

Leith Chooses meeting 2 April 2025

Present: Abby, Bruce (minutes), Don, Douglas

Apologies: Naomi, Sally, Tremaine

Definite actions are green-highlighted.

1 Himalayan Centre reporting issue

- See email from Naomi in appendix 1
- It was agreed to pursue this report so that LC can demonstrate value for public money.
- It was agreed not to try to sanction HC now, except for exclusion from LC until HC submits a suitable report.
 - Action: Naomi/Tremain to pursue this report.

2 Governance

- It was agreed that Bruce will draft a governance document, covering
 - Firstly, the purpose of the steering group is to enable a form of hyperlocal direct democracy/decision-making.
 - Secondly, that the steering group exists to create, maintain and operate secure participatory budgeting in Leith (and presumably non-Leith parts of the LC area when working with CGF funding; 'secure' meaning that the process and outcomes are trustworthy). The group would be a facilitator, not a gatekeeper.
 - Thirdly, that it will work in partnership with CEC and other funders to facilitate public benefits.

All other content would spring from these core clauses. They would cover

- Membership
- Decision-making
- Chairing and accountability, indemnity
- Conflicts of interest

3 Appendix: email re Himalayan Centre

Hi all,

When the Himalayan Centre were asked for the submission of their end of project report for 2023/24, they came back and said:

'We have not completed our project yet. There was a delay due to challenging weather. When do you need the form in by the latest.' When asked if they had a time frame for completion, they said 'it will take us another two months to completely finish the project due to the availability of space we had to deal with.'

Their project objectives included:

- Establishing shared gardening spaces in Leith for 40-50 participants, fostering intergenerational partnerships.
- Providing necessary gardening equipment and materials.
- Weekly hands-on sessions complemented by monthly educational workshops.
- Additional learning experiences through field trips and guest speakers.
- Creating online platforms and physical resources to document and share the project's journey and outcomes.

Many of these objectives are not determined by the weather, or a specific season/weekend, and could arguably have been completed (at least partially) over the course of the year.

As you know, the Steering Group agreed that the Himalayan Centre should be excluded from applying to Leith Chooses in 2024/25 as they did not complete their 2022/23 end of project report until >6 months after the deadline.

I wanted to flag this so you're aware of another late end of project report submission from them (2 years in a row), and to check if you're happy for us to give them an extension until 31st May 2025 to complete their report? Happy to take other suggestions re deadlines or return of funds.

Thanks,
Naomi