



Minutes of the Meeting on Monday 13th March 2023, 7:00pm at Nelson Hall

1. Welcome and apologies for absence, declarations of interest

CC Members: Philip McDowell (PM) Joan Carter (JC), Bob Hodgart (BH), Stephen Roger Benson (SRB).

Councillor: None.

Members of the Public: Alex Alderton (AA) (Minutes), Dr James Gilmour (JG), Holly Swift (HS), Will Tillotson (WT), Hugh Jordan.

JC welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies from Daniel Fisher, Philip Pinsky, Betty Offerman, Liz Logie.

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

None.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 13th February 2023 and matters arising

The minutes of the last meeting were approved.

3.3 Southside Community Centre - Meetings of the Management Committee are now on Wednesday evenings twice a month. JC cannot attend and it seems the SCC may struggle to regularly attend these though it would be helpful if someone could be there even if it were less frequently.

3.4 Birds - Posters have been designed by Alison Neathey. It was agreed that 6 A3 laminated posters should be printed. It would be relatively easy to produce more in future if needed. There was concern about the risk of being accused of fly posting or the posters being taken down. **Action: JC to ask for permission to put up the posters.**

6.3 Community Engagement - Andrew Field is planning to attend the next SCC meeting in April.

8 Potholes - JC reported that LL had had no response yet to her letter but had advised people should report issues with roads on the Council website. WT mentioned there is also a Twitter account where people can send pictures.

4. Councillor's Report

No Councillor was present.

5. Reports from office bearers

5.1 Secretary - Nothing to report.

5.2 Chair - Not present.

5.3 Treasurer - Not present.

5.4 Webmaster - Nothing to report.

6. Reports from Committees and meetings attended

6.1 Student Housing - JC and PM attended a Cockburn Association meeting regarding the student housing crisis. PM shared that it did not really address many of the SCC's concerns about student housing in depth; there were representatives from the student body, the university, and others including another Community Councillor. PM explained that from the students' point of view there is a shortage of housing and what there is is expensive, and the feeling was that purpose-built student housing is built to make money and not for the students' benefit. There was a presentation from the Student Housing Coop which is a good template for housing generally, not just students. The Coop has over 100 students living there and they manage to keep costs down whilst also learning maintenance skills. JC and PM felt the meeting was the beginning of a larger conversation about housing, and noted nobody from the Council appeared to be present. The meeting was inconclusive but useful as an exchange of ideas and many issues were touched upon. The number of students in Edinburgh has doubled over the last 20 years and now stands at around

75 000, 18 000 of which being from overseas. The University stated they are not going to lease any more buildings from developers.

6.2 Causey Development Trust - JC and BH attended an arts event showcasing a project where Preston St Primary School students had created drawings of birds which were turned into an animation by artists. The animation was screened outside on buildings and the drawings were displayed in the Southside Community Centre. It was a positive event and many local people were present including some Councillors.

6.3 EACC - BH and JC attended an EACC meeting on 23rd February. It was mainly regarding traffic/transport problems and roads. There were presentations by Cliff Hutt, the Council's Head of Roads and Infrastructure, and Gavin Brown, Head of Network Management and Enforcement. BH reported that they shared a lot of data about how complex it is to keep Edinburgh's road infrastructure intact; they spend £65 million annually just keeping things going. There were questions around priorities and whether they give sufficient attention to pedestrian areas; the representatives claimed to be concerned with all issues including pavements. A detailed report is available on the EACC website. They have an annual review and claim to have a longer term plan for the city's roads.

7. Planning and Licensing applications

SRB had objected to the short term let application circulated the previous week.

PM drew attention to the Planning Enforcement Report that was circulated, which was an update from the Planning Enforcement team on issues with local businesses. Action was being taken but progress was slow so the SCC should continue to monitor the situation.

8. Problems we have had dealing with CEC for consideration for April meeting

Andrew Field from the Community Planning/Engagement department plans to attend the next meeting in April and BH had suggested coming up with a list of topics to discuss with him. The following topics were mentioned:

- PM raised the question of knowing who to contact for the various issues that come up in meetings, i.e. a directory of names at the Council. Usually the SCC goes through its local Councillors but it would make more sense if they could contact the relevant people directly.

