

Craigiebuckler and Seafield Community Council

Minutes of the Virtual Meeting of Tuesday 6th May 2024

Present.

- William Sell (WS), Cameron Campbell (CC), Craig Melville (CM), Jane Ormerod (JO), Karen Reilly (KR), Margaret Meikle (MM), Keith Watson (KW).
- Councillor Martin Greig (MG), Councillor Ken McLeod (KM), Councillor John Cooke (JC)
- Sergeant Ricky Burr (RB),

Apologies.

Robert Frost (RF), Donna Blyth (DB).

Police Report.

RB's report was emailed to all members for review prior to the meeting. A number of questions were raised as follows:

- KW requested an update on the police follow-up on the circumstances relating to the pedestrian fatality on Seafield Road on 6th March 2024. RB advised that this was with the Procurator Fiscal and consequently the details cannot be shared or discussed at this stage.
Action: RB to share details once it is appropriate to do so along with any action proposed by ACC or the police as a result.
- KW asked if there was any feedback from the Police Scotland survey that was issued to the public a couple of months ago. RB was unaware of the survey.
Action: KW undertook to try and find the details and share them.
- CM referred to the part of the police report which stated, 'There are the usual low level collision reports across the Community Council area on various roads, most meeting the non-attendance criteria for officers not to attend'. He asked if it was possible to identify the locations in future reports so that any 'hot spots' could be identified e.g. the pedestrian refuge adjacent to the BP garage on Springfield Road.
Action: RB to include additional details in his report where possible.

Minutes of the Virtual Meeting of 5th March and 2nd April 2024

- The minutes of the meeting of 5th March (which were issued shortly before the meeting on 2nd April) were adopted on a proposal by CM, seconded by CC.
- The minutes of the last meeting on 2nd April were similarly adopted on a proposal by CM, seconded by CC.

Treasurer's Report

CC reported that on the 30th of April, the CSCC received the grant of £1077.54 for the calendar year 2024 from ACC. This sum is available immediately along with the previous balance of £663.88 making a total of **£1741.42**.

CC went on to advise attendees that the CSCC accounts were subject to an independent audit by Catherine McKay and were approved with very positive feedback. The accounts were forwarded to Karen Finch in ACC and the receipt had been acknowledged but no further comment or feedback has been received to-date. It was agreed that a payment of £30.00 should be made to Catherine McKay to cover the audit.

CC noted that the following expenditure/commitments are still pending:

- Zurich Insurance at a cost of £97.20 (to be reimbursed to WS).

- Zoom Video Conferencing account renewal on/by 23rd July at a cost of £129.90. It was agreed to review this in June as there is a possibility that the CSCC could become dormant in October depending on membership.

It was noted that Ken Petrie, the Minister at Craigiebuckler Church was due to retire and all present agreed that it would be appropriate to present him with a retirement gift on behalf of the CSCC. It was agreed that an Aberdeen Performing Arts voucher to the value of £40 would be appropriate and well received. CC undertook to organise this.

A discussion followed to canvass ideas for community projects and whilst it was still relatively early in the year, the following were agreed:

- Litter Bins in Johnston Gardens – at total of 6 bins (five in the gardens and one in the car park) to be replaced. Cost/bin range from £100 to £300. All present agreed that the CSCC could donate £300, but further details were required which MG undertook to obtain. Given the agreement in principle, email approval by CSCC members will be appropriate once the details are available to avoid unnecessary delays.
- Dog Waste Bags and dispensers - all present agreed to an expenditure of +/- £40 to cover the cost of replacement bags and dispensers in the area.
- All present were requested to provide further ideas and suggestions at the June meeting for consideration.

Actions (CC):

- *Arrange payment of £30.00 to Catherine McKay.*
- *Reimburse WS for £97.20 for the community council insurance.*
- *Zoom renewal to be reviewed and discussed at the June meeting.*
- *Replacement dog waste bags and dispensers to be purchased.*

Actions (MG):

- *Obtain further details of the Johnston Garden bin replacement and issue a note to CSCC members for approval by email.*

Outstanding Actions from April Meeting:

WS and CC are to agree a date w/c 13/05 to arrange electronic banking at the bank.

