

## HOUSTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

**Title:** Houston Community Council Meeting

**Ref:** HCC/16/11/2022

**Location:** Carrick Centre, Houston

**Date:** 16 November 2022

**Time:** 7:30pm

**Sheet:** 1 of 11

### **Present**

Ian Andrew (IA)  
Kathy McFall (KM)  
Janet Mason (JM)  
John McEvoy (JMc)  
William Haddow (WH)  
Trevor Hillman (TH)  
Duncan Greenhorn (DG)  
Kevin Christie (KC)  
Gareth Gardener (GG)

### **Representing**

Houston Community Council (HCC)  
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Houston Community Council (HCC)  
Houston Community Council (HCC)  
Houston Community Council (HCC)  
Resident  
Gryffe High School  
Elgin Energy

### **Apologies**

Mark Arthur (MA)  
Carol Ann Rankin (CAR)  
Gordon Wright (GW)  
Lucy James (LJ)  
  
Cllr Audrey Doig (AD)  
Cllr Alison Ann-Dowling (AAD)  
Cllr David McGonigle (DM)

### **Representing**

Houston Community Council (HCC)  
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Houston Community Council (HCC)  
Houston Community Council (HCC)  
(Minute Secretary)  
Renfrewshire Council (RC)  
Renfrewshire Council (RC)  
Renfrewshire Council (RC)

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### **Chaired By**

Ian Andrew

### **Representing**

Houston Community Council (HCC)

### **Minutes taken by**

Trevor Hillman

### **Representing**

Houston Community Council (HCC)

Item	Description	Action By	Due Date
1.0	<b>Apologies</b> All were welcomed to the meeting and apologies noted as listed.		
2.0	<b>Approval of Minutes of Meeting 19<sup>th</sup> October 2022</b> The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true record of that meeting Approved: TH    Seconded: JM    no matters arising.		
3.0	<b>Police Report</b> No Police Report received		
4.0	<b>Gryffe High School Report</b> 4.1 KC provided a report to members present on developments within the school since his last attendance at HCC.  4.2 Four parents' nights have been held with one still outstanding. All are going well.  4.3 Christmas Concert details to be arranged  4.4 In June the school will perform the stage show Grease.  4.5 Educational trips can resume, and trips are planned to Greece, Barcelona, The Manchester City Football Academy, London, Belfast, and some local visits.  4.6 S4 Prelims will commence next week with a 2-week duration.  4.7 Pitches are presently being resurfaced with 4G surfaces. Some sinkage was found towards the Bridge of Weir Road side of the pitches but this is being rectified and work will be completed one week behind schedule on 9 <sup>th</sup> December.  4.8 Litter – KC is pleased with their efforts in the area from South Mound to the paper shop, but more work is needed at the underpass and Co-op. BH raised minor problem at lunch time and after school around the Carrick Centre. KC will visit at those times.  4.9 IA thanked KC for his report and, there being no questions from those present, KC left the meeting to attend an event at the school.		

<b>5.0</b>	<b>Houston Solar Farm</b>		
5.1	GG provided a presentation to members present on the proposals for a solar farm and battery energy storage facility north of the B790 Houston Road and south of the B790 Houston Road adjacent to Moss Road and Auchans Road. Presentation attached to the minutes; key points raised were:		
5.2	Elgin Energy EsCo Limited (Elgin) was established in 2009 and has projects in the UK, Ireland and Australia.		
5.3	The proposed development will have a designated project team and will manage a community development fund.		
5.4	Existing Hedgerows and trees will be retained		
5.5	Equipment height on most of the development will be up to 3.2m at the highest points and the larger battery storage facility will be sited off the Moss Road and screened by trees.		
5.6	A management programme will be put in place for hedges, trees, and other plant growth.		
5.7	Pre-Application Consultation is not mandatory for Solar Farms, but Elgin carry one out in every case.		
5.8	Feedback received by Elgin has been generally positive, but panels have been removed from the proposal in three fields in response to objections from nearby properties and one other property has objected but refused to engage when approached by Elgin.		
5.9	Elgin continue to review the positioning of panels, and some may be pulled back due to the topology and their visibility. One section adjoining Houston wood which seems disconnected from the rest of the development area will be removed.		
5.10	KM raised the issue of the designated core path running through the site and GG agreed to review the placement of panels in consultation with the community together with what hedging/screening would be appropriate. He was aware of the Bee Happy Group and would anticipate working with them should an application be approved.		

