

Craigleith/Blackhall Community Council

Minutes of Meeting Monday 16 November 2020 - Held online via Teams

Present - Stuart Pinkerton (Chair), Alan Denham (Secretary), Martin Riddell (Treasurer), Duncan Osler, Grant Roger, Jim McLennan, Darlene Jeffrey, Susie Ross, Michael Cockburn, Paul Moron; Inverleith Ward Councillors Hal Osler, Gavin Barrie, Max Michell; PC Ewan Hickie (Police Scotland). Also in attendance on behalf of Orchard Brae House Development - Colin Smith, Giacomo Mastantuono, Ewan Anderson and Ben Watson; and 2 members of the public

Apologies - Deidre Brock MP

Minutes of 19 October meeting - approved.

Orchard Brae House Development - Pre Application Notice consultation - with the aid of a visual presentation, Colin Smith summarised the development proposals - residential development is proposed each side of the existing office building, with one block fronting the existing flats north/south and the other providing a new frontage to Orchard Brae; pedestrian links to the west linking Orchard Brae Avenue with Queensferry Road and a new link at Queensferry Road/ Orchard Brae junction where the stone wall will be removed; 53 new homes of which 20% will be family homes, 25% affordable homes. The tallest part of the development will be near Queensferry Road and will be equivalent to the existing flats. Consistent with the City Council's parking policy, the intention is to make better use of the car park and there will be a reduction in the number of parking spaces, with greater reliance on public transport.

In response to questions, it was stated that the intention is to make the area more open, improve the public realm and may include a retail unit or commercial space at the suggestion of City Council planners. Vehicle access would continue to be from Orchard Brae Avenue.

Police Report - PC Ewan Hickie summarised the recent position - it had been an exceptionally busy period because of bonfires; there had been an increase in anti-social behaviour because of drinking by young people; also an increase in break-ins into sheds and garages but house break-ins were down; serious/violent crime figures were also down.

Events held at Craigleith Retail Centre;

Speeding - all local police are now trained on laser devices;

Ravelston Woods - following serious assault, individuals had been charged and were awaiting court appearance; Martin Riddell thanked Police Scotland for their efforts in dealing with problems in both the Woods and Maidencraig Crescent;

Ravelston Park - a local resident had expressed concern about the smoking of cannabis by individuals in the park.

Community Council matters

Shipping container in Ravelston Park - there was no support for the siting of a shipping container in Ravelston Park as it would detract from the open space in the park and could lead to increased vandalism. The City Council had been notified. There was however sympathy with the purpose of the container - for storage purposes by the Pink Panther Scouts - and suggestions by the local community of alternative sites would be welcomed. One suggestion at the meeting was the Council owned land on South Groathill Avenue.

Litter bins - a local resident had noted that litter bins in the park were not emptied. Councillor Hal Osler said that it had recently been discovered that such bins in parks were missing off the system and this omission was now being rectified.

Blocked gully drains - acknowledged that in heavy rains there were problems of flooding - specific blocked drains should be reported to the City Council using their "Report a Problem" section on the Council web site which leads to maps showing the location of individual drains. Should cars be parked on the drain when it is to be cleared, it could lead to a delay of 6 months in clearing it.

Overgrown Hedges - it is for individual property owners to ensure that pavement widths are not restricted. Some hedges, even after trimming, still restrict pavement width. Where owners fail to cut back hedges to the property line, the City Council has powers to do the works and charge the resident.

Hot food van in Blackhall Dip - following concerns by a local resident, it was noted that a hot food van had been parked adjacent between Boutique and Farmer's Tyres. Concerns had been raised about whether approval had been given by the City Council, social distancing of queues, and parking issues including parking on the footpath and at bus stop. Taquero had been opened for 3 weekends. It was stated that a hot food van standing for more than one day requires a licence. Councillor Gavin Barrie said that it was important to ensure safety factors are checked.

Councillors Reports - Councillor Max Mitchell said that the Spaces for People A90 Queensferry Road proposal introducing cycle lanes and bus lanes had been delayed and will be considered by the full Council on 19 November. Flooding and run-off also still a problem.

Blackhall Library - current works should be finished in December but Councillor Hal Osler said that there was not a specific date for reopening, determined in part by staffing and financial issues. Its space allowed for social distancing easier than other libraries.

Ravelston Woods Quarry - dogs falling into the pond. The Council does not have resources to repair the fencing and it is the responsibility of owners to keep dogs on the lead - and also parents to keep children safe. The Council's fallback position would be to close the footpath should there be continuing problems.

Site at Queensferry Road / Craigcrook Road junction - noted the illegal felling of trees protected by tree preservation order. Still awaiting a response from the Council's Enforcement Section.

AOCB - Craigleith Hill Crescent - Susie Ross that proposal to close it had been made without alerting the residents. Councillor Gavin Barrie said that it would only be closed for a limited time to allow new tarmac to cool - although the letter to residents had not made this clear.

Next meeting - agreed that the date should be revised and will now be held online at 7.30 pm on Monday 14 December 2020 using Teams.

Alan Denham
Secretary 19 November 2020

