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Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

Agenda – November 2003

There will be a meeting of the community council at 7pm on Monday 6th November in the Burgh Chambers of the Town Hall, Queen's Gardens. There will be a short break at about 8pm during which the 200 Club draw will be made.

(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/>)

1. Apologies

2. Minutes of October 2003

Read for accuracy in matters of substance – harangue the secretary for minor errors (spelling etc) outwith the meeting.

3. Presentations

For anyone wishing to address the meeting on a matter relevant to St Andrews. Please contact the Secretary or Chair before the meeting. Priority will be given to those who have been invited to speak or have given advance notice.

3.1. Police report

3.2. Recycling Centre

Roy Steward of Environment Service to report on progress and discuss other waste and recycling issues.

3.3. APOCH

APOCH, the Association for the Preservation Of Cultural Heritage, a newly-formed student society, to talk about its aims.

4. Fife Councillors

4.1. Frances Melville (West)

4.2. Sheila Black (South)

4.3. Bill Sangster (Central)

4.4. Jane Ann Liston (South East)

5. Planning Committee

6. Matters Arising from previous meetings

6.1. Phone Boxes

[September 6.1] Appendix B: Response from BT to us; Patricia Hewitt (Minister DTI) to Menzies Campbell MP; BT to Fife Council.

6.2. Development Survey

[October 7.3] Appendix A: Response by Frank Riddell and Pete Lindsay.

6.x. other matters arising?

7. New Business

7.1. A Whyte Melville Memorial

Appendix E: proposal from Keith McCartney.

Shall we support this?

7.2. Edinburgh Erskine Home

Appendix F: invitation to a presentation in St Andrews Town Hall, 11am Tuesday 18/11/03.

Can anyone attend?

7.3. Floral Enhancement Grants

Application form received; must be returned by 28 Nov.

7.4. Population

As part of the review of the scheme for community councils Fife Council have circulated updated figures on population and community council sizes. St Andrews population based on the 2001 census: 15,116. (previous figure used for the 1997 scheme: 14,510).

7.5. Scottish Water Annual Report 2002/3

Received, available from the Secretary.

7.7. Vonef Newsletter

October 2003: New equipment; Disability Discrimination Act; Project applications for BBC Children in Need; Minimum wage; Child Protection Conference 11/11/03; Safe & Healthy Working; On-line training facility; Scotland's Voluntary Sector Fair; Intermediate Care; East Neuk Neighbourhood Transport.

7.8. Environmental Services Newsletter

Autumn 2003: Don't get collared...get a tag (dog tags compulsory since 1992); European Week for Health and Safety; Ferry Busy Day; New Litter Wardens; Light Pollution; Beef

Labelling; Foreign Labelled Soft Drinks; Champions for Paper Recycling in Fife; Home-made Ice Cream; Environmental Services – Restructure.

8. Reports from Officers

8.1. Chair

8.2. Treasurer

8.3. Secretary

8.3.1. St. Andrews in Focus is a magazine for St Andrews to be launched this month by Flora Selwyn. See www.standrewsinfocus.co.uk. She would like to come to talk to us about funding. I've suggested December.

8.3.2. Remembrance Day Wreath cost £17.86.

8.3.3. Parking Charges Appendix C: email from Kirk Wynd Highland House and a response.

8.3.4. Bins Appendix D: Letter from Dr Gilroy regarding an eyesore. Passed to Roy Stewart (Environmental Services) and Kate Hughes (Locality Manager).

9. Reports

9.1. From Committees

9.2. From Representatives

9.2.1. APOCH Launch Reception An invitation was circulated by email. Laurel Aguillar and Pete Lindsay attended, meeting various members of the Association's committee.

10. Any Other Competent Business

Please notify Chair of AOCB items before the start of the meeting or at the break. Hint: Given that the end of the meeting is often taken in something of a rush, unless items are urgent it might be better to submit them for next meeting's New Business.

Late agenda items, circulated at the meeting, included [after](#) the appendices.

