

Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

Minutes – February 2004

Approved

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1. Attendance

Community Council: Laurel Aguilar, Ken Crichton, George Davidson, Richard Douglas, Ian Goudie, Ian Hamilton, Joe Lamb, Chris Lesurf, Pete Lindsay, Dennis Macdonald, Murdo Macdonald, Donald Macgregor, Joe Peterson, Ewen Sparks, Archie Strachan, Penny Uprichard.

Students Association:

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

Apologies: Sheila Black, Frank Riddell, Ken Fraser, Derek MacLeod.

2. Minutes of January 2004

2.1. January

January 3.2: Joe Lamb queried the level of detail of the report on the Harbour Trust: no support.

Approval proposed Donald Macgregor, seconded Penny Uprichard. Unopposed.

Approved

2.2. December

Joe Peterson raised a factual correction to the approved December 2003 Minutes, 9.1.5. *The Links Trust* not the Horticultural Association is to plant a flowerbed at the entrance to the Eden complex.

3. Presentations

3.1. Police report

None

3.2. A-Boards

Rachel Hay, Locality Manager's Assistant, circulated draft letter on Accessible St Andrews, asking for community council support:

Accessible St Andrews

In the light of recent legislation, Fife Council along with local organisations such as the St Andrews Preservation Trust, Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council, Fife Society for the Blind and St Andrews Merchants' Association has been considering the accessibility of the Town Centre to disabled residents and visitors.

Recent correspondence from members of the public has highlighted the need to look at the street clutter on St Andrews streets, not just from an aesthetic viewpoint but also to ensure that St Andrews remains an accessible destination for all residents and visitors. In particular, the amount of advertising boards on the streets is increasing, and a walk around St Andrews with a wheelchair or a double buggy has become not only laborious but sometimes dangerous, as cluttered pavements force pedestrians on to the road.

For a trial period throughout the month of March, we are asking all those who have A-Boards not to put them outside their premises. We hope that by doing this, we can resolve the problems created by pavement clutter. This would also be an opportunity for you to consider if the extra revenue (if any) generated by using A-Boards outweighs the inconvenience they may cause to potential customers.

In addition we are keen to hear your opinions as to whether Fife Council and its partners could offer a suitable alternative to on-street advertising. I would welcome any comments on this at the email or postal address below.

Meeting agreed to support this very positive, practical proposal.

Agreed

Cllr Frances Melville brought to the meeting's attention that funding for the Locality Manager's Assistant post was due for review by Development Services at the end of the financial year. She and the other councillors were agreed that the post was a benefit; she asked if community council would add their support.

Meeting agreed to write to Head of Development Service in support.

Pete Lindsay to write

3.3. Iain Smith MSP

Iain Smith explained he was again working round NE Fife attending all 33 community councils in his constituency since his re-election, but Monday nights were very popular so it was taking a while. He did not have any points to raise himself; he was primarily along to listen, but was happy to take any

questions.

Asked about progress on third party right of appeal in the planning system (ie not just for the applicant) he expects a consultation on proposals in the spring.

On employment opportunities for well qualified people in St Andrews he noted that the low unemployment rates here do not qualify the town for various employment-related grants so it was necessary to look to spin-off from the university perhaps in alternative energy. In the end, he said, businesses have to come forward with the ideas to develop and create the jobs.

Asked about housing pressures he pointed out that there was provision for declaring a “pressured area” status, but that it was up to Fife Council to make the case; if they do so he will support it. In a related question it was put to him that there was a developing problem with the number of houses being built at the expense of trade and industrial sites for small builders, plumbers, joiners etc which comprise an infrastructure to support the residential population – was there anything the Executive could do about this? Zoning of development falls into the remit of Fife Council and the planning system he said and emphasised the need for the local community to take part in the consultation process for the local plan which he noted later on in the agenda.

In response to a question of the possible responses of the Scottish Parliament to university students having to pay ‘top-up fees’ south of the border and he said they were still trying to work out the consequences of the policy changes in England; he thought there may be some increased funding here he describe arising from the effects of the Barnett formula. The Executive is about to start another rolling spending review which will consider responses.

