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Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

Minutes June 2001

Approved 2 July 2001

Chair Murdo Macdonald

1. Attendance

Community Councillors: Ken Crichton, Ken Fraser, Ian Goudie, John Landon, Helen Lawrie, Pete Lindsay, Dennis Macdonald, Murdo Macdonald, Donald Macgregor, Lindsay Murray, Archie Strachan, Cynthia Tero.

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

Apologies: Bill Sangster, Marcus Booth, Maries Cassells, Hugh Gray, Frank Riddell, Joe Peterson, Chris Lesurf.

2. Minutes May 2001

Donald Macgregor omitted from those attending. Amended minutes accepted.

3. Presentations

3.1. Community Policing

PC Thomson attended

3.1.1. Town Centre Break-ins

- Noted that there had been a series of break-ins to shops in the town centre recently - investigations are continuing.

3.1.2. CCTV

- it is not known when the newly-funded units are to be installed yet, though Kate Hughes, St Andrews Locality Manager was able to tell the meeting that St Andrews was scheduled first of the list of Fife locations.

3.2. Local Initiatives

Fife Council's Locality Manager, Kate Hughes, gave an update.

3.2.1. Locality Planning which she spoke about on her last visit ([3.3 September 2000](#)) has changed direction somewhat and is now "Local Community Action Plans" and will involve Community Plans and the new Community Forum scheme.

Asked about composition of the Community Forum she said no decision had been taken yet. Cllr Frances Melville explained that discussions were at an early stage, but it was part of the new Fife Council management structure. She thought Fife Council wanted something more representative than community councils. She added that the driving force was from the Scottish Executive's emphasis on community planning/involvement. Kate Hughes further said that the proposed fora might cover wider areas than perhaps a locality let alone a Community Council.

The great concern was expressed by Community Councillors that this development could reduce local representation by bypassing community councils, rendering them irrelevant. Anxiety was heightened by the apparent lack of consultation by Fife Council in considering changes to its community relations.

As neither the Fife Councillors nor the Locality Manager were able to answer the points being raised, at this early stage of these proposed Local/Community Fora, it was decided to raise them with Fife Council's Chief Executive.

Pete Lindsay to write

3.2.2. Opportunity Centre

- The Fife Council Local Office in St Mary's Place is to become an Opportunity Centre Satellite. An Internet-connected computer will be made available as well as daily newspapers so people can look for jobs and training, with support from staff as necessary. The office is also working to extend this to open evenings for young people, coordinating with the youth café.

3.2.3. West Sands Liaison Group

- this was set up in response to the problems experienced a year ago with a number of beach parties. It includes such as Cleansing & Waste Management, Property Services, Environmental Health, Police, Scottish Enterprise Fife, etc. As part of the response to the initial problems with parties the group have produced a form spelling out to organisers their responsibilities for cleaning up afterwards and for safety over matters of food, drink and the proximity of the sea. These have been used for some recent beach parties and their effectiveness is being assessed.

The group is looking at other matters too, such as the appropriateness of the types and numbers of signs, the benches and 'furniture' along the West Sands at the prompting of the Preservation Trust.

Donald Macgregor suggested that this group could expand its coverage to the Castle Sand where there can be problems with litter.

3.2.4. Town Centre Group

- this is another multi-disciplinary group, again meeting occasionally at need to deal with town centre problems. Recently this group has been looking at the problem of advertising A-boards.

3.3. Mr Christie

Asked what progress there had been on various matters: raising the Town Hall flag, displaying the copies of the charters, displaying his heritage materials and the burghers roll?

On flag and charters both of these had been held up by the absence of the regular hall keeper through illness. The flag though had been raised in the last few days. The idea of the heritage display in the town hall foyer seemed to have stalled. Fife Councillors suggested that Duncan Simpson (Area Operational Team Leader in Community Services) be contacted.

Pete Lindsay to write

Mr Christie then raised the question of the portraits hung in the town hall. He called for better information on this aspect of St Andrews heritage to be made available.

Jane Ann Liston thought local historian Dr Marianne McLeod Gilchrist might be able to help.

4. Fife Councillors

4.1 Frances Melville (West)

4.1.1. Shared Surfaces - the East Area Development committee was very unhappy with the report mentioned [last month](#). Planning Service is reappraising it.

4.1.2. Common Good Fund

- she has received a breakdown of Lammas Market income and expenditure figures. She notes that the cost to prepare and then restore the streets for the market (& fair?) has risen from £700 (1999) to £3,500 (2000). This is apparently due to the increase in the number of items such as bollards, notice boards etc that must be removed for Lammas. The figure is likely to increase as more such are installed.

4.1.3. Kingask Traffic

- Strategic Development will not be permanently relaxing the section 75 agreement with St Andrews Bay Co. Instead by a 8-5 vote they will allow traffic levels to exceed the agreement under a clause allowing occasional excess in special circumstances. The special circumstance of the rush of interest on the opening in mid-June is expected to last three months.

4.1.4. Wester Langlands

- asked about newspaper reports on this university project to replace David Russell Hall and Fife Park, particularly regarding speculation on growth of the university population to 10,000, she said that recently the university had only spoken of growth of a couple of hundred places.

