

Craigleith/Blackhall Community Council

Minutes of Meeting Monday 19 April 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; PC Sarah Hall, Police Scotland; Deidre Brock MP; Iain McFarlane, Edinburgh City Council; and 3 members of the public.

Apologies - Pam Barnes, Stockbridge and Innerleithen Community Council

Minutes of 15 March 2021 meeting - approved.

City Plan 2030 and Fettes Site - Iain McFarlane, Programme Director, City Plan, Edinburgh City Council

Mr McFarlane outlined progress on City Plan 2030 - the consultation on the Choices report in 2020, what had happened and what needed to change. The Council's preferred strategy is based on brownfield development, with high density housing development and good access by public transport. Publication of the draft plan has been delayed because of a cyberattack on SEPA which has impeded flood risk assessment. SEPA input is now available and the Council is working to get a better understanding of the flooding implications together with information on education capacities, and traffic and transport issues. The draft Plan is likely to go to Committee between June and September 2021. The Council will then engage with participants including Community Councils when there will be a 6 week period for representations. The representations will be to inform whether the plan should be changed. If unchanged the Plan could then be examined independently by Scottish Government Reporters. The Council generally agree to follow the Reporter's recommendations.

Mr McFarlane acknowledged that the environmental report that accompanied the Choices report was not accurate in relation to the Police Scotland Fettes site. The next version of the environment report that will accompany the Draft Plan will correct any errors. In response to Councillor Hal Osler, he said that residents should be reassured that the Council's flood experts will take new information into account and where appropriate also draw on technical evidence from Scottish Water and SEPA. Should the Council decide to continue with the inclusion of the Fettes site in the draft plan, residents can make representations.

Susie Ross asked about ownership of the site as she understood only part of the site was in Police Scotland ownership, about the former Royal Victoria Hospital and Orchard Brae sites feeding into the same surface water drainage system as the Fettes site, and the availability of a SEPA report in January that stated the Fettes site was unsuitable for development. In response Mr McFarlane said that ownership was not necessarily a planning impediment but could make implementation more difficult. The Royal Victoria Hospital and Orchard Brae sites together with the Fettes site would form part of a strategic flood risk assessment. In light of new information in the January report the assessment will be seriously reviewed.

Further questions and points - can an application be approved and result in flooding. Mr McFarlane said that the process is designed to ensure flood risk is fully taken into account by the developer and a flood risk assessment would be required by the Council; there is scrutiny of flooding matters as part of the development control process; new development should not lead to increased flood risk either on the site or outwith the site; Western General Hospital required to implement a SUDS (sustainable urban drainage scheme) but not sure whether carried out before further developments on the site implemented. If not implemented could be subject to enforcement action; Deidre Brock - there were many unknowns about the open water course between Craigleith Hill Avenue and the Western General Hospital; also not certain whether CCTV of culvert has yet been carried out. Mr McFarlane said that SEPA normally do not support culverting but exceptionally would accept it in this case. There would however be issues who bears the cost. He would seek updated information on the CCTV survey; As well as flooding, local schools are at capacity. The final assessment of the site will fully take into account whether new schools can be delivered to meet the Council's statutory responsibilities for education. If no school capacity then the site will not be allocated. The Chair thanked Iain McFarlane for taking part in the meeting and answering detailed questions.

Police Report - PC Sarah Hall a Community Officer, reported on anti social behaviour at Easter Drylaw on 4 March - they are working to identifying the culprits; High visibility walks on cycle/walkways undertaken and also in Inverleith Park where some were not meeting the COVID distance requirements; Anti social behaviour and bus vandalism in parts of the city including Muirhouse - given the potential injuries for drivers from bricks being thrown at the buses, Police Scotland is working with Lothian Buses. As well as seeking to discourage youths, a number have been identified and charged; Speed checks carried out on Strachan Road, Craigcrook Road and Orchard Road - 2 tickets issued. In response to a question from Councillor Gavin Barrie, PC Hall said that their focus was on 20 mph zone and Road Traffic section in the main did speed checks on other roads; Martin Riddell thanked Police Scotland for the work done recently in Maidencraig Crescent; Stuart Pinkerton noted the increase in graffiti on bus stops and utility cabins. PC Hall said that there was a joint initiative with the Council although Councillor Hal Osler said that it had been delayed due to COVID-19. In relation to utility cabins any graffiti problem should be taken up with the operating company.

Community Council matters -

Spaces for People - the removal of the railings in Blackhall Dip had taken place separately from the Spaces for People A90 scheme and without consultation. It had not been mentioned in the SfP report. Councillor Hal Osler had eventually tracked down the officer responsible and the justification was the 2012 policy to declutter surplus signs and railings and in this case nobody had been injured in the last three years. He has not answered subsequent questions from Councillor Osler. Councillor Barrie was sceptical that the policy had been applied correctly. The barriers had been important in relation to separating young children and fast traffic.

The changes at the Craigleith Road junction were now unsafe - two lanes from Craigleith Road disappearing into one lane on Queensferry Road and likewise city bound on

Queensferry Road. Councillor Osler recommended contacting Spaces for People web page.

There was uncertainty about the permanence of the changes. There were technical problems and the scheme had not fully settled in eg cyclists were uncomfortable when passing buses at bus stops.

Pavement resurfacing - the recent resurfacing of some footpaths in Blackhall (and Blinkbonny) was of poor quality, melting in modest heat and some breaking up and with weeds growing in other parts. Councillor Osler said the process was known as slurring. She was not clear how the priorities had been identified as other footpaths in the Orchards and Craigleith Hill were in desperate need of upgrading.

Councillors Reports - Maidenraig steps are to be repaired;
Blackhall Library is being considered as a Covid testing centre;
Craigleith Hill Avenue - rumble strips are to be introduced to counter speeding;
Orchard Brae uphill cycle track not to be implemented;
Forthview Terrace resurfacing - officials do not consider it a priority and more patching will take place;
Controlled Parking Zone to be introduced in Crewe Road South area;
Groathill Road South bridge being used by youths to throw stones at adjacent houses; no Council budget available to address problem including fencing; developer has put up fencing.

Next meeting - to be held online at 7.30 pm on Monday 17 May 2021 using Teams.
Agreed the 2021 AGM will be held as part of the June meeting.

Alan Denham
Secretary
20 April 2021