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Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

Draft Minutes - March 2001

for approval

Chair: Murdo Macdonald

1. Attendance

Community Councillors: Ken Crichton, Ken Fraser, Ian Goudie, Helen Lawrie, Chris Lesurf, Pete Lindsay, Dennis Macdonald, Murdo Macdonald, Donald Macgregor, Lindsay Murray, Joe Peterson, Frank Riddell, Archie Strachan.

Student Association Rep: Fraser Walker

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

Apologies: James Kelman, Hugh Gray, Maries Cassells.

2. Minutes of February 2001

5.9 - Bill Sangster felt his phrasing in objecting to consideration of the position of student members of the community was closer to "inessential" than "undesirable".

Amended minutes accepted

3. Presentations

3.1. Police Report

Inspector Pow attended

3.1.1. Station Car Park

- is free so it is not an offence to park outside the marked bays. Frank Riddell who had raised the initial query about the poor parking suggested that restrictions such as double yellow lines should be employed at the car park junction with Doubledykes Road.

3.1.2. Cycle security campaign

- 42 cycles stopped, 4 offences found of which 3 were lighting and one cycling on the footpath. Some 40 lock vouchers were given out. Overall the exercise was sufficiently successful for it to be repeated in October.

The issue of ill-lit cycling newspaper-deliverers was pointed out to the Inspector - surely their employers bore some responsibility to see they were legal - had they been approached?

The reply was that a scheme to provide paper deliverers with yellow safety jackets was being looked at by the St Andrews Safety Panel and Local Office. Points about lighting would be passed to them.

3.2. Right for Fife

Dr Frances Elliot - medical director of Fife Primary Care NHS Trust - spoke on behalf of the Fife Health

Board, though emphasised that she is not employed by them.

She started with a general overview of the reasons for Right For Fife.

The Right for Fife document has been circulated to all households. It is the first stage of consultation to integrate the review of services in Fife with non-health community planning being undertaken by Fife Council. It attempts to look at access to services and people's priorities for health care.

Some aspects are driven by external decisions by the Scottish Executive, UK national Government and even the EC on such matters of standards of care, working conditions. These may override local conditions.

Timetable - Right to Fife distribution should be completed this week. Options will be developed from the responses to the questionnaire for further consultation at public meetings in July and other consultations through to October. The Health Board will then decide on policies at its November meeting.

Responding to questions Dr Elliot explained that the new St Andrews hospital was not covered directly by Right for Fife though it would of course be affected by the decisions taken. When the lack of maternity care in the area was raised, along with the difficulty of reaching facilities in Kirkcaldy, she admitted that maternity was not one of the core services being looked at, but said that it would be considered.

As Chair, Murdo Macdonald asked for a show of hands of people who had seen the Right For Fife document. Of the 20 or so people around the table fewer than half a dozen remembered seeing it. Concerns were expressed that the format of the document (tabloid newsprint) made it likely to be mistaken for an advertising free-sheet and binned without noticing either the importance of the document or the questionnaire on the back. On the questions it was commented that for an all-Fife consultation they were biased towards west Fife issues and that too many of the questions suggested a single answer rather than presenting alternatives. Dr Elliot was aware that others had raised similar concerns. She would report these to Fife Health Board herself, but emphasised that people should also add their comments on this to their own responses.

Asked about links with Ninewells Hospital, as Dundee is easier to get to than Kirkcaldy from this part of Fife, Dr Elliot was able to give reassurances that Tayside and Forth Valley Health Boards were also involved in the consultations. Similarly Fife Council is involved through the Community Plan which covers areas of care in the community.

3.3. Mr Christie

Reported the good opinion of a relative in Liverpool who had found the community council web sites and was impressed by the information available on community council business.

Turning to his main purpose of making people more aware of the history and heritage of St Andrews he circulated some of his material and spoke of some of the things he'd like to put on display - a reproduction of the US Declaration of Independence, the burghers' roll - which could be photographed for display as the charters have been. Bill Sangster suggested that these could be displayed in the St Andrews Museum at Kinburn Park which has the matriculation certificate of the Community Council's arms on display already.

4. Fife Councillors

4.1. Frances Melville

4.1.1. Cycle Contra-Flow Lanes - to go to a public enquiry - possibly April/May

4.1.2. Drainage Problems - on Hepburn Gardens side of Lade Braes are being investigated.

4.1.3. Drive Carefully Signs - to be installed on Strathkinness High Road

4.1.4. Traffic Calming - to be introduced at Lumsden Gardens

4.1.5. Pub closing times

- Licensing Board to consult on closing times - public meeting in the first week of April.

