



Minutes of HCC Monthly Meeting Civic Centre Annex 7pm 29th Feb 2024

The meeting was chaired by Peter Brown.

Welcome

Present for HCC: Roger Clarke, Cameron Foy, Elizabeth Lambert, Peter Brown, Norman McNally, Stewart Steel, Tariq Durrani, David Sinclair, Richard Trail, Paula McIntosh, Polly Jones, Nigel Millar,

Apologies: Irina Agostinelli, Joanna Pryce, Wendy Hamilton, Sarah Davies, Stewart Noble, Cllr Matt Campbell-Sturgess Howard Green, Cllr Ian MacQuire, William Purdon.

Public in Person: 9

Argyll and Bute Councillors: Paul Kennedy

Declaration of Interest

None

Minutes of last meeting

Approved (January meeting)

Police Report

None

Treasurers Report

Only one transaction for skip, account stands at £9769.83 Circulated prior to meeting.

Speakers

- a. **Lindsay Young A&B Climate Action:** Has now been set up with ScotGov funding. There will be 4 engagement officers in each area of A&B. Lindsey Finlayson from Cardross CC has been appointed for our area. Seed fund money is currently available to all local community groups. A website will be created for people to source information. They will provide Free Climate Literacy Training. Seed funding for mitigation and adaption projects. Support local community groups and share best practice in climate projects. Provide training and webinars to support the journey to Net Zero. Provide support for groups wanting to do Place Planning with a Climate Lens.
- b. **Eilidh Steel Sugarboat Project (Music in the Square)**
Local musicians proposing a video and composition to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Sugar Boat wreck A donation of £250 from HCC for this project, was agreed at the January meeting. They will use the money to pay for the trip out to the Sugar boat with Sea and You. They will film and record soundscape for the film to accompany the music composed and played by Eilidh. They hope to film in March or April and deliver the project by September. If successful in raising additional funding they hope to hold a public screening alongside an exhibition.
- c. **"Helensburgh In Motion"**, which is a group of consultants employed by A&B to improve facilities for walking, wheeling and cycling in the Helensburgh and Lomond Area. Sent their appologies and will be invited to a future meeting.

Action – In response to the Climate Action presentation HCC approved a proposal to support the action locally via updates from Lindsay or Angela at meetings and by displaying posters in the Community boards.

Tribute to Marion Gillies

Nigel Millar gave a tribute on the contribution of Marion Gillies during her time serving on HCC.

In particular her success in instigating and achieving the provision of bus route 306 to enable transport to hospital.

Planning Report

The Planning Report for February 2024 is restricted to Planning Application 23/00652/PP. Alterations and Extensions to "Redholm" 40 West Lennox Drive. From its Assessment and under its devolved powers this was objected to by the Planning Group on behalf of HCC and by a significant number of local residents. Together they were sufficient for the application to be determined/decided at a Public Hearing in the Civic Centre Marriage Room of Argyll & Bute Council's PPPSL (Planning & Protective Services & Licencing) Committee on 7 February. Councillors took part in person or on Teams. Councillor Hardie (Helensburgh Central) was the only Committee Member from Helensburgh & Lomond, - the others were from elsewhere in Argyll & Bute. Roger Clarke and Nigel Millar were there for the Planning Group. The Committee Chair had to leave for another appointment at 13.30. As a replacement could not be agreed upon the PPSL Committee Hearing had to be adjourned/abandoned with no resumption yet agreed. HCC members present believe adjournment was unnecessary and the Committee should have continued to its conclusion. It subsequently emerged that the running order of speakers at the PPSL Hearing did not adhere to the Council's own procedures which are there to guarantee consistency and fairness across all PPSL Hearings. And, we believe that the Marriage Room in the Civic Centre was an inappropriate venue not conducive to high quality interaction and debate. Taken together I believe our 3 concerns are sufficient to warrant a formal complaint by Helensburgh Community Council to Fergus Murray, Argyll & Bute Council's Executive Director responsible.

The 7 February PPSL Pre-Determination Hearing was significantly flawed

It need not have been adjourned. A great deal of time and expense has been wasted, and

It was held in an inappropriate venue.

The proposal to submit objections from HCC and request that it should be declared null and void. To be re-convened in its entirety with only those involved at the 7 February Public Hearing to take part. This was unanimously agreed by the HCC.

Action Nigel Millar to submit objection.

Waterfront

Peter Brown shared analysis of the Colliers report a study commissioned by Argyll and Bute Council looking at Retail in Helensburgh and a key document in the discussion about the future of the Waterfront Site. The Council will be making a decision on which proposals will be taken forward.

A group from HCC had a look at the Colliers report and found it to be lacking accuracy in many areas.

By using a company with no local knowledge the report features many errors and omissions in the categorising of businesses. It underestimates the calculation of floorspace. It uses out of date information about the surrounding areas omitting all the large retail outlets in Dumbarton and Alexandria.

The HCC group has concluded that taking these factors into account and correcting the errors leads instead to concluding that we are probably at capacity for retail unless the option is for something not already provided. Additional retail in completion with existing retailers may result in more empty shops.

Peter also noted the support being voiced on social media by the Community for the return and development of the Skatepark on the Waterfront site.

Pier Regeneration Project and Co-Option

Bill Purdon co-option to HCC was approved.

David Sinclair and Bill Purdon will attend future PRG meetings and keep the HCC updated.

David reported that the last meeting was about looking at potential revenue that could be generated.

Beach Cleans and Big Conversation

The first beach clean of 2024 will be 10am Sat 30th at the Helensburgh Beach by the Pier.

A large skip will be provided by the council to remove the debris deposited by winter storms.

The Big Conversation is a meeting for all local community groups to discuss how they can work closer and smarter together to deliver a cleaner greener projects in the Helensburgh area. The meeting is at Helensburgh Parish Church 1-4pm 9th March – All Welcome.

Business Group

The Feb meeting was well attended by local retailers from our independent shops.

A presentation from Carrs explained the help that could be applied for within the Carrs area. However a good many shops that would benefit from new shopfronts fall outside this area.

The meeting set out a programme of events for 2024 in the town which are key events for increased footfall.

The areas of particular concern to the retailers related to bins and parking. Their concerns will be followed up by subgroups in the BG to resolve the issues.

Democracy Matters/Petition

Norman McNally thanked the members that had worked on the submission to the Democracy Matters Consultation. It was not an easy task but is one that is at the heart of what we do and support. The Petition has been shared by several local Community Councils and we encourage people to sign it.

AOB

Paula McIntosh highlighted the issue of dangerous driving near local schools. Demonstrated in a recent incident of a driver jumping the lights at the crossing near the Academy. Cllr Paul Kennedy offered to look into this issue.

Polly Jones raised the recent decision by the Council to raise Council tax and the impact on local people struggling under the cost of living crisis. HCC will invite Councillors to speak on this issue at the next meeting.

Norman McNally updated on his FOI request asking to see the data behind the Rider Report he received no additional information except a page including the information from the schools engagement which showed support by pupils for the Skatepark.

Nigel Millar highlighted the next round of local planning will be starting again now LDP3 consultation closes 25/03/24. Elizabeth Lambert proposed that we need to begin work on a Local Place Plan now if we want to engage with the Council and Community in a meaningful way. Elizabeth will provide more information on Local Place Plans at the next meeting.

Next Meeting

7pm Civic Centre Annex 28th March 2024