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Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

Minutes – October 2003

Approved

(Copies of Agendas and Minutes of the Community Council are held at Fife Council's Local Office, St Mary's Place and the Town Library, Church Square. Those from mid-1998 on are online at <http://www.louisxiv.demon.co.uk/standrewscc/>)

Chair: Donald Macgregor

1. Attendance

Community Councillors: Laurel Aguilar, Ken Crichton, George Davidson, Richard Douglas, Ken Fraser, Ian Goudie, Ian Hamilton, Pete Lindsay, Murdo Macdonald, Donald Macgregor, Gordon Pay, Joe Peterson, Frank Riddell, Archie Strachan, Cynthia Tero, Penny Uprichard.

Students Association: Derek Macleod.

Fife Councillors: Jane Ann Liston, Frances Melville, Bill Sangster.

Apologies: Sheila Black, Dennis Macdonald.

2. Minutes of September 2003

Corrections:

1. George Davidson's apologies omitted.

9.1.1. addition:

Recreation committee asked permission to purchase an all-weather banner to advertise the Art & Photographic Exhibition. To report on costs to the October meeting.

The corrected minutes were accepted.

Approved

3. Presentations

3.1. St Andrews–Loches Alliance

Bill Sangster gave a progress report: following the reminder at last month's community council meeting the Alliance is now compiling a list of clubs, associations, and other groups in town to approach for support.

He also reported that several prominent Lochois will be coming over to support St Andrews Week.

3.2. Heraldry Conference

Mark Dennis explained that he is a member of a group organizing biennial conferences on heraldry and genealogy, and that St Andrews will be the venue for the 2006 meeting. The Lord Lyon King of Arms is honorary head of the group in Scotland.

The 2004 venue is Bruges, in Belgium, with its spectacular mediaeval market place. For 2006 he wants to celebrate people rather than built heritage, envisioning a grand opening ceremony of some 300 people; the Lyon and Irish Heralds to attend in their tabards, the College of Arms from London, the Chancellor of the University and the maces. There is also interest from Flanders, Slovakia, Denmark, Norway and Sweden. He would like the community council to represent the Royal Burgh perhaps as some form of historical pageant if the Provost's robes and chain of office can be obtained, though that will require delicate negotiations with Fife Council.

Whether or not community council takes part he proposed to gift a processional flag of the Arms of community council, a gonfannon (or gonfallon). Made of top quality materials and stitched by the Needlework Makers Guild of Dundee the gonfannon should last 1-2 centuries.

Conference dates: 20-27 Aug 2006.

Meeting agreed to accept gift of gonfannon and consider the opening ceremony proposals favourably in due course.

4. Fife Councillors

4.1. Frances Melville (West)

4.1.1. TETRA East Area Environment & Development deferred a decision on the planning applications for TETRA masts. As other parts of Fife decided differently (not least because there were no objections in the other areas) and officials had recommended acceptance, the applications have been 'called in' to overall Fife Environment & Development Committee, as inconsistent decisions by different areas of the council would be good grounds for appeal by the developer. She felt the outcome should have been foreseen and a Fife-wide process adopted from the beginning.

4.1.2. Parking Charges Though the proposal to raise parking charges had been defeated in June it was brought forward again and passed this time, as one person changed sides in the vote. She criticized the increase in charges being implemented before the report on a Fife-wide parking strategy. There was still a possible 30min option for St Andrews, but there are questions to be answered on how the money is to be collected

in future.

Murdo Macdonald was very unhappy that an increase in should be presented as a *fait accompli* after we were told it was on the back burner. He found it "galling" that Cupar parking is so much cheaper, he said, than St Andrews.

4.1.3. Community Consultation Having already made her feelings known on the parking charges issue she reminded the meeting that this was just one of the things that could be commented upon at the Community Consultation Meetings. She was disappointed that Fife Council's Communications Unit were not supporting this series of meetings through East Fife – all the publicity and arrangements being done by Transportation Service.

4.1.4. Environmental Services Restructure Officers now relocated to Cupar and will no longer be available in the St Mary's Place Local Office.

4.1.5. Kinnessburn Road (Thom's Yard) She is asking for scaffolding to be put up to indicate height of the proposed 5-storey structure, and corners and boundaries marked to make it easier to visualize the impact.

4.1.7. Harbour Fund raising for harbour bridge replacement. Target was £97k. Fife Enterprise and the Pilgrim Foundation contributed £55k between them, now have total £100k from other organizations and individuals. However work on the slipways is upcoming; that'll be another £50k required. (Fife Council grant to Harbour Trust £9k, total annual income £15k.)

