

## **Craiglockhart Community Council**

### **Minutes of the Public Meeting**

Time: 7p.m.

Date: 23 November 2020

Venue: Online via Microsoft Teams

Chair: Peter Mavor

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

-Apologies were received from Gavin Corbett and David Key, Councillors.

-No declarations of interest were made

#### ***In Attendance:***

7 residents

Community Councillors -Peter Mavor, Neena Agarwal, John Corbett, Jim Brydon, Hilda Henderson\*, Kevin McKay, Bryce Morrison \*\*, Anni McLeod \*\*\*, Nick Stewart, Eleanor Young,

\* Friends of Easter Craiglockhart Hill representative

\*\* Water of Leith Conservation Trust representative

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

City of Edinburgh Councillors- Andrew Johnston

#### ***Formalities***

Peter Mavor (PM) thanked everyone for joining our first meeting since January and explained that members of the Public would be asked to use voice only for the meeting. All were asked to use the "raise hand" option on Microsoft teams to indicate they wished to ask a question.

#### **2. Minutes from previous meeting of 27 January 2020**

PM confirmed that the agenda items for the meeting largely covered the action points from the previous meeting.

Andrew Johnston (AJ) confirmed he would seek an update on the action point in regard to the Kayak Club Temporary Shipping Containers **Action A1**

Bryce Morrison (BM) pointed out that under Section 7. Any Other Business reference should be made to the "Natural Heritage Officer" rather than the "National Heritage Officer"

Approval of the minutes was proposed by Eleanor Young (EY) and seconded by John Corbett (JC)

#### **3. Community Police Report-**

PC Gavin Mears was not in attendance therefore there was no report

#### **4. Annual Craiglockhart Community Council Accounts**

PM thanked Gail Loukes and Kevin McKay for their work on the accounts, which had been made available in advance of the meeting. PM asked for any questions. No questions were raised.

The Accounts were therefore proposed for approval by EY and seconded by Nick Stewart (NS).

**Action-** KM to send accounts to City of Edinburgh Council.

## 5. Planning Updates

PM advised that as Paul Mowat had relocated JC had kindly agreed to be the Committee member responsible for planning matters

Briefly the current position is as follows:

- **Car Showroom**, 1 Lanark Road- site cleared
- **Blue Goose**, 27 Lanark Road – In planning process. Original design altered.
- **Former Alfa Romeo Car Showroom**, 116 Colinton Road – Site now cleared
- **Premier Store & Sitting Room Pub**, 120-122 Colinton Road – Site now cleared
- **Redhall House** – Section 75 agreement has not been completed on time. Next due to be considered by Planning on 4 December 2020. The following update was received from Councillor Gavin Corbett:

*I have followed up with Planning Officers with my view that reasonable further time should be given to conclude the legal agreement on the conditions which committee agreed when consent was given. Ultimately it will be up to planning officers to make a recommendation to DM Sub Committee at the meeting which falls after the end of the current extension which is end of November. That meeting would be 9 December, I imagine. If an extension is not agreed and a legal agreement not concluded then the only option is to refuse consent. That definitely has to be an option; however, it would take Redhall House back to square one.*

## 6. Any Other Business

- **Landslip on Easter Craiglockhart Hill**

Hilda Henderson gave an update as a Trustee of Friends of Easter Craiglockhart Hill.

The landslide occurred on the Meadowspot Woods side of the Hill. Material flowed down the hill, across the Meadowspot Woods Path and into some gardens at Meadowspot. An initial clean up near the houses in Meadowspot was undertaken and a silt fence installed to prevent any further loose material reaching the road/houses.

The Meadowspot woods path was closed and soil testing indicated there was some asbestos in the spoil. The Council erected signage and barriers advising the path is closed and Hilda encouraged all in the Community to abide by the restrictions. Inevitable some people ignore the restrictions. CEC are awaiting prices to have the work done to restore the land and make safe. Badgers who lived in a sett very near the landslip area have been successfully encouraged to move to another sett

nearby. It is unclear at present how long the work will take and when the path can be re-opened.

AJ added that there is significant cost in remedying matters and some debate now between CEC and QMile (developers of Craighouse) as to where the responsibility lies.

