

Craiglockhart Community Council

Minutes of the Public Meeting

Time: 7p.m.

Date: 26 July 2021

Venue: Online via Microsoft Teams

Chair: Peter Mavor

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

-Apologies were received from Neena Agarwal, Gavin Corbett and David Key

-No declarations of interest were made

In Attendance:

Circa eight residents

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

* Friends of Easter Craiglockhart Hill representative

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

*** Water of Leith Conservation Trust representative

City of Edinburgh Councillors- Andrew Johnston

Formalities

Peter Mavor (PM) welcomed everyone. All were asked to use the “raise hand” option on Microsoft teams to indicate they wished to ask a question.

2. Minutes from previous meetings

The following Action Point from previous meetings remains active but was not discussed in the meeting. It will be carried forward to the next meeting.

Nick Stewart (NS) gave the following observations and questions

- *About 2-3 weeks ago I was invited to complete an on-line questionnaire from the Spaces For People team.*

Question posed to Andrew and Gavin if they had any indication of the following:

- *1. Response rate to the questionnaire;*
- *2. Indicative messages from those questionnaires completed; and*
- *3. When and how the results of the survey will be made public.*

- *A significant amount of public funds (circa £5m) have been allocated to and spent by Edinburgh Council using powers granted to it under Covid Emergency Measures. One key question must be answered by the Council, "What difference(s) have the changes implemented under Spaces For People made?"*
- *All stakeholders across our community and Edinburgh as a whole are justified to expect an objective answer to this question.*

Action- Carry forward to next meeting for a response/ update from GC and AJ

Approval of the minutes was proposed by Jim Brydon (JB) and seconded by Hilda Henderson (HH)

3. Community Police Report

A report has now been received but was very general in character and not specific to our area. It was felt to be fairly worthless compared to the attendance we previously had from a Community Police Officer and a report specific to Craiglockhart.

Action Points:

1. AJ to arrange for his group leader to raise it at the next Group Leadership Committee in August.
2. EY to put Report on CCC website.

4. Appointment of Engagement Officer

PM confirmed that Nick Stewart (NS) had been appointed as our Engagement Officer.

NS outlined a few things he wishes to do:

1. Meet with Eleanor Young (EY) to better understand our Facebook and Twitter accounts and discuss how we could improve our reach
2. Better understand what monitoring and management processes we need to develop. E.g. how do we manage responses and manage expectations
3. Obtain data to inform us on the population characteristics of our area and would therefore enable better targeting of information etc.

Re 3. above NS thought the next Census (due 2022) may be the best source. PM observed the results from that are a long way off and we need to think what we could do now.

A few suggestions were made by local residents and CCC members as follows:

-we could look at what other Community Councils and groups such as the Water of Leith Conservation Trust are doing.

- we should consider how we reach younger people.

-we could work together with a resident (Alex Schweitzer- Thompson) starting up a new local newspaper.

Action/s above - NS

5. Planning Updates

Redhall House- PM confirmed the update from Gavin Corbett (GC) was as follows:

"I have followed up with the lead planning officer on next steps given that the end of June has come, the deadline given to come back on how best to proceed. The officer has written to the agent requesting an update but is now on leave so I won't get anything further until early August"

PM advised this was not good news at all. He had tried calling the Project Manager but no response. CEC are minded to refuse the application given lack of progress.

General- John Corbett (JC) advised planning matters remained fairly quiet. The application for a 5G Mast had been refused due to location. A suggestion had been made to locate it in the nearby Church Steeple instead.

Anni McLeod (AM) questioned whether a survey had been done on the steeple to check for possible disturbance to bats or swifts which sometimes roost/nest in Spires. There was no answer available at the meeting

Action- JC to comment at next meeting

6. AOCB

Landslip on Easter Craiglockhart Hill

Jim Brydon (JB) communicated the update today from GC as follows:

"Meadowspot Woods landslip. Following the last CC I met shortly after with the Friends Group and residents association and then further with council staff and the legal team working on behalf of the council. I also sought and secured all the correspondence between the council and Qmile and the engineer's report. As we know the scope of the work has to both clear up the debris/restore the slope AND deal with the source of the water (which is from a drainage issue on Qmile land). So the issue has never really been work scope but acceptance of responsibility. Even if the council were to fully fund the work on its land (which it shouldn't anyway) there would still be a risk of recurrence if the issue on Qmile land remained unresolved. The insurers for Qmile are being pressed to come to a view to allow progress to be made and in the last couple of weeks it has looked like that was possible; however, at the time of writing – really frustratingly – I have nothing concrete. The latest twist is that work appears to have resumed at the top of the slope (North Craig) raising the fear of further slope movement especially with heavy downpours forecast. Meantime, work to repair the silt fence in Meadowspot houses has now been instructed. All very frustrating but I'll keep hammering on at it".

