

## Minutes of Meeting

Title: Houston Community Council Meeting April 2017

Ref: HCC 04/2017

Location: Carrick Centre, Main St, Houston

Date: 19/04/17

Time: 7:30pm

Sheet: 1 of 8

### Present:

David Dunlop (dd)

Jill Jack (jj)

Jake Fulton (jf)

Gordon Wright (gw)

Elizabeth Dalgetty (ed)

Kathy McFall (km)

Mark Arthur (ma)

Helen Parker (hm)

### Representing:

Houston Community Council (HCC)

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### HCC Position:

Vice Chair

Secretary

### In Attendance

PI Cassie Glass

PC Martin Norwood

PC Brian Dick

### Representing:

Police Scotland (PS)

Police Scotland (PS)

Police Scotland (PS)

### Apologies:

Provost Anne Hall (ah)

John McEvoy (jmc)

John Chambers (jc)

Sharon Chambers (sc)

Carol Murray (cm)

Janet Mason (jm)

Lesley Walker (lw)

### Representing:

Renfrewshire Council (RC)

Houston Community Council (HCC)

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Distribution:

HCC members and uploaded to the  
HCC website and issued to  
Renfrewshire Council

Minutes taken by Jill Jack

Chaired by David Dunlop

### **1.0 Apologies**

Apologies were extended by the above noted people.

### **2.0 Approval of Previous Minutes**

March's minutes were agreed as a true record of that meeting (proposed Kathy McFall and seconded by Mark Arthur) and can subsequently be issued to Renfrewshire Council and uploaded to the HCC website.

### **3.0 Matters Arising from Previous Minutes**

Refer to the HCC action list attached via excel document.

### **4.0 Police Report (PI Glass, PC Norwood and PC Dick left the meeting after giving the Police Report)**

**4.1** PI Glass introduced PC Martin Norwood and PC Brian Dick the new Community Police for Crosslee & Houston starting on 1 April. They will attend HCC meetings going forward. The PCs have a lot of local knowledge and will work both day/ late shifts. This is great news and the PCs have worked previously in this area.

The Co-op and Ardgriffe Park continues to be an area of concern. They will be making visits to local schools.

Summary of 11 offences – 4 detected during reporting period between 15 March–19 April. 4 incidents at Co-op on 14/04. There was a party at a house behind shops and disturbance took place by youths from out with the village. Friday/Saturday nights are the busiest. Police working with Co-op staff on how to challenge under 25's when buying alcohol and how to spot fake ID. Also discussed with Co-op management where alcohol is placed in store. If need be will discuss with Area Manager. Wardens are making regular visits to Shop Retail area and will carry out home visits with parents where necessary.

Summary:

- 1 x attempt theft break-in with attempt to steal from shop
- 1 x cash & electrical goods
- 1 x wheelie bin
- 1 x theft alcohol (culprit out with village)
- 1 x breach of the peace at shop
- 1 x misuse of drugs (cannabis)
- 1 x road traffic offence – careless driving & fail to report
- 2 x vandalism to car window and fire door
- 1 x wilful fire raising – hedge
- 1 x refusal to provide details

**4.2** PI Glass advised Langbank CC bought 40/50 Smart Water kits. Kathy McFall advised that when testing the interest in Houston there was limited response, however, will look into buying signage for certain areas. PI Glass advised villages are vulnerable - criminals will target houses with no alarm, high value cars, car keys left lying on a table in hall and keys left in back doors make it easy for crime to take place.

**4.3** HCC Facebook page – recent comments from some residents suggesting taking matters into their own hands – PI Glass reiterated to leave to the Police. There is a Johnstone Police twitter account and Renfrewshire Police fb page for information.

**4.4** PI Glass advised that police are doing best with resources and have an interlink with Linwood and work closely with the fire department.

**4.5** PI Glass spoke with Galaxy dancer lead who is keen to put activities in place as a diversion for older children.

**4.6** PI Glass advised that majority of disturbances are not from village kids and they have no issue in pulling resources from other areas to send out a clear message.

**4.7** Jake advised problem with litter persists in Houston and now we have police on the beat can this be moved up the agenda? Police advised plans in place to talk to Head Teachers of schools w/c 24/04 to raise awareness and if necessary can place a CCTV van at shop area. Funding hire of van would need to go through Karen Keane.

