S distributed attendance sheet for the past year. Those below 50% were noted to be Ken, Bruce and Jane. Peter noted Bruce's family reasons for non attendance and is to write to Ken.

PS

Follow-up from AGM: Bill was asked if he accepted his nomination as Treasurer, answer "yes". John S asked Bill about the accounts for the year ending 31 March 2008, since they were not submitted for the AGM. Bill said he would prepare the statement of accounts as soon as possible and that our account balance was about £1300.

- a. **Publicity - Newsletter** - no progress. John S reminded us that he proposed at the last meeting the idea of an information letter 'info letter' instead of a newsletter, but no decision was made. All content from the original planned newsletter is now out of date, therefore we have no content at present. Peter proposed we approve using an information newsletter. Agreed. John S suggested the starting point should be the leaflet he produced for the Neighbourhood Partnership Event in May. Copies were supplied at the meeting.

Notice boards – No Progress

- b. **Traffic** - Joanna sent the email she agreed to do and copied to John S. No reply. John S to follow up with Joanna.
- c. **Christmas Lights 2008** - no progress – no information from Cat or Cllr Dundas. Bruce is worried given the CEC cutbacks can we get an assurance from CEC Cllrs that the funding for lighting will not be cut back? It was agreed also to record concern over lack of progress. John S to write

JS

JS

PS

to Cllr Dundas and to Cat.

- d. **Number 60 Bus** - Southside CC have not responded to Peters' attempts to contact them but he will attend their next meeting.
- e. **Declaration and Register of Interests** – John S briefed everyone of the state of play with the Declaration of Interests and of those who had not responded. He handed a blank form to Sam and to Bruce and asked them to complete them by the end of the meeting.

4 CORRESPONDENCE

- a. **Making Edinburgh Healthier** – A Discussion Paper towards a Joint Health Improvement Plan for Edinburgh. Document presented at meeting for information but do we respond? It was agreed not to spend time on it.
- b. **Edinburgh City Local Plan** - John S received more letters regarding the Local Plan Inquiry, these were passed on to Julie for continued input.
- c. **Consultation on the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 - Amendment Bill 2008** - agreed not to discuss this, not of interest.
- d. **Public Transport Review – Edinburgh. Proposed Bus Lane Time and Waiting Amendments** - it is outside our area, noted for information only.

5 DISCUSSION ITEMS

a) Official/Community Group Reports

Lothian and Borders Police – Pc Lyall Downie's police report was circulated by e-mail, see Appendix 1

Lyall thanked everyone for the letter of thanks sent to Inspector Bruce Johnston showing appreciation for Lyall's regular attendance at our meetings.

Lyall highlighted some of the concerns for our area: noise complaints are increasing. Julie asked for a breakdown of some of the categories of crimes. There have been 4 serious assaults, 3 assault with robbery, 48 minor assaults last month. These were usually after drinking sessions and occurred mostly outside night clubs.

Sam highlighted his concerns over Victoria Terrace and West Bow as reported last month. Bruce highlighted problems of 'vagrants' sleeping in Dunbar's Close, also drinking in public.

Cycling on pavements is a problem; Lyall said there is a police operation starting using CCTV and PC evidence. This will be used at various locations in our area throughout the year.

Peter and Julie highlighted drug use problems in common stair ways and closes. Lyall said 'Operation Armour', as highlighted in last month's police report and minutes will tackle this issue. It requires the co-operation of CEC, residents and landlords.

All at the meeting agreed to support the police initiative and their view to upgrade door locking systems for common stair ways.

Neighbourhood Partnership – John S attended the Neighbourhood partnership meeting and reported the Grassmarket Nursery's grant application was not approved. They were not eligible to apply since they

were not a voluntary group. However, the NP team are trying to secure funding within the Children & Families Department.

John Thompson has agreed to be our representative for future meetings. The next meeting is on 4 September 2008, venue to be confirmed.

Co-opting members – St Giles want a 'revolving member', Peter has spoken to Eileen Hewitt about this who expressed that this is not usual way of representation.

