

# Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

## Minutes of 7th February 2000

*As Approved 6/3/00*

**Chair:** Murdo Macdonald

### Young Citizen Award

Archie Strachan introduced the winner of this years prize, Jane Pitman, who was recommended by Rymouth staff for her voluntary work on a regular basis helping and befriending residents. Also commended was Alan Donaldson, recommended by people on his newspaper round for his assistance of elderly residents with wheelie bins in the course of his delivery duties. Murdo Macdonald presented the trophy, certificates and cheque.

### 1. Attendance

**Community Councillors:** Maries Cassells, Ken Crichton, Ken Fraser, Ian Goudie, John Landon, Chris Lesurf, Pete Lindsay, Dennis Macdonald, Murdo Macdonald, Joe Peterson, Archie Strachan, Cynthia Tero.

**Student Representatives:** Steve Durrant, Linda Piálek.

**Coopted:** Bill Sangster (Merchants' Assoc).

**Fife Councillors:** Sheila Hill, Jane Ann Liston, Frances Melville, Jane Hunter-Blair.

**Apologies:** Donald Macgregor; Hugh Gray; Helen Lawrie, Barry Joss, Archie Muir, Lindsay Murray.

### 2. Contributions from Members of the Public

#### 2.1. General

##### 2.1.1. Police

**2.1.1.1. New Community Policeman** - PC Cumming introduced his sucessor, PC Brian Balmaves a new member of the community policing team.

**2.1.1.2. Housebreaking** - There has been an increase in housebreaking in St Andrews over the last few months, but some people have been charged recently, which it is hoped will put an end to the current problem.

**2.1.1.3. Damage by West Sands Road** - PC Cumming and his colleagues have been checking, but haven't caught anyone yet (Jan 2.1.1.).

##### 2.1.1.4. Kinburn Park

- attended the site meeting after the report of an attack (Jan 4.2.) Cllr Frances Melville added that as a result of the site meeting two damaged flood-lights are to be replaced and an extra spotlight to be installed. Unfortunately funds will not stretch to an extra column lamp at the moment.

**2.1.1.5. Illegal Parking** - Chris Lesurf asked about illegal parking on pavements, particularly how many prosecutions there had been, asking that figures be brought to March's meeting. PC Cumming pointed out this was a difficult crime to prosecute at the moment as the new laws (allowing prosecution for being parked on the pavement rather than the current offence of driving onto the pavement) are not yet in place. She also mentioned that she had information from Dundee Citizens' Advice Bureau that Local Authorities could take responsibility for enforcing parking laws. PC Cumming was unaware of this but would look into it.

#### 2.1.2. Development at St John's House Garden

The university proposes to build a Psychology lab in St John's House garden, 65-71 South Street. Magnus Jardine-Brown of the University History Society spoke against on a number of grounds:

**Historical** - the garden has been identified in a 17th century map and appears to have been an open space continuously since at least that time. The limited archaeological dig carried out recently shows no evidence of earlier construction save some mediaeval post holes, so it may have been a garden space for far longer. Unfortunately the archaeological survey results are confidential and the full details have not been released, making it difficult to know how significant the site might be.

**Social** - the garden is used as a tranquil spot by staff and students.

Practical - no objection to the lab as such but the choice of location seems perverse. Anticipate serious traffic problems at the entrance in the narrow section of Market St with ambulances delivering, visitors, staff and student traffic.

Describing the proposed location as 'perverse' he pointed out that there are more appropriate locations for such a building either at the North Haugh, where students attend psychology lectures anyway or, closer to the main Psychology Dept facilities, at the back of the Bute Buildings. The University has previously attempted similar developments in the Deans Court gardens and Westburn Lane which were successfully opposed.

While no formal planning application has been made yet he urged the Community Council to oppose any such when it appears.

Ian Goudie noted that members of community council had attended a briefing on the proposals last year. At first sight such a development was against previous Fife Council planning policy on infill.

