

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HELENSBURGH & LOMOND AREA COMMITTEE HELD ON  
A HYBRID BASIS BY MICROSOFT TEAMS AND IN THE MARRIAGE SUITE IN THE  
HELENSBURGH AND LOMOND CIVIC CENTRE  
ON TUESDAY, 12 MARCH 2024**

**Present:** Councillor Gemma Penfold (Chair)

Councillor Math Campbell-Sturgess	Councillor Paul Donald Kennedy
Councillor Maurice Corry	Councillor Ian MacQuire
Councillor Graham Hardie	Councillor Gary Mulvaney
Councillor Fiona Howard	Councillor Iain Paterson
Councillor Mark Irvine	

**Attending:** Stuart McLean, Committee Manager

Stuart Watson, Assistant Network and Standards Manager  
David Allan, Estates and Property Development Manager  
Ross McLaughlin, Head of Commercial Services  
Colin Young, Strategic Transportation Delivery Officer  
Douglas Whyte, Housing Strategy Manager  
David Hagerty, Community Development Officer  
Stuart Green, Corporate Support Manager  
Sonya Thomas, OD Project Officer  
Dianne Richardson, Helensburgh CARS Project Officer  
Brendan Docherty, Education Manager  
Allison Smith, Head Teacher, Kilcreggan Primary School  
Carolyn Randall, John Logie Baird Primary School  
Inspector Bart Simonis, Police Scotland

**1. APOLOGIES**

### **3. MINUTE OF THE MEETING OF THE HELENSBURGH AND LOMOND AREA COMMITTEE, HELD ON 12 DECEMBER 2023**

The Minute of the meeting of the Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee, held on 12 December 2023 was approved as a correct record.

Councillor Math Campbell-Sturgess joined the meeting during consideration of the following item of Business.

### **4. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Having noted that there were members of the public in attendance, the Chair invited them to submit any questions they may have.

#### Kenneth Lockhart, Cardross Cycle Path Action Group

Since the year 2000, Argyll and Bute Council have been discussing and have partially implemented a cyclepath between Helensburgh and Dumbarton. There have been lengthy delays in delivering this route for a variety of reasons. We note from the previous minutes, the delivery of this path is a stated Council Priority. 24 years on, anticipated completion is still some years away. On behalf of the community of Cardross, The Cardross Cyclepath Action Group would like to ask:

What assurances can the Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee give to the community of Cardross that construction of the cyclepath, as a stated Council Priority, will be given the highest priority in terms of both staff and financial resources?

How can the community of Cardross and the Cardross Cyclepath Action Group best support Argyll and Bute Council in delivering this sustainable travel route?

The Committee members agreed that they all wished the cyclepath to be completed and that they were aware of issues and assured Mr Lockhart that the cyclepath remained a priority.

Councillor Mulvaney highlighted his frustration regarding the lack of progress and welcomed the support of the community to get this over the line. Councillor Mulvaney suggested that if landowners got the message of this support for the cyclepath it may be helpful to move the project forward. The Committee Manager advised that with

#### Norman McNally, Helensburgh Community Council

I read that both the Ryder Community Engagement exercise and the Collier Retail Study have been instrumental in finalising the bid selection for the Waterfront site.

My question concerns the Helensburgh Waterfront Community Engagement Reporting carried out by Ryder Architecture, Glasgow.

This stakeholder engagement was carried out over the course of a week between 17 and the range of options currently being put forward for the Waterfront site in terms of broad



Is the Council still committed to delivering the key elements of its approved Masterplan, including limiting commercial development to 2,600 sq m gross, and space for a skatepark as intended?

The Estates & Property Development Manager confirmed that this is built into the Masterplan and none of the proposals would exceed that space. Mr Allan also advised that as agreed at the September 2023 Area Committee, the skatepark would be located on the Waterfront unless a more suitable location was identified.

Peter Brown, Helensburgh Community Council

Question 1 and 2

The agenda for the H&L Area Committee meeting states that the Committee will be asked to pass a resolution to exclude from the public Appendices B, C and D of the Pierhead development item.



can update it based on information that we received from Colliers yesterday through David Allan.

Our primary concern with the Retail Study Update is that Colliers have significantly underestimated the existing retail floorspace in the town centre. Colliers said that they had taken the floorspace figure from an Experian Goad Category Report, and that the list

But they do, if the list of shops and floorspaces is wrong.

We obtained the underlying Experian data yesterday. This data, supposedly specifically Toy Superstore and therefore was a significant multiple retailer. Unbelievably, The Jolly Giant Toy Superstore went into receivership in 2002.

Given this kind of hole in the data, it may come as no surprise to the committee that we can demonstrate definitively that the floorspace figure that Colliers have used for 2023 is too low, for both convenience and comparison shops. What that means is that their conclusion is wrong and, in fact, that any expansion of food (convenience) stores will close down some of our existing shops.

significantly, the comparison sales percentages have been based on very old figures, from 2007. We asked Colliers what error margins should be applied to allow for such old data, reviews by market specialists based on specific scenarios using data from multiple

If this is too low, it will suggest that more floor area is required. Colliers have figure that is based on the average sales density of all comparison retailers, including multinational and small independent retails. It must be appreciated that a benchmark sales

We have examined another Retail Capacity Study, prepared by Nexus Planning for Newry, Mourne and Down District Council in April 2022. robust, industry standard benchmark sales densities for calculating the turnover of smaller independent retailers that typically make up the majority of the comparison provision of town centres. Moreover, the trading levels of comparison retailers can fluctuate significantly depending on a number of localised variables, most notably the location of the retailer relative to similar providers.



it suggests that this consultation was on the Helensburgh section of the Dumbarton - Helensburgh cycleway. At no point was it made clear that this was the purpose of the survey. Can you assure us that further consultation will take place on the preferred route and that this is not the only consultation?

