

## Queensferry & District Community Council

### Chairman's Report for January 25<sup>th</sup> 2016 Business Meeting

#### Christmas in Queensferry 2015

In my capacity as Chair of Christmas in Queensferry I would like to provide a brief report about the Switching on of the Christmas Lights celebration held in the early evening of Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2015. We are very grateful to the businesses and organisations that sponsored the main event: South Queensferry Rotary, The Almond Partnership, Cala Homes, The Rosebery Hall CE Association and to CEC for their continued support providing advice and assistance with organising the event. Approximately 1200 people attended on the night to enjoy the primary schools Christmas Concert. The weather played its part with only one short shower of rain forty minutes into the event. The lights were switched-on by the Ferry Fair Queen Alexandra Lane and Gracious Lady Moira Sinclair and Luke Ballie Cool Club member. They all enjoyed the ride on Rotary Santa's Sleigh from Scotmid to the stage. Christmas in Queensferry are indebted to South Queensferry Rotary for their ongoing support providing the Santa's Sleigh and stewards for the event. The "Switch-on Finale" was again supported with a fantastic display of fireworks kindly provided by the Orocco Pier. We are very grateful to Peter Wilson for his long term commitment as the Orocco Pier has sponsored the Fireworks display since Christmas 2008. The generous donations provided by our sponsors allowed Christmas in Queensferry to add to the Christmas lighting scheme by installing new Christmas Tree decorations on the two walls of the Council office to fill the gap as a bigger tree was relocated to the Rosebery Hall. Additional lamp post lighting was installed around St Margaret's Church. It should not be underestimated the amount of work that goes into organising this event all by volunteers. They give of their time freely putting up and taking down decorations along with those who turn up on the day or evening to help with the event such as the local fire brigade, Roseberry Hall staff and individuals. Also I would like to mention a thank you to Councillor Work for acting MC on the night of the switch-on event.

#### QHS Students - Junior Community Council

On the morning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> December along with David we were invited to attend QHS to give a talk to High School student's Prefects about the work of QDCC. I am not aware of any feedback being provided to QDCC.

#### Queensferry Infrastructure Group Friday 4<sup>th</sup> Dec

Along with Grant I attended a quarterly meeting to discuss the planned improvement works for South Queensferry. We were given a presentation by WSP a project management company about the project management services they can provide. CEC are considering using WSP for the total works package for the High St refurbishment project.

### Hawes Toilets

I was invited by Henry Coyle on the morning of the 9<sup>th</sup> Dec to attend an exploratory meeting looking at ideas about the provision of public conveniences at the Hawes Promenade.

### School Catchment Areas - 9<sup>th</sup> Dec

On the evening of the 9<sup>th</sup> Dec I facilitated a meeting with Crawford McGee and Ian Tame to learn more about the work being undertaken by them on school catchment areas along with the possible plans for extending the Queensferry Primary Schools.

### EVOC Meeting 15<sup>th</sup> Dec

I was invited to attend an EVOC meeting held in Munro Community Centre Parkgrove Street Clermiston. It transpires that June Jansen had attended the previous meeting held 29<sup>th</sup> October representing QDCC and raised a number of questions about elderly people being forced to do things the way the council wants and in having to use on line services. There was also a question about debt collecting put to Henry Coyle at the meeting. I met with June Dickson EVOC prior to the meeting as she wanted the opportunity to explain EVOC's thinking behind inviting Community Council representatives. Community Council attendance might support EVOC by helping to raise the concerns for voluntary groups with stakeholder agencies and not to be raising business that CC's are better placed to deal with. I agreed that QDCC would deal with the points raised by June and gave her my assurances! Subsequently I have spoken with Henry Coyle of line too.

