

Craigleith / Blackhall Community Council

Minutes of Meeting held on Monday 20 January 2025

At Blackhall St Columba's Church

Present - Community Council - Stuart Pinkerton (Chair), Alan Denham (Secretary), Grant Roger, Duncan Osler, Jim McLennan, Martin Riddell, Darlene Jeffrey, Russell Murdoch, James Burr; Inverleith Ward Councillors Max Mitchell, Hal Osler, Vicky Nicolson; PCs Colin Cursiter, Paul Gunderson; Megan Welford.

In attendance - 6 members of the local community

Apologies - Councillors Jule Bandel, Alan Beal, Fiona Bennett.

Minutes of 16 December 2024 meeting - approved.

Police Report - PC Cursiter reported:-

There were 177 calls to Police this month (+27 more than last year)

There was 1 reported housebreaking to a business premises and a reported break-in to a garage at a residents dwelling house. Both are currently still under investigation. A car was stolen from a housebreaking and the suspect has been captured and was taken into custody.

In terms of road traffic incidents, a driver was charged with careless driving following an incident at Crewe Road. Police Scotland have been active with speed checks in East Fettes Avenue, Comely Bank Avenue and also within Craigcrook Road at the school and surrounding streets. PC Cursiter was happy to add that there had been no speeding of note whilst in attendance.

A drugs warrant was carried out in the Telford Drive area and although there was no recovery of note, this led to more disruption to OCG groups.

Youth calls have diminished slightly over the festive period and we will be commencing some plain clothed patrols in the retail park and some of the residential areas in the coming weeks.

The subsequent discussion raised the following :-

HGV parking at Baillie Signs, Maidencraig Crescent - following concerns raised at a previous community council meeting, PC Cursiter had visited Baillie Signs. Baillie Signs appreciated the concerns of residents in Maidencraig Crescent regarding the disruption arising from HGV parking during deliveries. PC Cursiter said that should future problems arise the community could speak to Baillie Signs. Additionally if driveways are blocked then to contact Police Scotland via the internet rather than phoning 101.

It was reported that a female with anti-muslim posters had been protesting in Blackhall Dip and upsetting both adults and children passing by. PC Cursiter said that there had been previous examples near the Blackhall Mosque.

Community Council matters :-

Telford Road / Groathill Road South Junction - Megan Welford spoke to local residents' concerns regarding rat running on Groathill Road South, increased all day parking because of proximity to the Western General Hospital, and the dangers for pedestrians from the shared pedestrian /vehicular space under the tunnel at the foot of Groathill Road South. Additionally there had been accidents when residents were reversing out of their drive because of restricted visibility from parked cars.

Megan said that all 40 residents had signed a petition, initially seeking support for banning right turning traffic from Telford Road into Groathill Road South.

Following discussion, it was agreed that the community council would support a bid to the Local Traffic Environment Programme 2025 which set out the issues rather than specific proposals. Megan Welford would prepare a proposal and share with the Community Council and Ward Councillors for further consideration at the next meeting.

Local Traffic Environment Programme 2025 - as part of the current consultation, agreed that a bid would be submitted for the Strachan Road/Craigcrook Road junction setting out the issues and problems. Maiden Craig Steps had been rejected in 2024 and was now being pursued through another programme.

SPEN (Scottish Power Energy Networks) - SPEN had notified the next step of fitting the cable through the new ducts. This would require road closures including Queensferry Road. There was no update on the proposed fencing at Maiden Craig Crescent.

Community Council Elections 2025 - it was agreed that it was important the Community Council should continue to provide a voice for the local community in Craighleith and Blackhall and ideally that there should be wide representation. The Secretary said that a minimum of 6 community councillors were required for the community council to continue. The period for nominations will be 6-27 February and the new Community Council term will begin on 28 March 2025. Appropriate publicity would be given including Facebook.

