

HELENSBURGH COMMUNITY COUNCIL



BE BETTER: BE EXCELLENT

Minutes of a Meeting of the Helensburgh Community Council Held on Thursday 24th September 2009

Present: Nigel Millar (Chair). Stewart Noble, Gordon Tran, Catriona Mallan, Richard Trail, Karen Brabender, Alastair Macbeth, John White, Findlay McQuarrie, Jim Gorie, Ian Fraser, Ronnie Finnigan, Kathleen Siddle

Apologies: David Sinclair, Marion Gillies

Councillors: Andrew Nisbet, Al Reay, Vivien Dance, Ellen Morton

Members of the Public: John Tacci

1. Welcome and Introduction

NM welcomed everyone present and reported that A&BC had received 23 nominations for the 24 seats for the HCC. This means there will be no elections. In addition, two nominations were disallowed as the candidate's names did not appear on the Electoral Register and one was submitted late.

NM thanked all HCC colleagues for all their hard work over the past 4 years.

2. New Helensburgh Swimming Pool

See Appendix 1 for the discussion on a new swimming pool/sports facility

3 and 4. Public Session and Town Issues

(i) SN suggested a committee of Community Councillors look into a second petrol station for the town. Re-opening the old petrol station at the foot of Henry Bell St. is not a runner. A new site needs to be identified.

Councillor Morton: The public would need to support another station.

DECISION: HCC agreed that sub group should be convened by new HCC.

(ii) SN asked if the Japanese Knotweed in Hermitage Park had been treated.

Councillor Nisbet: Treatment had taken place but that it would need repeated applications over a number of years to be effective. Network Rail is treating the railway embankments with repeated doses of poison.

AMcB said that the weed can be pulled out by the roots, but that it all had to be burnt on site and that it was very labour intensive.

(iii) A&BC had responded to HCC letter re Hermitage Academy pupils maintaining Park School Sensory Garden. A&BC said they had no responsibility for the maintenance of the Park School garden. The matter had been raised by Marion Gillies at the HCC meeting in August.

DECISION: Councillor Nisbet offered to raise the matter at the Hermitage Academy School Council meeting at the beginning of October.

MG could also contact the Head Teachers of both schools.

(iv) KS: Scotrail had explained that their toilets were kept locked to avoid vandalism. As before, train passengers only can obtain keys at the ticket office. KS awaiting Scotrail's response to HCC enquiry re when rolling stock between Helensburgh and Drumgelloch would have toilets.

DECISION: KS will follow this up if no answer is forthcoming.

(v) The Co-op had responded to the HCC enquiry re their toilets. Co-op said that effect of new manned desk situated near toilet exit is being monitored in an effort to cut down on misuse. HCC enquiry re a cleaner in the store during the shopping day is still to be resolved.

DECISION: KS will follow this up if no answer is forthcoming.

(vi) A&BC had promised a response to HCC traffic light enquiry as a matter of urgency.

DECISION: KS to follow this up, if necessary.

(vii) IF asked about the John Dickie Homes Appeal to Condition 16 attached to their planning permission with regard to the old Hermitage Academy site. NM said the Appeal had been granted by A&BC but it seems JDH have not yet formally withdrawn it. Hence there will be a formal Appeal Hearing in Jan. 2010. Councillor Morton: JDH still want to purchase the site (incl) the old building and A&BC are still keen to sell it to them. The price has been agreed which includes JDH demolishing the existing building. The "legal niceties" are ongoing. The demolition will definitely not take place before the Appeal Hearing.

KS asked if A&BC could demolish the building and charge the cost to JDH or whoever buys the site.

Councillors Morton and Dance: This had been discussed by A&BC and rejected.

(vii) IF: Will A&BC redesign the one way system around the Kenilworth Av, Waverley Av. and Ashton Dr to encourage parents NOT to drop off their children in these streets to the extreme annoyance of residents there..

Councillor Nisbet: A&BC is about to send a letter to residents of the area asking if they want a change - e.g. a two way system with a turning area at the end.

(viii) JG asked for the many potholes on Campbell/W Argyll St. to be mended.

Councillors: New tarmacking machine is being tendered for by Helensburgh & Lomond which would make a better, longer lasting job on potholes.

(ix) KB: The town's traffic lights are often out of order.

ACTION: KS to add this to A&BC traffic light enquiry.

(x) RT: Will the town have Christmas Lights this year and will there be a switching on ceremony.

Councillor Morton: This is on the Agenda for the H&L Area Committee Mtg on 6 October. In other towns in A&B funding is from Common Good Funds, something Helensburgh does not enjoy. With money being extremely tight, a reduced level of Council funding should be anticipated. The switch-on is pencilled in for 24 Nov.

(xi) GT wanted us all to be aware of the recent Annual Beach Watch Survey. Among other things, enormous quantities of cotton bud sticks with plastic stems were found. The Scottish Government had been approached to ask if producers could be persuaded to change to rolled cardboard stems which are bio-degradable. But SG had said this is a matter for the Westminster Parliament. Further, 6 out of 7 suppliers do not have "Do not Flush" on their packaging.

DECISION: This matter to be pursued by the new HCC. Catriona Malan said she would pursue the matter with the 6 out of 7 companies which do not have "Do not flush" on their packaging.

IF: What is A&BC's roll in beach cleaning.

Councillors: H&L have a tractor and rake for this purpose.

General Consensus: Not been seen in Helensburgh for a long time.

DECISION: This matter to be pursued by new HCC.

5. Helensburgh Landscape Statement

AMcB presented the Draft Landscape Statement for HCC approval. He thanked all those who had worked on it, particularly the Helensburgh Study Group and the HCC Statutory Plans Group. AMcB emphasised that the Statement, like the Helensburgh Design Statement, does not express any personal views.