Correspondence.

WS reported that all emailed items of correspondence had been forwarded to the membership.

Matters arising from the Virtual Meeting of Tuesday 2nd April 2024

1. Following the Fatal RTC on Seafield Road on 6th March involving a 68-year-old man, can we be informed of the outcome of Police enquiries when they are available and is any action proposed by the Police/Council as a result?

Covered in Police Section

2. Computers in the Airyhall Library are being left on. MG confirmed follow-up.

Planning Officer's Report.

- Treetops Development

Concern was raised by MG concerning the volume of trees that had been removed by Malcolm Allan (MA) in the Treetops site. An ACC inspection was subsequently requested, and it was identified that MA are in breach of their planning permission and a Tree Preservation Order (TPO).

It was noted that MA had previously breached a TPO and planning permission when the hotel was demolished, and the site was cleared a couple of years ago. No enforcement action was taken following the first breach and ACC are not proposing enforcement action for this second breach.

Those present were very disappointed that this should have been allowed to happen, not once but twice and the consensus view was that enforcement action should be pursued. It was subsequently agreed that WS would follow-up directly with David Dunne, Chief Officer for Strategic Planning in ACC to establish the details.

Post meeting note – this was subsequently completed by email on 13th May 2024. A response is awaited.

CM asked if Scottish Forestry (SF) had any involvement/jurisdiction and MG agreed to follow-up.

Actions:

- *WS to keep on the agenda for discussion at the next CSCC meeting in June.*
- *MG to establish if SF have any involvement in this area.*

- Hutton Institute and Link Road Trees

Several questions were raised concerning the tree removal associated with the development. MG subsequently followed up with Hutton on 8th May and the queries and their responses are included in Blue below the corresponding query:

- 1) **Yew Trees in Field South of Institute;** CSCC asked about a group of three yew trees which are being stored next to the new access round from the institute down to Countesswells Road. It looks like they have been uprooted from the site of the new road and that they will be replanted. Since they are valued yew trees, CSCC asked about the future of these trees, in the hope that they will be sensitively and carefully replanted in an appropriate location.
When the tree felling operations were being undertaken it was identified that these yew trees could be retained and replanted. Once the road construction works are completed these three trees will be replanted on the campus.
- 2) **Felled Trees Next to Car Park** - CSCC asked about large tree stumps next to the refurbished car park - close to the main building. The felled trees were mature and healthy and felling them does not seem to be advantageous. CSCC ask for the reasons for felling.
These trees were felled following advice from our tree consultants and the necessary permissions were granted before this work was undertaken. The key reason for their removal was due to the condition of the trees becoming a health and safety risk, along with the root bowl of the trees being impacted by the car park development. The three tree stumps have been retained to allow one of our colleagues who is a chainsaw carver to create carvings in keeping with the campus.
- 3) **Felling of Trees Near Couper's Pond** - CSCC regret very much the removal of so many mature, healthy trees from the west side of the former Treetops Hotel site. This is next to

the Macaulay Development's site around Couper's Pond. Some of these felled trees did not have permission to be felled. They did not have planning consent. Also, the site has a Tree Protection Order in place. The community council wanted to check that none of the unauthorised felling took place on Macaulay or Hutton land. They would be grateful for the Hutton and Macaulay reaction to the tree felling in the Treetops site.

The trees that were felled were not on the Institute campus and as this is an unrelated development we cannot comment on these activities.

It should however be noted that we will be felling two beech trees in the triangular field (on the West side of Macaulay Drive), and a poplar tree that is overhanging the pond will be crown lifted. This is to reduce the risk of it falling into the pond. We have submitted the necessary application to the Council for this work as the trees are covered by a Tree Preservation Order and permissions have been granted to allow this work to be undertaken.

