

Craiglockhart Community Council

Minutes of the Public Meeting

Time: 7pm

Date: 20 March 2023

Venue: Online via Microsoft Teams & In person at Craiglockhart Campus Room 2/05

Chair: Peter Mavor

1. Welcome, apologies for absence and any declarations of interest

Apologies:

Community Councillors - Neena Agarwal, Anni McLeod **

City of Edinburgh Councillors - Val Walker, David Key

Police Scotland - Community Policing Team

In Attendance:

Community Councillors - Peter Mavor, Kevin McKay, John Corbett, Bryce Morrison*, Nick Stewart, Alex Schweitzer-Thompson, Eleanor Young.

* Water of Leith Conservation Trust representative and Friends of Easter Craiglockhart Hill representative

** Friends of Wester Craiglockhart Hill and Greenbank Community Woodland representative

City of Edinburgh Councillors - Christopher Cowdy

Residents - circa 20 (Online and in person)

Declarations of interest:

None

Co-opting Community Councillor

Hilda Henderson (HH) has resigned as a trustee of Friends of Easter Craiglockhart Hill (FECH). The co-opting of HH onto Craiglockhart Community Council was proposed by Nick Stewart (NS), seconded by John Corbett (JC), and unanimously carried by vote.

The meeting noted that Bryce Morrison (BM) has been appointed as a trustee of FECH and with immediate effect will serve as both the FECH representative and the Water of Leith Conservation Trust representative on Craiglockhart Community Council.

2. Minutes from previous meeting

Approval of the minutes from the public meeting held on 20 February 2023 was proposed by NS and seconded by Eleanor Young (EY).

Other than one action point, below, Peter Mavor (PM) advised that action points from the last minutes would be covered by the agenda items for this meeting.

BM confirmed the Water of Leith Conservation Trust (WOLCT) plant sale would be on 7 May, 11am -> 2pm. BM also confirmed the FECH plant sale would be on 14 May, starting at 2pm. Plant donations are welcome for both events: 6 May WOLCT deadline; and morning of 14 May FECH deadline.

3. Community Police Report

No report available for the meeting. PM advised that a Community Police Newsletter will be available early April, with a hyperlink to provide people with direct access to Ward crime statistics.

Repeated vandalism, affecting one resident was raised - refer to Any Other Business, item 8.8.

4. Planning Updates

John Corbett (JC) advised that there was nothing of note to report on Planning.

Happy Valley Development - JC was able to confirm that the 24 units under construction had gone through the appropriate planning notifications and consents via two planning applications (i.e. 19 units and 5 units).

5. Engagement Update

Steady progress made regarding the community engagement event planned for Saturday 27 May 2023.

Funding

- Awarded £500 from The University of Edinburgh - Edinburgh Micro-grants
- Awarded £350 from the SW Community Grants Fund
- Online application for £500 to be completed for the Edinburgh Airport Community Fund. Applications for the April meeting are now open until midnight 14 April

Invitations

- Email sent to 17 clubs/organisations at the start of March
- Declines from Edinburgh United (i.e. clash with match day but open to another event) and Colinton Castle Squash Club
- Chasing responses from 50% of invitees and following up positive responses received

Venue

- Church booking form to be completed for Saturday 27th May
- NKS Health to visit the venue between 11th and 13th April to define their itinerary for the event
- Finalise opening hours to residents after NKS Health April visit (e.g. 10am - 4pm or 11am - 3pm)

Actions to be carried forward:

1. NS to propose article for The Steeple
2. NS to progress the upgrade of two existing public notice boards and the creation of a noticeboard at Craiglockhart Tennis/ Leisure Centre

6. Water of Leith - Dell Bridges and Paths - Update

BM was pleased to confirm the following with additional input from PM.

Redhall Weir Bridge - Enabling works (minor tree felling/pruning) have commenced ahead of the new bridge installation running parallel to Redhall Weir (i.e. first river crossing downstream of Colinton Tunnel).

The project is due for completion by the end of June 2023. During these works there will be the requirement to close the Spylaw car park area (see below) and on occasions the path - when possible the Council will provide advance notice of these closures and signage will be available on site including a map showing a suggested diversion.

The Spylaw car park area is scheduled for closure as follows:

- For 8 weeks - Monday 6th March 2023 -> Friday 28th April 2023
- For 4 weeks - Monday the 29th May 2023 -> 24th June 2023.

Note: the step access leading from the car park entrance to Spylaw Park will remain open.

Pipeline Bridge - No update or progress to report.

Path closure at Dell Road - Due to the landslip the Council commissioned consultants to monitor, survey and advise on solutions for stabilisation. The design has been finalised and the tender process was completed in Autumn 2022. Unfortunately, the initial design for stabilisation and path re-instatement at Dell Road was not currently economically viable, with costs coming back over five times that which was estimated. The Consultants have been asked to re-think the design and look at other potential options and those have not offered a more cost effective solution so far.

The Council have requested a technical note to be prepared by the consultants summarising all the findings to allow the Council to make an informed decision on the outcome of the path closure at this location.

