

# West End Community Council Minute

**7:30pm on the 7th of January 2020** at 61 Ashfield, 51 Melville Street, EH3 7HL

Present: Dr Gordon M Wyllie (Chair), Ian Robertson (Vice-Chair), David Duncan (Secretary), Isabel Thom (Planning), Cllr Claire Miller, Cllr. Hal Osler, Susan Purnell (Police Scotland), Community Councillors Dr Leonora McAndrew, Gordon Renton, Alex Milne and local residents Peter Dunlop, Suzanne Black, Peter Blade, Andy Duncan, Charlie Smith, Ian Woollen, Euan Glen, Stephen McKenny together with David Orr (Nadler Hotels) Jeremy Scott (NLA Architects) and Andrew Munnis (Montagu Evans) re Meldrum House.

## Discussion

## Action

### 1. Apologies

Apologies were received from or on behalf of Marta Baur and Colin Johnston.

### 2. Representation regarding Meldrum House

A detailed and comprehensive presentation was given by David Orr of Nadler Hotels and Jeremy Scott of NLA Architects regarding the development of Meldrum House, is to become a 170 bed serviced apartment hotel intended for business executives and other higher spend clients. This was defined as costing on average £160 a night. The proposals have been worked on in collaboration with the Planning Department and are about to be lodged formally, after which there will be a 21-day opportunity for comment. In the meanwhile, individuals from the locality with views to express would be welcome to get in touch. Most of those attending approved the change of use and appearance of the development. More presentations about developments were promised to be made in due course. Those making the presentation were duly thanked and left the meeting.

### 3. Minute of meeting held on the 3rd of December 2019

The Minute from the last meeting of the Community Council was approved.

### 4. Matters arising

Strong support was expressed for the view that the Christmas Market should be scaled back or removed from the centre of Edinburgh. A number of people protested about the over-commercialism of the city as a visitor centre.

Attendees discussed with the City Councillors present at the meeting the practicalities of changing the location of the Christmas Market going forward. Cllr. Hal Osler said that this was very unlikely in future.

Gordon Renton reiterated his concerns over the diesel generator used to produce electricity at the Christmas Market being a public health hazard.

### 5. Police report

Susan Purnell of the West End Community Policing Team advised that over the course of December there had not been many crimes reported. She reported that the influx of Romanian beggars have largely dissipated back to their country of origin.

A clothing outlet in the local area was broken into on the 6<sup>th</sup> of December.

An elderly lady had had her bag 'dipped' by 2 Bulgarian nationals who were subsequently been arrested after committing the same offence later on the same day and deported.

## **6. Finding a Treasurer and an Engagement Officer**

Community Councillor Alex Milne volunteered to take on the WECC Treasurer role.

Vice Chair Ian Robertson required more time to assess the size and extent of the Community Engagement Officer role prior to making a decision about taking up the post.

## **7. Website update**

The WECC website has been brought up to date with thanks to Campbell Mills

## **8. The "Quaich" project and use of Princes Street Gardens**

Referring to the earlier discussion, Dr Wyllie and Mrs Thom would be attending a meeting with other Community Councils next week.

## **9. South East Locality**

The Chairman tabled the Agenda for the meeting taking place on Monday the 13<sup>th</sup> at 2:30pm on Shandwick Place. Which he would be attending on behalf of the Community Council.

## **10. Councillors' report**

City Councillors Claire Miller and Hal Osler made a brief report, noting that the City Councillors had been in recess over the festive period.

After a discussion initiated by Cllr Osler referring to progress being made towards the reopening of the Water of Leith Walkway, and the forthcoming proposals to regulate short-term lets.

Mr Woollen that his requests for further information from the Council regarding the removal of parking spaces from Melville Street had been unanswered, Cllr. Miller undertook to take this up with the officials involved.

Concerns were renewed about deleterious outcomes expected from the forthcoming cycle route and a number of people complained about the reduction in (already scarce) residents parking places.

## **11. Finance and Planning reports**

The financial situation was unchanged since the last meeting although a number of bills were outstanding.

Isabel Thom spoke to and was thanked for her planning report (See appendix 2)

## **12. AOCB**

Cllr. Hal Osler advised that Stockbridge is completely closed for 8 weeks due to gas works taking place. Buses are being rerouted and diversions are in place for other vehicles.

## **13. Dates of next meetings**

4<sup>th</sup> February, 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 7<sup>th</sup> April, 5<sup>th</sup> May, 2<sup>nd</sup> June, 7<sup>th</sup> July, 4<sup>th</sup> August, 1<sup>st</sup> September, 6<sup>th</sup> October, 3<sup>rd</sup> November and 1<sup>st</sup> December

**This was all the business**

Appendix 1 – An article sent by Cllr. Hal Osler regarding short term let controls in

08 Jan 2020

## **LATEST NEWS: EDINBURGH'S CALL ANSWERED FOR NEW SHORT TERM LETS LICENSING REGIME**

Following today's Scottish Government announcement to introduce a new regulatory scheme for short term lets, the Leader of the City of Edinburgh Council Adam McVey welcomes the news that the Council's call for new legislation has been successful.

He said: "This is extremely welcome news and will give us the controls that we need over short term lets for our residents and communities across Edinburgh. Today's announcement by the Minister meets our request for mandatory licenses and we will now be in a position to more effectively implement planning controls to stop the increase of short term lets. A review of taxation of short term lets will also make sure that businesses are paying properly for income they're receiving and local services they're using.

"In 2018, we set up a working group to look at this in detail and provide recommendations, the main one being the need for a regulatory system. Since then we've been working closely with the Scottish Government on the implementation of a new regulatory system, so it's extremely welcome that we'll now be able to take this forward, and soon.

"This news also comes on the back of our successful campaign to introduce a tourist tax which will also make sure that visitors to the city are financially contributing to the services that they use. All of which, are part of a package of measures to better manage the enormous success of our tourist economy.

"We'll now work with the Scottish Government on the details of the new system which I hope will allow us to react quickly when rules are breached as well as addressing the particular challenges we face in Edinburgh such as housing being taken out of supply, rising rents and anti-social behaviour.

"Next week we will also set out how we propose to tackle this issue through the introduction of new planning policies in our consultation document 'Choices' for the next local development plan City Plan 2030."