

Leith Chooses Meeting Notes, 29 April 2026

Present: Abigail, Lisa, Rachel, Sally, Susan, Naomi, Tremaine, Jack (second half / online)

Apologies: Bruce, Don, Donna, Jason

1 Inspiring Volunteer Award (Team category)

This has been won by Leith Chooses Steering Group (nominated by Naomi & Tremaine). Award ceremony will be at City Chambers on 2nd June (by Lord Provost). Agreed that Abigail and Jason (if available) will attend to receive award on behalf of LC Steering Group. Susan & Jack, as Councillors, will probably also be invited to attend.

Action: - Abi to ask Jason if he can attend. If not, arrange for someone else to go instead.

2 Leaflet for Leith Festival gala

Agreed we need to start drafting leaflet that can be used asap (for Leith Festival Gala Day 13th June) to raise awareness of LC generally, and specifically making clear which fringe areas are also included e.g. Abbeyhill, Bellevue, Broughton, Hillside, Newhaven etc.

ACTION: No action decided. All members to think about content.

3 Council survey re Community Grant Fund

Naomi and Tremaine explained the stakeholder engagement survey (deadline 4 May 2026)

- i. Background – council resources reducing, Culture & Communities Committee asking for changes to increase accessibility and community participation, inconsistency across the city etc.
- ii. Process of engaging / consulting stakeholders started May 2024. Due to report to C&C Cttee in August 2026.
- iii. Decision to reduce 13 geographic areas to 9 (merging areas with low demand for CGF, ?although keeping the money allocated to each?)
- iv. A fair amount of consensus reached on Funding Conditions and Eligibility (would apply to Leith Chooses too), i.e.
 - a. Introduce a microgrants scheme (up to £2,000, reduced conditions for qualifying and for reporting)
 - b. Small grants scheme £2,000 - £10,000 (existing conditions) which can also cover previously disallowed things like staff salaries, utilities, rent etc.
 - c. Maybe extend the grant period from 1 to 2 years
- v. Delivery Process – the status quo is not an option. Three new options on offer:
 - a. A – Funding Panels but widened by adding local residents including young people and underrepresented groups. Process to run once a year only, not 2 or 3 as currently.
 - b. B – Councillors and Community Councillors to gatekeep applications but open (online and library-based ballot) voting for all members of the community.
 - c. C – Everyone in the community to be involved at every level. Local community group could mount an in-person Voting event if they want, maybe partially funded (£3,000) but not supported by Council staff time.
- vi. Should some CGF money be kept back from geographical 'place-based' processes and used for 'communities of Interest' that are spread across the whole city?

4 Discussion (sorry – did not manage to note down all the points covered)

- Do all 9 areas have to adopt the same model, or can there be variety across different areas?
- Where does this leave/Leith Chooses?
- Majority of stakeholders across the city had preferred Panels to PB.
- Concern about how difficult it would be to ensure satisfactory composition of Funding Panels, as regards local residents, especially young people and under-represented groups
- Concern that Leith Chooses model of PB had got lost and not fully represented in any of the 3 options
- Concern that respondents from Leith could misunderstand which model represented LC (actually none of them) so voting would not be
- Concern that LC capacity not adequate to 'carry' full LC process without council support
- If Leith Chooses wanted to apply to run a voting event, LC would have to become a constituted bdy (SCIO)
- Option C – we know how difficult it is to get 'everyone in the community' to engage with setting themes / determining needs and eligibility
- Concern about 'communities of interest' idea.
- Concern that unless total grant money on offer were increased, allowing applications for up to £10,000 would mean that fewer

5 AOCB

- Issue of fixing the 'Quorum' number still outstanding. Agreed to try to collect votes from Steering Group members by email over the next couple of weeks
- Remakery Mural due to be finished by 7th May.
- **ACTION:** Sally to ask Remakery if there is to be a formal 'ceremony' to unveil it

6 Next Meeting

13 May – 4-6pm or 7pm (tbc) McDonald Road – Boost Vote Discussion

ACTION: Sally to ask Jack to try to book the library room for these extended hours.