

HOUSTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Title: Houston Community Council Meeting

Ref: HCC/18/8/2021

Location: Virtual meeting using Zoom

Date: 18/8/21

Time: 7:30pm

Sheet: 1 of 5

Present

Nigel Hobbs (nh)
Gordon Wright (gw)
John Chambers (jc)
Graeme Richardson (gr)
Sharon Chambers (sc)
Kathy McFall (km)
Bill Haddow (bh)
Jake Fulton (jf)
Ian Anderson (ia)
Carol Murray (cm)
Kevin Christie (kc)

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
Houston Community Council
Gryffe High School

Ex-Officio

Representing

In Attendance

Representing

Apologies

Debbie Hobbs
John McAvoy
David Dunlop
Janet Mason

Representing

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

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

Minutes taken by: Harry Manley

1) **Previous Minutes** Noted. Approved by Sharon Chambers and Carol Murray.

2) **Police Report**

Police Officer reported for 15/6/21 to 19/8/21 the following incidents:

- Theft by Housebreaking/Attempt (1 to business premises)
- Theft (1 bin)
- Serious Assault (1 in street)
- Common Assault (1 in street, 1 outside house)
- Anti-social behaviour (1 x throw bottle at moving car)
- Road Traffic Offences (1 x hit & run)
- Other (1 x breach of bail)

Community Police Report- Random speed checks carried out throughout the village by community police and road traffic department. Several warnings given.

3) **School Update**

Gryffe High School's new Head Teacher, Kevin Christie, gave a report on the school. KC introduced himself and thanked HCC for inviting him to their meeting. KC reported that 56% of S5 pupils achieved 5 Highers at first sitting or better. He said that it was an incredible statistic that will open many doors for the future of many young students. KC mentioned that the school was very pleased overall with the uniform situation in Gryffe, however they noted that there is room for improvement in certain areas such as unsuitable footwear. He also mentioned that the Parents and Teachers Association (PTA) were involved in an upcycling initiative before the summer which has benefitted close to 100 young people. KC reported that this year a very large number of placing requests were put in to Gryffe, due to Houston Primary only having two P7 classes instead of the usual three, Gryffe was able to accept many more placing requests than normal and close to thirty have been accepted. KC said that the S1's have had a very positive start to Gryffe High School and that they are not allowed to leave the campus until Easter. KC also mentioned that the S6 Pupil Management Group meet for the first-time next week at 8 AM with the S6 year head and KC himself. This meeting sets the agenda for the next school session. KC mentioned that Covid-19 restrictions will hopefully be relaxed in the next few weeks which will allow the School to have whole year group assemblies again to spread the word about events happening in the school and the values Gryffe expects of its pupils. Relaxed restrictions would also allow the School to hold more PTA events such as coffee mornings to raise money for the school. KC said that the football pitch at Gryffe is nearing the end of its lifespan and they are looking at ways to replace it.

SC thanked KC for coming along and mentioned that there have been a few issues with pupils from the School disrespecting local residents and leaving a lot of litter. KC said that it is disappointing when incidents like this arise, however, the Senior Management Team is often out at lunch to try and stop any further incidents happening.

4) **Councillors' Reports**

The report from Councillor Audrey Doig is as follows:

Can I ask all CC members to check the pre planning applications regarding the proposed telecoms mast the details of which I have sent to Nigel last week, it is important that members make their views known.

People often say they cannot see much difference between one council administration and the next. The mantra of the man on the Houston and Brookfield omnibus will tend to be borne of a general cynicism about politics and councillors in particular. However, I only ask people in Houston and Brookfield to check the websites of their respective Community Councils to see that this current administration, unlike the last one, is committing millions to road repairs in and around the villages as that was a clear demand from constituents that this be done. I am glad that the current administration has delivered on this.

I have had a few complaints from constituents in the Houston and Brookfield area regarding the blight of Japanese knotweed. Can I ask all constituents to please check their garden boundaries and any waste ground near their homes in case there is Japanese knotweed present. A quick look on social media will give people an idea of its distinctive look. We must be vigilant against this horticultural menace.

I would like to thank the Be Happy Crew for all their excellent work in both Houston and Crosslee recently to make our villages brighter and better looking with all their various green endeavours. They really are a key example of community empowerment in action and this does matter, that is why the litter picking crew has recently saw an increase to their numbers because their community leadership is inspiring others. Well done to the Crew.