4.1.6. Cyclepath Litter

- Lindsay Murray and Dennis Macdonald commented on Litter accumulating on the St Andrews to Guardbridge cycle path, particularly at the Hungry Horse and Strathtyrum areas. Cllr Melville will raise with appropriate service.

4.2. Jane Hunter-Blair

4.2.1. Public Toilets

- passed on details list of public toilet opening times over the Christmas/New Year period. Bill Sangster, who had raised concerns originally, noted the facilities were closed far longer than many of shops and businesses in the centre and asked what the shoppers and visitors were supposed to do? Jane Hunter-Blair will make representations.

4.2.2. Shore Bridge footpath

- a footpath is to be installed on the upstream side of the Shore Bridge (St Mary St) after all. This seems to be part of a safe path to school initiative, plus the effect of the possible development at St Leonards Fields.

4.2.3. Flagpole at the West Port

- Historic Scotland consider it unsafe for their staff to maintain the flag there, due to access difficulties and intend to cease flying it. General concern was expressed at the possible loss of this feature. Jane Hunter-Blair to investigate possibilities of Fife Council providing assistance (eg a cherrypicker lift platform perhaps to access the flagpole safely).

Pete Lindsay to write

4.2.4. Abbey St/South St junction

- work to start on a new roundabout (the fruit of the Kingask section 72 agreement) in mid March, work likely to last four weeks

4.2.5. Residents' Parking

- the latest expansion of the scheme into Howard Place etc is opposed by the local residents' association. While residents had formerly backed the proposal, the turnover of residents over the years has been such that when re-canvassed only a few supporters were found.

4.2.6. South Street/West Port improvements

- Lindsay Murray - south street improvements stopped because of the construction of the road - tarmac skin over a well-compacted base of sand. Not up to modern standards and would have to be totally replaced, at vast expense if the Scottish Enterprise proposals had gone ahead.

4.3. Sheila Hill

No points to raise herself, straight to questions

4.3.1. Craigtoun Road Development

- Several people concerned about the state of the Craigtoun Road outside the Wilcon development. Originally four weeks work around Christmas was expected, but there is no sign of an end to the disruption and of lights, barriers and earth spills on the road. Some concern that with Wilcon's announced withdrawal from the site this will remain after they have gone.

4.3.2. Weekend Waste Collections

- call for the weekend waste collections experiment to be repeated soon to help deal with the spring gardening debris.

4.3.3. Council Tax Payment Schedule

- Dennis Macdonald concerned at new council tax collection timetable, felt the disappearance of a 'free' month

in April was not adequately publicised, would cause problems for some who had budgeted on the basis of it. Frances Melville replied that she and her colleagues had indeed raised this point when the changes were discussed about a year ago, but to no avail.

4.4. Jane Ann Liston

4.4.1. Wheelie bin 'Parking Tickets'

- when bins are left on the street they will get reminders, intended to look very like fixed penalty parking tickets, attached to the offending bins pointing out that they should be removed from the pavement as soon as possible after collection. One member, perhaps taking the description of 'parking tickets' over literally, protested that students who were often short of money could ill-afford parking fines. He was not noticeably reassured by the suggestion that taking bins in promptly might therefore be a good idea.

4.4.1. Scooniehill Rd flooding

- Planning Service are looking into who has responsibility - at the moment everyone is denying it - Fife Council/SEPA/EoS Water. There is some suspicion that field drains might have been damaged when Fife Region installed a new sewer towards the end of its existence, in which case EoS Water is the successor authority.

4.4.2. Tourism Management Plan Forum

- meets 7.30 Thursday 8th Mar. As well as regular business there will be a speaker: Prof George Hazel on "traffic & conservation areas"

4.4.3. Tourist Board

- are to switch their promotional focus back to St Andrews (& Dunfermline) from the current attempt to market the whole of Fife. They hope that interest in the historic bits will spin-off benefit to the rest.

4.4.4. Coastal Path

- Countryside Rangers trying to fix it. Think Fife Council own the surrounding land so can undertake work to divert the water draining from the caravan site which appears to be the cause of the landslip. It was suggested that careful examination of planning permissions for recent expansion of the site might be in order, and the question of visual screening of the site with trees and bushes was again raised.

4.4.5. Railway Passenger Council

- held a statutory meeting in Dunfermline, which she attended as did Chris Lesurf. One of the speakers was head of Transportation, Alan Brien. Rail reintroductions were mentioned, including St Andrews, and the Chair of the RPC expressed a hope that they would be meeting at St Andrews' station in 2010.

4.4.6. Strategic Consultation for Rail Passengers - she is coordinating the submission on behalf of the Railway Development Society.

