

Craigleith / Blackhall Community Council

Minutes of Meeting held on Monday 16 September 2024

At Blackhall St Columba's Church

Present - Community Council - Stuart Pinkerton (Chair), Alan Denham (Secretary), Grant Roger, Darlene Jeffrey, Duncan Osler, Michael Cockburn; Inverleith Ward Councillors Hal Osler.

In attendance - 10 members of the local community

Apologies - Councillors Max Mitchell, Alan Beal; Jim McLennan ; PC Colin Cursiter

Minutes of 19 August 2024 meeting - approved

Police Report - there was a written report this month from PC Cursiter:-

“There were 158 calls to Police this month, down 51 from same period last year.

No domestic housebreakings were reported; there were 2 break-ins to garages with pedal bikes stolen. Both enquiries are currently under investigation.

2 x reported motorcycle thefts took place at the Village Hotel. Both motorbikes were recovered a short time later.

1 x vehicle seized after a pro-active stop. Found to have no insurance and driver also arrested for drink driving.

The CID recently had a day of action in response to bike thefts / asbo use of electric bikes. This resulted in a number of arrests and plans are being made to have a further number of these initiatives in the coming months.

We have done a number of bike marking events and I am happy to roll out to other agencies if anybody has suggestions.

Youth calls have reduced this month and this may in part be due to schools returning from summer holidays.

Planning for halloween and bonfire night(s) is well underway and resources are in place for this.”

There were no comments.

Community Council matters :-

Consultation response to Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) TRO/ 21/30A west area - Queensferry Road

The discussion identified a number of concerns :-

- the ETRO only gives information on the changes to the double yellow lines, but does not explain why the changes are needed. There are no stated links to the Spaces for People bicycle lanes introduced in 2020 and there is no supporting monitoring and analysis to show what the changes have achieved to date. Councillor Hal Osler said that the ETRO did not require such information, although should there be no comments/objections, the ETRO changes can be introduced on a permanent basis;
- the Spaces for People bicycle lanes are not safe, not clear, not maintained; they are little used by cyclists, but when used, some cyclists are using the footpath or main carriageway to avoid the cycle lanes;
- the completion of the east-west cycle route at Roseburn in 2023 has made it a much more attractive and safer route for cyclists travelling to the city centre, using the Roseburn Cycle and Walkway beyond Queensferry Road;
- the changes in 2020 have made Queensferry Road less safe for motorists, drivers of buses and other vehicles. Junction at Craigleith Road is problematic, particularly city bound on Queensferry Road. Likewise the chicane at Orchard Road west bound makes driving more challenging,
- road surfaces have deteriorated as a result of the 2020 changes eg Queensferry Terrace to Orchard Road junctions;
- the removal of the bollards near to Craigleith Crescent has made the road safe for road users and should be retained.

Agreed - the Secretary will draft a response taking into account the points made.

Consultation response to Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) TRO/ 21/27B north area - Crewe Road South/ Comely Bank/Orchard Brae

It was noted that the Spaces for People cycle lanes are well used by cyclists travelling to the Western General Hospital, are better maintained than Queensferry Road and are more attractive due to slower vehicle speeds in the corridor. It was noted that in heavy rains, flooding in the cycle lanes occurs at the cemetery.

Gully Drains

The Secretary reported that there are currently 100 blocked gully drains in Craigleith/Blackhall Community Council area according to the City Council's online map - 68 are in Blackhall and 32 in Craigleith. Councillor Hal Osler said that the Council will be bringing forward a TTRO in October or November to enable cleaning of all gully drains in the area.

Craigcrook Road (Ravelston Park) parking at central islands - a local resident had expressed concern at the unsafe standard of parking, resulting in drivers being

forced to keep right at the keep left islands. The discussion highlighted a number of ways forward :-

- police should be phoned on 101 reporting obstruction;
- a note should be put on offending vehicles;
- the introduction of double yellow lines would take at least 18 months but on previous occasion not all residents were supportive of their introduction.

Secretary agreed to reply to the local resident

Ward Councillor Reports - Councillor Hal Osler reported on :-

Craigleith Hill - following endless road closures in 2024 on Crewe Road South/ Carrington Road junction and now Groathill Avenue, diverted traffic has resulted in disruption and frustration for Craigleith Hill residents;

Sainsbury Deliveries - nothing to report

Strachan Road/Hillhouse Road/Telford Road junction - still to be confirmed, but there is a possibility of a pedestrian crossing on Strachan Road to compensate for the absence of the green man on the traffic lights on the Strachan Road arm of the junction.

Blackhall Primary School travel plans - parents have asked pedestrian crossing outside the school and the possibility of traffic lights at the foot of Strachan Road/ Ravelston Dykes Road. Councillor Osler is to meet with senior officials to discuss.

Blackhall Mosque Parking - there had been a positive meeting with residents with progress towards yellow lines for inclusion in a TRO in 2 years time;

Blackhall Library - A Report is to be submitted to Finance and Resources Committee on 19 September providing an update on Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) within the Council's operational estate. At Blackhall Library, due to the extent and poor condition of RAAC the building had to be closed. It is proposed to provide a temporary library facility at Davidson's Mains Primary School and engage with the local community over the next six months about the options and location for a permanent library solution. The temporary solution will be delivered as quickly as possible. If there are no unforeseen delays the temporary facility should be delivered by summer 2025.

The options to replace the RAAC in the longer term (i.e. the permanent solution) are complex due to the extent of work required, the potential costs and the wider condition of the building. An options appraisal has developed initial proposals for permanent solutions as follows:

- Replacing all the RAAC;
- Replacement of all the RAAC and retrofit of the building to reduce energy use;
- A new library on the existing site; and

- A new library on the Davidson's Mains Primary School site.

The proposed wider community engagement will consider the implications of each option and the feedback will be included in further reports to Committee which will recommend the preferred long term solution.

Flora Stevenson School - the deteriorating condition of a Lothian Buses toilet adjacent to the school site had resulted in part of the school grounds being fenced off because of the building safety concerns.

AOCB - Craigleith Tunnel - residents were disappointed that there was nothing to report.

Written Report - when Ward Councillors could not attend community council meetings, it was asked whether it would be possible for a short written report to be available.

Davidson's Mains Residents Association - it was with sadness that the death of the chair Rod Alexander was noted.

Next meeting - Monday 21 October 2024

Alan Denham

Secretary

Craigleith/Blackhall Community Council

23 September 2024