

**HOUSTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL**



**Title:** Houston Community Council Meeting  
March 2019

**Location:** Carrick Centre, Main, St Houston

**Time:** 7:30pm

**Ref:** HCC/03/2019

**Date:** 20/03/19

**Sheet:** 1 of 6

**Present**

John McEvoy (jmc)  
David Dunlop (dd)  
Janet Mason (jm)  
Kathy McFall (kmf)  
Elizabeth Dalgetty (ed)  
Jake Fulton (jf)  
Nigel Hobbs (nh)  
Gordon Wright  
Sharon Chambers

**Representing**

Houston Community Council  
Houston Community Council  
Houston Community Council  
Houston Community Council  
Houston Community Council  
Houston Community Council  
Houston Community Council  
Houston Community Council  
Houston Community Council

**HCC position**

Chair  
Vice-Chair

**In Attendance**

Jill Jack (jj)  
PC Dick  
PC Clark  
Cllr Jim Sheridan  
Carol Jackson

**Representing**

Houston Community Council Secretary  
Police Scotland (PS)  
Police Scotland (PS)  
Renfrewshire Council (RC)  
Resident

**Apologies**

PC Norwood  
Mr C Johnson  
John Chambers (jc)  
Mark Arthur (ma)  
Carol Murray (cm)  
Cllr Scott Kerr (sk)  
Cllr Audrey Doig (ad)

**Representing**

Police Scotland (PS)  
Gryffe High School (GHS)  
Houston Community Council  
Houston Community Council  
Houston Community Council  
Renfrewshire Council (RC)  
Renfrewshire Council (RC)

**Distribution:** HCC members and uploaded onto HCC website and issued to Renfrewshire Council

**Minutes taken by:** Jill Jack

**Meeting chaired by:** John McEvoy

**1.0 Apologies**

Apologies noted by the people above.

## **2.0 Approval of Previous Minutes**

February minutes approved by Janet Mason and seconded by Nigel Hobbs.

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

Refer to HCC action log.

### **4.0 Police Report**

**4.1** Police Scotland representatives left meeting after police report given.

**4.2** 5 offences with 0 detected during period 20/02 to 20/03. Summary:

3 x theft – 2 x lead stolen from surgery roof, 1 x bicycle

1 x common assault – historical assault dating back to 1962

1 x anti-social – vandalism to garden equipment polytunnel at Houston Primary which was cut with knives

**4.3** Input given at Gryffe High School along with paramedics regarding knife crime and knife incidents.

**4.4** Additional patrols at lunchtimes along with wardens regarding litter. Police are requesting wardens for litter as much as they can.

Jake stated that need to get in about them and charge culprits and there is more that can be done. Discussion took place regarding litter being a local Government problem and school presence makes a big difference.

**4.5** Secretary shared an email from Mr Johnson Head Teacher of Gryffe High School. A lady in South Street was getting her door bell rung. Mr Johnson saw it on HCC fb page and the next day he visited the lady to see what was happening. They had a great conversation and sat in her house as pupils from the school went past. He noticed some pupils and approached them the following day, and this then led to conversations with other pupils. He advised year group assemblies and they were horrified that anyone would do such a thing. Following further interviews, they identified 2 pupils who were mainly responsible and one who was just there.

The parents of all were contacted – one parent was brought into school and another parent, himself horrified, following discussion offered to take his son round to apologise, which he did.

Mr Johnson revisited the lady, who was happy with actions, and he will visit her every so often to ensure all is well.

The Community Police in attendance confirmed they provided support regarding this issue too.

**4.6** Culprit who set fire to Coop not charged yet, but this will be actioned. Police confirmed they received Jake's photo re vandalism.

**4.7** Resident Carol Jackson raised issue of speeding on Main St which is dangerous.

**4.8** Cllr Sheridan advised that pedestrian crossing on approach to Deafhillock is too near roundabout and looking for opinion from Police. Advised to email traffic management dept. Will also carry out a site visit and look at road markings.

### **5.0 Speeding on Main St**

**5.1** Resident Carol Jackson advised that speeding along Main St from the Houston Inn is unacceptable, with speeds in excess of 50mph. Real concern with so many young children about.

**5.2** HCC Chair advised this is a topic that is routinely discussed.

**5.3** A residents fence has been broken by cars speeding on numerous occasions, however this had not been reported to the Council. If no fatality or injury it will not get taken further. It must be reported to the Police.