5.11	IA raised the matter of unused ground within the project area, it will be under the control of Elgin and can be used to encourage biodiversity.		
5.12	JMc raised the issue of screening on the road side of the development to mitigate the visual impact and all agreed this is likely to be the biggest concern for the community. IA suggested it would be useful if there was some form of visual representation of how the actual site would look. GG stated that the application will include “mode” photo’s of various views at year 1 and year 15. IA asked that HCC be kept apprised of ongoing survey reports produced for Elgin to fully inform their position.		
5.13	TH raised the issue of background noise or visual glare from the site. GG assured that the panels make no noise and are matt coloured as they must absorb rather than reflect the light so no glare. There can be a very low hum from the invertors as they switch on, but they will be sited so that this will not be an issue.		
5.14	On the matter of community benefit, GG stated there will be a Community Benefit Fund in the region of £2,000 to £3,000 per megawatt for the proposed 50 megawatt site. GG will provide a draft agreement to HCC for consideration.	GG	
5.15	GG will provide a soft copy of the presentation that HCC can share.	GG	
5.16	Elgin’s planned timescale for the development is: Application Submitted – January 2023 Estimated 1 year to go through all approvals Go Live 2025		
5.17	Elgin will publish again when the planning application is submitted at which time residents will be able to comment on the application.		
5.18	IA thanked GG for his presentation and GG left the meeting.		
5.19	After the Elgin representative GG had left the meeting, IA reported on the response to HCC’s post on Facebook asking for comment regarding the proposed development. While a few members of the community had commented both for and against, there was no clear		

	indication of public feeling at this time. It was agreed that, in the absence of a “clear steer” from the community, HCC should not take an active part at this time but should continue to share information received with the community and monitor public response.	IA	
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Councillor’s Reports</b> No Renfrewshire Councillors were present, and no written reports had been received.		
<b>7.0</b>	<b>Bee Happy Houston</b>		
7.1	No members of Bee Happy were present but members discussed items relevant to HCC with Bee Happy now being a “stand alone” project.		
7.2	KM reported that all money held for Bee Happy has now been transferred to their account.		
7.3	Equipment being used by Bee Happy still comes under HCC and ownership should be formally transferred. IA will draw up an appropriate document.	IA	ASAP
<b>8.0</b>	<b>Action Log Review</b>		
8.1	The action log was reviewed.		
8.2	Discussion ensued on the need to go over the full action log at every meeting. Suggested that ownership of the action log and responsibility for maintaining it should be delegated, that those responsible for an action should update that person before each meeting, and the responsible person need only report that actions were being progressed rather than going through it in detail. Only those actions not being progressed or that require further input need be brought before the meetings. Closed actions to be archived but available for reference.	IA	18 Jan 23
<b>9.0</b>	<b>Treasurer’s report</b>		
9.1	KM issued the report up to the meeting date and confirmed a current balance of £14,567.43. Full report at Appendix A.		
9.2	Some sponsorship money still outstanding for the Christmas Lights to be addressed, KM will provide details to JMc to speak with them.	JMc	

9.3	Grant from Renfrewshire Council for £2,900 in October. Breakdown of grant not clear, KM will obtain detail from MA.	KM/MA	
9.4	Payment to Gryffe High of £1,150 not detailed. KM will obtain detail from MA.	KM/MA	
9.5	Agreed that, in the interests of transparency, all grant applications and the relevant paperwork should be discussed with all members and that the paperwork should be with the treasurer and copied to the chair and vice-chair.	KM/MA/IA	
9.6	TH suggested that the secretary should not be put under further pressure at this time and every effort should be made to lighten his load.		
<b>10</b>	<b>Chair's Report</b> In the absence of MA for this meeting he will provide a full report at the next.		
<b>11</b>	<b>Matters Arising</b> No matters arising		
<b>12</b>	<b>SGN Works</b>		
12.1	IA reported that, as requested at the last meeting, a social network post was created to ascertain the experience of residents using the shuttle bus paid for by SGN. This had been created and the results shared with SGN.		
12.2	Members expressed their appreciation for SGN completing their works well within the anticipated time scale.		
<b>13</b>	<b>Barochan Road development by Stewart Milne update</b> IA reported that the planning application will go before the planning board in January.		
<b>14</b>	<b>Cala / Curb~6 / Link Group Development</b>		
14.1	IA reported that the recent notification of a public consultation for housing in Houston Road was for the social housing to be built within the present Cala development and was to inform on the type of housing.		
14.2	JMc stated he would try to attend the public presentation by the developer, but all agreed it was not a priority as planning is already in place.	JMc	

