

# **THE SOUTHSIDE ASSOCIATION**

**117 Nicolson Street  
Edinburgh  
EH8 9ER**

*Founded 1972 Scottish Charity No SCO12262*

[www.southsideassociation.co.uk](http://www.southsideassociation.co.uk)

**Members' Meeting  
Tuesday 1 November 2016 at 7pm  
Room 1, South Side Community Centre**

## ***Minutes***

**Present:** Colin Christison (Chair), Moira Gibson (Minutes Secretary), Hilary McDowell, Philip McDowell, Maggie Bagan, Tom Bonallo, May Linton, Kenny McLeod, Fran Gifford, Steven Carter, Dora Lola-Luz, Ola Uduku, Bob Hodgart, Isobel Leckie, Carol McHugh.

Also Present: Cllr Steve Burgess, guest speaker Steven Cuthill.

### **1. Welcome and apologies for absence**

The Chairman welcomed those present, particularly the guest speaker. Apologies for absence were received from Jan Fraser, Ethel Murray, Jo Scott, David Wood.

### **2. Guest speaker – Steven Cuthill, Local Transport and Environment Manager, South East Locality**

Steven Cuthill (SC) explained that there had been a restructuring of management of local Council services to try to make them more efficient and cost-effective. Neighbourhood Partnerships will be retained and four new 'localities' have been introduced to replace six neighbourhoods. Ours is the South East Locality, which includes three Neighbourhood Partnerships (South Central, City Centre, and Liberton and Gilmerton) and four wards (Southside/Newington, Meadows/Morningside, Liberton/Gilmerton, and City Centre).

The restructure means that all public services, including Police, Fire and health and social care services now operate within the same boundaries. This should deliver a more integrated approach when it comes to local improvement plans and the requirements of health and social care planning and the new Community Empowerment Act. The Leadership Board for the South East Locality reflects this aspiration for better co-ordination: the Executive Director is Paul Lawrence, Executive Director of Place at the Council, with representatives on the Board from the Council, Integrated Health and Social Care, the NHS,

Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, the voluntary and further education sectors.

SC said the logic was partly about the reduced resources available in light of Council cuts, as well as about avoiding duplication of services. The new set-up should empower citizens, since the Localities aimed for a 'right first time' approach. As part of this, online interaction will be encouraged (although, as yet, it is difficult to find any information about services delivered by Localities on the Council website or the Neighbourhood Partnerships sites).

The day-to-day Locality Manager is Sarah Burns. Under her sit:

- Steven Cuthill, Local Transport and Environment Manager, with responsibility for local transport, parks development and park rangers, environmental wardens, and liaison with waste and cleaning services;
- Paul Swan, Local Housing Operations Manager, with responsibility for rent arrears, tenancy management, lettings, estate management, concierge service at multist;
- Kathy Evans, Local Family and Household Support Manager, with responsibility for community safety, family solutions support, neighbourhood support service, sheltered housing support;
- Anna Herriman, City Centre Programme Manager;
- Andrew Gallacher, Interim Partnership and Information Manager, responsible for local community planning and libraries. Our regular contact with Mags Campbell will fall under this area, and she will work with Katie Swann.

Steven's department covers a wide range of services relevant to Southsiders:

- Gareth Thomas manages Waste and Cleansing – not directly managing these services, but as liaison with the central delivery point. As well as helping with problems we notify him about, he will organise initiatives like community clean-ups;
- Paul Baxter will run a team of six Environmental Wardens. These will patrol, issue fixed penalty notices for littering and dog-fouling, and educate businesses about waste. They will also work with the police on anti-social behaviour issues like drugs, begging, etc.
- Alan Dunlop will run the Transport Team, dealing with maintenance of roads and footpaths, permits for skips, road closures, co-ordination of utilities digging up the roads, etc;
- Mike Shields will manage Parks and Greenspace, liaising with Friends, dealing with events, planting and all issues relating to local parks.

