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MINUTES of MEETING of HELENSBURGH & LOMOND AREA COMMITTEE held in the MARRIAGE SUITE, HELENSBURGH AND LOMOND CIVIC CENTRE on THURSDAY, 19 DECEMBER 2019

Present: Councillor Barbara Morgan (Chair)

Councillor Lorna Douglas	Councillor Aileen Morton
Councillor George Freeman	Councillor Iain Paterson
Councillor Graham Archibald Hardie	Councillor Richard Trail
Councillor David Kinniburgh	

Attending: Shona Barton, Committee Manager
Douglas Whyte, Team Leader – East
Robert Williamson, Head Teacher
Laureen McIlroy, Service Planning Manager
Charlotte Craig, Business Improvement Manager
Melissa Simpson, Hermitage Park Manager
Arlene Cullum, Senior Development Officer

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillor Ellen Morton and Councillor Gary Mulvaney.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest intimated.

3. MINUTES

(a) Minute of the Previous Meeting of the Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee held on Thursday, 19 September 2019

The Minute of the previous meeting of the Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee held on Thursday, 19 September 2019 was approved as a correct record.

4. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Mr Alastair Moore and Mr John McGall, Rhu Community Council, asked the following question:

We would be grateful if the Area Committee will consider a road safety initiative by Rhu residents for the provision of a much needed pedestrian pavement in lower Pier Road, Rhu. We include this plea in writing with supporting photographs.

The carriageway in Pier Road, according to A&BC, is substandard in width with a significant section of the road entirely without footpath and would not meet current design standards. Two – level surface shared pedestrian lanes are incorporated into the carriageway further reducing road lane width rendering vehicular pass through

impossible without lane encroachment. These lanes do not comply with the requirements of Equality Act and force pedestrians to turn their back to oncoming traffic; a dangerous practice contrary to the Highway Code. Moving Traffic encroachment into lanes is a common everyday occurrence with pedestrians prevented from stepping out of harm's way to avoid collision because of a high grass embankment at one side and a stone wall at the other, which effectively traps them in the lanes. The risk to pedestrians is exacerbated by the use of Pier Road as a timber haulage route, where up to 5,000 HGVs journey per year – with loads of 44 tons, now takes place with the industry suggesting this will go on in perpetuity.

Pier Road is in a conservation village and forms part of the 'Highlandman's Road' which is, in itself, a popular tourist attraction for hillwalking groups but also links the tourist attractions of Hill House in Helensburgh and Glenarn Gardens & Marina in Rhu. It is also the route to school for children and residents catching public transport on the A814 and probably the busiest residential road in the village with traffic flow rates currently in excess of 100 vehicles per hour. With the first steps in the future development of McKenzie Estate now underway, these figures are likely to increase significantly going forward. When congestion takes place on the A814, either due to increased Base traffic or the A814 being temporarily closed, those with local knowledge see this route as a means to bypass delays and as a result normal traffic volumes increase dramatically.

The increased risk to pedestrians has had a negative impact on our community. The frightening effect it has had is self-evident when you learn of and see local residents and their families being forced to give up their use of the public realm for fear of serious injury. The risk was confirmed at a multi-agency meeting on Friday 31st May 2019 when a Police Scotland traffic officer, having seen and assessed this situation on Pier Road first hand, stated in his report that the shared use of Pier Road near the junction of A814 was a significant concern and pedestrian safety was being compromised. He recommended A&BC should take action. Mr Jim Smith, our Roads and Amenities Manager who was also in attendance stated "If I could give you a pavement here and now I would... but you have to get the funding in place."

It is the opinion of residents that this section of road incorporating a shared lanes scheme is inherently dangerous for all pedestrians and is no longer fit for purpose. They feel it is therefore essential, to ensure pedestrian safety, a formal pavement be constructed and this view is shared and supported by R&SCC. It would seem it is physically feasible to construct a pavement on the east side of Pier road where a 180 meter grass verge approximately 1.2 meters wide exists. The verge is formed from 5 parcels of land which may require Compulsory Purchase; a process which we fully understand can be difficult even though one resident, so concerned about public safety, has strongly indicated willingness to donate the land, approximately 30% of the entire verge, for free.

It is therefore with respect we ask this committee to take the necessary requisite action to provide the tax paying residents of Rhu with a much needed pavement and instigate the first stage of this process in regard to Compulsory Purchase. In recognising funding may be in short supply, we also ask the Committee to consider any and all funding opportunities.