Appendix A – Development Survey

Questions for St. Andrews Community Council

Answers by Pete Lindsay and Frank Riddell.

Housing Developments

1. What is the Community Council's opinion on the proposals (mentioned last year) to develop 1000 new houses to the west

of St. Andrews? What are the main reasons for this opinion?

Against.

In the St Andrews Strategic Study in the late 90s substantial expansion of was rejected by a large majority of the respondents. The response rate to this study (by Fife Council) was unprecedentedly high, with 900 responses where normally less than 100 would be expected.

Proposals from the Muir Group for a 1000 house expansion to the south of the town in the early '90s met furious opposition from townspeople.

See below for other reasons

2. What does the Community Council think would be the main impacts of such a development on St. Andrews? What would be the advantages and disadvantages?

-ve road traffic into town and the town centre.

-ve requirement for feeder roads will make further development likely.

-ve loss of quality farming land.

-ve water run-off.

-ve proposals appear to be for high ground; part of St Andrews attraction is often held to be its compact setting within the surrounding hills and high ground, which would be degraded or lost.

3. How important are 'environmental' factors in the Community Council's opinion on the proposal (compared to economic or social factors)?

Probably the major concern.

4. Are there any circumstances under which the Community Council would alter its opinion on such proposals?

Too hypothetical to answer,

(however:

Global warming is predicted to bring regular flooding of land below 5m above current sea level by the end of this century.

That will certainly affect St Andrews. The response of any future community council to these circumstances will be their concern, not ours, but I presume St Andrews will move further inland and uphill.)

5. Is the Community Council in favour of any housing development (of any scale) within and/or around St. Andrews in the foreseeable future?

More than sufficient housing sites have been identified in the St Andrews Area Local Plan to meet foreseeable needs. Apart from that there are always small scale, brown field sites.

6. How does the Community Council think the shortage of affordable housing in St. Andrews can be met?

Small scale, brown field sites, and a majority of development to be long term affordable/social/cooperative housing. Some limited expansion in lower lying areas (the 'Kinnessburn Valley' between Strathkinness Low Road and the Craigtoun road) might be acceptable as this does not impact obtrusively on the townscape.

Fife Council is looking into getting St Andrews declared a 'pressured area' for housing. As I understand it this might allow Fife Council to resume building of council houses without being forced to sell them at a loss to public funds under 'right to buy'.

Rail Link

7. What is the Community Council's opinion on the possibility of building a rail link to St. Andrews? What are the main reasons for this opinion?

Support since the inception of the St Andrews Rail Link (StARLink) campaign, which is led by a former community councillor.

8. What does the Community Council think would be the main impacts of a rail link on St. Andrews? What would be the advantages and disadvantages?

Advantages:

- Reduction of increase in road traffic coming into St Andrews, easing pressure on the town centre particularly.*
- More direct travel links to the outside world.*

Problems:

- Integration of public transport (bus station and rail terminal) could prove tricky. Route into St Andrews for rail link is not yet defined.*

9. How important are 'environmental' factors in the Community Council's opinion on the proposal (compared to economic or social factors)?

Environmental (traffic) concerns are certainly the most visible factor.

10. Are there any circumstances under which the Community Council would alter its opinion on building a rail link to St. Andrews?

Too hypothetical to answer.

11. What does the Community Council think the chances of a rail link actually being built in the foreseeable future are?

Improving. We understand that some serious thought is now going into the possible economic benefits.

12. Does the Community Council think a rail link could lead to increased development pressure in St. Andrews and how would

they respond to this?

Yes, but hopefully in a controlled way and in acceptable directions/areas.

Green Belt

13. What is the Community Council's opinion on the St. Andrews Green Belt? What are the main reasons for this opinion?

We support as it will add to the powers of the planning authority to control (not block) development in the area covered.

14. What does the Community Council think will be the main impacts of the Green Belt on St. Andrews? What will be the advantages and disadvantages?