### **2.1.3. Parking at Abbey Walk**

Kate Patullo, a resident of Abbey Walk, next to the Byre site, drew the meeting's attention to parking problems there. Though due at the moment to the Byre development she is concerned that with 11 flats and a 200 seat theatre currently being built the already limited residential parking will become impossible. Currently Abbey Walk is not covered by the residents parking scheme, so cannot make use of parking spaces on South Street, just around the corner. She proposed instead widening Abbey Walk by removal of the grassed spaces (where there used to be housing anyway, she said) and introducing angled parking on the east side of the street.

Ken Crichton condemned what he described as the complete lack of planning over the Byre development, noting that due to safety concerns much of the site equipment had moved to the East Sands, taking over half the car park he said.

Cllr Jane Hunter-Blair expressed sympathy; she was aware of the problems. She had recently been talking about parking in the area with Alistair Clyne of Transportation Service, but found that the council was dragging its feet over residential parking.

Maries Cassells blamed the lack of parking spaces on the students.

### **2.1.4. Mr Christie.**

Spoke about his involvement and interest in the history of the town, since the age of 12 when he started reading about the Bruce Embankment.

He called for the various town charters, Burgess Roll and other historical documents to be put on display in the town, suggesting that perhaps the new Gateway Tower would be a suitable location.

### **Murdo Macdonald to meet Mr Christie re charters etc**

### **2.1.5. Pier Project.**

Nan Taylor spoke on current plans: As well as its normal fundraising efforts the Pier Project is undertaking a special push to bring the total raised to £10,000, to show the Heritage Lottery funding body that there is good local support for the pier. Currently the fund stands at about £8,000 - £10k is the target for Easter. There will be a special weekend of fundraising events 10-12th March (details to follow).

She asked that in the mean time however people make an effort to talk to someone new every day about the pier, to publicise the project; try to get any clubs or associations to take and sell the project's greetings cards; and to contribute 'spare change' collections to Kathy Philip (flowershop) on Bell St.

Chris Lesurf asked what the cost of repairs will actually be - the figure is thought to be in excess of £60k.

Steve Durrant mentioned that the university's external relations department was currently looking for fundraising projects.

### **2.1.6. Mr Docherty**

Started by referring to his previous appearance here in December 99 when he had commented on the current situation concerning pedestrian crossings and roundabouts. He asked if it would be possible for him to contribute to the scheduled debate later in the agenda.

After a brief discussion it was agreed that the normal practice was to take submissions from the public at this point in the agenda but, mainly for time reasons, to restrict debate to the community council and not include the public gallery as well.

He then went on to raise a problem with parking at the Bus Station. The public are often unable to wait to pick up passengers getting off the buses because of the number of taxis waiting. Is it possible to limit the number of taxis allowed there?

In discussion it was pointed out that there were only waiting spaces for a limited number of taxis, the rest of the space being double yellow-lined (theoretically banning public and taxi waiting). It was reported that sometimes there were so many taxis there that the buses could not turn into the station. Several people spoke in favour of taxis being given preference to private vehicles as the public could park in the adjacent station car park. Others commented that there seemed to be too many taxis in town altogether, citing similar problems in St Mary's Place.

**Cllr Frances Melville to investigate.**

## **Fife Councillors**

### **2.2. Cllr Frances Melville**

#### **2.2.1. Portacabins**

at North Haugh Bio-molecular Science/Purdie Building are up for renewal of their temporary permission - recommendation is for acceptance.

**2.2.2. Fife Structure Plan** consultation - noted the scant regard for the findings of the Strategic Study with regard to green belt. She urged everyone to respond to the consultation paper (prepared by David Sneddon, Central Planning Manager).

Ian Goudie reported that the Green Belt Forum had already been in touch looking for increased involvement by the Community Council to fight Fife Council's dismissal of a green belt for St Andrews. He supported the councillor's call for everyone to comment on the consultation document, though described responding to Fife Council consultations as a triumph of hope over experience - it seems to him that less and less attention is being paid to those in E Fife.

### **2.3. Cllr Jane Hunter-Blair**

#### **2.3.1. Blue Stane**

- looking into getting a sign for the Blue Stane in the grounds of the Featherie & Firkin.

**2.3.2. Commercial Wheelie Bins** - raising with the appropriate sections of Fife Council the abuse of retailers' wheelie bins. She is aware of about half a dozen premises whose bins are left out on the street constantly.