We also have concerns in paragraph 4:13 on page 160 that there is a role for volunteers to support the maintenance of the cyclepath because the Roads and Infrastructure Service have previously stated they do not wish to adopt sections of cyclepath remote from the road. The Community Council and other groups willingly coordinate volunteers to clean the beach and tend to the shrub beds maintaining cycle paths would be quite a different matter for which we have neither the expertise or the equipment.

Councillor Penfold advised that this question would be passed onto the Strategic Transportation Delivery Officer who would provide a response to Ms Davies.

### Question 3

On the agenda today Item 12 pages 123-128 is an item Area Plans Update. As the Chair of the Helensburgh and Lomond Community Planning Group I can report we have already had this presentation. It would appear that the Area Committee, the Community Planning Partnership along with Community Councils and community groups will have a significant role to play in the production of these plans. I would like to ask how you as a committee feel we can all better work together to produce an area plan for Helensburgh and Lomond which truly represents the needs and aspirations of the local community?

Councillor Corry confirmed that he would welcome any suggestions in this regard from Ms Davies.

### Jackie Hood, Helensburgh Skatepark Group

The Helensburgh Skatepark Project carried out a poll which got 123 responses, 73% wanted the Skatepark to remain on the waterfront, 15% supported a move to Kidston Park

preference for the skatepark to remain on the waterfront despite the size restrictions imposed by the council planning conditions. However, should Kidston Park be deemed by the current feasibility study to be a suitable alternative location for our community skatepark, and the skatepark is forced to move to this location, can the Council confirm that the replacement ramps will be allowed to remain on the waterfront location until the alternative park is constructed and operational so that there is no further loss of amenity for our young people?. They have already had to endure 3 years without a skatepark. We need confirmation that the temporary ramps can remain on the pierhead site until a new facility is up and running.

Can the Council also confirm that any funds left over from the £80,000 after the feasibility study has been concluded, will be put towards the planning, design and construction of a permanent skatepark?

The Estates & Property Development Manager advised that due to planning considerations an alternative location would need to be agreed before relocating it.

The Head of Commercial Services advised that at the December Area Committee there was a preference for further investigations into Kidston Park and also Hermitage Park and that investigations in this regard are ongoing. Mr McLaughlin confirmed that that there



would be a skatepark on the waterfront site until such time and any revised relocation proposal is agreed.

The Estates & Property Development Manager confirmed that any funds left over from the £80,000 after the feasibility study would be used to facilitate the new development.

Angela Anderson, Plastic Free Helensburgh

Following on from the question I raised last quarter on drainage and flooding going back to



more carbon than any other tree in the world and Scotland only has around 4% of mature natural woodlands left so all remaining fragments are very precious to this type of nature crisis. The new national planning framework 4 recognises this in law and seeks to protect ancient woodlands from development and the community in Rhu fought for tree preservation orders for Blairvadach and Argyll and Bute Council delivered the Tree Preservation Orders in 2018, this made the Community think that the trees would be protected and any development would be nature sensitive. In 2020 the children in Rhu and staff at the primary planted hundreds of tree saplings and the community is being responsible and climate aware but why is the Council betraying us by signing death warrant for mature woodlands?

Will the Council commit to giving back to the community what is left of Blairvadach Woods so that we can ensure mature trees continue to sequester the carbon, purify the air and water, provide homes to owls, hedgehogs and bees and all who live there?

The Committee highlighted their disappointment at hearing what had happened and agreed to contact Planning Officers to look into the matter as a matter of urgency.

The Committee Manager advised that if the land was owned by the Council there is a Community Asset Transfer process in place and agreed to put Mr Darcy in contact with the relevant officer.

5.



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

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth, dated January 2024, submitted)

#### **10. ROADS CAPITAL RECONSTRUCTION PROGRAMME 2024/25**

The Committee gave consideration to a report which included a draft programme for roads reconstruction schemes for 2024/25 in the Helensburgh and Lomond area.

##### **Decision**

The Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee:

1. provided comments on the draft programme contained at appendix 1 of the report, which were noted by the Head of Roads and Infrastructure Services; and
2. noted that the programme would go forward to the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee on 21 March 2024 for endorsement.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Roads and Infrastructure Services, dated February 2024, submitted)

#### **11. PROPOSED ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL (OFF STREET PARKING PLACES AND CHARGES) (HELENSBURGH) (AMENDMENT) ORDER 202\_**

The Committee gave consideration to a report which provided an update on the proposed detail of a single objection to the draft traffic regulation order.

##### **Decision**

Council (Off Street Parking Places and Charges) (Helensburgh) (Amendment) Order

minutes maximum.

(Reference: Report by Executive with responsibility for Roads and Infrastructure Services, dated March 2024, submitted)

At this point, the Chair ruled and the Committee agreed to vary the order of Business and take agenda item 17 (Helensburgh Waterfront Development (Commercial Area) Update & Shortlisting of Final Offers) next.

The Chair advised that should Members wish to discuss the content of appendices B, C and D of the following item there would be a requirement to agree to exclude the press and public.



## **Decision**

The Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee considered and noted the information provided.

Councillor Math Campbell-Sturgess left the meeting during consideration of the following item of Business.

### **14. 2023/24 ACTIVE TRAVEL PROGRESS REPORT**

The Committee gave consideration to a report which provided an update on the progress made in 2023/24 in relation to active travel projects in the Helensburgh and Lomond area, and sought continued support for the projects from Members.

1. welcomed the community engagement to support the identification of a preferred route linking Morrisons Supermarket/Hermitage Academy to Helensburgh Town Centre/Waterfront;



**Decision**

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

(Reference: Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee workplan, dated 12 March 2024)