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Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

Draft Minutes - May 2002

Approved

Chair Murdo Macdonald

Annual General Meeting

1. Attendance

Community Councillors: Ken Crichton, George Davidson, Richard Douglas, Kenneth Fraser, Ian Goudie, Chris Lesurf, Pete Lindsay, Dennis Macdonald, Murdo Macdonald, Donald Macgregor, Lindsay Murray, Joe Peterson, Frank Riddell, Archie Strachan, Cynthia Tero, Jean Thompson, Penny Uprichard.

Student Reps: Dana Green, Minda Weigler.

Co-opted: David Reed

Fife Councillors: Jane Ann Liston; Frances Melville.

Apologies: Gordon Pay, Sheila Hill, Joe Lamb, Callum MacLeod, Gordon Pay, Bill Sangster, Bill Brooks

2. Minutes of the 2001 AGM

accepted

3. Chair's Report

(circulated at the meeting)

This year has been unusual with an election occurring half-way through the period. Whilst some Community Councillors stood down having served a period exceeding three years it was pleasing to see that, due to candidate numbers, an election was necessary to decide the new council.

The new elected members were welcomed at a meeting in October and as re-appointed Chairperson I personally looked forward to working with them.

The majority of Councillor posts were set up in April and in October current positions prevailed. This gave an opportunity for continuity and allowed new members a good 'settling in' time.

I would like to thank all Councillors for their involvement at the monthly meetings and the sub-committee Chairpersons, Ian Goudie, Ken Crichton, Joe Peterson and Donald McGregor and their committees for their good work during the year. Thanks also to my Vice Chairs for their help and guidance.

Particular thanks are due to Archie Strachan our Treasurer for all his efforts in counting and distributing our monies and Pete Lindsay our Secretary for keeping us fed with paperwork and providing agendas and minutes that even I can follow.

With these sincere thanks borne in mind I now come to the concerning feature of recent times:

It was mooted last month by Pete Lindsay that he may well wish to stand down as Secretary and earlier Archie Strachan advised that he wished to relieve himself of some of his duties such as Youth Committee Young Citizen of the Year Organiser, and 200 club co-ordinator. Thankfully Joe Peterson has volunteered to take on the Young Citizen task and Callum McLeod the 200 club. We do however still have a problem concerning bandstand concerts which will be the subject of discussion later during our usual monthly meeting.

The Secretary's task within Community Council is perhaps the most important position of all around this table and I would like to think that perhaps Pete may be encouraged to continue with this job, if members so decide, until we have a serious opportunity to decide whether the format of the Secretarial rôle should be changed.

With the above situation in mind and remembering that we all give our time freely I would urge our new members to become involved more with sub-committees and other additional duties. It is only with the full involvement of all 20 members that we are able to provide the service to the Town that an elected body like the Community Council should. By spreading the workloads as broadly as possible no one person is overburdened.

Please help to ensure that for the coming year we continue to fulfil our role in the community.

Murdo MacDonald

4. Accounts

Accepted (Prop Frank Riddell, 2nd Pete Lindsay, unopposed)

5. Dates of Meetings 2002 – 2001

Agreed to 12 monthly meetings including August.

7. Any Other Competent Business

7.1. Attendance report

noted

8. Election of Officers

8.1. Chair

Murdo MacDonald (Prop Donald Macgregor, 2nd Archie Strachan, unopposed)

Murdo Macdonald gave notice that he did not intend to stand for Chair next year, by then having completed a three year 'term'.

8.2. Vice-Chairs

After discussion of numbers and rôle of the Vice Chairs it was agreed to retain current numbers and personnel. (Prop Donald Macgregor, 2nd Archie Strachan, unopposed)

Ian Goudie, Frank Riddell, Lindsay Murray

8.3. Treasurer

Archie Strachan (Prop Frank Riddell, 2nd Cynthia Tero, unopposed)

8.4. Secretary

After some discussion of the secretarial workloads, Pete Lindsay agreed to continue for three months.

Pete Lindsay (Prop Frank Riddell, 2nd Dana Green, unopposed)

Secretarial workloads to be reviewed.

AGM closed 7.35pm

May Monthly Meeting

1. Attendance

as AGM, *except* Apologies from Richard Douglas.