Add protection from excessive development proposals such as the current western proposals, or the Muir group's similar (1000 house) southern development which was fought off in the early 90s.

15. How important are 'environmental' factors in the Community Council's opinion on the Green Belt (compared to economic or social factors)?

Probably the major concern.

16. Are there any circumstances under which the Community Council would alter its opinion on the Green Belt?

Too hypothetical to answer

17. How strict does the Community Council think the Green Belt should be? Should there ever be exceptions made (e.g. for a hospital development)?

No position on this as yet.

18. Where would the Community Council like the Green Belt boundaries drawn?

We broadly support the Green Belt Forum at present, but a formal position won't be adopted until firm proposals are presented by Fife Council. We would probably support the edge of the current settlement as the inner boundary. "Intervisibility" a term used by the planners to define the general area for the Green Belt is a very vague term. We might well wish the green belt to be pushed back beyond the ridge line(s) particularly to the south of the town.

The Environment

19. Do members of the Community Council think the St. Andrews environment is unique? In what ways do they think it is most special and how do they value it?

Yes. There are 27 individuals sitting on community council. Each has a unique (!) personal view which we will not presume to present for them.

20. How environmentally do members think that people in St. Andrews are (e.g. with regard to recycling)?

The St Andrews area had a very good recycling record in the past under NE Fife District. Since then Fife Council's policies reduced that record to being amongst the worst in Scotland by removing facilities and support for recycling. Fortunately that is now changing; we expect St Andrews' recycling to be successful when the facilities are here.

21. Does the Community Council try to promote environmentally aware behaviour amongst local residents?

We support facilities being made available to enable environmentally aware behaviour e.g, recycling.

22. Does the Community Council have an environmental policy?

No

23. Are members of the Community Council aware of the concepts of 'sustainable development'? How do they think these concepts can be applied to St. Andrews?

Some – several of whom are on our planning committee.

24. Does the Community Council have a sustainable development policy?

No.

25. In general, do members of the Community Council think that environmental or economic and social factors are more important in deciding planning applications?

The planning system assumes development and growth are economically beneficial and should be promoted and guided. More recently government has increased the weight environmental and social factors – for instance making community councils statutory consultees.

Where the balance lies between the (interlinked) environment/economic/social and where it should lie is an extended debate far beyond what can be answered here.

The advent of European legislation particularly with regard to Environmental Impact Assessments etc is making the planning system (in particular the professional planners) far more aware of environmental factors. We support this growth in the importance of taking environmental factors into account as major planning issues.

And Finally..

26. Are there any other comments that the Community Council would like to make regarding my work?

Many thanks for your time in answering my questions. Any answers, brief or detailed, will be of use to me, and all answers

will be kept in confidence.

Ben Clifford, A21 McIntosh Hall, Abbotsford Crescent, St.
Andrews, Fife, KY16 9HT

e-mail: bpc@st-and.ac.uk

Appendix B – Phone Boxes

Response from Rick Thompson, Project Liaison Manager, BT Payphones

I agree with your reasoning for the retention of the payphone in Lamond Drive / Pipeland Road. This payphone is being cited as the nearest payphone to 01334 476636 located at Jct The Canongate / Largo Road. Therefore it would be unreasonable to remove both, and I have now cancelled it from the review programme.

We have also received representations from Fife Council regarding the recovery of the Lamond Drive payphone. I have also advised them that this box will now remain in situ.

You have also raised concerns regarding the consultation process. I would like to reassure you that all processes and procedures have been adhered to, in line with OFTEL regulations.

The 42-day consultation period is a timescale agreed between BT and OFTEL, which allows adequate time for Local Authorities and Parish Councils to raise any objections or concerns they may have, regarding the removal of individual telephone kiosks.

However, at the present time we cannot do the same for the Community Councils in Scotland. This is because the National Association of Local Councils is unable to provide Community Council boundary lines. Therefore, we have no way of knowing which payphones are within each Community Council area. OFTEL are aware of the situation and are in agreement that until we are provided with the appropriate information, we will only be able to notify the Local Authority concerned.