#### **2.3.3. Alfred Place bins**

- has a scheduled site visit with Bob Lawrie of Cleansing & Waste Management Service to view the problem.

**2.3.4. Greyfriars Garden** - Planning Service is to pursue the owners of the corner garden property of Greyfriars Garden to keep it cleaner this year.

**2.3.5. Residents' Parking scheme** - Murdo Macdonald asked for clarification of the reports that the residents' parking scheme is now to allow 2 tickets per household. He was concerned that this would cut down parking available to visitors and those working in the centre. Bill Sangster thought that there would be no parking spaces left in Market Street at all.

The Fife Councillors explained that the decision had been taken and announced some time ago, due to the very low current take-up of the scheme (referred to in Oct 2.2.2.).

Joe Peterson was quite happy for the residents to come first for parking - visitors who had journeyed into St Andrews wouldn't mind walking a few extra yards he felt. Dennis Macdonald called for a multi-storey car park to be built in the centre to alleviate the problem while in contrast Chris Lesurf pointed out that pedestrianisation had not done the centre of Dundee noticeable harm.

**2.3.6. Meeting with Museum Service** - will be discussing the town charters, etc.

### **2.4. Cllr Sheila Hill**

**2.4.1. Traffic calming** - will have something to say about this next month.

**2.4.2. Gibson House** have a coffee morning 10am 4th March with usual stalls

### **2.5. Cllr Jane Ann Liston**

**2.5.1. Closing date** for comments on the Structure Plan is 30 April.

**2.5.2. Local Services Committee** this week is considering replacements for the local meetings cancelled over the summer. The proposed 'public meetings' will take place in Cupar,

somewhere in the East Neuk and St Andrews for a trial. There was no mention of time, but she will press for evenings so most people can get to them.

### **2.5.3. Pipeland Park**

- happy to report that there is more money than expected available for the youngsters rollerblade/skateboard facilities. Discussed this at a site meeting with such as Community Services, Locality Manager and the Police but need to find out what the people who will use it want.

### **2.5.4. Buses**

- Stagecoach to speak to East Fife LibDem councillors soon. It will be interesting to hear what they have to say about the recent problems.

She also noted that very few of a collection of immediately pre-Christmas bus tickets had any notice of the changes or the information line phone number, as claimed by Stagecoach and Transportation Service.

**2.5.5. Tourism Management Plan Forum** takes place next month. Noticed that there was no Community Council member scheduled for one of the working parties beforehand and asked who it should be. The Secretary does not keep records of the individual assignments. Ian Goudie said he and Lindsay Murray covered one working group each, Donald Macgregor the other two.

**2.5.6. Fergusson Anniversary** - looking for a Community Council representative to co-ordinate various celebrations

**Ken Fraser volunteered.**

**2.5.7. The high speed rail guide** omits Fife stops - such as Leuchars - a peculiar error especially in this Open year. Dennis Macdonald commented that the omission of Leuchars from guides etc goes back at least 30 years to the time of the closure of the St Andrews Line. Cllr Liston added that a few years ago rail travellers had been advised to get off at Kirkcaldy for the Leuchars Air Show...

**2.5.8. Fife & South Tayside Rail Study** - on examining the full report there are fatal flaws in the conclusion against a rail link to St Andrews. She is passing details of the problems to the consultants who prepared the report, for their comments. Relevant parts of the report have been passed to our Planning Committee for information.

<only a 5 minute break as time was pressing>

## **3. Minutes of Jan**

Correction:

7.4. Planning - final paragraph: 'no' notification, instead of 'hardly any'.

## **4. Matters Arising**

### **4.1. 'Friend of St Andrews' proposal**

Generally agreed that this is a good idea, but doubts expressed about the name. Agreed to form a working group to consider & report: Archie Strachan, Dennis Macdonald, Ken Crichton, Cynthia Tero.

### **4.2. Open Exploitation**

Murdo Macdonald suggested that in view of the potential clash with the Pilgrim Foundation's plan to run something similar, a decision be put off for a month until their plans are clearer.