She paid tribute to the Harbour Trustees for their work on this and, especially David Martin and Ken Sweeny for sharing the tasks of the harbourmaster interim, and very well.

She reported that the structure of the Trust is to be made more representative, but that this will be a lengthy legal process. Reform will make it easier to seek funding necessary for the works above, and the longer-term inner harbour and surrounding environmental improvements.

4.1.8. Craigtoun Road In the absence of the local member, Cllr Black, Ian Goudie raised a number of issues with Cllr Melville as she chairs the East Area Environment and Development Cttee:

- The development has fallen a long way short of the original excellent planning brief.
- Where is the footpath joining the site to the town path network at Carron Place? This was specified in the section 75 agreement of Oct 2001.
- Turning area: three consent notices for the site legally require the turning circle to be built before the houses were occupied. It now seems it is not to be built for two

years.

- The path alongside the distribution road should be a shared cycle/footpath, but is not marked as such.
- Was enough consideration given to construction traffic? There are many lorries moving earth from the site at the moment.
- The flood attenuation and kick-about area does not fulfil the latter rôle as it is currently a deep depression with an area of reeds which is not playable on except in a very dry summer. Agreements with developers involving play areas is an have had problems before. It seems the Council has failed to learn the lessons. He is concerned that while there is a toddler play area in Craigtoun C, there is no intermediate age area, and the kick-about area is unusable.

She agreed with several of the points and will investigate a way forward with officers. She criticized the tendency to 'stealthy' small incremental changes to approved plans that can result in something very different from what was originally passed. She did point out that the scheme is on its third developer.

Penny Uprichard again made the point that there is no formal enforcement of agreements; the council relies on the developer to comply voluntarily.

4.1.9. Rail Route Ian Goudie noted that there was still no answer to his question posed in connection with Computer Science Building application at the start of the summer: 'What is FC's current thinking on railway line route into town'. This has immediate relevance to the current Petheram Bridge area applications and upcoming meetings with the University on the North Haugh Master Plan.

4.2. Sheila Black (South)

4.3. Bill Sangster (Central)

4.3.1. West Port Traffic He had been misinterpreted on the front page of The Citizen recently: he is not in favour of closure of the West Port at all. There was some support for his position from the meeting; Murdo Macdonald was happy with the current West Port arrangements but called for changes to the nearby pedestrian crossings. By contrast Pete Lindsay supported the retention of the existing pedestrian crossings.

4.3.2. Abbey St/Walk It is proposed to adopt No Waiting restrictions here; there is a lot of inappropriate parking resulting in traffic and safety problems.

There was some concern that the parking of cars actually slows traffic thus improving safety for children walking along the pavement; however it was also pointed out that parked cars

block visibility. Cllr Sangster agreed it was a concern, but felt that the balance of safety concerns weighed in favour of controlling parking. There may be another crossing installed and will be an extension of the pavement on the west side (alongside the Cosmos Centre) as part of the current St Leonards Fields House redevelopment.

4.3.3. Abbey Court Is to be repainted soon, over a period of 6-8 weeks, for the first time in 11 years.

4.3.4. Road Inspection He has undertaken a walkabout with Peter Milne of Transport Service & Kate Hughes, Locality Manager, to look at the state of road surfaces and pavements in the centre of town.

4.3.5. Cycle Lanes He is against the retention of the Greyfriars Garden cycle lane. While there was some support from the meeting for removal there was also support for retention, though acknowledging the unsatisfactory current layout. Ian Goudie pointed out that at a recent Cycle Forum meeting between cyclists and Fife Council not one cyclist was against Greyfriars Garden and other cycle lines, despite some safety worries. Dr Goudie added that he was concerned by the suspension of the lanes which was poorly handled and left anyone who mistakenly used the lanes at present at serious risk.

4.3.6. Library Responding to a question from Frank Riddell Cllr Sangster explained that the delay in reopening was due to factors such as the unexpected discovery of asbestos, then the discovery of skeletons from the old graveyard around Holy Trinity revealed by the new lift shaft, which had to be excavated appropriately. Now due to open end of February.

4.3.7. Disabled Access Joe Peterson asked about the effect of disabled access provision which will soon be mandatory for businesses. Would a proliferation of access ramps cause obstruction to pedestrians if they are built outside business premises and how could small businesses afford the alterations?

Cllr Sangster thought that not all buildings would have to install ramps; he will report back.

