

Minutes of Meeting

Title: Houston Community Council Meeting Jan 2018

Ref: HCC 1/2018

Location: Carrick Centre, Main St, Houston

Date: 17/01/18

Time: 7:30pm

Sheet: 1 of 7

Present:

John McEvoy (JMCE)
Jill Jack (jj)
David Dunlop (dd)
John Chambers (jc)
Sharon Chambers (sc)
Kathy McFall (km)
Jake Fulton (jf)
Gordon Wright (gw)
Liam Smith (ls)
Janet Mason (jm)
Elizabeth Dalgetty (ed)
Carol Murray (cm)

Representing:

Houston Community Council (HCC)
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HCC Position:

Chair
Secretary
Vice Chair
Treasurer

In Attendance

PC Martin Norwood
PC Brian Dick
Cllr Audrey Doig
Cllr Jim Sheridan
Jan Hoskin
Neil Hoskin
J Maxwell
David McCrae
June McCrae
Sharon Miller
Alan Borthwick
Iris Borthwick

Representing:

Police Scotland (PS)
Police Scotland (PS)
Renfrewshire Council (RC)
Renfrewshire Council (RC)
Resident
Resident
Resident
Resident
Resident
Resident
Resident
Resident

Apologies:

Mark Arthur (ma)
Helen Parker (hp)
Cllr Scott Kerr (sk)

Representing:

Houston Community Council (HCC)
Houston Community Council (HCC)
Renfrewshire Council (RC)
HCC members and uploaded to the
HCC website and issued to

Distribution: Renfrewshire Council
Chaired by John McEvoy

1.0 Apologies

Apologies were extended by the above noted people.

2.0 Approval of Previous Minutes

Approval of November minutes by Gordon Wright and seconded by Janet Mason.

3.0 Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

Refer to the HCC action list attached via excel document.

4.0 Vodaphone Mast Magnus Road

4.1 Residents from Craighends Estate attended meeting with a view to obtaining HCC support to petition the removal of phone mast in Magnus Rd to a less obtrusive area.

4.2 June McCrae advised 225 signatures to date and have support of MSP Tom Arthur and MSP Gavin Newlands plus Local Councillors. Also, to get MSP Derek McKay on board.

4.3 Concern that mobile phone companies do not need permission to erect masts due to change in law/planning. Relaxed laws in place to increase phone coverage. Only 4 residents (within 25 yards of mast) advised by letter of mast being erected. There is a democratic deficit that there is no consultation with the local community.

4.4 John McE confirmed himself and David have been in communication with residents twice and initial canvassing of opinions re mast erection was split with some people in favour of it. Submission was made to council with no objection. David advised initial information was limited and vague when first presented. Sectional diagram didn't give the full scale. This was approved under current legislation.

4.5 Concern raised re radiation and children playing close by mast plus environmental issues and impacts on houses.

4.6 Residents requested review of other sites considered from RC, which amounted to private landowners not responding.

4.7 HCC and Local Councillors advised they do not have technical expertise to advise if mast can be moved.

4.8 Cllr Sheridan advised motion passed at last full council meeting to challenge utility companies. Cannot allow multinational companies to do as they like – need to challenge as they are ignoring local opinion. Spoken to colleagues in Local Parliament and must question rationale and impact on community.

4.9 Cllr Audrey Doig advised to contact Audit & Scrutiny Board as more chance of being heard. Need to review 6mths after decision made ie March 2018. Masts have been moved in the past. The ideal would be for the local petition to go to Parliament/Holyrood and argue national case. At least 1000+ signatures required.

4.10 Discussion took place that Vodaphone have gone for large mast instead of erecting smaller masts discreetly in surrounding area due to cost.

4.11 Strategy:

Need to publicise petition. Residents to adopt door to door strategy to canvas support. The more people involved the better and to approach all MSPs at Scottish Parliament to change legislation.

Consider costs of independent assessment being carried out.

Approach Vodaphone directly to complain.

As part of media campaign contact the Advertiser to submit article for public support.

Contact Laura Forsyth at Daily Express.

Leave petitions in local shops.

Kathy agreed to put on HCC fb page (June to supply wording).

Involve other Local Community Councils.

Suggested searching fb for technical expertise re moving mast.

Get support of all Local Councillors (3 so far)

Place petition on other Renfrewshire fb pages to form alliances.

Arrange petition group to be at Co-op over a weekend to gain signatures (publicise first).