AMB was congratulated on a well written and intellectually rigorous document.

DECISION: HCC

(i) ___ approved the document which would go on the HCC website

(ii) ___ agreed for 200 colour copies to be distributed to planners. : local builders/architects/solicitors/estate agents : Local Councillors

(iii) ___ agreed to a formal launch

(iv) ___ any additional copies to be B&W or on disc

6. Finance Report

SN: Currently, HCC has £887 in the bank. A further £300 is expected from A&BC. Current HCC members should present their expenses to SN asap.

APPENDIX 1

SITE OPTIONS FOR NEW HELENSBURGH SWIMMING POOL GARETH HOSKINS ARCHITECTS - 24 SEPTEMBER 2009

1. At the HCC meeting on 24/09/09 Gareth Hoskins led a discussion on possible sites for Helensburgh's new swimming pool/leisure centre. His company had been commissioned to prepare a report in 15 weeks to evaluate possible sites and to make a recommendation. The benefits and accessibility have to be considered for each site. He added that the study has been opened out to include sports provision and to investigate what the community says it requires.

2. He said A&BC has identified the following as possible sites - the Pier Head site, Hermitage Park and the site opposite the new Hermitage Academy already identified as a possible business park in the new A&BC Local Plan.

3. In the discussion other possible sites were identified and the PROs/CONs of each discussed.

| POSSIBLE SITES | PROs | CONs |
|----------------------------------|--|---|
| PIER HEAD SITE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Central location * Easy access - road, rail, foot, cycle, bus * Vehicle parking | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Site floods regularly * Site should be for a marina |
| HERMITAGE PARK | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Central location * Road access * Opportunities to synergise with the V Halls | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Only satisfactory bus, cycle, rail and foot access |
| SITE OPPOSITE NEW ACADEMY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * A green field site * Sufficient size | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Not in Council ownership * Pupils would have to cross busy A814 * Off centre rail/limited bus access |
| OLD HERMITAGE ACADEMY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Vacant and in Council Ownership * Sufficient space * Former sports hall in reasonable condition and could be adapted * On a bus route and close | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Off centre * Sale of site to John Dickie Homes integral to the PPP deal between A&BC and Palisade Properties on the development of the new Academy |

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| | to Craigendoran rail station | |
| HELENSBURGH RESERVOIRS | * Sufficient space | * Within the Helensburgh Green Belt * Way off centre - poor access except by car |
| HELENSBURGH RUGBY & CRICKET CLUB | * Sufficient size * On a bus route * Opportunity to create a sports campus with rugby/cricket club and Lomond School | * Would take out some of the playing surfaces of the rugby/cricket club(?) * Off centre - poor access by public transport |
| EAST BAY | * Fairly central - access reasonable | * Little or no parking * Unsuitable site as it contains Scottish Water's main drains and pumping equipment * Regular flooding |
| DRILL HALL/COUNCIL DEPOT SITE | * In Council ownership | * Site too small (?) |
| BEHIND COLGRAIN PRIMARY SCHOOL | * In Council ownership * Near schools | * Site too small (?) |
| CRAIGENDORAN PIER SITE | * Reasonable access | * Site ownership fragmented * Difficult turning on A814 |
| WALKERS REST | * Site sufficient size * In Council ownership (?) | * Off centre |
| ARNOLD CLARK/R.B. STEEL/MAITLAND STREET CAR PARK SITE | * Central location * Access to buses/trains | * Sufficient size (?) * Little on-site parking |
| DESIGNATED SPACE FOR COMMUNITY USE AT NEW ACADEMY | * Access to buses | * Close proximity to children * Off centre * Sufficient space (?) |

4. Each identified **site** option has to be assessed against an agreed set of criteria (openly arrived at) before a decision is taken by A&BC. These criteria should include :

- A. **ACCESSABILITY** - by foot, cycle and car
- close to buses and train station

- adjacent car parking
- close to schools

B. FREE FROM FLOODING

C. BRINGS ECONOMIC BENEFIT TO HELENSBURGH

- accessible to visitors
- as attractive to visitors as to residents
- parents confident to leave their children while

they

spend money in the town

- waterfront a main asset for the town. A sports' development with e.g. a café overlooking the water could be a big draw for both residents and visitors.

Which site will deliver the greatest economic benefit to the town?

The

right development in the right place could be a significant visitor attraction and help energise the economy of the town.

5. The **sports facility** itself should meet certain agreed criteria. E.G.

- (i) Big enough to hold swimming/diving competitions and a wide range of water sports
- (ii) Able to hold training classes for all ages and for those with special needs
- (iii) "Open all hours"
- (iv) No under used spaces/facilities, e.g. spectator galleries
- (v) As "green" as possible
- (vi) Multi use circulation areas
- (vii) Provision of other community facilities, e.g. meeting rooms
- (viii) Good visible design has a huge importance and will be attractive to residents and visitors alike. E.G. an all-glass building, a heritage "feel"
- (ix) Financially successful (see 7 below)

6. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT : as well as engaging with the local community it is

essential that the views of current users of the swimming pool are sought and their requirements of a new facility taken on board.

There will be a further public meeting to feed back info / ideas gained from all public consultation. It is important to keep residents informed on how the different sites were viewed in terms of the agreed criteria.

People need to be kept up to speed on reasons for choices and recommendations.

7. NOT A FINANCIAL WHITE ELEPHANT ; as the many Millennium projects have demonstrated securing capital financing need not be difficult. However many of these have subsequently been unable to generate sufficient income to meet their targeted revenue costs. Some have folded.

While creativity and imagination have to be both welcomed and encouraged there has to a robust and not overly ambitious business case agreed, and in place, right from the start.

HELENSBURGH COMMUNITY COUNCIL
2009

SEPTEMBER