### Polo Club Planning Application 16<sup>th</sup> Dec

I attended a meeting called by the Convenor of the PSC to learn about the Polo Club application

### Place setting/making Events (three meetings)

#### Scottish Government Launch

QDCC was invited to attend the Scottish Government launch of the Place Setting agenda by Alex Neil Cabinet Minister held in Surgeon Hall Museum on the morning of 10<sup>th</sup> Dec. A series of presentations followed, the most interesting one was given by Sir Harry Burns former Chief Medical Officer for Scotland who put in context what needs to be delivered from using the Place Setting tool. Improvements to the built environment is what impacts on the health of our nation. I would encourage you to "google" Sir Harry and listen to one of his Youtube postings as he is an inspired speaker. Following the presentation supported by CEC Planning Officers we had an opportunity to explain to four tables, our experiences in using the process. I'm pleased to say that we are able to put Queensferry on the map as our experience was spoken about in the close out session for the mornings event. All considered it was an excellent opportunity for QDCC to develop new contacts and get some of our concerns up into the head lines.

#### CEC Staff Briefing 14<sup>th</sup> January

I was invited by Will Garrett Planning Officer to attend a CEC Planning Staff seminar about Place Setting and was given an opportunity to talk about "Queensferry's" experiences with the consultations. QDCC was talked up by Will and David Leslie Acting Head of Planning; our enthusiasm and the commitment given to officers in organising and attending the events.

This followed with a walkabout of Queensferry starting at Dalmeny Station; to QHS around QHS south to Lovers Lane along Scotstoun Avenue and into Provost Milne Grove back out onto Scotstoun Avenue walking up the east side of B800 to the crest of the new flyover to view both LDP2 sites then back in around Ferrymuir Roundabout to Tesco. From Tesco out onto the B800 up to the FRB onto Bullyeon Rd along Bullyeon Rd and into Echline from its access point into Echline Park then down to towards Ecline Primary School, then followed the spinal path behind Echline Grove onto Hopetoun Rd towards the High Street to finish the walkabout. Officers found it an enlightening experience and that it was far from pedestrian friendly.

#### CEC Officers Meeting 20<sup>th</sup> January

I was invited to attend a meeting for CEC departmental officers responsible for delivering services. A presentation was given to update them about Place Setting by Will Garrett. Will talked too the Placemaking Graphs you have seen and some of the challenges. He spoke about his recent experience from the walkabout and about connectivity and signage at length. Day by day I'm becoming more and more confident that we are making some progress and that QDCC is doing its best for the community of Queensferry.

#### Stopping Up Order for Lovers Lane - Public Hearing

Scottish Government Planning and Environmental Appeals Division, Town & Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997

A Hearing was held in the Rosebery Hall on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> January starting at 10am and ran until 3.15pm. The appeal hearing for The City of Edinburgh Council (Lover's Lane Right of Way, Cycle Track and Core Path South Queensferry Edinburgh Stopping up Order 2015) Two objections had been lodged with one being withdrawn. The remaining objection to the Stopping Up order had been lodged by Mrs June Jansen.

#### Some Background Information

Prior to the hearing I had met on two occasions with Mrs Cecelia Rose the other objector at her request to talk about Lovers lane and the stopping up order. I facilitated an on site meeting with Mr Gavin Pope for her. Mrs Rose decided to withdraw her objection. It became apparent during discussions with her that she was miss-informed on information provided by others.

In early December 2015 I reached out to June by email seeking an on site meeting with her to discuss the stopping up order and invited Diane to join us. I wished to understand first hand what her objections were to the order. I received a curt response; no comment. Following on I replied to June advising her that as a Community Councillor that I thought she had responsibilities to the community of Queensferry. I never got a reply.

I attended the Hearing as an observer with Diane. In advance QDCC had made a representation in support of the Stopping up order.

Present at the hearing heard by the Reporter Frances M. McChlery were; June Jansen with a friend Cecelia Rose, representing CEC John Richmond Traffic Manager and his assistant John Murphy and Andrew Sikes CEC Planning West Team Leader a Mr Jack, Mr Gavin Pope Land Manager Cala, Diane and myself.