14.3	It was noted that the road adjoining the development was dug up on 26 August for work to continue over a period of six weeks, but work has not been completed. MA and Cllr Ann-Dowling attend all Cala/residents meetings as per action log, this matter needs to be raised. KM will email Cllr Ann-Dowling.	KM	
<b>15</b>	<b>Village Traffic Calming</b>		
15.1	JMc reported on the correspondence received from Renfrewshire Council regarding the proposed measures.		
15.2	JMc will submit his summary of the proposals to HCC members.	JMc	
15.3	JMc will ensure information is shared on HCC social media to allow residents to comment.	JMc	
15.4	JMc will confirm with Renfrewshire Council if the proposed changes are relevant to a conservation village, specifically the signage to be used.	JMc	
15.4	Concern was expressed that the proposed crossing on Bridge of Weir Road is to be uncontrolled, it may be more appropriate for this to be a Pelican or Puffin crossing.		
<b>16</b>	<b>Christmas Lights Switch On</b>		
16.1	JMc confirmed that everything is progressing well.		
16.2	Questions around the size of the required generator have now been resolved and the order placed		
16.3	The barriers for the street closures will be delivered to the site on the 24 <sup>th</sup> . Two barriers will require to be staffed for access.		
16.4	Those attending to help should be there at 4pm. IA, JM, TH, and DG volunteered to assist, and it is likely John Chambers will also be there. Bee Happy have offered some members if required, staffing will be further assessed at the final sub-committee meeting.		
16.5	HCC collection buckets seem to be missing after the pandemic period, KM will ask John Chambers.	KM	
16.6	KM will revisit the wording of the flyer so an up-to-date version can be shared.	KM	

16.7	DG offered the use of hi-vis jackets for those taking money at the barriers.	DG	
16.8	Gary Wilson had asked for support with the Christmas Tree lights on Saturday, Bee Happy will also be assisting.		
16.9	A final meeting of the sub-committee will take place on 22 <sup>nd</sup> November at the Fox and Hounds.		
<b>17</b>	<b>Emails/communications since last meeting</b> IA reviewed the items of correspondence received since the last meeting.		
17.1	Renfrewshire Community Planning had asked for assistance in spreading the information regarding their #Youdecide programme seeking community engagement with their proposed projects in Houston. Information has been shared on HCC social media and they will provide a stall at the Christmas Light switch on where they can directly engage with residents.	IA	
17.2	Johnstone Community Council had asked for input regarding the experience of residents in Houston with McGill's buses as they are raising several issues with the company and Renfrewshire Council. JM agreed to liaise with Johnstone CC.	JM	
17.3	Renfrewshire Community Council Forum meetings were suspended during the pandemic as there was no appetite for virtual meetings. It is proposed to reform the forum, perhaps in a different format, and Anne McNaughton is asking for Community Councils to be involved. It was agreed that HCC should be represented, decision to be made if HCC Chair or Vice-Chair would be most appropriate to attend meetings.	MA/IA	
17.4	Correspondence received from Marie White regarding a proposal to create a community orchard in Craigends. Agreed that she seems to be taking a proper approach regarding local engagement and discussion with Renfrewshire Council and Bee Happy and that HCC would support her efforts as appropriate. IA to email a response to that effect.	IA	
17.5	Two licensing applications were received regarding a wheelie-bin cleaning service and a mobile butcher. Agreed that HCC had no objections to either.		



17.6	Notification received from the Boundary Commission of changes to be made to constituency boundary covering Houston. JMc had looked at this and it appears Houston will be re-aligned with an area of Inverclyde rather than Renfrew and Inchinnan and the constituency name changed. As there is no division of Houston involved it was agreed HCC do not have real concerns but that the information should be shared on social media to allow individuals to comment before the deadline of 5 <sup>th</sup> December.	JMc	
17.7	Friends of Hawkhead Cemetery have sent correspondence expressing their concern about the laying down of unsafe gravestones and that this should not be a final solution by Renfrewshire Council. They refer to a petition by Cllr Andrew Stuart Wood which is presently under consideration by the Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee. Agreed that IA should respond to Friends of Hawkhead Cemetery agreeing that it is a matter of concern which HCC are also addressing with the relevant authorities.	IA	
17.8	Email from Jake Fulton referring to concerns that there is no barrier at the roadside on Back O'Hill to protect primary school children coming along the footpath from the school onto the pavement and asking that it be referred to the Renfrewshire Councillors at the meeting. As no Councillors present IA agreed to forward the email to them and to inform Jake Fulton accordingly. (On contacting Jake Fulton after the meeting, he stated he had already referred it to Cllr Robert Innes who will progress it.)	IA	
<b>18</b>	<b>AOCB</b>		
18.1	Two matters raised relating to Cala Homes and Bee Happy are included in the relevant sections above.		
18.2	It was suggested that HCC insurances be reviewed after transfer of responsibility for equipment used by Bee Happy. This was agreed.	MA/TH	
<b>19</b>	<b>Date and Time of next meeting</b> 18 <sup>th</sup> January 2023 at 7.30pm in The Carrick Centre.  IA closed the meeting at 9.25pm		