Anja will contact St Giles and ask them to formally write to John S and ask to be considered for membership. Julie will contact Blackfriar's Resident Association and ask them to do the same.

AA
JL

Licensing – Sam applying to be considered as a representative on the Licensing Forum, nobody else was interested. Peter asked others to think about it.

Issue with 'Mamma's Pizza' regarding tables and chairs. Sam asked Lyall to look into this. Sam And Bill expressed concerns on tables and chairs in the centre area of the Grassmarket and who will get permission. Need to ensure high quality maintained.

b) Planning

Canongate – Jacobs Ladder, Saltire Steps, Panmure House

Bruce stated the plans for the steps appear to be shelved, then the 'Block 10' developers came in and promoted funds for improvements. Bruce spoke with Mountgrange and they say they still have funding for it, but CEC pulled out of the plans. Julie says some of his information is inaccurate. One 'opportunity' identified as part of 'Block 10' is a completely new route, Jacob's Ladder would be blocked off. John S expressed his frustration as to what is actually being proposed since Julie and Bruce are giving different information!

'Block 10' not going further and 'Caltongate' is still with Scottish Ministers.

Saltire Steps – work is being progressed, vegetation has been cut back and David Sinclair is looking into other improvements but not as a community clean up since too many issues with Health & Safety (potential of needle stick injuries and steep slopes).

Panmure house – Bruce stated it has been sold to Heriot Watt University which were not the highest bidder – it is going to Parliament for approval because it is less than market value although there are other benefits which are not financial.

Bruce asked for us to send a letter of support to the CEC in support of selling it to Heriot Watt – the feeling at the meeting was no. John S stated he previously asked if we should send a letter of support to the CEC about a planning issue and this was strongly objected to.

Grassmarket – Sam asked does the burger van have the same licensing hours as the Chip Shop? If open later crowd dispersal, late at night, would be a problem.

Sam to take this question to the Stake holder's meeting can we get a report back? How are licensing going to be allocated to shops and mobile units for

the central area? Maybe Joanna could report back on this?.

General Planning Applications

Bill went through the list for this month. George Heriot School development at the back of Greyfriar's Church. If not visible to street or high point for example Castle would be difficult to make valid objection. No objection. But will write to CEC Planning regarding this application NOT appearing on the weekly list.

Julie expressed concern over the loss of retail space on South Bridge. Bill working on proposal to present to the CEC Councillors to preserve retail areas based on his knowledge as a retailer.

6 OPEN FORUM

John T suggested an opportunity for some publicity – advertising in the Old Town Festival by sponsoring an event at the Canongate Community Forum's Street Party Such as sponsoring the bouncy castle. Also opportunity for a stall throughout the day. How much does it cost for the bouncy castle?

Approximately £100 was stated. It was agreed we would sponsor the bouncy castle and get a banner.

Date Saturday June 28 10am till 4pm. We need leaflets and volunteers.

John S asked who will volunteer since the CCF volunteers will be busy with other things?

Peter, Anja and John T agreed, 11am-12pm, 12pm-1pm and 1pm -2pm respectively.

Bill agreed to organise the 'banner', a version of the leaflet which John S had made increased to poster size.

**PS
AA
JT
BC**

NEXT MEETING

08 July 2008: Venue: Edinburgh City Chambers. Time 7pm.

No meeting in August

09 September 2008, 14 October 2008, 11 November 2008

Appendix 1



Old Town Community Council Meeting

Meeting Date: Tuesday 10th June 2008, 1930 hours.

Police Report: PC Lyall Downie, Community Beat Officer.

Police Beat: CE21

Dates: 1st May 2008 to 31st May 2008

There have been 234 reported crimes in the area over the past month, a slight decrease from March and April. Again a large percentage of these crimes occur during the hours of 00:00 and 04:00 at weekends.

130 have been solved and persons reported, a small number have been recorded as no crime or recorded in error. The reporting officers will investigate the remainder.

The following is a sample of those in the immediate area of the Old Town Community Council area.

Noise complaints.

These complaints appear to be on the increase and we are working with the council and housing associations to resolve these complaints.