Mrs Jansen was given the opportunity to present her case for opposing the stopping up order and provide supporting information.

Mr Richmond supported by Mr Sikes presented the Council's position for the stopping up order. During the process both parties were given the opportunity to ask questions about each others position or claims.

This took until lunchtime when the hearing recessed for a natural break. Upon returning from the break the Community Councils letter was read out by the reporter and I was questioned by the reporter seeking clarification on a couple of points. The reporter pointed out that the letter was lodged late so Mrs Jansen and CEC would be given two weeks to respond to the content of the letter as she hadn't had sufficient time to consider the points.

The remaining time was spent with the reporter summing up and asking questions about the Cala Development and checking her understanding. It was fortunate that Mr Pope had attended as he was able to provide accurate and factual information about the Cala Development.

The following afternoon we met up at Sommerville Gardens to walk the locus. The reporter reminded all that this was not a re-run of the hearing it was an opportunity for her to translate the information provided into context with the site. Both parties were given two weeks to provide the reporter with a final written statement or comment about the additional information that was tabled at the hearing. This took just over an hour.

Should the reporter choose to refuse the Stopping up Order then there could be serious ramifications.

At no time has QDCC been formally informed or invited to lodge their views with the reporter nor has Mrs Jansen formally informed QDCC of her position.

I leave you to form a view as a councillor of QDCC.

### Meeting with Sgt Rennie Police Scotland

A meeting was held with Sgt Rennie at the Police Station on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> January at 7pm. It was an opportunity for members of QDCC to meet with Sgt Rennie and discuss Queensferry policing matters. The following topics were raised and discussed;

1. High Street Newsagent window broken by a concrete slab purported to be maybe a racial attack?? - *There is no evidence that it was a racial attack*
2. Problems with boy racers on Society Road going west to Hopetoun House causing occupants of cottage to vacate. Hopetoun House have been trying to resolve working with Police Scotland and CEC. However they are talking in terms of closing off road access!! – *WIP there is a problem with Boy/girl racers from time to time and the*
3. Any reports about minor vandalism/anti social behaviour of youths such as egg throwing of properties in Echline Grove, damaged Christmas light decoration at Priory Church!! - *No reports but the Police are aware of it and have briefed the stores to monitor sales of eggs to youths. Some youths were spoken too.*
4. Ram raid on property in Kirkliston to steal car keys- *There was no ram raid*
5. Serious Break-in and Craigie Farm – *Awaiting feedback*
6. Other break-ins continue in West Edinburgh!! – *Generally in Cramond and Barnton locus. Residents should be vigilant and ensure they secure tools and lock garden sheds etc.*
7. Loony Dook update was there any issues worthy of report such as car parking problems etc. – *no issues reported a good day*

Sgt Rennie intends to hold these meetings every four months or sooner if needed to develop a good working relationship with QDCC.

### PSC meeting with Jonathan Clarkson about Urban Design

On the evening of the 20<sup>th</sup> I attended a PSC meeting and listened to a presentation given by Jonathon Clarkson about Urban Design.

### Walkers Drive Residents 21<sup>st</sup> January 16

I met up with the Walkers Drive Residents representatives who previously attended the QDCC Business meeting in October. I have been working on a number of issues with them mainly about condition of some of the properties and gardens and the garage lock ups.

Last week they contacted me about a forty foot sea container that had been placed in car parking bays which was now being filled with baths, furnishings chemicals and a car. I contacted the West Team Council officers who got the Environmental Wardens and Police involved. I will give you an update at the meeting.

### Correspondence

- I was in correspondence with Council officers during the FRB closure feeding in to the CEC Resilience Group that were dealing with the issues arising from the road closure. During this period I was contacted by local

businesses asking for QDCC's support in getting the message over that the trading situation was very difficult for them. I was asked by QA to give QDCC support for the shuttle bus service.

- Correspondence about Walker Drive business has been significant.

Keith Giblett 23 January 2016