



# Leith Harbour and Newhaven Community Council

## Final minutes – Leith Harbour and Newhaven Community Council Meeting

**Date:** 28 January 2025

**Time:** 18:30–20:30

**Location:** Custom House, Leith

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### 1. Welcome and Introductions

- Chair: Douglas Tharby (Chairman of the Community Council)
- Members and attendees introduced themselves, including residents, councillors, local business representatives, and police officers.
- An attendance sheet was circulated for visitors to sign, and visitors were informed about the recording of the meeting for transparency and accurate minute-taking.

### 2. Apologies

- Apologies were received from Jason Ran (Community Council Member) and Ben MacPherson (MSP).

### 3. Declaration of Interests

- No declarations of interest were made by the members present.

### 4. Approval of Minutes

- The minutes from the previous meeting held on 26 November 2024 were noted. Chair Douglas Tharby noted that he would verify specific details with Don Giles, another attendee of that meeting, before finalising any amendments.

### 5. Police Report

The police report was presented by Sergeant Chris Casselden. Key points included:

- **Crime Statistics:**
  - A total of 218 calls were logged in January, slightly below the monthly average of 250. Categories included thefts, youth disturbances, vandalism, and reports of antisocial behaviour.

- A notable reduction in reported crimes compared to December was attributed to increased community engagement and police presence during the holiday period.
- **Notable Incidents:**
  - **6 December:** A youth stole items from ALDI, caused a disturbance on a bus, and assaulted the driver. The individual was apprehended and charged with six offenses, including theft and assault.
  - **19 December:** Reports of a youth with a bow and arrow at Newhaven Harbour led to immediate police intervention. The item was determined to be a school project and not used in a threatening manner.
  - **Graffiti Incidents:** Ongoing investigations involve a suspect linked to 35 offenses across the area. Police highlighted the importance of local residents providing information to assist in identifying offenders.
- **Community Engagement:**
  - Officers attended a pre-Christmas event for young carers and organized educational visits to schools, showcasing police vehicles and equipment.
  - The Leith Chooses event saw significant police participation, with over 500 attendees interacting with officers.
  - Upcoming engagement includes a session with St. Andrews Youth Group on 30 January.
- **Policing Boundaries and Resources:**
  - Concerns were raised about the potential overlap and misalignment of Newhaven policing boundaries. Residents emphasized the importance of seamless communication between adjacent police wards.
  - The sergeant reassured attendees that collaboration between officers in different wards ensures consistency in addressing shared concerns.

## 6. Treasurer's Report

- **Financial Update:**
  - The current bank balance stands at £1,011.06.
  - Outgoing payments were made for venue bookings and printing costs related to recent events.

- Members were reminded to submit reimbursement claims for any outstanding expenses.
- Plans were discussed to allocate funds for promotional activities supporting the upcoming council elections.

## **7. Councillors' Reports**

### **Chas Booth (Green Councillor)**

- **Visitor Levy:**
  - The levy was approved at 5%, effective July 2026. It is estimated to generate significant revenue for local projects despite an extended nine-month transition period resulting in £1.6 million of lost income.
- **Licencing Policy:**
  - Draft policies for areas of alcohol overprovision, including Great Junction Street and South Leith, will soon undergo public consultation. Applications for new licences in these zones will require a strong case for exemption.
- **Council Budget:**
  - An 8% council tax increase is proposed to prevent severe cuts to public services. However, health and social care budgets remain under significant strain, with the Integration Joint Board exploring further cost-cutting measures.
- **Liveable Leith:**
  - A new community group is advocating for the permanent implementation of the Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN). Residents are encouraged to engage in the council meeting scheduled for 18 February to voice their views.

## **8. Community Councillors' Reports**

- **City Plan 2030 (Seafield Development):**
  - Neil Tulloch shared updates on the redevelopment of brownfield sites at Seafield, focusing on sustainable housing, green spaces, and community facilities.
  - A public consultation will commence shortly, with events planned in Leith, Portobello, and Craigentenny. However, delays in the wave action study have raised concerns about incomplete data.

- **Western Harbour Development:**

- The Community Council has formally objected to the development, highlighting potential environmental impacts and insufficient consideration of local needs.

- **Tram Landscaping Works:**

- Ongoing issues with incomplete landscaping along the tram route were discussed. Members expressed frustration and resolved to pursue further updates from council officials.

## **9. Presentation by Carl Baker (Collective Architecture)**

- **Cable's Wynd House Retrofit Project:**

- The project aims to upgrade the energy performance of the listed building to EPC Band B by improving thermal efficiency and reducing carbon emissions.
- Key improvements include enclosing open-access galleries to reduce heat loss, installing new windows, and updating communal heating systems to electric.
- Proposals also include converting unused basement spaces into community hubs and waste/recycling facilities, and significant landscaping enhancements to improve biodiversity and accessibility.
- Resident engagement workshops informed the design, including selecting colours for the exterior. Enhanced concierge facilities aim to reduce antisocial behaviour.

- **Discussion Points:**

- Funding for long-term maintenance post-retrofit was identified as critical to ensuring the sustainability of the improvements.
- Questions were raised about potential disruptions during construction and ensuring clear communication with residents throughout the project timeline.

## **10. Presentation by Jo McClelland and Ethan Lewis**

- **Local Place Plan Proposal:**

- A proposal to develop a Local Place Plan for Leith was presented. Key objectives include prioritising green infrastructure, addressing energy transition, and creating a cohesive community development strategy.

- The timeline aligns with Edinburgh Council’s 2025 deadline for Local Place Plan submissions, offering an opportunity for the community to shape local planning policies.
- Members discussed collaboration with local groups, including SOS Leith and Friends of Water of Leith Basin, to ensure diverse community input.
- The community council agreed to explore options and possibly organise initial workshops/communications to gather broader feedback. A request was made by the community council for the development of a short concept note by the proposers for circulation for further comment and to clarify objectives/scope.

## **11. Community Projects and Updates**

- **Leith Chooses Event:**

- Online voting is currently open for 22 projects, with strong participation encouraged from all community members. Successful projects will receive funding to support local initiatives.
- The in-person voting day on 20 January was well-attended, with over 500 residents participating.

- **Community Council Elections:**

- A recruitment campaign is being prepared, including promotional stalls at local markets and leaflets distributed in community spaces. Members discussed the importance of attracting diverse candidates to strengthen representation.

## **12. AOB**

- No additional points were raised for discussion.

## **13. Next Meeting**

- The next meeting is scheduled for 25 February 2025, 18:30 at Online only via Teams

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**Minutes prepared by:** [Name]

**Date:** [Insert Date]

## Seafield

The Seafield steering group met remotely on 9 December 2024. It was noted that there is still no representative from Craigentiny & Meadowbank CC on the group. The plan is to begin consultation in January/February 2025 on the drafts presented to the Council's Planning Committee on 11 September 2024; it is the third and final stage of engagement/consultation. Ideally consultation would have been aligned with the wave action study, but this has not been possible. The intention is to stage at least three in-person events, prospectively in Leith, Craigentiny, and Portobello, despite the imminent dissolution of community councils pending the forthcoming elections.

It was noted that, while the preparation of the wave study had not yet been confirmed, there were some positive developments, namely the appointment of a consultant to deliver the Council's Coastal Change Adaptation Plan, the commencement of some analysis by SEPA around Seafield (albeit not to the level of detail needed), and a meeting of council officers with the Scottish Government at which there was an emphasis on unlocking difficult sites.

Neil Tulloch

17/1/25