HCC agreed to support the Resident Action Group and meet offline w/c 22/01 (John McE, Kathy, David, Jake and Cllr Jim Sheridan)

5.0 Police Report (PC Norwood and PC Dick left the meeting after discussion had taken place.

5.1 Summary of 13 offences – 7 detected during reporting period between 16/11 – 17/1

Summary:

3 x theft - mobile phone reported stolen from property (possibly tradesman undertaking works). Theft of 2 sets of car keys from house party. Crate of beer stolen from Co-op.

1 x drug offences - Teenager found in possession of herbal cannabis, reported to PF

1 x vandalism - Window pane smashed at St Fillans Church

6 x road traffic offences – Male reported for 4 x RTA offences inc driving without insurance, 1 x drink driving, 1 x driving using mobile phone and 1 x leaving scene of accident, 1 x careless driving Houston Rd Crosslee when Lolly pop lady hit by wing mirror.

1 x common assault – domestic incident

1 x fraud – paid £1150 to fit doors and bannister but work never carried out.

5.2 Crime and Trends – Shoplifting continues to be an issue at the Co-op.

5.3 Proactive patrols to continue in area to assist in preventing break ins due to common spike in crimes of this nature at this time of year.

5.4 Further speed checks to be carried out in problem areas due to previous and ongoing complaints. Proactive high visibility patrols with assistance of the Road Traffic Dept and core shift personnel.

5.5 Abandoned car on Barrochan Rd will be moved shortly (owner stays in Bridge of Weir)

5.6 Continuing to visit schools re littering and supporting with litter patrols.

6.0 Local Councillor Reports

Cllr Jim Sheridan

6.1 Motion proposed at the last full Council Meeting on 21/12. Councillor Colin McCulloch seconded the proposal and it was unanimously supported. "That this council reviews our current planning procedures to ensure local democracy is paramount and that the best interests of our communities and commerce are protected. Reaffirm communication, transparency and accountability will be at the core of the process. Utility companies defined planned timetables to form part of the application with effective penalties in place. Should statutory legislation be necessary to achieve these objectives then political representation should be made".

6.2 Deafhillock – RC Directors of Roads admitted mistakes made and robust planning process required and must learn from mistakes. Need to make sure this is implemented. Councillors to keep pressure on to make sure this happens.

6.3 Request submitted to resurface North Street.

6.4 McGills X7 services cut. Discussed with company and unable to change services due to operating costs.

6.5 There will be new refuse bin collections. Going from a 2 to 3-week cycle.

Cllr Audrey Doig

6.6 Brierie Hills portable speed sensory device showed minimum road speed <20mph and highest 29mph. Main St is also on list to get portable device.

6.7 Deafhillock widening of slip road to A737 will commence March/April for 3 to 4 weeks.

6.8 Glasgow Airport flight path review – more information required.

6.9 All 5 green belt building proposals rejected.

7.0 Treasurers Report

7.1 Income and expenditure covered for the period 13/11 to 15/01. Opening balance £4791. Income £2582 which includes Bee Happy donations, sponsorship, RC admin grant, HMRC repayment. Expenditure £1548 including Secretary, insurance, smart water, yew tree, tree felling, printing, winter bedding plants, Miller security, buckets and jubilee clips. Closing balance £5825.

7.2 Items not included in bank statement: Expenditure – Glow sticks £193, DJ £200, kids gifts £40. Income - Sponsorship Fox n Hounds £540, Houston Inn £540 and Main St £180, glow stick sales £631, bucket collection £258 to date, donation National Women's Register £35 and Bee Happy donations £50.

7.3 John C confirmed that he will itemise Bee Happy subscriptions and donations separately on monthly accounts.

8.0 Secretary Report

8.1 HCC meetings – Discussion took place on how to reduce time of meetings so that members can get home at a decent time. It was decided that changing start time to 7pm may cause problems for working members and no guarantee meeting would finish earlier. It was suggested allocating times to agenda items and having a 20min maximum allocation at the start of the meeting for any visiting residents. Chair will ensure that times are adhered to.

9.0 Chairperson Report

9.1 Our second Christmas lights switch-on was even better than the first, with an estimated 2000+ residents attending. We raised a lot of money on the night as John has detailed in his report. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mark for all the work he did in making the event such a great success.

9.2 Along with Helen, attended Renfrewshire Community Council Forum AGM and meeting in November. New management committee appointed. Office bearers were unchanged from last year. There was a presentation by representatives of Glasgow Airport setting out the strategic plan for future access to the airport. There was no mention of the proposed new flight paths that have recently come to light.

9.3 Attended Public Meeting organised by Johnstone Business Consortium and Johnstone Community Council to discuss Renfrewshire Council's proposal to introduce car parking charges in Johnstone. The main pressure on car parking spaces in the town appears to be commuters travelling to Johnstone from Paisley so that can park there free of charge and catch the train. Submitted our response pointing out the adverse effects on Houston and asking that the Council reverse this decision.