All issues which fall under SC's team can be reported via email at [southteam@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:southteam@edinburgh.gov.uk)

Following Steven's talk, members raised several issues which had been flagged in advance:

- Why are response rates to requests for information and help so slow? Is training given to develop a customer/council taxpayer service attitude? *SC: we hope the new structure will improve response times.*
- The shift to online transaction and communication is unsuitable for many, and why does the Council also insist on asking for residents' dates of birth? *SC: will look into this.*
- We were told that all commercial bins would be removed from permanent presence on the pavements but this has not happened: when is this scheduled to take place? *SC: businesses will have to make provision for containing waste within their property, with*

*exemptions for food and glass. The Council hopes that these two exemptions will be removed in due course but currently has no way of dealing with these waste streams.*

- *Illegal flyposting has been raised time and again: what action is taken against perpetrators and will leases to Council premises be withdrawn if this takes place? SC: the Council removes flyposting from its own property but it is up to owners of other premises to take responsibility for removing flyposting. The Council has written to event organisers warning them not to fly post, and may consider further initiatives.*
- *Some local businesses appear to be conducting business from vehicles parked semi-permanently in No Parking areas such as bus lanes and Loading Bays: can they be fined and this stopped? SC: we are aware of this 'cat and mouse' operation. If loading/unloading is observed, then it can continue for up to 30 minutes and people can apply for dispensations or relevant permits. SC will ask Parking Enforcement to visit the area more frequently. However, this may be a matter for Trading Standards.*
- *When will leaf collection start and are leaves compostable? SC: Street cleaning is part of the citywide Waste and Cleansing operation, with Murray Black the responsible manager. My team can liaise to represent local concerns. Where leaf matter is free of litter, it can be composted; otherwise, it might be recycled or sent to landfill.*
- *Who deals with graffiti now? SC: graffiti removal is part of Cleansing, so report it via 529 3030 or it can be reported to the Police as criminal damage. The Council undertakes to remove graffiti on its own property: if of a racist nature within one day, otherwise within ten days. Graffiti on private property is the responsibility of the owner, though the Council has powers to force utility companies, for example, to treat graffiti.*
- *A neighbourhood Walkabout was conducted a year ago with Alan Dunlop, but many things promised then, such as bollards to prevent vehicle ingress onto pavements, have not been implemented. SC: work is ongoing to provide dropped crossings where bollards also feature and we are co-ordinating the work to avoid duplication.*
- *When will the main corridor of Newington Road to Nicolson Street get the repairs needed? SC: some work is under way to deal with bus stops and footway resurfacing before the end of the financial year.*
- *Whom should we contact for removal of detritus abandoned after road works, eg 134 Pleasance? SC: I will make arrangements for uplift as soon as possible.*

### **3. Police Report from Police Scotland**

Unfortunately, no one from Police Scotland was available to attend the meeting. However, the day following the SA meeting, an email from Inspector Graeme Nisbet was circulated outlining the following:

- a restructure of resources in October will deliver quicker responses, albeit from a smaller but dedicated community policing team;
- our Ward Officers are now supported by additional Community Policing Officers, who know the 'hot spots' and the local concerns;
- PS David Cuthbert, based at St Leonard's, will be our dedicated sergeant, in charge of PC Chris Harris, PC Neil Mackay, and PC Stuart Fraser;
- the email for our area is: [EdinburghSouthsideNewingtonCPT@Scotland.pnn.police.uk](mailto:EdinburghSouthsideNewingtonCPT@Scotland.pnn.police.uk)
- the investigations into the Salisbury Place attack and the attack on our own member are ongoing and being given the highest priority;

- currently, the focus is on safety of persons and property – patrols are advising on bonfire/fireworks safety, 20 mph safety, night cycling safety, and preventing housebreaking. For advice, see <http://www.scotland.police.uk/keep-safe/home-and-personal-property>

#### **4. Minutes of meeting of 4 October 2016, and matters arising**

Kevin Hawes had asked for a correction to the October minutes to indicate that fly-posting, graffiti and bins are the responsibility of the new South East Locality's Transport and Environment team, led by Steven Cuthill, and not the Community Safety team led by Kathy Evans. This was accepted.

Bob Hodgart asked for a correction to the minuting of Item 6.3, which discussed the proposed Traffic Regulation Order at West Crosscauseway. He is a member of the Steering Group (not the steering committee) of the Causey Development Trust. He also wished an addendum to the penultimate paragraph to read as follows: ' . . . most of the grant was coming from Sustrans, a UK charity, whose financial contribution would bring investment to the Southside which would otherwise go to projects in other UK cities or regions through a process of competitive bidding for Sustrans funds.' This was accepted.

Proposer: Maggie Bagan; Seconder: Tom Bonallo.

Matters arising: none.

