

Locality committees labelled a 'nonsense'

The city council's locality committees have been labelled "a nonsense" after it emerged they don't even have the authority to put up new signposts.

A call to put up welcome signs in Craiglockhart has been kicked into the long grass after the South West Locality Committee heard fears that backing the campaign could open the floodgates for communities wanting to put up the notices.



Cllr Gavin Corbett

Green Cllr Gavin Corbett tabled a motion at the south west locality committee asking for support for the ability to put up welcome signs in Craiglockhart.

Cllr Corbett said: "The community council has wanted for some time to put some signs up – it's going to raise some funds itself. I thought it would be pretty straightforward if it meets the criteria.

“Unfortunately the feedback is that we cannot do that because it’s not a village, it’s a suburb. It should be a reasonable thing for a locality to be able to put up some welcome signs. We are just asking to support the idea that a community council should be able to welcome people to its neighbourhood.”

He added: “I know one of the fears is somehow we can open the floodgates. I don’t see there’s a question of community councils snaking down the road. Even if there is a question of people wanting signs, how bad can that be?”

“We should be encouraging people to put up signs. I do think it would reflect slightly poorly on this committee if we cannot.”

Cllr Corbett gained cross-party support for his motion – but officers spoke out against the logistics.

Locality manager Mike Avery said: “My only concern is that we may run the risk of setting a city-wide precedent that maybe out of the remit of this committee.”

South west locality convener, Cllr Denis Dixon, supported the idea – and agreed to take the issue up with the council’s executive transport committee.

He said: “We are all in agreement that we support this motion and we would like these signs in place.”

“It’s generally a good idea. The problem we have is that it maybe out of our remit. We need to source and find out exactly who may approve this. What I propose to do is take this discussion up with the convener of transport and environment and pinpoint the person who would make that decision.”

But councillors criticised the committee’s lack of power with SNP Cllr David Key labelling the situation “a nonsense”.

He added: “There are branded signs all over Gorgie-Dalry. We

are asking for two signposts in one of our villages or suburbs.

“I agree that if we cannot make a decision on two signposts at this committee, what is the point in this committee?”

Conservative Cllr Phil Doggart added: “I thought the whole purpose of locality committees was we could take a decision that affects the locality. This is a very straightforward low cost minimal impact but good for the neighbourhood.

“It seems we are being hamstrung and it seems very bizarre we have to go back to another committee. It really brings into question the whole question of locality committees if we are not able to take a minimal impact decision – what’s the point?”