

HOUSTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Title: Houston Community Council Meeting

Ref: HCC/20/10/2021

Location: Carrick Centre, Main, St Houston

Date: 20/10/21

Time: 7:30pm

Sheet: 1 of 4

Present

Nigel Hobbs (nh)
John Chambers (jc)
Janet Mason (jm)
Carol Murray (cm)
Sharon Chambers (sc)
Ian Andrew (ia)
Jake Fulton (jf)
Mark Arthur (ma)
Kathy McFall (km)
Bill Haddow (bh)
John McEvoy (jmc)
Graeme Richardson (gr)
Barry Walker (bw)
Kevin Christie (kc)

Representing

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

Councillor Jim Sheridan
Councillor Audrey Doig
Councillor Alison Dowling
Kevin Christie (kc)

Representing

Renfrewshire Council
Renfrewshire Council
Renfrewshire Council
Gryffe High School

In Attendance

Harry Manley

Representing

Minutes Secretary

Apologies

Debbie Hobbs

Representing

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 John Chambers and Mark Arthur.

2) **Police Report**

Police Officer reported for 15/9/21 to 20/10/21 the following incidents:

- Theft by Housebreaking/Attempt (2x attempt at house)
- Theft (1x bicycle [recovered])
- Common Assault (1x historical assault)
- Drug Offences (1x possession)
- Anti-social (1x threatening behaviour)
- Other (1x suspicious activity at house [section 57], 1x extortion, 1x bogus workman fraud, 1x account fraud)

Community Police Report: From 21/10/2021 until 19/11/2021 both community police officers have been seconded to COP 26 programme.

3) **School Update**

Kevin Christie was present at the meeting and gave an update on Gryffe High School. KC reported that the School has been very busy over the past month. He reported that the First Ministers announcement has resulted in no major changes for how the School will handle Covid-19 precautions. He was delighted to report the extracurricular offering for young people is better and bigger than it has ever been before, a list of all available activities has been published on the school website. Over the October break, 18 ActivPanels have been installed throughout classrooms in the school building, the panels will greatly improve learning and teaching in classrooms and the school hopes to improve technology overall throughout the school in coming months. The feedback from both staff and pupils about the panels has been overwhelmingly positive. Litter picking continues in the local area after lunchtime, and the school welcomes any feedback on how it is being received in the community. The School plan to bring out whole class groups from S1 to S3 to help with litter picking, they hope this will help educate the younger pupils about the importance of litter picking and also reduce the overall litter in the area. 2 senior pupils carried out focus groups in Gryffe High School and Houston Primary School to see what young people want for Ardgriffe Park. The school have published their first interactive newsletter using Microsoft sway which has resulted in a much more user-friendly experience, KC will share the link to the newsletter with the council.

Councillor Jim Sheridan asked KC if the school still considered the modernisation of the football pitch to be a low priority. KC said that he considered it a real priority and that the pitch was nearing the end of its life span, he mentioned that the school has already purchased new sets of goals and they're just waiting for the cross bars to arrive before they set them up. He did agree that the surface of the pitch was a concern, however the school will be in touch with the Council to determine where they are with the regeneration of the pitch, although he understands it will be extremely expensive to resurface the pitch.

4) **Councillors' Reports**

Councillor Audrey Doig attended the meeting and gave a report. The councillor apologised for not being able to attend meetings when they were held virtually, as Renfrewshire Council policy prevented them from using Zoom. The councillor reported that Houston cycle path has started

construction, and feedback will be taken later in the project. Renfrewshire council have secured money to upgrade Ardgryffe park by installing adult gym equipment and improving the kids gym equipment, and also adding a cycle track around the park. The councillor was also pleased to report that in the new budget there is more money for upgrading school parks and hopefully Gryffe High will be one of the schools to receive an upgrade. The councillor also mentioned that she has received a lot of positive feedback over the past 18 months about the grass cutting, there were some issues about pathways that were not adopted by Renfrewshire Council and so no grass cutting could take place. The council are identifying the main problem locations, however it is very expensive to adopt areas and so nothing can be guaranteed. The councillor also said that education must be a priority to ensure that a tragedy like the one on the river Gryffe will never happen again.