- 4) **Wooded field on west side of Macaulay Drive at corner of Countesswells Road -** CSCC also noted that the small, wooded field at the corner of Macaulay Drive and Countesswells Road has been enclosed by preventing through access by walkers. The access point onto Macaulay Drive has been fenced off. They would appreciate any information on future plantings in this field. Will there be more specimen trees planted here? Is it going to be a special area for nurturing specimen trees etc? Any feedback would be welcome.

We have been working on filling in the gaps that have been created in the hedge by users of this area. We have had several attempts at planting to fill the gap before the fencing was put in place. Future plans for this area are to fell the two diseased beech trees, as highlighted in point three above, plant at least 2 replacement trees as per the conditions of the TPO and to create a wildflower meadow by planting native wildflowers. Walkers can continue to obtain full access to this area through the access gates via Macaulay Grange.

Matters for Discussion with Ward Councillors.

- 1) **Tree Planting in CSCC Area -** In the Feb. '24 meeting we recorded the following minute:
'KW commented on the number of trees that had been felled in the area i.e. Hutton Link Road, Tree Tops, Hazledene Road, Hazlehead Park, the large Cypresses opposite Craigiebuckler Church etc. He asked if the Council had a policy of replanting. MG advised that those trees felled very recently along Hazledene Road would be replanted with a variety that would reach screening height in 3-5 years. He went on to say that the Council were committed to planting a million trees in 10 years and there are areas that would benefit from planting in our area e.g. behind Springfield Avenue.'

KW requested an update from the Ward Councillors on the status of this tree planting commitment from ACC and whether there are any specific plans for this area and timescale?

MG advised that the Hazledene Road/Queens Road triangle was replanted with hundreds of broadleaf native trees. These are 2-year-old small trees and spaced at about 2.5 metres. These fresh plantings will allow for a more appropriate, permanent woodland to develop. An estimated 500 saplings will be planted which is five times the previous number of trees. They are smaller in size than the previous trees and more suited to our local environment. The new trees will grow to provide screening and cover in about 3 to 5 years. These native trees will be more resistant to high winds and will improve biodiversity.

Regarding the commitment to planting 1million trees in the city over ten years, MG advised that most of these will be in the more outlying open spaces and woodland areas but there will also be more trees in suburban and city centre areas. He invited the CSCC members to make proposals on areas within the CS community that would benefit from tree planting.

Action: CSCC members to propose areas within the CS area that would benefit from tree planting and this can be directed to the relevant department within ACC for consideration.

CM highlighted that there were several Apple Trees in the Hazlehead Nursery that had been there for some time. He enquired if these could be planted in the Springfield Meadows. MG agreed to follow-up but highlighted that there had been concerns expressed by some members of the community that this area should be kept open for safety and security reasons.

Action: MG to establish if the trees are available.

2) **Path Upgrades** - KW requested an update from Ward Councillors on the status of the path upgrades in the area.

MG advised that the intended work so far has been actioned through available budgets and there is a long wish list for further upgrading and repairs. MG has added to this list and campaigned for inclusion and for prioritising to influence the planning for future work which will be programmed based on resource gradually becoming available in the future.

KW highlighted the following that he felt should be a priority:

- The path between Springfield Road and the Rubislaw Park Care Home.
- The path around Walker Dam from Springfield Road to Kemnay Place,
- The short path from the Rubislaw Park Care Home to Johnstone Gardens.
- Extension of the new path from Springfield Meadows to the back of Aldi,

It was agreed that it would be helpful to have a prioritised list from Community Councillors for consideration as and when funds/budgets become available.

Action: CSCC Members to propose a prioritised list of path upgrades in the area.

3) **Vehicle Speeding & Traffic Safety in the Area**

MG issued an email on 3rd May to all CSCC Members with details of the speed survey that was completed using the Black Cat Radar over a period of 12 days in February 2024. He advised that the analysis evidenced an average speed rise and as a result the details have been sent to the Police for further consideration.

The following comment was given by the Council:

"Recent speed surveys have been carried out with the results attached for your information. As the data shows a slight increase in speed compared to previous surveys, these results have been sent to both the local policing unit for assessment as to whether this site qualifies for particular attention as and when resources permit and also the Scottish Safety Camera Partnership to assess whether they would consider the site for a mobile camera. If this site falls within the criteria laid down by the guidance for enforcement, then it may be possible to add this site to the existing sites within the City."

