

Craigleith / Blackhall Community Council

Minutes of Meeting - Monday 15 May 2023

Held at Blackhall St Columba's Church

Present - Stuart Pinkerton (Chair), Alan Denham (Secretary), Grant Roger (Treasurer), Martin Riddell, Michael Cockburn, Duncan Osler, Darlene Jeffrey, Jim McLennan; Inverleith Ward Councillors Hal Osler, Max Mitchell and Vicky Nicolson, Murrayfield Councillor Fiona Bennett; 8 members of the local community

Apologies - Deidre Brock MP, Angus Robertson MSP, PC Colin Cursiter.

Minutes of 17 April 2023 meeting - approved

Police Report - PC Cursiter was unable to attend but had provided a short written update :-

There were 160 calls to the Police over the last month, a reduction of 22 from the same period in 2022. There had been no reported housebreakings over the month.

A number of RTA (road traffic accident) offences have been detected by Roads Policing officers in the Queensferry Road area. Pc Cursiter will also be conducting speed checks on Sunday 28 May.

In relation to ongoing youth issues, over 14 youths have been identified for anti social behaviour offences and charged and reported accordingly.

The number of Police officers has been reduced at times due to football matches and Royal events.

Community Council matters -

Lothian Buses Service Changes - the proposed changes to Lothian Buses services on 28 May were discussed. The withdrawal of service 41 and the replacement with a re-routed service 47 was noted. Maintaining the service along Queensferry Road to the West End was welcomed but there was disappointment that the changes will represent a significant reduction in the number of buses to the main parts of the city centre from 6 buses per hour to 3 buses per hour. It was noted that nearby communities of Davidsons Mains and Cramond will no longer have a bus service providing access to the core of the city centre. The Crewe Road South corridor will be served by service 22 which will provide the equivalent frequency of the former service 47.

It was noted that Lothian Buses assume that when direct links are removed, passengers will change buses to provide for the missing links, but the discussion highlighted the problems for the elderly, the disabled and the added expense for some passengers. Additionally it was noted that Queensferry Street is a most unattractive interchange hub being narrow and congested. The changes did not fit easily with providing an alternative to the car and seemed to run counter to the City Council's Mobility Plan.

The Ward Councillors expressed disappointment that there had been no consultation and dialogue by Lothian Buses with the Councillors and officials. The Lothian Buses briefing system which they agreed to establish was non-existent. Major changes were not therefore subject to any consultation. All this builds on the perception that, after the withdrawal of service 42 in September 2022, also without consultation, Lothian Buses has little interest in serving north west Edinburgh with an effective bus service. Over time there has been a gradual reduction in bus services unlike other corridors - it was noted the changes on 28 May will increase the number of buses in the Goldenacre/Canonmills corridor and maintain the frequencies elsewhere.

Agreed - the Secretary will e-mail Lothian Buses and also invite them to a community Council meeting.

Telford Road/Hillhouse Road/Strachan Road Junction - the appalling road condition contrasts with the recently resurfaced section from Quality Street to Clermiston Road. It is now substandard and officials accept deterioration makes even temporary repairs difficult. It is in the programme for 2024 although there are no firm dates. Traffic lights will also be upgraded at the same time as the resurfacing. It was noted that Orchard Brae junction at Queensferry Road is also substandard.

Quality Street Junction Site Visit - following a site visit meeting at the Quality Street/Queensferry Road junction the Secretary reported back.

In order to minimise the dangers from right turning traffic from Quality Street into the path of vehicles from Craigmack Road, Mark Love Traffic Lights Systems engineer in the City Council said it would not be possible to separate out the Craigmack Road and Quality Street green phases as it would lead to additional delays overall and added congestion in Davidsons Mains. He agreed to examine whether it would be possible to provide a 2 or 3 second start for the Craigmack Road traffic.

Right turning traffic from Hillhouse Road into Quality Street - additional sensors are to be provided after resurfacing is completed.

Pedestrian green phase - although it operated during Covid, it was not feasible to introduce it on a permanent basis.

ETROs - the administrative errors in the original TROs (Traffic Road Orders) will mean the Council will need to reconsult. Councillors encouraged everybody to resubmit comments to address deficiencies, otherwise the present schemes will be retained as the ETROs provides a streamlined process for introducing such changes.

Councillors Reports

Councillor Vicky Nicolson reported on the added benefits from the Scottish Power cable upgrade (SPEN); these will include upgraded lighting, CCTV enabled posts and increased bins. There were also issues about parking, potholes and

pavements. More widely immigration including children from Ukraine was putting pressure on secondary schools in the city.

Councillor Fiona Bennett said potholes and pavements were an issue. She said that she would like a better understanding how the Council prioritised action to address the problems.

Tram line - Councillor Bennett had asked Council leaders about the impact of proposed tramlines in the Roseburn/Craigleith corridor. Their response had been that although there were some tricky areas they thought they can get round them and are satisfied that they can cope with both trams and active travel. Discussion highlighted the tension between the two and questioned why a most effective active travel corridor would be effectively destroyed by the trams. It was noted that no works on the tram route are programmed.

Neighbourhood Watch - a member of the community noted the slow response from the Council in approving the use of specific lampposts for neighbourhood watch signs.

Councillor Bennett was seeking to get railings at Ravelston Terrace reinstated.

Councillor Hal Osler reported on a number of positive matters :-

some residents have received larger bins

the pothole machine had carried out work on Craigcrook Road

the increase in the number of requests for street closure orders for community parties was encouraging

Flooding - the Council is looking at the feasibility of flood ponds in Orchard Parks.

Councillor Max Mitchell said that there had been a significant amount of correspondence about forthcoming bus service changes. The Telford Road/Hillhouse Road merging lines are to be reinstated.

AOCB

Craigleith Junction - the current restrictions have permission for 21 days but the oil leak in a cable may take longer up to 28 days.

Removing bus lay-bys on Telford Road and Queensferry Road near Clermiston Road now causes congestion for other road users. Councillor Mitchell said that buses were being delayed getting back into the stream of traffic. It was noted that the priority given to buses contrasted with the lack of priority given by Lothian Buses to the local community.

Parking on pavements will be illegal later in 2023.

Concern was expressed that emptied wheelie bins by operatives were not returned to their original position and footpaths were frequently blocked making routes to school unsafe.

Next meeting - Monday 19 June including possibly the AGM

Alan Denham

Secretary

Craigeith/Blackhall Community Council

17 May 2023