**5.4** It was mentioned that school children have been playing dares on the road and Head Teacher still to be advised.

**5.5** Nigel Hobbs advised he is meeting with PC Dick on 21 March re Community speed watch in which Community volunteers are trained to monitor speeds which acts as a deterrent. If the same person is caught speeding twice, they can be prosecuted, and it tends to be local people. Renfrewshire Police need to participate and there are 8 councils who participate in Scotland. However, if Police don't agree to support, we can do off our own backs with a group of volunteers. To buy equipment would be £400.

**5.6** Cllr Jim Sheridan happy to assist with speeding and litter issues raised.

## **6.0 Local Councillor Reports**

### **Cllr Jim Sheridan**

**6.1** Council finalising budgets.

**6.2** A reshuffle of Senior Management at the Council are now looking into the issue re bin collection which is getting out of hand eg assistance to elderly residents with putting bins on kerbside.

**6.3** Gryffe High School football pitch is in poor condition. Local football clubs have approached Local Councillors to support their campaign to have this facility upgraded. There is an online petition to raise funds to upgrade/replace pitch costing circa £200k. In Renfrewshire Leisure some pitches are underused so maybe an opportunity to facilitate these other pitches.

On Saturday 23 March at 10.30 the parents, players, press and possibly a local celebrity will be there to kick off the campaign. Agreed to post on HCC fb page.

**6.4** Janet Mason asked why no buses last weekend. Mention of roadworks but nothing happening. When questioned SPT at Buchanan St Station they knew nothing about it. Cllr Sheridan advised that the Director of Roads expressed disappointment re SPT.

**6.5** Renfrewshire Leisure are reducing charges for hire of Tweedie Hall for parties, birthdays etc.

## **7.0 Treasurer Report – details taken from report submitted**

**7.1** Income and expenditure covered for period 20/02 – 20/03. Opening balance £14595.

Income £40 made up of Bee Happy annual payments.

Expenditure £1803 made up of Secretary, insurance, land search, retirement gift, hardcore, strimmer, high vis vests, printing, JW grant materials, orchard plants. Closing balance £12831.

Bee Happy balance to date £807.

**7.2** Not included: -Santa Charity Donation -£100.00, Bee Happy donation £40, litter crew find £5 and bulbs -£528.

**7.3** HCC members asked when next grant submission due – John McE advised deadline end of April. Sub committees for Christmas light switch on and gardening group will meet to have input into application.

Kathy asked if we need more money for lights which are only on for short period. Agreed subcommittee to discuss other ideas/suggestions to spend money on. John McE advised that money does not go on lights alone, as there are other costs involved in running the successful community event.

Also, consideration to be given to location of real tree to be planted in Houston.

## **8.0 Secretary Report**

**8.1** Request from GHS for fundraising and programme sponsorship for performing smash hit musical Hairspray starring pupils. Dates of performance are Tuesday 18 – 20 June at 7pm. Tickets £4 (£2 concession) in newly refurbished theatre which seats 220.

Funding for extracurricular arts programmes is now not available. The school must therefore raise money in order to be able to produce our school shows every year. They would like to use this as an opportunity to showcase and promote our local business community through advertisements in their programme which not only helps raise the profile of local business but also benefits the pupils at GHS.

A5 size cost of advert £25 and £50 for a full page with all proceeds going into costs of the show.

HCC members agreed to support an A5 advert. Kathy McFall will respond to school.

## **9.0 Chair Report**

**9.1** Attended Renfrewshire Community Council Forum with Gordon Wright. Fraser Carlin, Head of Planning and Housing at Renfrewshire Council talked about planning policy and answered questions. He reaffirmed the Council's policy that planning applications for Greenbelt land would be refused. He also suggested that it was counterproductive for local authorities to ask for developer contributions and that these requests were better to come from community councils. It's still difficult to see how we can object to a planning application and ask for a contribution at the same time. John McE advised that we have until 10 June to respond to the local development plan.

Re orchard, this is Council owned land, and we were given permission to plant on it.

Mark Faichey is maintaining and looking after council owned land and landscape assessment states its low grade. John McE will liaise with Mark and accelerate process to get HCC name on it and challenge development plan, which we have 3 months to do. Records are available for work done in the past which Janet will investigate and get documents to John McE.

Before we call a public meeting, required to do a bit of investigating and what it means for this site. The Council don't believe there is a schooling issue. David advised that we need leisure spaces and a green network. Between areas of green space there is a level of bio diversity if you break up the green network this becomes a problem.

Agreed to get a core working group together to respond on our behalf. John McE to send Cllr Jim Sheridan an email and will look to see where he can provide support. Use terminology, public open space/leisure not green belt. Anthony Rush legal adviser to speak to Janet offline.