If you have any further concerns or queries I can be contacted on 020 8666 7430, by e-mailing me at btp.authorisation.team@bt.com or by writing to me at BT Payphones, PP 06A21, 35 Wellesley road, Croydon, CR9 2YZ.

The Rt Hon Patricia Hewitt MP, Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, to The Rt Hon Menzies Campbell MP

The regulation of pcbs [public call boxes] is a matter for the Office of Telecommunications (OfTel). As your constituent may know due to a significant decrease in usage of pcbs due to the increased use of mobile phones, BT Payphones has recently embarked upon a rationalisation programme which proposes to remove pcbs that are little used, where there is another pcb

nearby.

The procedure for the removal of BT's pcbs, is governed by guidelines agreed between BT and Oftel. The guidelines provide that where BT proposes to remove or re-site the last pcb at a site, it must write to the local authority (and to the parish/community council if there is one), giving those local bodies 42 days to object to the proposal. If no written objection is received within that 42-day period, BT is entitled to remove the pcb. If any written objection is received from these bodies, BT will not remove the pcb. Where there would still be another pcb available at that site, however, BT is entitled to remove the pcb without going through the consultation process.

There is no legislative or regulatory obligation to prevent BT from cross-subsidising any losses made by its payphone division from its other activities. Indeed, it is implicit in the universal service framework that the universal service providers, including BT, might be obliged to provide services which do not meet normal commercial criteria.

Appendix C – Parking Charges

From: Nancy Scollin, Kirk Wynd Highland House, 68 South Street

Staff who work for us have come to us complaining of the 100% increase in the Argyle Street car park, where they have to park for work. This, along with the voucher system is detrimental to the workers and shoppers in St. Andrews. Are the Community Council doing anything about this, or is there a meeting where the staff can vent their disgust at this?

Response by Pete Lindsay

Neither community council nor the local Fife Councillors for St Andrews were very happy about this increase. It was put off at the start of the summer at a meeting of the (Fife-wide) Environment and Development Committee, to wait until the results of a Fife-wide parking review were in, but it was brought forward again by officials and the rise was pushed through when one (non-local) Fife Councillor changed their vote, as I understand it. Cllr Frances Melville has been particularly active on this front and can give you more information if you enquire.

You should certainly contact Cllr Bill Sangster who represents the centre of St Andrews, to keep him informed of the problems your staff face. They should also contact their local councillors, who I would have thought should be informed of the effect of this central/strategic (ie Glenrothes) decision.

Your staff could park further down at Petheram Bridge which is uncharged, for now at least.

The voucher system is unpopular with pretty much everyone,

but parking controls are needed because so many drivers want to park in St Andrews. No one likes parking controls, but community council supports the principle of appropriate control.

There is a Fife-wide review of parking charges under way at the moment, as I mentioned above. Local bodies such as Community Council and the Merchants Association have been involved in meetings and seminars on this and points about the fine balance between keeping town centre parking turning over to maintain trade, the need for longer term parking, and the need for alternatives to be provided to parking in town (Park & Ride etc) were certainly aired. I don't know if the review is still taking submissions; Cllrs Melville or Sangster may be able to put you on to the right people in Fife Council to tell you that. What the transport consultants and Fife Council will do with this remains to be seen.

There was also Fife Council's the more general consultation on the Area Transport Plan and related matters which was in the Town Hall on 13/14th this month. If you missed it they'll take written submissions, meeting throughout East Fife go on until December. Contact details are on Fife Council's web site at <http://www.fifedirect.org.uk/yourviews/> (Follow the link to East Fife Community consultation).

Appendix D – Bins at Southgait

Letter from Dr Gilroy of Westview

I enclose a photograph[*] of wheelie bins regularly left outside the flats at Southgait Hall. It was taken on the morning of Sunday 12th October; the bins were emptied on 8th October; they were still there, unreclaimed today, almost a week later.