#### **5. Chair's Report**

- 5.1 Notification has been received about the community concert in the Charteris Centre on 7 December: all welcome.
- 5.2 The Spokes Magazine had been received. Also the University of Edinburgh Strategic Plan 2016, which is also available at <https://www.ed.ac.uk/strategic-plan>

#### **6. Treasurer's Report**

Clydesdale Bank appointment to be made. Currently £1,526.65 in the bank, including a Southside Community Council contribution of £100 towards the cost of the Christmas Party. There is also £42.52 cash in hand.

#### **7. Planning and Licensing Report**

- 7.1 16/04790/FUL - Alterations and change of use of existing class 1 retail premises (The Paper Gallery) to form class 3 restaurant at 49 Clerk Street, Edinburgh, EH8 9JQ: objection submitted, and receipt acknowledged.
- 7.2 95-97 Nicolson Street – formerly CanCom (Apple before that). Being turned into a Chinese tea room. No change of use PA. Colin will check the veracity of this via planning enforcement.

7.3 The planning application relating to the former Odeon cinema has been approved.

7.4 Philip McDowell has updated his spreadsheet of local shops to get an up-to-date snapshot of usage. There appear to be fewer empty shops, but perhaps too many cafés and takeaways, and charity shops. A wider range of uses would be good.

7.4 Planning community event:

Two Council planning officers met three members of the Southside Association on 27 October to explain the detail of the forthcoming community event in relation to the Town Centre Supplementary Guidance in the Southside area.

The 'Place Standard Tool' <http://www.placestandard.scot/#/home> will be used to discuss issues with the community. This tool has been developed by the Scottish Government, NHS Scotland, and Architecture & Design Scotland.

The planners would like to involve the Southside Association in this process, and they are speaking similarly to South East Locality, Southside Community Council and South Central Neighbourhood Partnership. They feel that the role of the Association is crucial in this kind of community engagement and hope small groups will attend to discuss 14 topics:

Public transport	Work and local economy
Moving around	Housing and community
Traffic and parking	Social interaction
Streets and spaces	Identity and belonging
Natural space	Feeling safe
Play and recreation	Care and maintenance
Facilities and amenities	Influence and sense of control

The dates for the events which will be held in the Southside Community Centre are:

Saturday 19 November – 10:00 - 12:00

Tuesday 22 November – 17:30- 20:00

Saturday 26 November – 10:00–12:00

## 8. Environmental Report

Most of the issues were covered in the Question and Answer session with our guest speaker, Steven Cuthill. Apart from that, Hilary reported that her guerrilla gardening plot on Newington Road is thriving.

## 9. Report from, and Question and Answer session with, the attending Councillor

9.1 Cllr Burgess responded to members' concerns previously voiced about the lack of responsiveness of the Council's planning system. He said that when there were more than six objections to any application, the matter could not be decided by Council officials but had to be referred to the Development Management Sub-Committee of Councillors. Therefore it is important for as many people and groups

as possible to be involved in the planning process to ensure that all matters were fully considered.

- 9.2 The Local Improvement Plan for our area has been approved.
- 9.3 The Canongate Youth Project would appreciate any support the Southside Association can offer. The bike track near the Craggs Centre will start being built in January. Bike training will be given by the Craggs Centre.
- 9.4 There is no further news on the future of the Southside Surgery, but an application has been made for a doctors' surgery in Kittles Yard. Moira also reported that the University was consulting with the local NHS about the potential of one of its properties for this purpose.

## **10. Any other business**

10.1 Isobel Leckie, a member of the Southside Association (SA) as well as Secretary of the Causey Development Trust (CDT), said that she had been puzzled by the SA's objection to the proposed TRO at West Crosscauseway since the SA had previously been very supportive of the Trust's endeavours. The aim has always been to breathe new life into a neglected area of the Southside, with the support of local people, transport and heritage groups and the Council, and there has been a decade of development and consultation.

Philip said that support for the vision remained but that the detail in the TRO had come as a surprise; although it may have been flagged in the 2015 public exhibition, those who did not attend that event had had no warning of it. Dora said that ten of the eleven businesses in West Crosscauseway had objected and there were wider concerns that the concept of shared space was dangerous. Colin noted that the Council will meet those with concerns.

Bob emphasised that there had been widespread consultation with local, heritage, transport and disability groups, with the Council's Access Panel, and that there were tried and tested ways of addressing problems with 2m people using shared spaces. He circulated a five-page handout to respond to concerns and queries.

## **11. Date of next meeting**

Christmas Carol Service, St Patrick Square festive lights and community party – 6 December at 6pm.

Next business meeting Tuesday 10 January 2017 at Southside Community Centre.