Councillor Freeman noted that he agreed with everything which had been raised by Mr Moore and Mr McGall and had a copy of the report from the road policing department in Dumbarton which stated that the lack of a footpath was clearly

compromising the safety of pedestrians. Councillor Freeman advised that following a site visit in May which he attended alongside Councillor Paterson and a number of agencies the Head of Roads and Infrastructure Services had agreed a number of actions, including attempting to identify funding via sustrans and other avenues but there has been no feedback following this. Councillor Freeman noted that it had been agreed during the site visit in May that white lines would be repainted at a mini roundabout near the site within 2-3 weeks but this has not yet been done and continues to be a hazard.

Councillor Morgan advised that she had received an e-mail from concerned residents and had visited the site herself so could appreciate the concerns raised.

Councillor Paterson expressed concern for the potentially serious repercussions of the outlined problem and noted that he would fully support residents of Rhu and the Community Council and endorse their concerns. Councillor Paterson noted that two incidents had been raised at the previous Community Council which had been reported to the police. Councillor Paterson advised that he had received assurance from the Head of Roads and Infrastructure Services that the white lines at the mini roundabout would be painted by the end of January.

Councillor Morton advised that there had been an unfortunately high turnover of Roads Officer and staffing issues have now improved which would hopefully see outstanding works completed shortly. Councillor Morton noted that she would agree that the Area Committee would be happy to look at the issue and progress it, although previous similar situations had been stymied by issues regarding land ownership and funding.

Councillor Morgan agreed that the Committee would be happy to progress this and it would be passed on to the relevant officer for follow up and response.

5. AREA SCORECARD FQ2 2019/20

The Committee gave consideration to a paper presenting the Area Report and Scorecard for Financial Quarter 2 2019/20 (July – September 2019) and illustrating the agreed performance measures.

Decision

The Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee agreed:

1. to note the performance presented on the Scorecard and supporting commentary;
2. that upon receipt of the Quarterly Performance Scorecard they contact either Sonya Thomas or the Responsible Named Officer with any queries; and
3. to note that work is ongoing and to respond to Sonya Thomas with requests or comments regarding the layout and format of the Report and Scorecard.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Performance and Improvement, dated 19 December 2019, submitted)

6. HERMITAGE ACADEMY SCHOOL REPORT ANNUAL UPDATE

The Committee gave consideration to a progress report which provided information on the school roll, levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy; school leaver destination returns; attainment for all; attendance, absence and exclusion rates and the recognition of wider achievements within the school.

Decision

The Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee thanked Mr Williamson for his presentation and agreed to note the contents of the report and commend the work being done by the school.

(Reference: Report by Head Teacher, Hermitage Academy, dated 19 December 2019, submitted)

7. HOUSING SERVICES ACTIVITY UPDATE - STRATEGIC HOUSING INVESTMENT PLAN (SHIP) - ANNUAL UPDATE

The Committee gave consideration to a report which provided an update on the Housing Services activity within the Helensburgh and Lomond area.

Decision

The Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth, dated 19 December 2019, submitted)

8. ARGYLL AND BUTE HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Committee gave consideration to the Health and Social Care Partnership Annual Performance Report.

Decision

The Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

(Reference: Report by Chief Officer with Responsibility for Health and Social Care Partnership, dated 27 November 2019, submitted)

9. HERMITAGE PARK UPDATE

The Committee gave consideration to a report and presentation providing an update on the Hermitage Park construction works and activity plan.

Decision

The Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee agreed:

1. to note the contents of the report; and
2. to thank Melissa Simpson, Hermitage Park Manager, for her service and to congratulate and wish her the best in her new career.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth, dated 19 December 2019, submitted)

10. COMMERCIAL SERVICES PROPERTY UPDATE

A report providing members with an update on the development and sale of properties in the Helensburgh and Lomond area was before the Committee for noting.

Decision

The Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee noted the contents of the report.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Commercial Services, dated 19 December 2019, submitted)

11. HELENSBURGH, CARDROSS AND DUMBARTON CYCLEPATH UPDATE

A report providing members with an update in relation to the delivery of Argyll and Bute Council's long-standing commitment to the provision of a dedicated, high quality walking and cycle route linking Helensburgh, Cardross and Dumbarton was before the committee for noting.

Councillor Kinniburgh asked in terms of standing order 10.9 that the report be referred to the next meeting of the Committee, this was unanimously agreed.

Decision

The Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee agreed that the report would be considered at the next meeting of the Committee.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth, dated 19 December 2019, submitted)

12. HELENSBURGH AND LOMOND AREA COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

The Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee Workplan at at December 2019 was before the Committee for noting.

Decision

The Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee noted the contents of the workplan.

(Reference: Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee Workplan, dated 19 December 2019, submitted)

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