MG advised that in addition to contacting the Police for their feedback and help, he has also been in discussions with the Council team about any further action that can be taken.

He undertook to report back to the CSCC.

Action: MG to provide update as and when available.

- 4) **Road Markings in Vicinity of BP Garage** - At the same time as the Black Cat Radar survey was completed in February '24 the ACC Roads Department highlighted the need to extend yellow 'no waiting' lines and refresh road markings around the busy junctions in/adjacent to the BP Garage. KW asked if there was a timescale for this remedial work.

MG advised that he had followed up the concern and was advised by the Roads Team that the current configuration of markings is adequate. Repainting of road markings will be carried out as and when resources allow.

- 5) **Craigton Road Mobile Speed Camera** - KW highlighted the recent press coverage of the new mobile speed camera in Craigton Road. The press article mentioned that 30mph stickers will also be attached to residents' wheelie bins and he enquired if there were plans to issue these to other streets in our area as it would be a pro-active positive measure in the absence of proper speed limit signage?

MG advised that these could probably be made available if residents could be persuaded to attach them to their bins.

- 6) **Deer Incident on Wednesday 1st May** - a deer had been struck and killed adjacent to the pedestrian island refuge at the BP Filling Station on Springfield Road. KW highlighted that there is a triangular warning sign for Ducks on the lamppost adjacent to Craigiebuckler Church and enquired whether there should be deer warning signs too when considering that there are a lot of deer in the area and the risk to traffic. MG advised that the decision to install these warning signs was dependent on the number of incidents and that he was aware of another deer incident on Springfield Road. A request for signage has been made and the outcome will be relayed in due course.

Action: MG to relay the outcome of the request for deer warning signs once known.

- 7) **Invisible DNA** – KW asked if there were any plans to use the Invisible DNA to combat the issue of rogue motorbike and e-bike riders that plague the area. RB had previously responded to this question by email as follows:
The Invisible DNA is a trial, as such there are limited officers trained across the city, none of which are based at Whinhill CPT.

Before full scale training to officers, there will be evaluation process on the trials to establish how successful it has been, as I am not part of this trial, I have no further details regarding it, other than what is in the public domain.

I appreciate it would be a good opportunity, however trained officers are tasked via the control room, when incidents are ongoing as it would not be a practical use of the finite resources to have them waiting in an area on the off chance that bikes are active

- 8) **BP Filling Station Island Refuge Lighting Light Standard in Springfield Rd** – MG has been pushing for the replacement street light column to be installed after the incident on 19th December 2024 where the island refuge was run over by a car and the lamp standard and one of the keep left signs were destroyed. He advised that an update had been obtained from the lighting team on 11th April and that the repair work has been programmed. The following update was provided along with some explanation for the delays;

'At present we have fitted retroreflective weebol bollards; an upgrade from before, this

ensures current safety levels. I will have the new illuminated pedestrian light up within the next few weeks. Sorry for any delay still catching up from winter and trying to get the A92 works done asap. We are making great headway and am hoping to have a few jobs done in that area in May. Again, I apologize for any inconvenience but, I'm trying to keep the work in condensed areas to prevent jumping all over the town and get more bang for my buck.'

- 9) **Footpath at the bottom of Seafield Road Footpath** - CM highlighted that there was still a temporary cover in place. MG advised that there was ongoing work in this area and that this cover would probably be removed on completion of this.
- 10) **Broken fence Along Kepplestone Buildings** – CM highlighted that there was a broken boundary fence on Anderson Drive. MG advised that this was part of the Stewart Milne Estate and that it can sometimes be difficult following up with the Factors. He agreed to check and revert.
Action: MG to check the status of the fence and revert.

A.O.C.B.

- WS advised the meeting that the CSCC summer break would be in July.
- There being no further business, WS thanked all present for their attendance and declared the meeting closed.

Date of Next Meeting.

- Tuesday 4th June online at 7.00 pm.