<8.10 break & 200 club draw>

5. Planning

Report circulated by Ian Goudie

5.1.iv. 130 Market St

- Joe Peterson asked for more details on the grounds for objecting to the extension of the amusements hall. Ian Goudie expanded on the report, saying that the use of the proposed extension for bingo was not the reason for the objection, rather the safety concerns about emergency exits and access for emergency services which is a concern with all infill developments behind the on street frontage. It has been the practice of community council to object to this sort of infill development for some years. Frank Riddell added that the very poor plans made it difficult to tell what was actually being proposed and whether there were any safety features. Dennis Macdonald wanted more objections to university developments such as the Students' Union rather than this one. He was concerned that objecting to this expansion affected a local family, but was assured by knowledgeable members that local ownership of the site had ceased four or more years ago.

5.3.i. Scooniehill Golf Development

- Joe Peterson proposed a motion condemning Frank Riddell for comments in the press on the rejection

"Vice Chairperson Dr Riddell has criticised the unelected officials of Fife Council's Planning Department by calling into question their competency in the full knowledge that they are unable to respond. By doing so he has brought this Council into disrepute. I would therefore ask that we issue a statement disassociating St Andrews Community Council from those insulting remarks and to publicly apologise to those officials"

Frank Riddell who defended his position as being in line with Community Council policy agreed in various full meetings of council. His criticisms were no more than the logical extension of the outcome of the public enquiry, he felt. In the debate that followed no one seconded the motion. Eventually Ian Goudie proposed the meeting move to next business, seconded by Lindsay Murray. Votes for 7, against 3, abstain 4.

6. Matters Arising

6.1. Street Names

Bill Sangster, as a member of the St Andrews/Loches Alliance, suggested keeping a Loches name in mind for the future as a reciprocal gesture to their naming of a street for St Andrews. There was some backing for this idea with an emphasis on future.

The report from Ken Fraser on names for the Wilcon Craigtoun Road development was accepted to be passed on to Fife Council.

6.2. Scenic Map

With the matter of the Botanic Gardens resolved no one wanted to take the matter further. Pete Lindsay to communicate with Scenic Maps, raise omissions, discuss possible use of the rear of the map.

Pete Lindsay to approach

6.3. Display of Charters

Ken Fraser to coordinate with hall keeper. Asked for guidance on location, on a show of hands: Supper Room 5, Burgh Chamber 2, Kinburn Park Museum 3, abstain 1.

6.5. A91 entrance to St Andrews

Use of Community Council Arms approved in principle, subject to some concern over exact design of the setting and lettering.

Lindsay Murray to discuss with SE(F)

NB Mark Dennis, designer and donator of the current arms, to be included in any unveiling ceremony.

6.6. Election Dates

(Feb 5.9.) Dennis Macdonald against considering students in the matter of election dates. It was pointed out that the matter had been discussed and decided upon at the February meeting, and a letter had already been sent on the basis agreed at then.

6.7. CCTV

(Feb 6.1.) - Bill Sangster thought the CCTV item that Murdo Macdonald had forgotten then was probably the award of £250,000 for 4-5 static CCTV cameras for St Andrews.

7. New Business

7.1. Damage of old noticeboard

Murdo Macdonald to get old noticeboard fixed, estimated about £70.

7.2. St Andrews Day

"I have received a reply from the Enterprise and Tourism Division of the Enterprise and Lifelong Learning Department of the Scottish Executive in response to my letter on behalf of the Community Council to Wendy Alexander, Minister of E&LL, suggesting that there could be substantial economic benefit to Scotland in promoting St Andrew's Day and am delighted to report that Visitscotland (formerly the Scottish Tourist Board) feel that the promotion of St Andrew's Day is sound in principle and that the homepage of the Visitscotland website will be adapted throughout the forthcoming year to reflect important dates with St Andrew's day and activities related to it being featured this year. This website receives over 3 million user sessions annually and Visitscotland is confident this activity will assist in raising the profile of St Andrew's Day.

I am sure members will agree that this is a very positive response and welcome the higher profile St Andrew's Day will be given worldwide through this new initiative by Visitscotland."

Keith McCartney, St Andrew s Day Convenor

7.4. Association of Scottish Community Councils

Annual subscription of £12 approved.

8. Reports from Officers

8.1. Chair

8.1.1. Harbour Lights meeting - 6pm not 6.30pm as reported in the agenda.

8.2. Treasurer

31st March is the end of the financial year - please get expenses in soon.

9. Committees

9.4. Publicity

Second issue of Bulletin in an advanced state of preparation; hope to circulate to the town before April meeting.

10. AOCB

None.