The resident from Milton Street, pleaded guilty to the charges and is awaiting sentence in HMP, Corntonvale.

I'm currently investigating another complaint in Old Tollbooth Wynd, working alongside a Community Safety Officer from the City of Edinburgh Council (CEC).

Domestic Housebreakings

01/05/2008 at Waverley Park Terrace, by forcing door of flat.

05/05/2008 – Spring Gardens, Forcing, by forcing open flat door, entering and stealing

18/05/2008 – Abbeyhill, Cadzow Place, forcing open flat door.

Business Break-ins

18/05/2008 PDSA High Street, Attempt to force fire exit.

21/05/2008 Gleneagles shop, Princes Mall, attempt to enter.

Vandalisms

An officer has now been appointed to take charge of crimes of Vandalism. PC Robertson is working with other police officers and Community Safety Officers from CEC. A number of CCTV cameras have been installed at various locations. The CCTV has picked up a number of persons spray-painting and PC Robertson is making good progress in identifying them.

Thefts

Pedal Cycles – there have been a number of thefts reported this month, 2 from Royal Mile, 2 from Holyrood Road and 1 from Tytler Gardens.

If you or your family have pedal cycles, please secure them with 2 different types of lock and do not let the lock lie on the ground where a hammer can be used to smash the lock.

Do not secure bikes to the railing within a common stair as these railings are cast metal and break very easily after a sharp blow with a hammer. If you have a cycle storage area, please lock them within this.

Auto Crime

2 drivers have been charged with drink driving this month, 1 being stopped for careless driving, she has been reported to the Procurator Fiscal to appear at court later this month (May).

On 21/05/2008 5 drivers were reported for driving without suitable insurance, another 2 for driving without a licence.

On 25/05/2008 Milton Street an attempt was made to steal a motorcar by pulling back the door and opening it, the cowling was then removed and an attempt made to start the engine. This report is unsolved at this time, however, it is hoped there may be a result from forensic evidence.

On 28.05/2008, in Gullane's close a motorcar had its tyres slashed, we are looking for any witnesses regarding this.

DRUGS

There has been an increase in persons found in possession of Drugs, 7 persons have been charged with being in possession, concerned the supply and supplying drugs to others.

LICENSING

A licensed premise in Cockburn Street has been reported for riotous behaviour within.

ASSAULTS

There have been 4 serious assaults reported this month with persons being slashed, punched and kicked to the head.

3 young males have been reported for possession of offensive weapons.

On 25/05/2008 3 males were arrested and charged with Reckless and culpable conduct after throwing bottles into the courtyard of the 3 Sisters, Cowgate.

OTHER

On 14/05/2008 a male was reported for being drunk in charge of Children (6 & 9 years old), a report has been sent to the Fiscal and Social work.

On 27/05/2008 a male was arrested for Reset after buy goods knowing they had been stolen from M&S.

Enquiries are still ongoing with many of the above crimes. If you feel you have any information regarding any of these crimes please do not hesitate to contact me at the West End Police Station 3-5 Torphicen Place, Edinburgh EH3 8DY tel 0131 221 2040 (direct dial).

Or via email at lyall.downie@lbp.pnn.police.uk

If you have any information or suspect a crime has been committed you can contact Crime stoppers and pass the information anonymously.

CRIME PREVENTION

This is the time of year when people are thinking of holidays; you going and the thief waiting for the house to be left empty.

When you leave your property unattended for long periods, please ensure you have done your best to protect it.

Lock all windows, if the door has 2 or 3 locks, use them all. Cancel any papers and milk deliveries, close curtains or lower the blinds. Plug a lamp and or a small radio into a timer switch (use a low energy type of bulb).

Leave a spare key with a friend / neighbour and ask them to check for mail and to stand at the window to give the appearance some one is at home.

You could also turn off your gas and water if they are not required, check your heating system first.

If you have an alarm, ensure the keyholder knows how to operate it. Don't leave the instructions lying around.

Before you fit any new locks to your property, please ensure they conform to the British Standards BS3621:2004 and display the kitemark.