The culprits are the occupants of flats 1, 2, 3, 5, 14 and 19. I know students tend to be sometimes blamed unjustly, but the fact that this problem only arises during university term times suggests that they are at fault here.

Since they tend not to read local papers and to be unaware of local concerns, I wondered if a direct appeal could be made to the occupants of the flats listed above. I know from what Councillor Liston told me that you are carrying a heavy load as it is, but if a letter from the community council could be drafted and copies sent to me, I would be very willing to distribute them to the people concerned. This might help reduce a major eyesore.

[indeed he did: six bins outside Southgait – bins numbered 1, 2 and 3 clearly visible. -PL]*

Appendix E – Whyte Melville Memorial

Written submission from Keith McCartney to the November 2003 meeting of the Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

John Whyte Melville of Bennoch and Strathkinness (1797 – 1883) was described in his obituary as being ‘... in some respects the most public man in Fife’, and justly so given that –

- he served as Convener of the County.
- at the outset of the Volunteer Movement he was associated with the Earl of Rosslyn and Colonel Anstruther Thomson in organising the Fife Mounted Rifles and was Captain of the St Andrews Troop.
- he served for almost twenty years on the University Court.
- he was an eminent member of the R&A, was the only person to be elected as their Captain twice (1823 and 1883) and, as he died before he could take office on the second occasion, the post was left vacant as a mark of respect.
- he stood in for the Prince of Wales, who in 1863 was the first royal to be elected Captain of the R&A, as he was unable to be present at the Autumn Meeting that year.
- he hosted Prince Leopold when in 1876 he was the second royal to Captain the R&A.

Members will know that in 2004 the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews will celebrate their 250th anniversary. Given the important role the Club and its members have played in the life of St Andrews over these years I would propose that the Community Council contribute to the events which will mark this anniversary by planting a tree in memory of John Whyte Melville who personified the link between town, gown and golf and that a plaque be placed alongside it perhaps reading ‘John Whyte Melville of Bennoch and Strathkinness (1797 – 1883) who personified the link between town, gown and golf. Planted by St Andrews Community Council in 2004 to mark the 250th anniversary of the R&A’.

May I thank you for giving this proposal your consideration.

Appendix F – Edinburgh Erskine Home

From Old Hospital To New Care Home

I write to invite you or a representative of your organisation to a presentation about Erskine Hospital, Scotland’s leading care facility for ex-Service men and women, on Tuesday 18th November 2003 at 11am. The presentation, given by the Chief Executive of Erskine Hospital, Colonel M.F. Gibson OBE DL, will take place in the Supper Room of St Andrews Town Hall, Queens Gardens, St Andrews.

I took the liberty of researching details of your organisation on

the Internet as I felt that you might be interested in learning more about the developments of a charity that for 86 years has cared for veterans young and old in need of full time nursing care or special support to live with their disabilities. Many of the people we care for today are frail elderly veterans of the Second World War living out the closing stages of their lives at Erskine but we also care for those involved in conflicts and peace keeping duties since 1945.

The presentation is not a fundraising event. Our aim is to inform the local community about Erskine Hospital and leave you with an understanding of our philosophy of care and plans to ensure that we are able to care for ex-Service personnel in need well into the future. The presentation will last half an hour and include a video of the new Homes in Scotland. We would be delighted if you would stay afterwards for a coffee and an informal chat where you will also have the opportunity to speak to members of the Erskine staff.