7. Litter Bin at Bogsmill Bridge, Craiglockhart Dell

No progress to report regarding attempts to get the bin re-installed. The Council officer concerned has made it clear that the status quo will not be changed.

Discussion moved to the status of other litter bins. It was noted that the bin at Craiglockhart Drive South was regularly overflowing. This will be reported to the Council.

ACTION: Chris Cowdry (CC) to establish if this bin is on the Council "list".

8. Any Other Business

8.1 Travelling Safely / SW20

ACTION: JC to arrange a meeting with SW20, including the attendance of Scott Arthur (new Convener for the Transport and Environment Committee). An insight into the short and longer term plans of the Committee would be extremely informative.

Frustrations towards the Transport and Environment Committee were evident at the meeting. To encourage lower road usage by cars the provision of 'alternatives' was a fundamental prerequisite strongly reinforced at the meeting. The poor reliability of our reduced LRT bus services was also reinforced by residents.

8.2 Redhall House Road - Road Adoption

The road has been adopted by the Council.

8.3 Redhall House - For Sale

The site is currently on the open market for sale. Plans were approved by the Council 5 years ago for 6 flats and 2 houses. The possibility of a change in these plans by means of a planning submission was highlighted as a risk to local residents. The Planning Update standing agenda item will serve to monitor this scenario.

8.4 Graffiti - City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) Response

CC confirmed that a £3m budget had been defined by CEC towards "Waste Cleansing", with graffiti specifically mentioned under this banner. CC will be looking for more detail to follow from CEC.

8.5 Shandon Bridge - Repair and Road Closure Impacts

Key stakeholders involved include: National Rail, City Fibre, City Fibre Contractors and CEC. Unfortunately, over the short term it is clear that no bridge repair activity will be undertaken. A resident, David Millar, confirmed that this will only serve to exacerbate existing high road usage and vehicle volumes (private & commercial) affecting Harrison Road, Harrison Gardens and Ardmillan Terrace.

A recent meeting convened with Network Rail, City Fibre, Glenevin (and their repair specialist) and representatives from CEC roads coordination team concluded with a disappointing outcome: Network Rail requested additional detail to the repair proposal before they are willing to consider an agreement. Progress ultimately relies on Glenevin and Network Rail reaching agreement .

CEC unfortunately seems to have limited influence over the process and final outcome since National Rail own the bridge and road under the bridge.

To alleviate road and traffic bottlenecks a temporary parking suspension was one proposed option.

ACTION: CC to update when a 'parking suspension' response is received.

It was noted that City Fibre have been fined by CEC and will be under extra scrutiny for the next 2 months.

8.6 Tennis Centre - Colinton Road Fencing

BM confirmed that he has been advised by the centre manager that funding has been secured to repair and replace the existing wooden fencing with a more robust option, metal railing.

8.7 CEC Finances - 2023/24 Financial Year Update

CC provided an overview of some of the measures to be taken by CEC to address the 2023/24 forecast £76m deficit.

- Accounting policies modified - £35m
- Borrowing - £16m
- Council tax rise 5%
- Parking fines increased
- Non-compulsory redundancy policy overhauled
- Outsourcing increased
- Removal of free tram travel for those under 22
- Cycle-lane scheme suspended
- Council tenant rent rise 5%

Other items of expenditure were noted:

- Extra funding for roads - £11m
- Flood prevention - £2m
- New Climate and Sustainability Team - £265k

8.8 Vandalism

As referred to under agenda item 3, Community Police Report, a local resident outlined 3 recent instances of vandalism to their property and home by youths.

Despite CCTV footage, witness names and other information being available it was extremely frustrating, and of concern, that no Police Officer had been allocated to any of the incidents. Vandalism, incidents, perpetrated by youths of school age were noted in Bonaly, Colinton Road and Colinton Mains.

ACTION: CC to follow up the incidents on behalf of the resident in attendance.

8.9 Colinton Road - Pavement Safety Barrier Removal & Pedestrian Crossing Mis-siting

Correspondence received by PM from a resident, John Hume, alerted the Community Council to his concern regarding the heightened risk of accident and serious injury to students/ pedestrians and road users triggered by Council actions over the pandemic lockdown.

Mitigants offered by John ranged from replacing (and extending) the pavement safety barrier removed during lockdown, relocating the existing bus stop, through to the removal of the Craiglockhart Campus bus stop altogether and relying solely on the adjacent bus stop at Craiglockhart Park.

PM shared the same concerns having previously raised them with local councillors. Despite repeated approaches being made by our local councillors to the relevant Council Officers zero appetite for change was forthcoming from CEC.

Post meeting: the option for our newly elected local councillors (i.e. Chris Cowdy and Val Walker) to resubmit the Community Council's concerns and raise the concerns of John to the relevant Council Officers exists.

ACTION: CC and Val Walker to raise the heightened safety risk and see what traction they can get from CEC.

9. Date of Next Public Meeting

Date: 15 May 2023

Time: 7pm

Venue: Online via Microsoft Teams & In person at Craiglockhart Campus.

Note: Next meeting will also be the AGM which will include treasurer's report, annual engagement report and affiliated groups reports.

PM thanked all attendees and the meeting was closed.