Councillor Jim Sheridan attended the meeting and gave a report. The councillor was pleased to report that both the council and emergency services have fitted GPS systems along the river Gryffe which will identify exactly where a telephone call is coming from if there is an emergency along the river. The councillor also mentioned that he has been in contact with Friends of Earth that assured him cutting down trees in residential areas is no issue and has no negative effects on the environment. He also reported that a new woodcutter was taking over tree maintenance for Renfrewshire Council, however the council only have rights over trees in council areas, not private land.

Councillor Alison Dowling attended the meeting virtually and gave a report. The councillor was pleased to report that Houston has been added to the traffic speed reduction visibility study, and the council is currently speaking with the consultants who will conduct the study which will be completed by the middle of November. The council reported that she undertook a site visit on Magnus Road to gather local residents' opinions on the second mast. The overwhelming feedback was against the mast's location. A final decision on the mast will be made in the beginning of November. The council reported that she recently visited Neuk Crescent Together local residents' feedback on the road conditions. Lots of feedback was received and the major issues are being addressed, the full road will now be part of the resurfacing programme next year. One of the main issues raised by residents was the desire for the footpath from Neuk Crescent to Ardgryffe it was suggested that this would be an excellent idea for the council's community investment initiative.

No other Councillors were present or submitted reports.

5) Treasurer's Report

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

6) Action Log

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

Action 106.0- Councillor Sheridan reported that Renfrewshire Council have no leverage but will continue to push the matter. JC asked the Councillor if Renfrewshire Council had any possible sanctions they could place on Taylor Wimpey, but councillor Sheridan reported that there were none.

Action 130.0- meeting held with consultant, way forward agreed and final summary project now expected.

Action 135.0- four year plan document to be reviewed at November's meeting

Action 152.0- decision taken to run with existing website for now

All other actions were progressing successfully.

7) Outdoor Gym Update

JMC started by voicing his appreciation for the Renfrewshire council officers, in particular Nicola Drummond, who have been extremely supportive during the project and have now secured a grant of £35,000 plus VAT for the gym. Altogether the gym is worth £50,000. A post about the gym was put on HCC's Facebook page and received overwhelming support from the local community. Thirty eight houses were leafleted in the two streets closest to the gym, so far there has been three responses. One response suggested fencing off the gym to prevent dogs reaching the equipment, two others suggested moving the gym, however, the current location was deemed to be the most suitable and so the location is not likely to change. HCC decided to sell sponsorships to local businesses for the gym. JC asked if we HCC had to raise £1500 upfront to cover the gym costs. JMC reported that the gym suppliers had absorbed the costs. HCC will still have to pay the VAT of £7000, but it will be claimed back. Everyone present congratulated JMC for his efforts in advancing this project.

8) Connecting Houston Update

DD met with consultants and Peter Leslie. Sustrans have made personnel changes and they are currently waiting for an officer to be selected to act as a permanent liaison officer, however they still remain keen to fund the project going forward. We have asked the consultants to prepare some briefs within the existing cost framework for specific works that could take place, to help visualise the project. They are also going to be updating the website so that HCC can share this on their Facebook page. The consultant are also keen to look at HCC's four year plan, to see if they can combine any aspects of the Connecting Houston project with the four year plan.

9) A.O.C.B.

MA mentioned that the school's Christmas designs for the projector have arrived and are ready to be displayed over Christmas.

CM asked if it was possible to plant a bigger Christmas tree or improve decorations in Craighend's. JC said that it was not possible to plant a bigger tree due to lack of space. councillor Audrey Doig also mentioned that Renfrewshire council do not have the capacity to add anymore Christmas lights anywhere in Renfrewshire. CM said that Renfrewshire Council do not have to do anything and that the Community Council could do it themselves. KM suggested creating a subgroup to look at expanding Christmas decorations in Craighend's. CM said she will look into possible locations within Craighend's to improve decorations.

DD reported that HCC have been asked if they have any good locations to plant 7 oaks for Her Majesty's platinum jubilee. JF suggested the roundabout, which is underdeveloped, or North Mound. NH mentioned that the roundabout has previously been rejected for development.

NH and DH have officially resigned from Houston Community Council and NH has officially handed over the position of chair to Barry Walker. Everyone present thanked NH for his service as chair.

The meeting closed at 8.46pm.

Date of next meeting: 17th November 2021.