

Craigleith / Blackhall Community Council

Minutes of Meeting - Monday 20 November 2023

Held at Blackhall St Columba's Church

Present - Community Council - Stuart Pinkerton (Chair), Alan Denham (Secretary),, Duncan Osler, Martin Riddell, Darlene Jeffrey, Michael Cockburn; Inverleith Ward Councillors Hal Osler, Max Mitchell, Vicky Nicolson.

In attendance - 15 members of the local community

Apologies - Grant Roger, Jim McLennan; and Deidre Brock MP.

Minutes of 16 October 2023 meeting - approved subject to a minor change.

Police Report - a written Police Report for the Inverleith Ward had been circulated this month by PC Cursiter:-

There were 159 calls for the month, a decrease of 12 calls over the same period last year.

Operation Moonbeam was launched prior to bonfire night and Halloween. There was a large number of conventional and public order officers working over the week end and it was a big success. There were a small number of calls early in the evening of 5th but the area did not experience issues that have occurred in the past.

Youth calls continue to be an issue, with the Village Hotel reporting a number of incidents - PC Cursiter was meeting with the hotel to establish a way forward.

There has been one break-in to a garage but no dwelling break-ins. There has been no violent crimes reported this month and one cybercrime recorded. PC Cursiter carried out speed checks at Fettes and Queensferry Road.

Community Council matters :-

Maidencraig Crescent Steps

Following the community council meeting attended by Councillor Scott Arthur in October, he had provided information on ways for taking changes to the steps forward including the requirement for a detailed technical study. While one Edinburgh community council had embarked on carrying out a feasibility study with support from Sustrans, there was a strong opinion that given the complexity involved, it was a lot to ask individuals from Craigleith/Blackhall Community Council to carry out a detailed technical study on a voluntary basis. It was agreed that this view should be fed back to Ward Councillors.

Strachan Road/Hillhouse Road junction

Councillor Hal Osler informed the meeting that despite the absence of a green man crossing at Strachan Road leg of the junction, the presence of both a Doctors'

Surgery and a pharmacy opposite, the presence of the Mosque, no early action was required to address the deficiencies at the junction in the view of the Council's transport officials. Following discussion, it was agreed that the Secretary should express the concerns of the community council about the lack of priority for action at the junction and e-mail the officials involved. (Subsequent to the meeting a press report highlighted the dangers at the junction for blind people with no tactile paving at the kerb edge and no audible traffic lights)

Strachan Road/Craigcrook Road/Ravelston Dykes Junction

The recent incident at the zebra crossing when a dog was run over and killed when walking with its owner on the crossing has highlighted the possible wider dangers to children and elderly residents. The crossing forms part of one of the major routes for children reaching Blackhall Primary School and the 'lollipop lady', who attended the meeting reported cars ignoring her sign, near misses virtually every day, and vehicles ignoring the Stop sign on Strachan Road. It was also noted that the crossing is poorly surfaced including pot holes and the white lines are fading. Additionally there was concern that the 20mph speed limit in the wider area is ignored by many drivers.

As well as the primary school, it is a child focussed area with the crossing linking to the play park, tennis courts and the nursery.

Suggestions for improvement to road safety at the junction included traffic lights, banning left turns from Craigcrook Road into Ravelston Dykes Road and speed signs near the junction. The view was that the problem should not just be viewed solely as a pedestrian crossing issue. It was agreed that the Secretary should e-mail Council transport officials.

Additional related points included inappropriate parking at the Jeffrey Avenue junction and the possible need for double yellow lines; concern that Craigcrook Road is in parts 4 lanes wide; and action to be taken by the Council to reduce traffic speeds on Craigcrook Road, March Road and Strachan Road.

Service 13

The Secretary reported that a recent paper prepared by Council officials had been put to the Transport and Environment Committee (T&EC) on bus services supported financially by the City Council, of which service 13 is one. The service was to be retained but after Queensferry Street it was to be rerouted up Lothian Road, Bristow Square to Dumbiedykes. There had been no consultation either with Ward Councillors or community councils.

Having lost services 41 and 42 in the last year, Craighleith/Blackhall Community Council objected to a further change removing essential bus links to the retail core of the city centre and sent a delegation to the T&EC meeting to voice concerns and objections. Some political parties in the Council also came together and their proposal that service 13 should be retained on its present route was agreed by the Committee.

Use of local streets for Park and Ride purposes

A resident in Queens Avenue has raised concerns about the street being used as a location for park and ride using the nearby bus stop for onward travel to the city centre. The discussion highlighted the presence of Controlled Parking Zones (CPZ) closer to the city centre which effectively kicked the can down the road to the next nearest free parking. Blinkbonny is to be included in an extended CPZ, possibly in 2025.

Councillor Hal Osler said that parking in the area north of Hillhouse Road together with the area around the Mosque, will be monitored which could ultimately lead to restrictions in a CPZ.

Consultation on Effectiveness of Community Councils - agreed that the Secretary will circulate a draft response for comment.

Hillhouse Road Woods signs - agreed that 2 unauthorised signs should be brought to the notice of the Planning Enforcement section in the City Council.

Ward Councillor Reports:-

Blackhall Library - because of RAAC in the roof, it will remain closed for the foreseeable future. Councillor Hl Osler said that she recognised its importance in the community

Proposed Bin Hubs - Councillor Max Mitchell said that there is only one in the area at Blackhall Dip behind the crash barrier

Orchard Drive - to improve pedestrian safety, the road is being narrowed at its junction with Queensferry Road from 40 metres to 11 metres.

Surface water issue - in Orchard Crescent and Orchard Drive.

AOCB

Ravelston Park - concern was expressed about the absence of lighting on the woods side of the park. Councillor Max Mitchell said that he would supply a report explaining why Ravelston Park did not qualify for additional lighting.

Youths - a resident with his child had encountered a gathering of youths adjacent to the nursery in Ravelston Park and felt threatened.

Wheelie Bins - concern was expressed at the manner in which wheelies are abandoned after being emptied, obstructing footpaths, some of which are narrow.

Lothian Buses - it was reported that Lothian Buses has said that it is not prepared to speak to community councils about proposed service changes and it will be for Ward Councillors to keep community councils informed.

Next meeting - Monday 18 December 2023

Alan Denham

Secretary

Craighleith/Blackhall Community Council

26 November 2023