

## Queensferry & District Community Council

### Chairman's report for the QDCC Business meeting being held on the 25<sup>th</sup> March 2019.

I have attended the Meetings noted below.

#### Community Safety Forum 20<sup>th</sup> Mar '19

I attended a Community Safety Forum meeting along with David Flint held on 20<sup>th</sup> March. Peter Strong Localities Manager was invited to give an update on the Local Improvement Plans and provide guidance how the Safety Forum "fits in" to the Edinburgh Partnerships and the yet to be formed Network Committees. PS explained that the role of the Community Safety Forum was to discuss Community Safety matters in the context of the locality Community Councils and local interest groups serve on; Policing, Fire, Housing, Social Works and Transport and have access to officers and officials to raise concerns about community safety.

#### High Street Improvement Steering Group Meeting

I will be attending the meeting of the Steering Group on 21<sup>st</sup> Mar in the QDCC meeting room to view the proposals being brought forward by Ironside Farrer.

#### Forth Bridges Forum

A Forth Bridges Forum meeting was held on the evening of 19<sup>th</sup> March at the CEC but I was unable to attend.

#### Other Business

##### Sea Cadets

I was asked by Colin Butcher Sea Cadets if QDCC could provide support and help with laying on classes in "citizenship" for the cadets. I'm grateful to Anne, David and Muir for volunteering to give these talks to small groups of cadets in the next two to three weeks.

#### Correspondence

##### Liner visits

Following the meeting held last month with Council Officers to discuss the impacts on the community from the liner visits and potential to free up space within the Hawes Car Park for day visitors, QDCC was advised that Council Officers would not be progressing any of the proposals. They perceived the benefits to be negligible quote; "I do not consider that any of the suggestions offer a significant enough benefit for them to be implemented for the coming season. Many of them are minor tweaks that will cause more issues than they reduce and as such I am not willing to make the changes this late in the day".

With Graeme's support and input we prepared and sent a formal letter to Mr Paul Lawrence Executive Director of Place expressing our extreme disappointment that QDCC's proposal were dealt with in a dismissive manner.

Mr Lawrence took up our complaint with CEC Officers and instructed them to review the operation and provided an action list that they were to investigate;-

- \*Managed reduction of coach parking for AM and PM periods.
- \*The introduction of a one-way system through the existing car park to increase on-street visitor parking.
- \*Excursion coach off-site holding areas.
- \*Changes to Pierhead layout to improve public safety (Defined areas for emergency vehicles, taxis, Lothian buses, private coaches and visitors).
- \*New layout to keep all pedestrian activity on one side of the road (safer layout for foreign visitors).
- \*Creation of a defined central pedestrian crossing point.

Further that a meeting is to be held with the Excursion Operators to discuss coach parking. Feedback is to be provided to QDCC by the West Team officers and QDCC awaits this reply with pending interest.

#### Place-making Outcomes

I contacted Peter Strong seeking an update on the CEC Plans to bring forward the actions from the Place-making consultations and the commitment by QDCC in attending meetings and survey walk-about. I also was enquiring about potential funding for paths and pavement improvements. I have copied the reply from Peter below which will allow you to form your own opinion.

To answer your specific query in this email, my reading of the Smarter Choices Smarter Places Fund funding criteria in the link you provided is that “capital works including paths” and “upkeep or maintenance of infrastructure” are specifically excluded, hence it would not appear to be available for the purposes to which you refer.

Taking your wider point, exploring the use of this or similar funding channels to complement mainstream Council and developer funding of local improvement projects, including infrastructure, is very much something the Locality team would want to promote. As you are aware, the demands on the existing Locality Transport & Environment Team are broad, and the proposal to centralise some of their functions which you refer to in your earlier email is a direct response to freeing up remaining Locality staff time to work with communities to plan and deliver locally prioritised improvements. The Queensferry High Street project is an example where this has happened by default, and many of the delays which this project has experienced are directly attributable to the conflicting work demands currently experienced by Dave and his team. The intention is that transferring responsibility for routine, operational, high volume services will allow the Locality team to concentrate on activities where their local contacts and knowledge will deliver added value.

My November update to QDCC referred to in your earlier email mentioned the North West Locality Improvement Plan and the action within the Place theme to review and progress actions against the Queensferry Placemaking exercise, and I gave a commitment to take this forward early in 2019.

Following the completion of the Edinburgh Partnership Review all Locality Improvement Plans are to be reviewed by Locality Community Planning Partnerships (yet to be established – my understanding is that the Edinburgh Partnership Board are considering remit and resourcing issues for LCPPs and the rest of the community planning structures) which will require detailed consideration of all of the actions against all of the themes. I have therefore not progressed the particular action against the Queensferry Placemaking exercise at this time.

However, while these strategic discussions are ongoing, work has continued on the ground - the Queensferry High Street project referred to above being a practical example, the completion of which will achieve many of the aspirations expressed in the Placemaking exercise. Going forward the proposed new Locality structures should provide a more seamless delivery of future projects, whether identified through placemaking or other community engagement exercises.

Overall then, I can reassure you of the Council’s commitment to working with community councils and other local community groups in terms of delivering both community planning outcomes and Council services.

#### High Street Sewer Repair works

I have circulated Scottish Water update reports received and replied to several enquiries from local businesses and residents in response to their concerns.

#### Demise of Partnership & Localities meetings

On behalf of QDCC, CBCC and DMRSA I have been in correspondence with Council Group Leader Councillor Adam McVey and CEC Andrew Kerr about the demise of both the Partnership and Localities Forums meetings. I received a reply from Councillor McVey today. An explanation has been offered up which is at odds with my understanding and I think confusion has been created by being poorly explained and presented to all. You have to look for the information on the Edinburgh

Partnership website. Adam McVey refers indirectly to the meeting held in Davidson Mains Church Hall so alludes to the disbanding of localities committees. I now see direction and understand the call they have made. The findings from these meetings over the last six plus months have been used to determine the future model. However I don't think I'm alone in misunderstanding the process so the material CEC are using might be flawed in that we were not all working from the same start point and agenda.

The final outcome looks positive though with the setting up of a "community body"!

Keith Giblett Chair QDCC 21<sup>st</sup> March '19