- PM also raised the issue of licensing, and whether it could be possible to see what licences businesses have and their limitations, in the same way that we can see planning applications.
- BH suggested asking about the process for how applications for planning permission are dealt with, as it seems fairly opaque and it would be good if there was a step where there was space for CCs to have their input. CCs want to be more empowered and this is an area where they could contribute but they need support. PM pointed out people can put comments in on applications on behalf of their CC for but it would be worth asking whether this has any impact.
- The Council has some officers who have oversight of CCs and PM would appreciate clarity on whether they are there to support or just to hold CCs accountable.

9. 15 Dalkeith Road Site

SRB had submitted a response which was circulated and a message was received in reply from Nick Ball on behalf of the developers. JC read the reply to those present, which said amendments would be made including: a reduction in height by one storey to some residential blocks; an increase in height by one storey of another block; changes to the interior of the office building; amendments to the exterior of a building to keep it in line with the existing structures.

JG was attending on behalf of the East Parkside Proprietors' Association (EPPA); he had made a personal submission on the planning applications which had been made available to SCC members by BH. He and the East Parkside Factor had met last week with Nick Ball primarily to review the ownership of the wall along the mutual boundary when they had also been informed of proposed amendments to the previously submitted planning applications.

Historical analysis by architects on behalf of the developers had confirmed that the whole of the north wall of the Joiners' Workshop was within what is now the East Parkside Development and as such is owned in common by the East Parkside Proprietors. The developers' original plan had been to take down the gable wall facing Holyrood Park Road to the height of the wall south of the building. Historic Environment Scotland considered this gable made a valuable contribution to the character of the Southside Conservation Area and so the developers had agreed to retain it. They would have to demolish the rest of the building as it is unsafe and could not be stabilised at reasonable cost, but the gable wall needs a supporting structure which would be concealed in a small roofed section. The east part of the north wall of the building, which belongs to EP Proprietors, would be reduced to the height of the eaves and the remainder taken down to the level of the boundary

wall. The developers plan to transfer the whole area to Scottish Power Energy Networks for a new area substation. The EPPA was pleased that the wall would be retained at reduced height as this would maintain the present appearance, provide an effective barrier between the sites, and avoid the need for any stabilising support along the wall.

Regarding the proposed reduction in height of some housing blocks, the EPPA had not discussed it but JG stated he personally would like to see more of a reduction as the buildings would still be substantially higher than the highest windows in the nearby EP blocks and would be very much out of character with neighbouring buildings. The SCC's original submission had suggested a reduction of two storeys. The middle block would be increasing by one storey as HES had asked for variation in roof heights across the site; there was uncertainty from those present as to how many storeys there would now be. JC suggested inviting Nick Ball to present at an SCC meeting but was unsure if there would be time within the planning process. JG pointed out there would be a public consultation once revised planning applications had been submitted.

BH explained that if the application goes to a hearing, there can be statements from various parties which could include the local Community Council and Ward Councillors, so it would be beneficial if there were a hearing. This would need to be decided by the Chief Planner. JC suggested contacting Tim Pogson to engage the support of the Ward Councillors. It was suggested that the SCC should seek the support of all four Ward Councillors for such a hearing.

JC drew attention to the statements in JG's personal submission about the need for a pedestrian-proof barrier between the gardens of the two sites and suggested it was desirable that there should not be such a barrier as it was better for residential developments to have permeability and more open access. JG strongly opposed this view, based on past and recent experience of unrestricted access within the East Parkside Development.

10. Public Question Time

10.1 Hugh Jordan was attending in his role as a journalist. He had been filming the pelican crossing at South Clerk St and had filmed many drivers including taxis and buses running red lights over the last several months. He had tried to contact the owners of the businesses and representatives of organisations including the police with variable response. He had also spoken to an MSP about it. JC suggested putting the issue on the agenda for a future meeting to hear a fuller report from Hugh, to see how the SCC could assist, and perhaps inviting the police to be part of a discussion.

11. Any Other Business

11.1 The date of the next meeting would fall on Easter Monday which is inconvenient for most, so there was a suggestion to move to Tuesday 18th. This would be confirmed by email after confirming the availability of absent members, and Andrew Field. **Action: JC contact Andrew Field, SRB check hall availability.**

11.2 JC shared that a water refill point had been installed on the Meadows.

11.3 JC queried who to contact when a zebra crossing needs repainting; PM suggested Cliff Hutt.

12. Date for Next Meeting: TBC