Hilda Henderson added the concerns of the Friends Group that we are almost at the first anniversary of the landslip without resolution.

David Miller, a Meadowspot resident living very adjacent to the landslip area, detailed his concerns (and those of his immediate neighbours) including:

- Only part of the private gardens had so far been cleared of potentially contaminated debris
- CEC have advised the slope is unstable and have identified a drainage issue which needs remedied by Qmile yet work has been allowed to commence at the top of the slope with heavy machinery
- The Silt fence is bulging following some movement after rainfall a few weeks ago
- The real potential exists of a second landslip/risk to health and public safety

All agreed the situation was unacceptable and very concerning.

Action- AJ to raise the matter immediately within CEC with Head of Place, copying in Gavin Corbett. The aim should be to investigate what prompt action CEC can take to stop the ongoing work given the safety and other concerns detailed and bring matters to a resolution.

Water of Leith Dell Bridges

PM relayed update from GC as follows

“My motion at full council to fund the two bridges was approved in May. I followed up with the manager prior to a detailed report going to Culture and Communities Committee in June. The works in the Dell have been rated priority 1 to be done this year (obviously I am pressing for that to be ASAP). Funding has been assigned as follows:

- £25k pipe bridge
- £93,750 for Redhall Weir bridge
- £66k for landslips (Dell Road end and also pipe bridge path)”

Obviously this is very good news given that the Bridges concerned have been closed for two years.

Spaces for People

AJ summarised that this has been a very polarising issue across the City.

At the June Transport Committee it was, therefore, decided the matter should go to full Council for a vote. The outcome was that some of the initiatives have been removed- mainly in shopping areas- and some have been extended for a further 18 months. Lanark Road was deferred until September for a further review and decision. AJ has heard nothing further since.

JC commented that the building projects approved for Lanark Road will generate significant additional bike traffic which would fit logically with designated cycle lanes. PM was of the view this was likely a co-incidence given that planning for the developments was granted pre-Covid.

Overhanging foliage in our area

EY advised this has been raised by a resident and she agreed with their concerns. Generally this had the effect of narrowing pavements. If a resident feels comfortable to do so then they can, of course, raise it directly with the owner of the relevant property. If this is not appropriate or does not work then there is a facility on the CEC website to report overhanging foliage.

JB shared that he had reported an overhanging hedge on Craighouse Road in 2020. The hedge was obscuring a handrail on a steep hill. This had subsequently been cut back.

Jim Reid (JR) (resident) observed that CEC need to put their own house in order as well as there are many trees and hedges owned by them, which need maintained better.

Action- EY to add advice on our website

Parking at Craiglockhart Drive South

PM relayed the following update from GC

"I wrote to traffic orders team at the end of May with the CC request for a sign "No End On Parking" bearing in mind that it would be advisory only. In general, traffic orders team don't like signage which cannot lead to clear action. The only other recourse is through police for obstruction."

JR reiterated concerns re dangerous reversing/parking. Perhaps the double yellow lines could be extended?

Action- PM to discuss with GC.

Conversion of existing parking/other spaces

JC outlined how this had been done elsewhere to create outside spaces, which can be used by the Community. E.g. seating/planters etc. There has been a lot of focus on the City Centre but little or none in other communities. He has communicated with Lesley McInnes at CEC who has responded positively in regard to discussing further. JC also raised desirability of extending 20mph zone to include the narrow Glenlockhart Road. NS suggested a periodic police presence might reduce speed/improve safety.

Action- CCC to discuss further internally and JC to discuss with Lesley McInnes.

Steps from Redhall to Water of Leith- PM confirmed these are due for repair in next 4/5 weeks

Water of Leith Conservation Trust

Bryce Morrison (BM) advised of recent new website for the Trust. He also advised that in terms of the earlier discussion on engagement they are hands on in managing social media. He views Facebook as a weekly update normally and Twitter as daily.

They may be looking for volunteers to assist with Dell Bridge re-building in due course.

Date of next meeting- 27 September 2021- to include delayed AGM