**9.2** At the meeting Anne McNaughton advised that the majority of community councils had voted against introducing a complaints procedure. There are also other proposals that we have been asked to comment on and these have been distributed to members.

**9.3** Received partial reply to FOI about schools capacity from Renfrewshire Council and have asked for internal review to get rest of information. In the meantime, a key fact is that Gryffe High is at over 98% capacity.

**9.4** Received response to FOI about impact of potential future development on site at Crosslee road from Scottish Water. Since no application has yet been made, they are not in a position to provide information on a potential development. More generally, studies are currently under way for Houston area and they should be completed by winter 2019.

**9.5** Along with Carol Murray had a positive meeting with Alastair Scott of Renfrewshire Council regarding paths. What we are proposing is in line with council policy.

The sustrans online application form is now available and the process has started for completion.

**9.6** Worked with David Dunlop and Elizabeth Dalgetty to formulate FOI request to Scottish Government for information on the overturning of planning refusal decisions on green belt land.

**9.7** Second defibrillator location. Sharon Chambers advised that various sites are under consideration eg River inn, Coop, Houston Primary School. To consider which site would be utilised more. Sharon Chambers will approach Jason Andrews at River Inn for agreement and suitability (there is CCTV). Mentioned that HPS Primary school may have a greater need as further away from defibrillator located at Carrick Centre, plus has external activities/clubs. Noted that electricity supply required which will affect position and it won't be in a locked box. Agreed to approach Jason Andrew.

**9.8** Proposed Animal Welfare Legislation. Should we respond to Public Consultation? Agreed to let legislation proceed with no official response from HCC.

**9.9** Response to Planning Permission Application for Chapel Farm. 10 units are in the application. There would be an impact on facilities eg schools, doctors surgery. Care that HCC need to be consistent and there is a case for restoring an old farm steading. HCC objected to the original application. Majority agreed to object to the expansion.

**9.10** Community Council Elections. As seen in email from Anne McNaughton, we have statutory obligations re preparing for this election. Guidance on re-election was also issued. No issue with self-nomination. HCC require a minimum of 10 members.

**9.11** Renfrewshire Council Local Development Plan 2019. Refer to 9.2.

**9.12** The Chair thanked our Secretary Jill Jack for all her hard work and commitment over the last 2years+ as Jill is resigning from this current role.

## **10.0 Update on Proposed Cycle Path from Sub Committee Meeting**

**10.1** See 9.5 in Chair Report.

## **11.0 Update to Path to Craigends Yew**

**11.1** Work ongoing to extend path up to yew tree.

## **12.0 Proposed Brief for Planning Consultant to be sent to other Community Councils**

**12.1** David Dunlop advised that this is work in progress.

## **13.0 Update on Micro Hydro Electricity Scheme – John McE reported on behalf of Mark Arthur**

**13.1** Advised that the project not economic or viable – Mark will update fully at next meeting.

**13.2** Electricity points may be provided to charge cars at Post Office as part of another initiative.

**13.3** The grant funding will therefore remain unspent. Take advice from Cllr Natalie Dawn re diverting funds to improve quality of space around pond or could Bee Happy use? £1000 of £4100 grant spent so far in consultancy fees.

#### **14.0 Publicising the Work of Houston Community Council**

**14.1** Nigel Hobbs has agreed to submit a brief summary of HCC minutes to local Advertiser. Maximum of 300 words and deadline by the third Friday in each month. HCC members all agreed to give it a go and minutes to be forwarded to Nigel by Secretary as soon as approved by Chair.

#### **15.0 HCC Facebook**

**15.1** Discussion took place as to why post blocked on HCC fb regarding orchard. Difference of opinion amongst members, with some preferring to see it as a notice board and others wanting an open discussion with residents.

**15.2** John McE reminded members of our policy on fb posts.

**15.3** Care required in blocking people and going forward two out of the three admin users to agree prior to blocking.

#### **16.0 Bee Happy Houston Update**

**16.1** Benches ready for installation by Company supplying furniture.

**16.2** 2000 snowdrops and bluebells planted.

**16.3** St Fillans Primary School successful with £2K grant from Coop and there is potential for Bee Happy to get the same.

**16.4** Currently 7 project applications sitting with Mark Faichey for work in the village.

**16.5** Elizabeth Dalgetty suggested checking Scottish Law regarding Act of Government concerning allotments.

#### **17.0 Other**

**17.1** Approached by resident Sandra Brown regarding fallen archway at Cunningham Gardens. Janet Mason will approach Archie Whyte from the unpaid workers scheme re restoration.

**Meeting closed at 9.25pm. Next meeting to be held on Wednesday 17 April 2019 at 7:30pm in the Carrick Centre.**