Correspondence Received

Date	From	Subject
15/10/2003	CVS Fife	Conference Reminder
15/10/2003	Social Work Service	Joint Community Care Plan Update 2002-3
15/10/2003	Water Customer Consultation Panels	Cupar Meeting 7/10
15/10/2003	East Area Services Committee	Agenda 15/10
15/10/2003	Law and Administration	Scheme for Community Councils
15/10/2003	Fife Health Council	Raising The Issue – Heart Disease
15/10/2003	NHS Fife	Hospital – community involvement
15/10/2003	Law and Administration	Floral Enhancement Grants Scheme – 2004
15/10/2003	Environmental Services	Autumn Newsletter
15/10/2003	Transportation Services	Seasonal Decorations
16/10/2003	FoE	Campaign on Regulation of Chemicals
16/10/2003	Dr Gilroy	Waste bins
17/10/2003	Water Customer Consultation Panel	Consultation date correction 11/11
17/10/2003	NHS Fife	Board Meeting 4/11

17/10/2003	Falkland Heritage Trust	Newsletter
20/10/2003	FoE	Winter Catalogue
23/10/2003	Kirk Wynd Highland House	Parking Charges
23/10/2003	EBCO	Newsletter
24/10/2003	Development Services	Scope of Environmental Statement St Andrews Hospital
24/10/2003	Chief Executive	BT Public Payphones
24/10/2003	VONEF	Newsletter Oct 03
27/10/2003	Scottish Water	Annual Report & Accounts
27/10/2003	Rural Scotland	Wind Farm Policy
27/10/2003	Mrs Willsher	Copy letter Roy Stewart re Bins
28/10/2003	Fife Council Policy & Organisational Development	Healthier Fife
28/10/2003	Edinburgh Erskine Home	Presentation on the Home 18/11
28/10/2003	Keith McCartney	Whyte Melville memorial
30/10/2003	Civic Forum	Information pack
30/10/2003	Edinburgh Erskine Home	Old Hospital to New care Home – presentation

November Additional

Sunday omissions and Monday pm update...

7. New Business

7.9. Royal Town Planning Institute in Scotland – Annual Conference

The Teacher Building, Glasgow, 14 November 2003. £125.
www.scotland.rtpi.org.uk

“What’s it about? Planning makes a difference to people’s lives, it makes a difference to the ability of politicians to deliver political objectives, it makes a difference to our ability to protect our environment and to create opportunities for prosperity. Above all it makes a difference to our communities and to sustainable development. With so much of the delivery of planning objectives moving into the hands of others in recent years, planners’ skills are still essential to

the enabling of development. This conference is designed to highlight the key areas where planning and the skills of planners are needed more than ever – in order to make a difference: -

- strategic planning,
- the quality of the built environment,
- stakeholder engagement and
- project delivery

These are all topical issues for the Scottish public interest. They are also issues in which the planner's role is central. Despite this, planning is undervalued, or at least misunderstood. Many key stakeholders, some of whom will be speaking at the event, are actively encouraging planners to take on the role which will make a difference, but can they do it? With the wider view of expert papers and the more practical view of our workshop leaders, here is your chance to rise to the challenge!"

The particular reason this was brought to our attention is one of the afternoon workshops:

Dreaming St Andrews – Modern architecture in the historic setting. Malcolm Fraser, Architect. Chaired by Bill Lindsay, Senior Vice Convenor, RTPI in Scotland.

7.10. Model Policies & Planning

Dundee University School of Town & Regional Planning invites us to a "Focus Group on Taking Forward Model Policies and Planning" 2-4pm Mon 17 Nov

Following an analysis of the responses to the Scottish Executive's recent Review of Strategic Planning, The Geddes Institute at the University of Dundee has been commissioned to take forward the idea of model planning policies. This particular piece of commissioned research takes the form of a scoping study which seeks to explore the following specific questions:

1. What is the scope for model planning policies?
2. What is the relevance and applicability of generic policies?
3. What are the practical concerns of users and service providers?
4. What are the most advantageous approaches to drawing up model planning policies?
5. How should model planning policies remain responsive to changing circumstances?

6. What are the ways in which Scottish Executive guidance and advice can be adjusted to enhance the contribution of model planning policies?