### **5.0 Councillor's Report**

Councillor Allan Noon has now retired and local elections are in May. Therefore in the purdah pre-election period.

### **6.0 Treasurer's Report**

Please refer to Appendix A for the Treasurers Monthly Report with the following items noted:

**6.1** The closing account balance sits at £4037 which includes expenditure of compost, containers, jubilee clips, planters, bowser and plants.

## **7.0 Secretary Report**

Please refer to Appendix B for the Secretary report with the following items noted:

### **7.1 Houston Hounds - Resident complaint re Hounds on public roads/pavements**

Encountered 30-40 hounds on Houston public roads/pavements on 20 March. The hounds appeared out of control with only 2 handlers present. Approx 10 hounds jumped on residents. The hounds did not respond to handler recall. The walkers voiced their concern to be told "Well that's what happens when you are out walking".

HCC wrote to Chairman of Lanarkshire & Renfrewshire Foxhounds requesting hounds kept under control at all times when on public roads and review takes place to give the support and training to handlers involved. Responded with an apology and advised residents in no danger. Invitation to constituents and council members to visit kennels. The residents declined invite and are taking the matter to the dog warden who is currently investigating.

### **7.2 Virgin Media**

Resident George Doak requested advice & support for the relocation of a cable box Virgin positioned opposite his house on pavement adjacent to J. Fleming Bowling Club. Request to move to a less obtrusive location (installed with no notice to residents). Forwarded to Renfrewshire Council and Maureen Wallace who has passed on Complaints procedure details.

Maureen Wallace from the Virgin Media Expansion Team is the Community Liaison Officer for Virgin Media. Maureen is our dedicated Community Liaison Officer and requested attendance at our next HCC meetings. Members agreed not an item for our agenda and Maureen has been informed.

### **7.3 Keep Scotland Beautiful**

Congratulations to Jake Fulton who has won the Clean Up Scotland Hero of the Month. Heroes take part in litter picking in a way that's significant to their community and local environment. Each Clean Up Scotland hero is awarded a certificate, their own litter picking equipment and a news story on our website plus local newspapers too. Meeting Nicola Turner Community Project Officers on 20/04 when award will be presented. Well done on your award Jake and thanks for helping to keep Scotland beautiful.

#### **7.4 Questioning Houston Election Candidates**

Elections for Renfrewshire Council take place on 4 May. Due to a number of local concerns, John McE would like to give Houston residents an opportunity to question the candidates. Current issues include the potential massive housing developments at Woodend House and Woodfoot Cottage, which both the director of housing and planning at Renfrewshire Council and the property developer have declined to give details of, the possibility of the Fleming Road development being expanded to Killallan Road, and Renfrewshire Council's refusal to engage with us over last year's vote on reducing traffic speeds.

A public meeting would give the Houston community a rare opportunity to determine the views of potential Renfrewshire Councillors on these and whatever other issues they consider important.

After discussion HCC members agreed that there is insufficient time to organise a separate meeting for Houston. Elizabeth will submit a post to the fb page to let members know that we will not be holding a pre-election Q&A. Also to contact the 3 candidates that agreed to attend and to thank them for offering to participate. Elizabeth will also speak to Kirsty from Linwood CDT to thank her for posting the recording of Q&A in Linwood.

#### **7.5 Facebook**

Jack Devlin from Crosslee made contact on 18/04 to express his concern at the number of negative Facebook posts that are on our site. He has stayed in Houston for 30 years and he has never experienced any negativity and there are so many good things happening in Houston that we should be telling our community about. He checked other Community Council sites ie Bridge of Weir, Brookfield etc and no negativity is being reported on their sites. We stay in a beautiful village with so many residents giving up their time to make it a lovely place to stay.

HCC members agreed for Kathy to review guidelines for posting on our fb page and look at other CC sites. Also to review administration which is very time consuming for approvers ie some posts to be approved with no option for commentary.