Finally he was asked his position on the campaign for a national holiday on St Andrew’s day. Not only does he support it he raised a motion in favour in the last parliament.

3.4. Local Plan

Bill Lindsay, Development Service, gave some news about the Local Plan and related matters.

The Fife Structure Plan is to be reviewed and revised to cover 20 years. This should have gone to Environment & Development committee last December, but some issues are still outstanding. The structure plan now won’t be out until autumn when the local plan draft is due too, which is not ideal he admitted, as the local plan is supposed to be dependant on the structure plan. He hoped there would be some extra flexibility in the local plan consultation to take this into account. The target date for adoption of the local plan is 2006.

There are to be three local plans, one in each area of Fife. He noted a possible area of controversy, elsewhere, in the renaming of the East Area one to the St Andrews & East Fife local plan.

Housing, green belt and development pressure are the main issues in St Andrews. There will be consultation workshops in late spring to early summer themed around the key issues from the community consultations last autumn. The process would include early indication on the green belt boundary. In answer to fears expressed that the green belt would become a noose, strangling development and employment opportunities he said that the balance of development vs green belt is the sort of thing to discuss in the local plan meetings; Fife Council will be looking for comments from CC, developers, etc. There are also discussions ongoing with the University on a development programme covering the next 15 years.

To finish he turned to changes within the service itself, arising from the merger of the Economic Development Service and the Planning & Building Control Service last year. He warned that there may be changes to accustomed contacts. The new Development Service is to move away from area-based to a Fife-wide approach; maintaining local ‘delivery’ but acting as one service across Fife.

4. Fife Councillors

4.1. Frances Melville (West)

4.1.1. Kerbside paper collections Now spreading through East Fife. Notification letters are going out. Asked if the paper collection is not a loss maker and a burden on the council tax payer she replied that the figures showed it was not, in view of the cost of landfill.

4.1.2. Play Areas Refurbishment Money is coming from the Scottish Executive for Quality of Life improvements. In this case most if not all of the areas in St Andrews fall in St Andrews South East.

4.1.3. Gateway Centre As covered in the press this is finally going to the University to be a seminar and display facility.

4.1.4. St Andrews Partnership Is another attempt to get private and public investment pointing the same way at the same time.

4.1.5. Housing in Multiple Occupation She noted press coverage of a recent case and stressed the need for a balance between the need for accommodation and appropriate use of property. Some felt that multiple occupation is ruining the centre of town.

4.1.6. Craigtoun Road Development There will be a meeting soon involving Development and Transportation services about the turning circle.

A buffer zone of trees etc is going in now, stretching down towards Little Carron, though not quite as originally described.

Ian Goudie had heard that a private individual had looked into the matter of a shop at the development, which facility has been called for repeatedly by community council, but eventually decided against. He asked if perhaps Scottish Enterprise could be involved in some way to tip the apparently close balance on the decision.

4.2. Sheila Black (South)

away

4.3. Bill Sangster (Central)

4.3.1. Road Closure Sun 8 February, closing Bridge Street from the West Port to Kinnessburn Road for removal of the crane from the new west port flats site.

4.3.2. Abandoned Bike Sweep Police rounded up 58 bikes recently...

4.3.3. Abbey Court Repainting Private owners are not supporting this refurbishment of the mixed ownership court so the scheme won't go ahead.

4.3.4. Town Library Projected reopening in May.

4.3.5. Environmental Wardens are now checking bins left out in the centre of town, 'assisting' businesses and reminding them of their responsibilities. They can also give fixed penalty notices for fly tipping and dog fouling.

4.3.6. Paper Collections Because of the problems of access and busy pavements there will be no blue bins issued in the town centre unless requested, nor to bag-only or communal facility locations.

4.3.7. Kinnessburn there will be no movement on this study etc until the new financial year.

4.4. Jane Ann Liston (South East)

4.4.1. Phone Boxes The various threatened boxes in the residential areas of town are reprieved and the lights to be reconnected.

4.4.2. St Andrews Partnership She and Cllr Sangster are pushing for community council inclusion as it is a democratically elected body representing St Andrews.

