

Craigleith/Blackhall Community Council

Minutes of Meeting Monday 15 March 2021 - held online using Teams

Present - Stuart Pinkerton (Chair), Alan Denham (Secretary), Martin Riddell (Treasurer), Duncan Osler, Grant Roger, Darlene Jeffrey, Susie Ross, Jim McLennan, Michael Cockburn, Paul Moran; Inverleith Ward Councillors Hal Osler, Gavin Barrie, Max Mitchell, Iain Whyte; PC Roslin Milne, Police Scotland; Deidre Brock MP

Apologies - Darlene Jeffrey

Minutes of 15 February 2021 meeting - approved.

Police Report - PC Roslin Milne reported on recent crime figures in Edinburgh north west and Inverleith Ward:-

Compared to last year serious and violent crime was down 16.4%. In contrast domestic abuse was up slightly - where appropriate specialist officers assist victims. Plain clothes officers were also being used in the area linked to the supply of drugs. If the public have information, they are encouraged to contact Police Scotland direct at Drylaw or phone 101 or contact crime stoppers.

House break-ins were also down 61% in Inverleith, although break-ins to sheds and garages had increased, particularly involving the theft of bicycles. Through Operation Agora the recovery of stolen bikes being reunited with their owners was at a record level due to the bike register marking, although bike marking events had been put on hold because of the current Covid-19 restrictions. Once there was a return to normality, Councillor Hal Osler encouraged Police Scotland to target Broughton School and the Western General Hospital for bike marking to counter the spike in bike thefts.

There were breeches of the Covid-19 regulations, in part through household meetings. Hate crime was down by 2% and an increased number of offenders were being charged. Road safety issues were down 42% and injuries in accidents by 63%. Car and motor cycle thefts were down but still remain at a level of concern. There were speeding initiatives on Craigcrook Road and Strachan Road and PC Milne encouraged the identification of other locations that would benefit from speed checks.

In discussion PC Milne said that there had been 2 major issues recently on the walkway/cycleway near Wester Drylaw and Police Scotland had increased patrols on the walkway. PC Milne said that a third incident on the walkway on 6 March between Maidencraig Crescent and Telford Road involving an elderly gentleman being attacked and suffering a broken rib, which had been reported on social media, had not been reported to Police Scotland.

Community Council matters -

Ravelston Park CCTV - it was noted that it is Edinburgh Council's intention to remove the CCTV camera from Ravelston Park as it had not recorded any events in recent years. In discussion it was noted that the camera was not in a hot spot for recording anti social behaviour being some distance from Ravelston Woods. It was acknowledged that the camera had been installed in 2007 to counter vandalism against the nursery, anti social behaviour in both the park and Ravelston Woods. Councillor Osler said that there had to

be a reason for a CCTV camera as it was a trade off with personal freedoms. It was agreed that the post should remain to allow the installation of a temporary camera should circumstances deteriorate in the future.

Ravelston Park Drainage Problems - a local resident had brought the problem of significant water flow from the Woods under the stone wall to the attention of the Community Council. The discussion noted the problem had increased since September 2020 although there was nothing obvious in the Woods or the Park to explain the change. Councillor Max Mitchell had brought the problem to the attention of the Park Ranger and will report back.

Development of Fettes site and flooding in Craigleith Hill area - Susie Ross had forwarded an exchange of e-mails between a resident and a council official which cast doubt on the accuracy of the flooding prediction for the Fettes Police Scotland site. Drainage was already inadequate and some residents have been out of their houses for 9 months as a result of flooding of their premises. More development at Fettes and Western General Hospital would only further exacerbate the flooding problems. It seemed that flooding in the area was a major issue that was not being treated by Edinburgh Council. There were also different responses from Edinburgh Council, Scottish Water and SEPA. Susie Ross said that the matter should be tackled ahead of the publication draft City Plan 2030. Councillor Osler said that considering sites collectively rather than piecemeal may offer greater potential for improvement.

Agreed - an Edinburgh Council officer should be invited to Community Council meeting to explain the position in relation to City Plan 2030 - Councillor Osler to arrange. Should an officer not be willing to attend, Deidre Brock MP would convene a meeting with Edinburgh Council, Scottish Water and SEPA which the Community Council and other interests could join.

Given the overlap with Stockbridge and Inverleith Community Council, it was agreed to work with the adjoining Community Council - Secretary to arrange.

Should there be no progress on the matter by the time of publication of the draft City Plan 2030 in mid 2021, the Community Council would object to the development proposals in the Comely Bank area expected to be included in the Plan.

Councillors Reports - the 4 Councillors commented on :-
issues at Groathill Road South;

speeding problems including Craigleith Hill Avenue;

bins - problems of blocked footpaths after bins are emptied should be taken in as soon as possible;

some hedges are overgrown and need to be cutback to the rear of the footpath;

Spaces for People (see below for discussion) - the consultation had been extended to early April to enable consultation on schemes currently being implemented including Queensferry Road;

Craigleith Hill area roads to be resurfaced; in contrast only 2 out of 53 programmed pavement resurfacing had been carried out in the city. In many areas of the city poor pavement condition discourages walking.

Spaces for People - following the white lining implementing the Queensferry Road scheme, a number of concerns were noted :- the 2 lanes city bound at the Craigleith Road junction disappeared before exiting the junction - could result in potential accidents; the orcas and their poles are not very visible where scheme begin; and the left turn at Craigleith Crescent into Queensferry Road is confusing. Additionally it was noted that the |

Crewe Road South scheme now looked scruffy after the winter with filthy bollards and dirty cycle tracks.

Susie Ross had attended on an online Spaces for People consultation event with other community councils. She noted that the temporary arrangements are to be changed to experimental so that consultations will not be necessary for their long term implementation. There was a view amongst attendees that Spaces for People schemes were a covert attempt by the Council to implement their zero emissions policy by stealth.

Councillor Iain Whyte understood residents' frustrations as the various schemes had been blasted through with inadequate consultation. Councillor Hal Osler said that the schemes are intended to reduce road space for cars and other vehicles and increase space for cyclists and pedestrians.

AOCB - the chairman noted the arrival of the Council tax bills for 2021/2022 For many residents in Blackhall the £3000+ council tax was as much their mortgage, but of questionable value for money. In discussion it was noted that Blackhall was in the highest tax ward in Scotland.

Next meeting - to be held online at 7.30 pm on Monday 19 April 2021 using Teams.

Alan Denham
Secretary
16 March 2021