No other Councillors were present or submitted reports.

5) Treasurer's Report

JC tabled an update on income and expenditure for the previous two months. A copy of this is available on request.

6) Chairman's Report

1. I received a response to my enquiry to Renfrewshire Council regarding the "Safe Rural Walking Initiative' that Houston appears to be part of. Renfrewshire Council have said that they're engaging a consultant to look at traffic and speeding related issues and solutions in Howwood, Kilbarchan and Houston. They will be assessing traffic volumes, speeds and travel patterns and considering a number of interventions.
2. I pointed out that Police Scotland have acknowledged that there is an issue with speeding vehicles in the village and that it is positive that RC have now also acknowledged this. I pointed out that our Connecting Houston project consultants have already completed some work mapping out the road and pathway network around Houston and that we would be happy to share the information and work with them on this new initiative.
3. A resident had reported fly posting around Crosslee from a Tree Surgery company, this was reported to Renfrewshire Council. Within a few days a response was received from Renfrewshire Council saying that the company had been spoken too

and they had agreed to take the posters down. RC will be following up with a site visit and a copy of the relevant legislation has been sent to the company.

4. I have had another resident requesting warning signage on Fulton Drive for wildlife crossing, I have passed the details on to Renfrewshire Council and I am awaiting a response.
5. It is with some sadness that I have to inform you that I will be resigning from my post of Chair and from Houston Community Council within the next couple of months as Debbie and I are in the process of moving out of the village. The position of Chair will need to be filled so I would ask you all to consider stepping forward and taking up the position. Please feel free to contact me to discuss the role and its responsibilities.

7) Action Log

NH took the group through the Action Log which will be updated for the next meeting

Action 97.0- SC reported that the defibrillator has been set up and is in working condition

Action 106.0- NH asked if anybody knew whether the Crosslee Bridge repairs had taken place. GR answered saying that they have been repaired.

Action 111.0- NH will need another member to take over responsibility of this action when he steps down.

Action 152.0- KM and IA will arrange meetings with the 2 website providers.

All other actions were progressing successfully.

8) Grants Update

NH reported that not a lot of ground has been made in getting the grant for the outdoor gym as there had been some confusion over the funding for the helicopter park and their plans for an outdoor gym. However, that gym is aimed towards children rather than adults. The investors want to do a site visit at Ardgryffe Park to look at the potential sites for the outdoor gym. NH also mentioned that Renfrewshire Council might fund the project themselves instead of HCC having to apply for funding, which would allow the project to cost more than £10,000.

9) Connecting Houston Update

NH reported that the consultants have been absent over the summer and there is not much to update HCC on. He did mention however that DD is keen for the consultants to put together a user-friendly summary of the project that can be given to residents.

10) A.O.C.B.

IA asked if the 5G mast getting installed on Magnus Road was an entirely new mast or a replacement of the old one. CM said that it looks like an additional mast will be installed and that there will likely be a lot of kickback from the local residents. IA agreed and suggested that HCC put something on their Facebook page to get feedback from the community. KM suggested putting the full email from RC about the mast on the HCC website and then posting a link on Facebook to the website. All present agreed.

NH asked for member's opinions on whether future meetings should go back to face-to-face meetings or carry on with Zoom meetings. CM mentioned that some members were unable to take part in the virtual meetings and so it would be good to go back to in-person meetings. IA asked if it was possible to do a hybrid meeting with people able to attend in-person or online. BH said that there is Wi-Fi at the Carrick Centre. KM mentioned that it has also not been possible to get members of the public, the Police representatives, and the Councillors to attend meetings like they used to do before the virtual meetings. BH will look into the possibility of using the bigger hall in the Carrick Centre to hold the HCC meetings. A decision will be made when the information is received about where the September meeting will be held.

JF mentioned that the Gardening Club at Houston Primary School, ran by Caroline Morrison, is short of funds. JF has already spoken to NH and JC about the possibility of helping the Club out but wanted to run it by members to see if HCC would be willing to provide £250 to help. All present agreed to give the money.

The meeting closed at 9.30pm.

Date of next meeting: 15th September 2021.