WS

4.3.8. Library & Common Good Fund Archie Strachan asked if there was any progress on the effect of the relocation of the effect on the CGF of the loss of income from the move of the Children's Library out of the Town Hall to the refurbished main building.

Cllr France Melville could not go into detail, but said there were efforts being made to resolve the problem of the drain on the CGF.

4.4. Jane Ann Liston (South East)

4.4.1. Traffic in St Andrews Likely to increase 40% over the next 25 years (2001-2026) at current rates of increase. In a recent traffic survey by Fife Council it was found that 55% of car journeys in St Andrews centre are under 1 mile between outset and destination.

4.4.3. Kinnessburn Rd To be resurfaced in November which will involve closing the road for a period.

4.4.4. Bus Changes The council put a new bus shelter at the end of Langlands Road; now no bus passing on that side of the road. People are complaining that they can get into town but not back easily, or to the Health Centre but take a 'scenic tour' around the houses to get back. She is calling for questionnaires to bus passengers to establish who is using services for what before services are changed.

Ian Hamilton agreed with the concerns raised and asked how much the council is saving by the effective halving of the service? She did not think that the route that had been cut was subsidised so there was no saving, nor involvement of the council in the decision by Stagecoach. She is very concerned by the loss of services with no consultation.

Further comment was made on the cost of a bus journey within St Andrews to the town centre. 70p one way would pay for an hour's car parking so is hardly an encouragement to leave the car at home for casual trips. It was also compared with the advertised £1 for the new Megaride service to Edinburgh.

Meeting agreed to write to Fife Council and Stagecoach to raise various of these and recent points on bus services. If Stagecoach cannot provide a service perhaps Moffat and Williams can be encouraged to do so.

PL

4.4.5. Paper Bank A new paper bank has been established at Spar on Tom Morris Drive. Expect kerbside paper collection by May.

4.4.6. Homelessness In a new consultation Fife Council will be asking for suggestions for housing local homeless people. If people cannot be housed in St Andrews Fife Council must house them elsewhere in Fife regardless of the practicalities of, for instance, retaining a job in St Andrews when housed in Dunfermline.

4.4.7. Phone Boxes She had asked Menzies Campbell MP to investigate the problem of cross-subsidisation of the BT phone box network. He has passed on a letter from Patricia Hewitt, Minister at the Department of Trade and Industry: BT have to consult community councils directly. If either Fife Council or a community council object the boxes cannot be removed. There is no legislation that BT cannot cross-subsidise the payphones

from other services, which is implicit in the common service provision.

4.4.8. Rented properties vs HMO applications Ian Goudie asked why the acknowledged number of student occupied properties in town, around 700, does not seem to correspond with the number of applications under HMO legislation; relatively few have been noted by planning committee.

Cllr Liston agreed that the rate of processing was very slow; no extra resources allocated to the planning system despite warnings, and as a result there is a backlog.

4.5. General

4.5.1. Streetlights With the nights drawing in Murdo Macdonald had noticed that a relatively large number of streetlights are not functioning correctly. Derek Crowe (Transportation Service) has told him that there is a monthly check over summer, moving to fortnightly after the end of October. Pete Lindsay added that the best way to report a faulty light is to give the street, and number painted on the column when phoning Fife Council.

5. Planning Committee

Report circulated at the meeting:

NOTES OF PLANNING MEETING – 29th SEPTEMBER 2003

1. Feddinch – I.G. to write objection to go in under name of P.U. (who is a previous objector).
2. John Knox Road – M.G. has sent in a further objection.
3. The new Hospital – it was noted that there has still not been a response from the Health Trust to the request for a copy of their consultants' latest report on the relative merits of possible sites for the Hospital in the town.
4. 15 Kinnessburn Road – check date (Planning [service] later said that not even November was certain yet). R.D. to reply to Grandcove's letter saying that scaffolding would be more satisfactory than the photo montages they have supplied.
5. University Athletics track upgrade on playing fields.
N.C.
6. Strathtyrum House – form external door.
Outwith our area
7. 5 Golf Place – alterations and extension to dwelling house, erect from porch, reinstate bay window

(demolish existing porch).

N.C.

8. 17 South Castle Street – install burglar alarm and vents.

N.C.

9. 36 South Street – display fascia signs within building.

N.C.

10. Kilrymont Road – single storey rear extension.

N.C.

11. 3 Cairnsden Gardens – single storey rear extension.

N.C.

12. 203 South Street – part change of use of pavement to outdoor dining area and erection of canopies.

N.C.