#### **7.6 Gryfebank Woodland**

Resident contacted HCC re state of woods between Gryfebank Ave and the bridge over the River Gryffe. There is a path through the woods which is constantly used and is in a dreadful state when it rains. There is also a problem with the woods as there appears to be indiscriminate cutting down of trees and the debris left and not removed. The area is beginning to look a complete mess. A small number of trees are in a dangerous state which could sensibly be removed. What, if anything, can be done and who actually owns the ground?

Jill to contact Janet Mason who will hopefully be able to give a steer on the ownership of the land due to work she has done to date on the Houston Yew.

## **8.0 Chairperson Report**

Please refer to appendix C for full report with the following points noted:

**8.1** Circulated updated copy of our Asset Register to all members.

**8.2** Houston resident Mr Eric Logan gave John McE a copy of the responses he received from Renfrewshire Council and Houghton Planning to his request for further information about the proposed developments at Woodend House and Woodfoot Cottage. Both parties claimed that they did not know details like the number houses or the size of the houses that Houghton Planning is proposing to build. I have liaised with David, Mark and John over our next course of action and David will lead the discussion at this meeting. See separate minute notes reference 11.

**8.3** In response to a request by Houston resident, Lorna Dunlop, and in light of the concerns expressed on our Facebook page I wrote to McGill's Buses on 7 April asking them to reconsider the recent changes to the bus timetables. To date they have not responded.

**8.4** Following some of the intemperate posts and comments on our Facebook I have forwarded some of these to our Community Police Inspector for information.

**8.5** Received a request from Fiona Beattie for two stalls at the Houston Agricultural Show, which I referred to Janet.

**8.6** Corresponded with John Wallace, Renfrewshire Council Lighting Manager re assessing safety of the lampposts in Crosslee on which we plan to place additional flower planters if we are successful in our LAC grant application.

## **9.0 Unpaid Workers**

Karen Keane did not attend meeting. PI Glass said if need support getting in touch with Karen to let her know.

### **10.0 Update on Flowers/Planters**

Gordon and Jake provided update. Plants/shrubs to be bought in time for May planting. Areas for planting to be sprayed with weed killer. Proposal for planting at main roundabout hit with objections. Option to plant behind fencing at roundabout as alternative.

HCC agreed for purchase of wild flower seeds for beds and bulk buy bulbs.

Jake/Hamish to agree number/type of plants for each of the bedding areas to purchase and Bee Happy to agree watering programme once plants in situ.

### **11.0 Planning Application for Woodend and Woodfoot**

See attached Appendix D which David prepared on commentary for Renfrewshire Local Development Plan Main Issues Report.

#### **12.1 David lead discussion:**

There is little or no information on Woodend and Woodfoot plans for development. Builders have until 10/05 to decide to take forward as an application.

Intention to put in a tight objection. Issues report extended deadline to 30/05.

A737 is breaking up and radical investment is required.

Expectation by RC for population increase of 5% by 2023 is nonsense.

Don't need to build on greenbelt. Should be finishing Dargavel village and Braehead developments. All RC see is income on housing and developers money on house sales. There is also a need for affordable housing and use of Brownfield sites for new build.

Some areas of Houston are looking tired and in need of refurbishment.

**12.2** Mark keen to explore pros and cons of extending conservation area of village.

Conservation does not suit all due to planning which can be negative. He will speak to conservation architect on what we could do to hold things up for developers.

Building in conservation area will take longer to build/costly and builder may think twice.

Timescales could be years ahead and builders are pitching in to get any available land. Potential for 1200 houses around village – impact on schools a concern.

**12.3** Mark advised that Russell Gibb is a key stakeholder to get on board who has a wealth of knowledge. The Carrick Centre and Village hall were made listed to put obstacles in the way of developers.

**12.4** Intention to join up with other CCs within rural villages and go forward as a united group to stop development. John McE to contact other Chairpersons (Bridge of Weir, Brookfield, Elderslie and Kilbarchan)

### **13.0 Any Other Business**

**13.1** Elizabeth asked if anyone knew about the trees that had been cut down at the bus stop at St Fillans.

Concern raised that part of conservation area and planning permission required.

HCC members agreed to leave unless complaints received from residents.

### **Date and time of next meeting**

Wednesday 17 May 2017 at 7:30pm in Carrick Centre