Some concern that IF such growth were to occur suddenly it would radically change the balance of the town population.

Pete Lindsay to write re numbers

4.2. Jane Hunter-Blair (Central)

4.2.1. Town Hall

- the fabric has been very neglected in recent years but now action is to be taken on repair of a number of items. There are new procedures for better reporting problems and acting on the reports.

No word on implementation of the Red Cross plans for the JP courtroom yet.

4.2.2. Public Toilets

- there is a meeting on 13 June with Cleansing & Waste Management Service to discuss the future of the toilets at the West Port and Harbour.

Various members worried that Fife Council might be considering closing these essential facilities; agreed a letter be written to express these concerns.

Pete Lindsay to write

John Landon observed that though the centre of town is well supplied with toilets, provision in the outskirts is very sparse.

Dennis Macdonald suggested that the toilets in public buildings, such as the Town Hall or Victory Memorial Hall should be open to the public and advertised as such.

4.2.3. Town Library - there will be a meeting on planned improvements to the library 14th June.

**Ken Fraser &
Archie Strachan to attend**

4.3. Sheila Hill (South)

4.3.1. Gibson House - is currently flourishing, but new legislation would be very expensive to comply with.

4.3.2. John Knox Road

- site clearing for the residential home development next to Safeway's had started. There was some concern at the location of the site entrance.

4.3.3. Lade Braes

- it has recently been realised that there are no bye-laws in force against cycling on the Lade Braes. Consideration is being given to removing the unenforceable 'No Cycling' signs.

4.3.4. Craigtoun Road

- rebuilding of a wall, required to be retained in the planning permission for the development, has started.

4.4. Jane Ann Liston (South East)

4.4.1. Housing in Multiple Occupation

- New legislation now in effect - seeing a number of related planning applications, and expect to see more over the summer.

4.4.2. Leuchars Railway Station

- seems to be closed due to staff shortages a lot at the moment. She is checking that this is not some backdoor route to the staffing hours reduction that was looked for last year.

4.4.3. Composting Trial Scheme

- passed on the assurance from Roddy Mann (East Area Head of Cleansing & Waste Management) that this scheme was not at the expense of / in place of the Recycling Centre. ([May 4.3.3.](#))

4.4.4. Pipeland Road Park & Skateboard Ramp - as mentioned last month ([May 4.3.2.](#) and [May 9.2.1.](#)) there was a site meeting with various officers, herself, Joe Peterson to look at the situation and discuss some options. At some point Joe Peterson's involvement had somehow been misinterpreted by officials as a Community Council 'objection' to remove the ramp.

Some costs for work in the park:

- to tarmac, realign fence & install bases - £3.5k
- play-bark about children's apparatus (to replace the current gravel chips) - £1k
- re-site & repair ramp - £2.5k

while the frame is solid the plates that form the surface are uneven and unsafe. It may be that buying entirely new equipment is better use of any available funds rather than repairing the ramp. The local office is looking at options, liaising with the users of the skating facilities. There may be an approach to the Common Good Fund for funds in addition to the money already raised by the skateboarders themselves.

Chair Murdo Macdonald emphasised that Community Council has not taken an official position on the skateboarding facilities, certainly not an objection to anything. He looked forward to hearing Joe Peterson's report on his return.

4.4.5. Kinkell Braes Caravan Site

- no planning conditions exist requiring planting of screening bushes etc. as mention in recent meetings. Scottish Enterprise Fife had funds for such work a while back but the site operator had not taken the offer up.

Archie Strachan asked when the lease expires; whether landscaping could be made a condition of renewal. Jane Ann Liston thought that the lease had recently been renewed, probably for another 25 years.

There were some comments about the possibility of planning enforcement action, and how long it could be left before whatever conditions lapsed. The action must be commenced within six months, or lapse, though some cases were only coming to court after years. Frances Melville noted that the Planning Service is not allowed to criticise the Procurator Fiscal's office, though the opposite is not true.

4.4.6. St Mary's Street Crossing - to be located at Greyfriars Primary School.

The Easter jams in town had been due to a doubling in traffic - unlikely that any traffic scheme would cope. The motor (drag racing?) event in Crail that weekend may have contributed to this unusual level.

Murdo Macdonald commented on a recent traffic survey which he thought, at mid-week just after the end of the university term, would give a falsely low impression of traffic levels in the town.

5. Planning

Ian Goudie apologised for the lack of a written report this month, due to pressure of exam-related work.

5.1. St Leonard's Fields

A letter was submitted on St Leonard's Fields proposals as indicated in last month's planning report.

5.2. Cycleway Public Enquiry

Ian Goudie represented Community Council at the public enquiry on Fife Council's cycleway proposals. He reported that comment from the town was united against the proposals. There was no support at the enquiry from any local cyclist witness. He pointed out that the Community Council position he had presented was not against all the cycling proposals, just those considered unsafe or against the interests of the cyclists of St Andrews - the £60,000 could be better spent on a local cycling agenda.