13. 203 South Street – remove condition restricting use to coffee shop so they can use it as a restaurant.

N.C.

14. 32 Lawmill Gardens – rear extension.

N.C.

15. 5 Golf Place – demolition of front porch (see 7. above).

N.C.

[N.C. – no comment]

Planning convenor Ian Goudie added:

1. Feddinch As the developer has appealed to the Scottish Executive on grounds of non-determination. Community council had not commented, relying on the usual procedure of being notified by the planners when an application was actually going to go to committee to be able to respond to the final plans not various intermediates. Only those with objections already submitted may submit further material to the reporter who holds the enquiry.

2. John Knox Road. Again an appeal, this time against the decision of East Area Development. In the same way as the previous item Margaret Goudie has included the points Gordon Pay made on density, and gradients etc which were only placed before the members of the EAD committee on the day of the decision.

He added that, pragmatically, it did not matter under whose name points were made, only that they were laid before the relevant people to be taken into account in the process of the

(appeal) decision.

3. Hospital He has had further contacts and does still expect to receive a copy of the business case.

6. Matters Arising from previous meetings

6.1. Recycling Centre (and Bins)

No action

6.2. Community Council Seminars

Noted

6.3. Banner

[Sept 9.1.1.] Cost of a vinyl banner reading "Exhibition" or similar: £100. Authorization to purchase: Proposed Murdo Macdonald, 2nd Ken Crichton; no opposition.

Banner authorized

6.4. Senior Citizens' Tea Party

[Sept 9.1.1.] Despite the assistance of Association President Derek Macleod there is no practical way to schedule the tea at the Students Union before Christmas because of the dates of holidays this year. Date set for January 8th.

Ken Crichton, as the tea organizer, made it clear that he was offended by what he saw as a questioning of his work: he had already reported that pre-Christmas was not possible. He offered to resign as organiser, but agreed to continue once it was made clear that the intention in calling on the Association President at September's meeting was only to explore a possible avenue of assistance. Several members were quite distressed that their motives in trying to help had been misunderstood.

7. New Business

7.1. Fife Farmers Market

Contribution agreed, up to a maximum of £200.

Agreed

Liaison:

IH

7.2. Yellow Pages

Meeting agreed to back retention of current division of Fife in Yellow Pages. Dundee & NE Fife, ie status quo, as more useful to St Andrews than a whole-Fife Yellow Pages excluding Dundee.

PL

7.3. St Andrews Development Survey

FGR

7.4. Policing Plan Consultation

MM

7.5. Alcohol Free Zone

Noted

7.6. Hospital progress

Noted

7.7. Scenic Maps

Any updates to Pete Lindsay, to forward.

PL

7.8. Best Kept Town – Judge's comments

Bill Sangster, as chair of the St Andrews in Bloom committee, to investigate judge's comments on Fire Station area.

WS

Archie Strachan proposed thanks and congratulations to Bill Sangster, Joe Peterson, Ken Crichton for their work. Carried by acclaim.

7.9. Scottish Natural Heritage magazine

Noted

7.10. CVS Fife Newsletter

Noted

7.11. Principles of Charging for Water and Wastewater

Noted

7.12. Tesco

Meeting not thought necessary. Donald Macgregor will respond.

DM

8. Reports from Officers

8.1. Chair

8.1.1. Town/Gown Liaison Committee Murdo Macdonald chaired this meeting which agreed to continue the forum with a cycle of 3 meetings a year.

8.1.2. Police Report Donald Macgregor has spoken with Inspector Dewar who regrets that other commitments have kept him away in recent months, but he does expect to make

November's meeting.

8.1.3. Pressure of Work Donald Macgregor apologised to the meeting for recent absences from community council functions such as the floral competition prize-giving recently and other occasions. These have been caused by an increase in (employment) workload which he had not expected when he accepted nomination as Chair. As the load was unlikely to drop in the near future he offered to resign.

Meeting appreciated being made aware of the situation and did not feel resignation necessary.

8.2. Treasurer

No business

8.3. Secretary

Noted.

9. Reports

9.1. From Committees

9.1.1. Publicity Noted

9.2. From Representatives

9.3.1. Fife Garden Festival Noted

10. Any Other Competent Business

10.1. Hogmanay Ceilidh

Murdo Macdonald asked permission to consider organizing a community council Hogmanay ceilidh. Readily granted.

MM

10.2. Links Management Trust consultation

Donald Macgregor asked for golfing representatives to attend this with him: Murdo Macdonald, Dennis Macdonald.
