

Craigleith/Blackhall Community Council

Minutes of Meeting Monday 21 January 2019

Held in Blackhall St Columba's Church Small Hall

Present : Emma Phillips (Chair), Alan Denham (Secretary), Martin Riddell (Treasurer), Peter May, Fergus Henderson, James McClennan, Michael Cockburn; Inverleith Ward Councillors Hal Osler, Max Mitchell, Iain Whyte; Sgt Aaron Chadha, PC Holly Matheson (Police Scotland). In attendance 10 residents from the local and business community.

Apologies : Rupert Lezmore, Claudia Romero, Councillor Gavin Barrie, Deidre Brock MP.

Minutes of 17 December 2018 meeting - approved.

Matters arising from the December meeting.

Traffic lights at Blackhall Library - through Councillor Iain Whyte, the Street Lighting and Traffic Signals Manager had responded. When vehicles are being detected and the signals are about to change to the green man the maximum vehicle green time is extended to 20 seconds. Conversely if no vehicles are detected the crossing will change to the green man after 7 seconds. Each part of the staggered crossing is treated as a separate crossing. This is not dissimilar to all other crossings within the city. In discussion it was concluded that there was little scope for fine-tuning the timings in favour of the pedestrians.

Western General Hospital Master Plan - James McLennan reported that the consultant Montagu Evans was willing to make a presentation at the next meeting of the Community Council - agreed

Community Council Scheme consultation - Emma Phillips set out the draft response which was agreed including the recommendation that the Community Council boundaries should be redrawn to include parts of Craigleith and the area at Blackhall Library. At a minimum the boundaries should reflect the more recent Ward boundary changes.

Wheelie Bins - there had been a recent improvement, although some Friday collections were still problematic.

Public seat outside Abingers - it was noted that a replacement seat would cost several thousand pounds - Secretary agreed to forward recent exchanges to Councillor Osler.

Police Scotland Report - PC Holly Matheson reported on:-

20 mph speed checks had been held on Craigcrook Road, Orchard Brae and Orchard Road - now easier to carry out following changes to Police Scotland procedures; red light monitoring at Blackhall Dip being undertaken; in the absence of a school patrol this would be changed to times when children are going to and coming from school; to avoid anti-social behaviour Ravelston Woods is being visited regularly, also Water of Leith;

Stewart Melville's College area - parking continues to be monitored as residents' drives are being blocked by parents dropping off pupils;

motor bikes on cycleways - more Police Scotland patrols on the walkway/cycle paths; percentage of reported crimes in the CC area has reduced;

there will be extra number of police officers in the area in February;
there had been good support for the recent bicycle event at the Maidencraig walkway junction.

20mph consultation

Questions from local residents to Police Scotland highlighted the disregard by a small number of motorists ignoring the 20mph speed, at times speeding in a dangerous manner on Craigmillar Road close to Ravelston Park.

To inform the discussions further it was acknowledged there was a need for speed monitoring - PC Matheson agreed to get in touch with the Council.

More generally, there was overall support for the 20mph scheme as it aided pedestrian safety. But a number of problems had been identified including the need for more effective enforcement, particularly on roads such as Craigmillar Road, Orchard Road and Orchard Brae clearer where the 20 mph speed limit is frequently ignored; there should be a clearer and more understandable hierarchy of 20mph and 30mph roads - the changing of speed limits from 30mph to 20mph for no obvious reason did not assist in the lower limit being respected; tailgating by speeding motorists.

Scope for change or improvement was discussed; measures suggested included - speed limits supported by physical measure such as speed bumps, greater use of pop-up Bob, train volunteers to carry out speed checks, and a better understanding of the impact on air quality.

The Secretary agreed to draft a response to the City Council.

Chair Report - Emma Phillips (Chair) reported on :-
meeting with all Community Councils in north west Edinburgh; while co-ordination is important, she had made the point that it was not an alternative to addressing particular local concerns by Community Councils;

Inverleith Neighbourhood Partnership grants - a PA system had been agreed to be purchased for use by all Inverleith Ward Community Councils at election hustings etc;
Stockbridge - closed street event in June;

Edinburgh Council budget consultation on "Planning for Change and Delivering Services 2019-2023" - she said that the document played down the implications of the reduced budget of £41million and the proposed changes to City Council services in the document were not always clear. Amongst the measures she had noted was the intention to charge for events in parks and green spaces, support services in schools to be cut, and other cuts to affect social care, street cleansing, road maintenance, Edinburgh Leisure and reduced sports provision, nursery provision, and funding of Community Police. Additionally the discussion noted the closure of public conveniences, the centralisation of museums in one building and further changes to waste collection.

The follow-up discussion raised the matter of tourist taxes - at the earliest it would be 2 years before they could be introduced.

It was agreed that Emma would provide comments on behalf of the Community Council to meet the 11 February City Council deadline.

Other Community Council Matters

Alan Denham (Secretary) raised the following :-

Hillhouse Road Woods Care Home planning application - no decision yet, but it is understood the Scottish Government Reporter has sought additional information from the appellant without reference to the objectors.

Orchard Brae House car park planning application for 7 storey infill residential development - previous application for 8 storeys had been withdrawn but revised application had generated 29 objections to date and it was agreed that Community Council should also submit an objection in support of local residents.

Royal Victoria Hospital demolition - there was concern that demolitions works beginning at 7.30am was early but in discussion it was noted permissions extended from 7am to 7pm.

Graffiti on BT Exchange Wall, Craigcrook Road - Councillor Hal Osler said that graffiti more generally had been considered by Councillors and they will be reporting to Committee shortly. Where the owners do not remove graffiti, they could be subject to a statutory notice.

Councillor Reports - most of the matters they would have raised had been discussed under previous headings.

AOCB

Craighleith Retail Park traffic light phasing - George Alexander on behalf of Craighleith Retail Park voiced concern about the 8 second time allowed for traffic leaving South Groathill Road. During the Christmas period it had resulted in major congestion within the retail park and Sainsbury's. Councillor Hal Osler agreed to investigate. (Note Tony Booth, Senior Engineer had reported back on the changes once SCOOT was introduced on Queensferry Road)

Blackhall Community Trust - the next meeting to consider progress was on 27 February 2019

Next Community Council meeting - Monday 18 February 2019 in Blackhall St Columba's Church Small Hall at 7.30pm

Alan Denham
Secretary
22 January 2019