As part of the agreed research methodology, The Geddes Institute is holding a series of Focus Groups. These are intended to engage further with those who expressed a view during the review process, and whose practical insights are welcomed in order to critically consider the potential of model planning policies and to devise a practical way forward. Given the breadth of interests who responded to the initial Review, the Focus Groups have been geographically spread across Scotland and will comprise a mix of interests spanning both users and service providers. It is anticipated that the Focus Groups will provide for a critical debate around the practical issues, by bringing together a mix of views.

The Focus Groups will be facilitated by myself and Deborah Peel of The Geddes Institute.

In order to assist us in ensuring that the Focus Groups achieve their maximum potential, it would be helpful if you could confirm who will be attending as soon as possible, either by returning the response card, or by telephoning my secretary, Anne Mather, at the School Office: 01382 345236.

Professor Greg Lloyd Head of School

7.11. Road Safety Strategy for Fife 2003-7

Received, available from the Secretary.

7.12. Raisin Weekend

The university's Student Support Services write to inform us it is Sunday 23 and Monday 24 November this year.

8. Reports

8.3. Secretary

8.3.5. East Fife Local Plan Bill Lindsay, Team Leader (Plans & Projects) in Development Service would like to speak to the whole community council early in the new year. Date under discussion.

8.3.6. Web site uses the "T" word At October's meeting Ken Crichton passed on a query from a concerned member of the public about the use of the word "twinned" in context of St Andrews and Loches on Ken Cochrane's web site at <http://www.saint-andrews.co.uk/town.htm>.

It is being used in an entry on the Loches Alliance. Seen in context it is clear to me [PL] that the word twinned, used as it is in quotes, is being used as shorthand (for Cultural Links and Exchanges or something similar) and is unobjectionable in that it would be difficult to construe this as a statement of Community Council's policy.

A print of the page will be circulated for people to form their own opinions.

8.3.7 Bus Letter [Sep 4.4.4.] = DRAFT: NOT FOR PUBLICATION =

I write to express the concerns of the community council over the state of town bus services in St Andrews.

Since the new time table was adopted community councillors have reported comments from members of the public noting that, depending where they live in the residential areas, either journeys to the centre of town or the health centre – or the return – is much longer than previously and in some cases involves a change of buses. Another problem reported is that services from town centre to the south east cease too early to be useful to workers returning home in the evening. The now cancelled Scooniehill circular service allowed a far more convenient journey to and fro in these cases.

Community council feels that there are a number of factors which contributed to the lack of success, despite their utility, of the services which have been and scaled down or removed.

1) Lack of information – Advertising of services is very poor. The bus companies do not seem to advertise their services. Would-be passengers are expected to know what bus routes are though town by some process of telepathy that tells them when and where to ask for information from the companies, or Fife Council's Transportation Service. Undoubtedly the information is 'out there', somewhere, but it isn't at point of delivery of the service – the bus stop. Where are the route maps, the fare and time tables? Not at the stops.

It seems there is a 'Hail & Ride' system operating in parts of the residential areas of St Andrews. This was news to community councillors a couple of months back. While it is possible that we are entirely out of touch, we are rather more of the opinion that if the majority of a very varied body of community-minded people are not aware of such a fundamental aspect of life then there may be questions to be asked about how well information about bus services is being disseminated.

Is there an integrated route map of the public transport options (routes, fares) and likely destinations in St Andrews? And perhaps even a well advertised web page, given this is the 21st century?

2) Cost – For the cost of a bus ride from the Kilrymont area to the centre of town and back (2*70p) a car could park in the centre for 2 hours (just over in fact: 2*60p). Meanwhile the new Megabus service St Andrews-Edinburgh is launched at £1. It is hardly surprising that bus fare in town are seen as expensive; and so services fail because people don't get out of the habit of using the car.

3) Consultation – What studies and consultations of passengers and potential passengers has there been to determine their needs? Were services cut purely on financial grounds without looking at why they were failing?

In conclusion, we hope that steps will be taken to find a useful replacement for the lost services as soon as possible, and suggest that if the previous company is unwilling Fife Council might encourage a different company to provide it.