This left Joe Peterson with a problem as he could not attend to the prize-raising until Community Council gave the go-ahead; a month there was rather more significant than in other aspects of organising a draw. It was agreed that he could undertake informal soundings in the mean time.

Maries Cassells added that the foundation had found out that only one charity (already chosen) would be allowed to operate within the boundaries of the Open.

Cllr Jane Ann Liston reported that she had approached Fife Council's Economic Development Service on behalf of Community Council to arrange space in their facilities in the enclosure, as had been done in the days of the District Council.

### **4.3. Health Seminar**

Enlarging slightly from her written report on the seminar Chris Lesurf explained she would be speaking to the schools about the proposed competition to publicise health-related issues in the area with the permission of the meeting, which was given.

Ian Goudie had heard that in some parts of the seminar location of the new hospital on the southern hillside was being promoted. This is very much against Community Council policy which favours an expansion of the current in-town site.

#### **4.4. Zebras**

Bill Sangster announced that as Fife Council had withdrawn the survey form the Merchants' Association had prepared their own, with some changes, for distribution.

Joe Peterson spoke in favour of the zebras as they make walking through town much easier. Most traffic jams he saw were due to motorists stopping in the road to wait for a parking space to become free, regardless of the effect on other traffic; or delivery lorries stopping to unload at peak times.

Cynthia Tero also spoke as both pedestrian and driver, concerned that some pedestrians did not know how to use zebras properly, stepping out without looking. She also noted that the positioning of the Belisha Beacons was poor - some of the globes had been knocked off by turning lorries. Maries Cassells drew attention to problems from the buses unloading at Madras and the poor discipline, she said, of Madras pupils rushing across the road. Ken Crichton pointed out that the crossing between Holy Trinity and the Town Hall caused problems for official cars at weddings and funerals having taken out some parking spaces. Murdo Macdonald looked forwards to pedestrians learning how to behave on the crossings. He felt that the full impact on traffic flow in town would not be felt until Easter.

Ian Goudie thought the layout of the crossings and junctions very odd, not in accordance with road planning guidelines for separation. This was leading to problems at both ends of Bell St. At the north end buses were blocking the crossing as they sought to turn left into St Mary's Place, often finding their turn obstructed by parked taxis.

Cllr Jane Ann Liston clarified the situation over the questionnaire. Following Bill Sangster's comments on the subject last month she had asked Kate Hughes, the Locality Manager, about it. It did not come from Transportation Service, rather it was an attempt by the Local Office staff to get a feeling for the town's response. The reason for not publicising the survey was that the intention had been to ask every N'th person coming to the office to fill it in on the assumption that most would recently have experienced the zebras by foot or road. Unfortunately the system broke down when the flu not-quite-an-epidemic struck the office in January. The forms had been put aside as none of the staff temporarily drafted into the office knew what to do with them - which must have been when Mr Sangster had seen them and failed to get an explanation. There was no 'plot' by Fife council to hide them. Though they had since been advised to withdraw the questionnaire for other reasons the Locality Manager was quite happy that it had been reproduced in *Event* and elsewhere. Ian Goudie, as a professional statistician, considered the sampling method employed by the Local Office's study to be poor and warned against extrapolating the results.

Cllr Jane Hunter-Blair expressed mixed feelings on the zebras, depending whether she was thinking as a motorist or a resident of the town centre. As far as the positioning vis-à-vis junctions was concerned she understood that the government had recently changed the rules, to allow greater priority to pedestrians.

Bill Sangster made it clear that he did not believe Cllr Liston, and called for the zebras to be replaced with traffic lights.

Dennis Macdonald commented again that in order to pedestrianise St Andrews a large car park would be needed in the centre of town.

Murdo Macdonald summed up, suggesting that anyone with concerns either way should write to Fife Council and make their feelings known.

#### **4.5. Kinburn Park Lights.**

see 2.1.1.4. above

### **5. New Business**

None

### **6. Officers Reports**

#### **6.1. Chair**

##### **6.1.1. Rectorial Drag**

- will be welcoming the new Rector of the university, Andrew Neil, to St Andrews on behalf of the town at Church Square at 10.45am. All Community Councillors encouraged to attend.