2. Minutes of April 2002

4.2.1. change "consolation" to "consultation"

Amended minutes approved

3. Presentations

3.1. Coastal Path

3.1.1. Jean Grycuk, who fell and was seriously injured on the St Andrews-Boarhills section of the coastal path by the St Andrews Bay complex at Kingask, spoke of her experience:

Accident between Kingsbarns and St. Andrews

On Saturday second of March this year, I set off with my son Michael on what I fully expected to be a pleasant walk along the Fife Coastal Path, on the stretch between Kingsbarns and St. Andrews. The outcome of this walk turned out to be very different from what we anticipated.

The weather was reasonable for the time of year, a rather grey day, but quite still and dry. The sign at the beginning of the walk said that we would be crossing rough ground, but did not mention that the path was in any way dangerous. Michael and I continued along the path for some time and soon we could see St. Andrews in the distance. By now Michael had gone on ahead and I remember passing a sign which said that path workers were working on the path due to erosion and walkers should take care of the construction sites. There was no mention of any danger. The path did seem narrow and there was a sheer drop onto rocks below. I am not the type of person to take risks and I have always considered the coastal path a safe walk, nowhere in the league of mountain or hill climbing.

Suddenly, the unbelievable happened; my right foot gave way and I realised I was falling, not down a cliff but through thin air. Nothing like this has ever happened to me before and it seemed a long time before I hit the rocks. When I came to, I realised I had done something serious to myself. I could not stand and was in great pain from my back. I called for my son, but by now he was too far ahead to hear me. I waited... and waited... for what seemed like a long time until at last I saw Michael walking towards me. When he saw me he was visibly shocked, but fortunately he had a mobile phone and dialled the emergency services.

Michael managed to keep a cool head and I feel I owe my life to him.

After some time, the coastguard and his team managed to locate us, closely followed by paramedics. Very quickly they were saying something about an "unstable fracture" and I knew it was serious.

I later discovered that I had shattered one of my vertebrae and had to be moved very carefully. There was no way I could be carried up the cliff and a helicopter was called. After about an hour it arrived and soon we landed on the pad at Ninewells hospital. The next few hours were frightening and painful. I was extensively x-rayed and scanned and taken to the intensive care unit of the neurology department at Ninewells.

For a week I lay on my back while things settled and I was given an operation where the broken vertebra was fused to the vertebrae on either side with the help of a piece of bone from my pelvis and some heavy-duty metal work.

After another 10 days I left hospital and have been recovering ever since. I am healing well now although I am still encased in a back brace and my left leg and hip area are still numb. I have also experienced internal problems, which are not serious but extremely uncomfortable and will need further surgery.

The physical and emotional damage have been extensive. I am unable to work until August and the accident has meant a great deal of trauma for my husband and four teenage children.

Since the time of my accident it appears that this stretch of the Coastal Path is renowned for being treacherous. The coastguard who brought my son to hospital said that he had located us so quickly because there had been five serious accidents reported there in the past two and a half years.

My niece and her companions had been terrified two years ago when crossing that stretch on a Duke of Edinburgh Award hike. I have since spoken to several friends in Dunfermline who have also found that part of Coastal Path dangerous.

I am left asking myself several questions:

Why have steps not been taken to make this path safe for walkers? Why have no barriers been put up at the steep drop? Why have now signs been posted regarding danger? If there is a problem with erosion, why are the public not made aware that the path could give way under their feet as it did with me? Is the Tourist Board aware of how many accidents have taken place in the past few years? How serious does an accident have to be before any action is taken?

3.1.2. Chris Broome (Service Manager, Community Services) then spoke, giving some history of the coastal path project. He emphasised that Fife Council itself accept responsibility and maintain only Forth Bridge-Craik. Because of access problems to the private land that the path crosses along the Craik-St Andrews stretch this section has not been brought up to standard and Fife Council has not taken over the running of it. It remains entirely in the control of the various landowners. Indeed Fife Council have no right of access or right to erect signs on private land unless some agreement is reached with the landowner. The area in which Ms Grycuk fell has been a particular problem. The landowner has now agreed a route for the path, away from the eroded section where the fall occurred. It is now hoped to complete the path by the end of the year.