A detailed update from CEC is shown below:

#### *CEC Statement*

*“After the torrential rain in mid-August, there was a substantial landslip in Meadowspot Woods. The path was closed immediately and barriers and signage have been put in place to prevent access. In mid-September, following the observation of suspect debris located towards the top of the slope in the woodland area, a contractor appointed by CEC to look at the landslide undertook soil sampling. The test results confirmed the presence of low quantities of asbestos in five of the seven locations tested. Signage on the barriers was amended with this new information and now says: “Meadowspot woodland is closed due to a major landslip which uncovered historic asbestos contamination in the soil.”*

*Sediments from the landslide reached some of the properties in the Meadowspot residential area at the time of the incident and an initial cleaning operation was carried out as soon as possible. A silt fence has been installed to provide some protection for the closest houses to the slope to mitigate any further debris slip. A contractor will be appointed to undertake additional remedial work to the private gardens. It is hoped that this part of the work can be completed before the Christmas holidays. Following this, further analysis including reassurance air and dust testing was undertaken, and reports have been completed for each properties and shared with homeowners. A full report on any possible health risks is being prepared by a specialist consultant.*

*An asbestos 'sweep' has been completed in order to remove any visible pieces of possible asbestos containing material from the woodland, and works to stabilise the slope are ongoing. Specialist contractors have visited the site and quotes have been received to clear the woodland of any potentially contaminated soil and re-test the location so that it can be re-opened to public access. Following consultation with the Qmile group Ecologist and NatureScot, a licence for the temporary closure of the badger sett located in the vicinity of the landslide has been approved. One way badger gates had been installed for a period of 3 weeks (and were monitored) and the sett can now be closed. Short-term remedial action to the scarp will be undertaken week starting 16/11/20. A topography survey has been completed to assist with the modelling of the long-term remedial work that will be required to stabilise the slope.*

*We know that the closure is inconvenient for many and that alternative routes are longer, less accessible and often along busy main roads. It is important though that members of the public heed the warning notices and do not ignore or circumvent the barriers.*

- **Water of Leith Bridge repairs**

BM advised they had no success as yet with grant applications or 3<sup>rd</sup> party approaches to e.g. Army to assist. Ultimately it is the responsibility of CEC to repair. An update from Gavin Corbett is shown below:

*The two bridges – the pipe bridge and the Redhall Mill Weir bridge – have been out of action for too long. The former has been removed by WOLCT volunteers; the latter is closed off. Along with WOLCT and Natural Heritage staff I have been trying to narrow down ways forward where the costs are proportionate. In the case of the pipe I personally don't think a bridge is needed and the same result could be achieved by stabilising the ground below and building up the earth to create a path over the bridge. I have asked staff to cost that, potentially using supervised volunteers. On the weir bridge, the stone pillars and the steel spans are fine. It's just the wooden decking that is rotten. I think a lower cost wooden decking coupled with an annual maintenance contract with WOLCT might be a way forward here. Both of these options still involve finding so I am exploring with SfP project staff as to whether they could be funded under that programme; initial feedback is that they don't meet Sustrans' conditions but I shall keep pushing that.*

PM suggested that if, as is rumoured, CEC are receiving some income from Scottish Water (see below) for e.g. utilising car parking areas, then this money could perhaps be ring-fenced for the Bridge Repairs. The meeting agreed with this.

**Action –** AJ and GC to approach the Council to advise that the CCC formally request any income accruing from the disruptive Scottish Water work be utilised first for the repair of the Bridges in the Dell.

**Action-** PM to contact Longstone CC Chairperson and suggest they make similar representations.

**Water of Leith – excavations in Colinton by Scottish Water-** BM had already issued a useful public update as follows:

*The work is being carried out on behalf of Scottish Water and is expected to take about 6 months which is why they have set up a little camp and have taken over the former station goods yard at Colinton.*

*So what and why? You will possibly be aware that the valley of the Water of Leith has always been a main route for Edinburgh's sewage. Fortunately it is now in pipes but sometimes in really heavy rain these cannot cope. You may have seen places along the river where there are storm outlets. The problem has been that with more housing developments in the catchment area of the Water of Leith there is more sewage than the pipes were ever designed for coupled with more extreme rain events. So what Scottish Water are doing at the meadow is going to be burying large storage tanks to hold excess water and I believe a settling tank to filter any excess that might need to be released into the river through a new storm drain at that point.*

*This is part of a much bigger scheme of things that you can read about here <https://www.scottishwater.co.uk/en/About-Us/News-and-Views/100220-Water-of-Leith-Investment> You will see that the work has been delayed by some 6 months due to the impact of Covid.*

*Hopefully the meadow will be restored to its former tranquillity next Summer but who knows on timescales. At least they have provided a through path for now but I suspect that will have to be closed when work begins in earnest and the old railway line will have to be used instead.*

*The WOL Manager bogs about matters like this on a regular basis. The original plan was noted back in June 2018 <http://www.waterofleith.org.uk/blog/2018/6/28/article-about-scottish-water-work-on-cso-outflows-on-the-riv.html> There have been periodic updates since, most recently on another site upstream <http://www.waterofleith.org.uk/blog/2020/9/22/latest-from-scottish-water-on-the-cso-upgrading-works-at-jun.html>*

BM was of the view that although the work by Scottish Water in the dell was disruptive it was ultimately an investment in the infrastructure.