Ward Councillor Reports -

Councillor Hal Osler reported on :-

Craighleith Hill - pruning back vegetation at Royal Victoria site;

Orchard Park - still some outstanding work. Flooding outwith the swale was being investigated. Councillor Osler was also chasing up getting the gate fixed;

CCTV camera had been reinstated at Maiden Craig Crescent;

Bus stops Queensferry Road - road surfaces were being replaced and renewed.

Councillor Max Mitchell reported on:-

Nike now closed at Craigleith Retail Park, possible The Range could take over Homebase store;

Hillhouse Road - following concerns he had walked the section near Blackhall St Columba's Church noting the absence of effective white lines, poor lighting and the unlit central reservation. He would follow up with road staff;

the Travelling Safely bollards near the Esso Garage/Craigleith Crescent junction had been reinstated;

Gullies had been cleared at the Blackhall Medical Centre, Telford Road and the Carfraes;

Wheelie Collection calendar -the new format was temporary ahead of a digital version.

Councillor Vicky Nicolson reported on:-

Maidencraig Court - there was to be another meeting regarding the central heating boiler replacement;

Parking on Telford Road restricting left running vehicles into Groathill Road North - problems had increase since pavement parking was banned and Lothian Buses have voiced their concerns about delays;

Groathill Avenue - shrubbery on Council land should be cut back.

Councillor Fiona Bennett was not able to attend but had provided a written report - attached in the annex

AOCB -

Oaklands School, Ferry Road - the swimming pool was out of commission and not available for students or other users.

Seaforth Drive - communal bins had been repositioned to the side of the road with double yellow lines. Councillor Mitchell will look into it.

Orchard Brae House - the CityPlan 2030 provides for housing on the site.

Next meeting - 17 February 2025

Alan Denham

Secretary

Craigleith/Blackhall Community Council

24 January 2025

Annex - Councillors' Written Reports

Councillor Fiona Bennett's Report :

Potholes

- An update was requested and asked for a deadline of 4:00 PM today but no response has been received yet. Cllrs will forward this on should it arrive in time.
- A follow-up request has been made to chase this issue.

White Lines

- Thank you for your enquiry regarding Access Protection Marking refreshes.
- These refreshes are chargeable, and individuals wishing to have their lines refreshed can do so via Access Protection Markings on the Council website

Scottish Water Leak

- Sean Gilchrist informed Cllrs that he has spoken with Jo's husband and will be sending an email outlining his findings.
- A follow-up meeting on location has been proposed and Cllrs are actively pursuing this.
- Written details of the outcome from the site visit were requested to share with the community council this evening, no response yet

Noise

- Findings from residents' assessment of noise including dates and times, have been shared with the hotel, and a meeting requested
- No response has been received so far, and a follow-up request has been made.
- An update is awaited regarding the replacement of the extractor fan and other noise mitigation measures.

Trees

- Edinburgh Council has its own definition of a high hedge, which may differ from other Councils but is within its legal right to apply the legislation as it sees fit.
- The council stated: "A row of mature sycamore trees is not a hedge."
- According to the Scottish Government's website (2019):
A high hedge must:
Be a row of two or more trees or shrubs.
Be over 2 meters high.
Block light.
- Concerns have been raised about the trees at Blinkbonny, which seem to fit the criteria of a high hedge outlined in the Scottish Government's legislation.
- A request for clarification has been submitted to confirm whether the 2019 legislation has been updated. If it has not, an explanation is sought as to why it does not apply to the trees in question.

Craigleith Tunnel

- No update since last meeting, however, Cllrs have asked for progress report

CCTV

- Police have now installed CCTV at the Maidenraig junction on the cycle path.
- This is a positive step forward, and is hoping to deter or identify individuals engaging in anti-social behaviour.

Strategic Parking Review

- Raised with the Council today (20 January), further to Russell Murdoch's email on Sunday.

Fly-tipping

- Numerous reports of fly-tipping along the path, Cllrs are pursuing