9.4 Along with David was in communication with June McCrae who asked that the Community Council become involved in organising a campaign to have the new telecommunications mast in Magnus Road removed. Responded that while we would welcome June at our next meeting to discuss this we could not become involved since there was no clear legal way to challenge the decision. Agreed with other Facebook page administrators that we allow June to put link to petition on our page, but that it would not be a HCC initiative. Renfrewshire Council has also confirmed that the mast was erected legally and that a recent change in the law means that planning permission is no longer required for masts of this nature. Agreed at this meeting that Resident Action Group be set up with several HCC members becoming involved (See item 4.11)

9.5 Along with David prepared and sent submission to the Parliamentary Boundaries Commission Scotland asking that they review their plan to include Houston in the new Westminster constituency of Renfrewshire West and include us instead in the new constituency of Inverclyde and Erskine.

9.6 Suggested to Deirdre MacLean of Langbank Community Council and Mary McElhinney who chairs the Renfrewshire Community Council Forum that we pursue Public realm improvement levies in relation to any future developments in our areas. Both reacted positively.

9.7 Dorothy Kerr Renfrewshire Council wrote to advise that my request for additional bus shelters on Fulton Drive and Magnus Road could not be actioned because the contract for bus shelters had not yet been concluded. At the time of writing she did not know when the contracts would be awarded. To check if second hand ones available.

9.8 Along with Gordon, completed Janet's nomination for the Provost's Community Volunteer of the Year Award and receipt has been acknowledged. We await the outcome and hope that Janet can match Jake's success of last year.

9.9 Corresponded with Dorothy Kerr, Service Co-ordination Manager at Renfrewshire Council over the works at Deafhillock roundabout and the planned work at the slip road from Barrochan Road to the A737. I asked her to confirm that the appropriate lessons had been learned following the fiasco at Deafhillock, but unfortunately, she has not done this.

9.10 I invited Dorothy Kerr or a member of her team to attend tonight's meeting to give us details about the widening of the A737 slip road, but nobody was available. Somebody from the team will attend our February meeting.

9.11 Reported numerous street light that were unlit. There appears to be some dispute between Renfrewshire Council and Virgin Media over who is responsible for the ones close to the Crosslee shops being unlit for a protracted period.

9.12 Unfortunately Lesley Walker has resigned from the community council due to the pressure of other commitments. She has said that she can continue to organise the Bee Happy subscriptions but that we will now need another address for them to be sent to. Have asked Lesley to contact me separately to discuss. Also, if any suggestions for new members please let John know.

10.0 Update on Craigends Yew

10.1 In plan for unpaid workers to continue to work on area. Further signage to be erected showing way to yew tree and plinth to be fixed.

10.2 Bee Happy have also advised they would be willing to assist with works on Yew Tree under direction from a specialist.

11.0 Update on Planters/Flowers

11.1 Gardening sub-committee to look at cost of benches, decide on location and how to secure to the ground.

11.1 Bee Happy in planning stage for 2018. Projects will include bug hotels, extension of wild flower beds, development of Glenartnay site, herb planter, engagement with local schools and local gardening groups, glow for gold garden, planting Scottish bluebells.

11.2 Watch out for spring bulbs starting to appear throughout Houston.

12.0 Christmas Light Switch on Review

12.1 HCC commended Mark for the copious amount of work and planning that he put in to a very successful Christmas event for 2017. Well done and thank you.

12.2 Going forward a sub committee will be formed to support Mark with event planning ie Sharon, Jake, Gordon, Janet John McE, Liam and John C.

12.3 The subcommittee will carry out a review of the 2017 Christmas Light Switch on and decide on the date for the 2018 event.

12.4 Initial feedback to look at sponsorship, choir staging/ microphones.

13.0 Projected Closure of Barrochan Rd Slip Road

13.1 Agreed that expertise from HCC lies with John C and Liam who will ask representatives from RC attending next meeting to present plans. If we can establish who will be attending upfront this would be helpful.

14.0 Any Other Business

14.1 Jake mentioned the success of free community Christmas tree and decorations bought and paid for by HCC. Also thank you to residents who donated baubles.

14.2 Kathy noted a well done to the work Houston Improvement Playpark group have done to date with planned improvements to Ardgyffe Park.

14.3 To join HCC fb page there are several questions to be answered. Kathy advised if no response after 2 weeks request is removed and need to reapply.

Meeting closed at 9.45pm. Next Meeting in The Carrick Centre on Wednesday 21 February at 7:30pm.