**Water of Leith- general** -BM encouraged anyone who wished regular updates on the Water of Leith to register on the Trusts Website. Maintenance activities have continued by volunteers throughout the pandemic. The Café and Shop are now open again. BM encouraged people to visit/consider joining the Trust and/or donating if they are able. In common with many charities income is well down and reserves are being utilised.

- **Royal Edinburgh Hospital**

Jim Brydon (JB) advised that work had slowed down at the REH. This is likely due to shortage of funding and Covid. Smaller site clearance jobs are taking place but the large Phase 2 development involving circa 300 Contractors has not started. The upside of this

is that the NHS have been allowing 30/40 vehicles to park within the boundary on their internal Yellow lines near Myreside Road. This is likely to be temporary but has assisted in keeping the southern end of Myreside Road safer and less congested. Further CEC Yellow lines have been agreed in the vicinity and implementation is in the queue. Not likely to happen until mid 2021 earliest.

- **Role of Engagement Officer**

The CCC meeting scheduled to discuss this was hampered by Covid. To be re-arranged for early 2021

- **Proposed Changes in the Community**

**Spaces for People** discussed at some length. There may be a cycle lane planned for Craiglockhart Drive South. Changes are planned for Lanark Road including cycle lanes and potentially “floating bus stops”.

EY raised a concern about floating bus stops. AJ agreed that floating bus stops had created a lot of negative feedback both for those already installed and also for proposed ones.

AJ gave some other detail and advised that this is a hot topic for Councillors with many concerns and objections being raised by residents. Lack of Consultation seems to be one of the key concerns with designs appearing to be rushed through. The East Craigs proposals have been paused due to challenges received. CEC have been successful in obtaining funding for these initiatives from the Scottish Government. They are designated as temporary (up to 18 months) and Consultations may follow later.

### **Questions**

Jim Reid – resident-expressed his concern CEC ignoring feedback. Some limited Yellow lines have now been installed at Craiglockhart Drive South but the safety problem caused by end-on parking remains. Yellow Lines either need extended or signage preventing end-on parking installed.

Johnathan Loukes- resident- expressed his concern regarding the poor design of the cycle lanes.

Allan Gordon- resident- considered any cycle lane on Craiglockhart Drive South would become blocked by car parking

Bryce Morrison - observed that a cycle lane on Lanark Road, for example, might take some of the cycle traffic away from the Canal Towpath, which would be a good thing. EY echoed concerns regarding safety of towpath for walkers give number of cyclists.

**Action Point-** PM to speak with GC again re the crossing point at the Hairdressers and safety of the corner/ end-on parking issue.

Nick Stewart suggested worth establishing views of other CC's on Spaces for People Plans. AJ recommended speaking with Longstone, Merchiston and Hutchison CC's.

**Action Point-** PM to speak with Longstone CC.

**Action Point-** John Corbett to raise " Spaces for People" concerns at next Edinburgh Association of Community Councils meeting.

### **Charitable Donations to local causes**

PM discussed a proposal that given our funding situation and the impact of the Covid pandemic on charities and good causes we donate £200 each to:

1. Friends of Easter Craiglockhart Hill
2. Water of Leith Conservation Trust
3. Craiglockhart Parish Church
4. The foodbank at Gorgie Road
5. Friends of Wester Craiglockhart Hill and Greenbank Community Woodland

This was proposed by EY and seconded by Neena Agarwal.

**Action-** Kevin McKay will arrange for the donations to be made.

**City of Edinburgh Council**

AJ advised that the Council now only has £90m of reserves. Income streams such as those from parking have been decimated by the pandemic and budget cuts were already planned prior to this happening. The Tram project is expensive and will burn more cash. Inevitably even deeper cuts to services will be required and is a real concern. A whistleblowing enquiry is planned focusing on cultural issues in the Social Work department. This has a cost of £600k.

**7. Date of Next Public Meeting**

To be determined