On the section from St Andrews to the Rock & Spindle he said an engineering report has been completed on drainage problems to identify remedial work. There is money identified within Fife Council (Scottish Enterprise funding ran out in 1 April 02). Need 'not insignificant' funds to bring the whole route up to standard. The council are in negotiation with funding source at the moment.

Coastal path must be operated in partnership with communities and landowners. A Trust has been set up to seek funding to improve and maintain the path and avoid incidents like Jean Grycuk's. Maintenance of the path costs, averaged over its length, approximately £1,000 per km per year, the path is 170 km long.

3.2. Police

PC Balmaves attended

3.2.1. New Inspector in St Andrews, Craig Dewar, will be along to introduce himself soon.

3.2.2. Skateboarders in Church Square/Logies Lane There have been complaints that they are waxing the edges of the steps in front of the town library, creating worries of a safety hazard. PC Balmaves explained that the police move them on whenever they are reported by council workers in the area. Youth committee member David Reed noted that the official alternative facilities at Pipeland Park were not well regarded by Skateboarders.

3.2.3. Cycle Lanes Frank Riddell asked if the police would be particularly monitoring accidents involving cyclists and the a new lanes, some of which he felt to be more dangerous than the previous arrangements. The Greyfriars Garden lane was particularly concerning. PC Balmaves admitted that he did not care to cycle it when on his Community Police bike.

3.2.4. Parking at the Kinness Fry Bar Joe Peterson raised the persistent parking on the restricted areas (double yellow lines) immediately outside and nearby the KFB. PC Balmaves said this is a known problem area. Double yellow lines indicate 24 hour no waiting zone.

4. Fife Councillors

4.1. Frances Melville (West)

4.1.1. Kinburn Park lighting Cllr Melville asked whether lighting should be further improved. The lit area is attracting undesirable elements such as underage drinkers but there are still dark areas which give rise to fear of attacks on those passing through.

On balance the feeling was that lighting should be improved, that 'no go' areas were unacceptable.

4.1.2. Harbour Bridge Harbour Trust to take over the management of this from Fife Council.

4.1.3. St Leonard's Fields An appeal over a Fife Council planning decision to refuse permission for 4 luxury houses has been put on hold for 3 months at the developer's request while they look at the new hospital proposals which include St Leonard's Fields as a possible site.

4.1.4. 1000 home development proposal to NW of St Andrews. Area Planning Manager Jim Birrell has written to Montgomery Forgan to point out that with green belt, local plan review etc, a planning application now would be premature.

4.1.5. John Knox Road application for (affordable) housing withdrawn as there were a lot of planning problems with the design.

4.3. Jane Ann Liston (South East)

4.3.1. Town Hall flag - not flying while waiting for frayed rope to be replaced.

Pete Lindsay to write

4.3.2. 95 Bus Stagecoach is withdrawing the East Neuk coast service, Fife Council will have to subsidise a replacement.

4.3.3. Pipeland Park Skateboarders raised money to go to improve skateboarding facilities. Grinder bars & tarmac were set up. The ramp was to be moved but a Safety Audit has caused a review of plans.

Archie Strachan raised the spread of chippings onto the safety matting as a safety hazard.

4.3.4. Cycle Lanes Thanked Community Councillors who attended the April meetings. Noted that as a relatively new, inexperienced cyclist she found some of the lanes very reassuring.

4.5. General Questions

4.5.1. Bus Station Toilets Chris Lesurf reported that the Ladies were in a dreadful state recently, and asked who was responsible.

Stagecoach own the bus station. Cllr Liston will contact Environmental Health over the toilets.

4.5.2. John Knox Road The rose beds on the south side have been cleared. Cynthia Tero asked what's going on?

Pete Lindsay added that some trees had been cut down nearby on JKR. Murdo Macdonald understood that residents had complained about having to clear the leaves from their gardens. There were general expressions of shocked disbelief. It was commented that sometimes Fife Council was *too* responsive and should consult more widely.

4.5.3. Holes in the road (other than potholes). Chris Lesurf asked to whom a large hole/works in Market St should be reported. Ans: Local Office in St Mary's Place in the first instance.

5. Planning Committee Report

Circulated at the meeting.