5.3. Recent Meetings

The major application considered recently is the Royal and Ancient Club House. There is some concern at the design of proposed air conditioning vents at the very top of the building.

5.4. Kingask Liaison Committee

Dennis Macdonald reported that the recent meeting of the committee heard criticism of the traffic management scheme, with questions raised whether Fife Council could effectively monitor traffic at the site.

6. Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

6.1. Street Names

[\(May 7.4.\)](#) Ken Fraser circulated a written report:

The proposed new street is, like the others named recently, in the lands of Craigtoun or Mount Melville (as Mr R.N.Smart confirms). As the distributor road off which it runs has been named Melville Rd. after a previous proprietor, it seems appropriate to name this one for the most recent proprietors, the Youngers of Mount Melville, and in particular for Mrs. Annie Younger (died 1942) a notable philanthropist to whom the town owes the Younger Hall, All Saints' Church, and St. Gregory's. She featured among the notable St. Andrews women described in a recent Preservation Trust exhibition.

As the street is a dead end with several offshoots, "Gardens" seems appropriate for the second part, and so I would suggest "Younger Gardens".

I am sorry not to have circulated this with the Agenda.

K.F. 4/6/01

Report Accepted

6.2. Skateboard Ramp

Keep on agenda for July as Joe Peterson absent.

7. New Business

7.2. Best Kept Town & Village

Passed to Ken Crichton.

7.4. Passionate about Waste

Ken Crichton may be able to attend

7.5. Gumley Golf Trophy

An annual challenge between Edinburgh and NE Fife councils. This year played on the Old Course. Murdo Macdonald and Joe Peterson to represent the community council.

8. Officers' Reports

8.2. Treasurer

00/01 Accounts accepted by Fife Council.

01/02 administration grant of £2861.31 received.

9. Committees' Reports

9.1. Recreation

9.1.1. Fund raising - applied to the university Kate Kennedy Club but grants not available until December.

9.1.2. Purchase of display boards

- 12 display boards were purchased at £10 each (office clearance) after consulting Chair Murdo Macdonald. These will be used for the St Andrews Week art exhibition. They are stored at the Victory Memorial Hall and are available for community. Meeting noted that last year's cost for transporting borrowed display boards to the hall was £200, and approved the purchase.

9.2. TMP Environment Working Group

Lindsay Murray circulated a report on the recent meeting of the Tourism Management Plan's environment group.

Tourism Management Programme Environmental Group

A meeting held on Thursday 17 May 2001 reviewed progress with projects to date, and discussed future plans.

- 1. The crossings in North Street**
were criticized by the Preservation Trust who thought that North Street was being "destroyed".
- 2. Transportation news**

Interesting points to emerge were:

Investigations are under way into the feasibility of rail links under Turnhouse.

The car park at Inverkeithing is currently around 1/3 full.

Centra] gov't won't fund A8000 improvements: excess bridge tolls may help.
- 3. Hostels**

SYHA: There has been tentative support from the Order of St John (accommodation for travellers). At present a site is being sought.
- 4. Press Coverage for the Tourism Management Plan:** Press coverage has to be organised well. Alison Laughlin is the contact re TMP developments.
- 5. Petheram Bridge landscaping** is progressing well. There is a hold up at the roundabout (chevrons too big). The new wall on the approach to town will take a while to be completed.
- 6. Abbey Street** negotiations for mini-roundabout etc are almost complete.

7. **College Street:** consultation is taking place over wall mounted lights. Works will take place in September/October.

8. **Harbour Area**

Drawings/ consultation process to follow.

It is hoped that the cafe will be moved under the wall, and will mimic the existing store there in design. Toilets would be incorporated into the new building.

There was an animated discussion about toilets: do we want a few good toilets or many basic toilets? (There has been poor publicity.)

9. **South Street:** developments are in the melting pot: there are problems. The street surfacing/edging will take place at some stage between October and January, steering well clear of Christmas.

10. **Facelifts**

There is a free standing fund for facelifts. Retail façades will be a priority.

11. **Preservation Trust**

drew attention to the fact that there was a piece of fence missing at the Children's Play Area at the West Sands and cars were parking on it.

Future Projects

Abbey Street

Plans for improvements may be resubmitted in modified form.

Toilets

South Street

Church Street/Queen's Garden area

Market Square area

Access routes

Suggestion that the shrubs might be cut back in the Petheram Bridge area. Committee disputed that this was necessary.

Funding

Funding is tending to be given to business developments: St Andrews needs practical developments. A good case will have to be made.

Lindsay Murray

In discussion on the landscaping work at the Petheram roundabout it was decided to write to Fife Council to suggest that the Petheram Bridge be restored as a part of the cycle route - especially if the public enquiry goes against other cycle related developments in St Andrews and there are funds available.

Pete Lindsay to write

10. AOCB

10.1. Refurbishment of Notice Boards.

Donald Macgregor passed on a late query from Cllr Jane Hunter-Blair - would Community Council have any objection to refurbishment of the public notice board on South Street? Refurbishment was welcomed, providing its siblings at the Bus Station and Tom Morris Drive were also treated.