##### **6.2. Treasurer.**

**6.2.1. Medallion of Office** for the Chair of Community Council has now been paid for (£400 plus £200 for the office bearers' name bars).

### **6.3. Secretary**

#### **6.3.1. Buses -**

Joe Peterson asked whose fault all the bother over the changes was? Cllr Jane Ann Liston explained some of the background to the timetable changes. Commercial services must be notified to the Scottish Executive six weeks in advance. Subsidised services, paid for by Fife Council, don't need notice. Some of the services changed were subsidised. Fife Councillors received the same notice of the changes as the Community Council, a letter dated 5th Jan.

A Stagecoach visit would be welcomed.

**Pete Lindsay to write**

**6.3.3. St Andrews Day holiday** - Keith McCartney to be offered co-option to run the letter-writing campaign. Proposed Pete Lindsay, Second Joe Peterson. No opposition.

**Pete Lindsay to contact Keith McCartney**

## **7. Committees**

### **7.3. Health Education & Welfare**

**7.3.1. Work in progress** - Chris Lesurf reported that they are currently considering Fife Council reports on Sports & Health and a NEF Respite Care consultation.

**7.3.2. Bus Station Toilets** - Ken Crichton suggested that the committee should take up the issue of the Bus Station Toilets.

### **7.4. Millennium**

from appendix C

**7.4.C1. Greyfriars Garden Site** - Archie Strachan asked if a price had been fixed for the garden. It has not. He suggested that before looking for money it might be helpful to know how much was needed.

**7.4.C2. Competition to promote millennial projects** - a decision on this is waiting on feedback from the schools on what they are willing to take part in. It was suggested that this may be joined to the other competition proposal from the health seminar (4.3 above).

### **7.5. Planning**

**7.5.2. University Hall wall** - Joe Peterson queried why the university wanted to demolish this wall? Ian Goudie understands it was damaged during the felling of trees and the university did not wish to rebuild it.

**7.5.4. Kinkell Brae Caravan site** - Cllr Jane Ann Liston noted that there was no comment from the Community Council on a development of a temporary building. Ian Goudie explained that these plans had been requested but denied as planning officials did not consider them to be of public interest. He added that there had been problems getting hold of other plans, concerning the Purdie Building, too. It is hoped that the meeting of 14 Feb will sort this out.

**7.5.6. Tourism Management Plan** - vision of St Andrews Transportation in 2020. Ian Goudie expressed some concerns about the way this had been dealt with at the TMP working group meeting. The minutes of the TMP meeting came too late to discuss at (our) Planning Committee despite a three hour discussion of a prepared document being boiled down to a two page minute. This process of reduction had led to a number of significant omissions - the St Andrews rail link, a secondary school in Tayport to reduce the number of buses running between the Tay bank for two examples. He did feel that the working group was being railroaded to agree to a 'party line'.

*<As time was pressing Chair asked further reports to be kept brief>*

### **7.7. Recreation**

#### **7.7.1. Photo Record**

- Ken Crichton noted a millennium project to preserve group photos of school groups, clubs and other bodies.

**7.7.2. St Andrews Week committee** to meet 1st Wed every month.

*9.30pm - Chair asked for standing orders suspended to allow continuation of business - no opposition*

### **7.8. Youth**

Archie Strachan reported that he and Joe Peterson were still pursuing options for a new format to the Youth Forum.

*9.35-ish - meeting no longer quorate.*

#### **6.2.2. Coat of Arms**

- Bill Sangster apologised for forgetting this report earlier and reported that existing contracts were being checked, with a view to extracting any monies owed, and new contracts are being set up. He noted that there will be costs incurred in the process of updating this. It is intended to clamp down on the misuse of the former Burgh Arms.

### **8. AOCB**

#### **8.1. Royal Naval Association**

Dennis Macdonald mentioned that the NEF branch was likely to disband as a consequence of their eviction from the Victory Memorial Hall two years ago.

#### **8.2. Library**

John Landon asked for an update on progress on a new library. Cllr Jane Hunter-Blair said that the present facility is to expand within the same building.

#### **8.3. Loches Alliance**

Bill Sangster reported that the body had become a registered charity from 1st Feb 2000.

*<Meeting closed at 9.45pm>*

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