Report of the PLANNING COMMITTEE Meetings of 8.4.02 and 29.4.02 for the Community Council Meeting of 6 May 2002.

1 Planning applications.

(i) **Chaplaincy Centre** - Mr Lindsay has written suggesting that the proposed landscaping of the forecourt should include the removal of the old rusty lamp-standard.

(ii) **Pizza Express** - Mr Crichton has written, urging that, in contrast to the proposals, the fascia and projecting sign should be made of wood rather than stainless steel. Our preference would also be for wooden menu boards with low wattage lighting.

(iii) **Central Bar** - Miss Uprichard has written objecting to the proposed extension of the outside seating area to the narrow pavement of College Street. In view of the customary use of the opposite pavement in College Street for wheely bins, this would give pedestrians, including mothers with push-chairs, no option but to use the cobbled surface.

(iv) **Proposed nursing home, John Knox Road.** Revised plans have been submitted for the nursing home element of the plans passed last year. Unlike the more, recent plans which were withdrawn, the new ones do not cover the upper part of the site for which affordable housing was proposed. The Planning Committee remains opposed to the development of this site, and agreed to resubmit our previous objections. Even if the principle of development were deemed acceptable, the height of the proposed nursing home would still be a major concern. Although much of its length is nominally two storeys high, the pitch of the roof is steep, so that these sections are only a little lower than the three storey section. It all makes a mockery of Condition 3 of the outline consent which, unless views out of and into the town could be shown to be unaffected, appeared to intend to restrict development of the site to single-storey. It was also suggested that there is a need to look out for devices designed to make the new plans appear more attractive than the previous ones (e.g. replacing blackened windows with white ones!) The claustrophobic reality for pedestrians in John Knox Road would be a long tall building, effectively three storeys high, towering above them and, for the entirety of its length, removing even a glimpse of the present attractive hillside.

2. Third Party Appeals

In connection with the "Getting Involved in Planning" consultation, Miss Uprichard

submitted a letter expressing our general support for this concept.

3. Craigtoun B Housing site. Revised plans for parts of the site have been received.

4. Tourism Management Programme. It was agreed that we should continue to oppose the "intersecting needles" style of lamppost proposed for South Street.

5. Scenic Maps

Mr Rattray has written asking for advice on a site for a second of his town maps with advertising. The full Community Council is invited to express an opinion on whether or not the Planning Committee should cooperate on this matter.

6. Wester Langlands.

The University has held a meeting to present new plans for its proposed new residence, which it now hopes to build by September 2003.

Discussion:

5.5. Scenic Maps

It was agreed that suitable locations could be found in the area of the Bruce Embankment car park or our original suggestion, the bus station. It is unlikely that applications for these areas would attract an objection from community council on grounds of location.

Pete Lindsay to inform Scenic Maps

6. Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

6.1. Cycle lanes

Ian Goudie speculated that to make the Greyfriars Garden lane safe Community Council may need reverse previous policy of preserving parking places and call for the removal of 8 parking spaces on the east side of Greyfriars Garden.

6.2. Bandstand

Frank Riddell will contact local press also the University Music Centre in a last ditch effort to find a coordinator. CGF grant to be retained for another month.

Pete Lindsay will hold keys.

Frank Riddell to write

6.3. Kinnessburn

Noted

6.4. Town Library progress

[April 4.5.1.] June agenda

7. New Business

Due to late running after AGM and Coastal Path all items carried over to June agenda.

8. Reports from Officers

8.1. Chair

8.1.1. Coat of Arms Murdo Macdonald gave an update on the contract negotiations, following a meeting of Arms and General Purposes committees. The negotiations had been long and involved detailed legal consultation involving the Lord Lyon's office. The contract reviewed had been sent back for modification as a few conditions were not acceptable. A new offer is now expected following meetings between the marketing company and the Chair.

Due to pressure of time Murdo Macdonald asked for permission to sign an acceptable contract after consultation with the Vice-Chairs of Community Council.

Agreed permission to sign if appropriate

9. Reports

Due to late running after AGM and Coastal Path all items carried over to June agenda.

10. Any Other Competent Business

10.1. Inspector Pow

Frank Riddell suggested writing to St Andrews' former inspector congratulating him on his promotion, but Chair has already passed on congratulations on behalf of the town and Community Council.