4.4.3. Bus routes She will be meeting with public transport officers of Transportation Service to discuss these.

4.4.4. Play Area Refurbishment As referred to by Cllr Melville three are in the SE ward. She has made a point of asking about the removal of the stone chips from around the safety matting, as this has been a concern of community council for some time.

4.4.5. Paramics Traffic Model should be completed soon.

4.4.6. Common Good Fund She expressed her concerns at how little money there was available to local causes now; after £28,000 goes to service loans to the Byre Theatre the CGF has only £6,000 to give out. Its income includes £13,000 from rental of the Children's Library which will likely cease, or reduce substantially, in a year's time. The Lammas Market brings in £11,000 and £8,000 comes from investments. The income from the Children's Library premises is problematical. Community Services is happy to continue using the premises, but not at the current rental. Letting it out to a third party would need alterations and improvements to disabled access which would increase costs substantially.

Archie Strachan, one of the CGF consultation representatives, added that he was still awaiting a formal minute of the recent meetings and will make a formal report to community council when he gets it. He has been assured there is ongoing consideration of how to replace the soon-to-be missing income.

4.4.7. Special Uplift Consideration is being given to charging for this. There have been cases of 'abuse', for instance people putting items on the street on collection day then claiming collected items had not been intended for disposal and demanding compensation.

Ian Goudie responded that the idea of charging a frail pensioner for the disposal of a cooker they could not possibly get to a recycling centre seemed ridiculous. If the system is being abused as described then better arrangements are needed eg householder present at collection and a receipt signed. Charging would likely increase fly tipping.

5. Planning Committee

5.1. Minute circulated

PLANNING MEETING – 12/1/04

1. The Links Trust proposed seventh golf course – this had been discussed at the meeting of the Community Council a week earlier.

2. Craigtoun B – re details of the bus turning area, a hammerhead was deemed to be adequate. Currently there was no bus service running. The bus turning circle is now in 'future works'. It will apparently be paid for by the Council. A private individual has offered to build a shop on site, but in the end abandoned the idea. It was agreed that a letter should be written to Fife Council endorsing the idea of a shop.

3. 20 The Scores – conservatory extension to dwellinghouse. N.C.

4. St. Mary's Place – erect bus shelter, bicycle sheds. The meeting agreed that more details of the design were needed; the plan was agreed in principle but needed more details of shape of roof, size of pillars, materials. It was thought that it would be the N.C. same as the bus shelter near the Gateway building.

Further information from Grant Baxter (23.1.04) – the roof is of curved smoked glass. The pillars are 400 mm at the corners, the smaller pillars are 200 mm x 200 mm. The material is coated metal, blue, he thinks. He believes it is very similar to the one near Gateway, but can't say it is exactly the same.

5. 23 Argyle Street – change of use on ground floor, from office to 2 flats. Plans?

6. 86b Market Street – HMO 3 persons. N.C.

7. 2a Abbey Street. – N.C.

8. Craigtoun B – material variation of permission, omit 9 dwellinghouses, erect 13 houses and 4 garages. There were queries about the tree-lined avenue, the play areas and the design of the houses. Pavements? The tree screening has now been lost and is inside private gardens. IG agreed not to object in principle but to investigate details. IG to investigate*

9. 8 Kinnessburn Terrace – erect 2-storey dwellinghouse and garage, formation of vehicle access on public road. P.U. OBJ.

P.U. subsequently spoke to Grant Baxter (13.1.04) and was told that two amended applications were going to be lodged in place of the two applications for this address already put in. (Amended plans not yet in.)

10. Hepburn Hall – new application to alter/change use of wing to form 2 flats and alter annexe – and amend access arrangements. N.C.

11. 2 St. Nicholas Steading – 2-storey attic extension. N.C.

12. 11 Park Street – single storey extension. N.C.

* Craigtoun B – Ian Goudie's recollection was that the outcome of discussions on item 8. Craigtoun B had in fact passed beyond investigation to objection. This was agreed by other members of the planning committee.

5.2. Feddinch Departure Hearing

Ian Goudie thanked Frank Riddell for representing community council at the recent hearing (appendix E).

5.2. Craigtoun Road Shop

Ian Goudie also asked for specific backing for endorsement of a shop at the Craigtoun Rd (Melville Park) development.

Agreed

5.3. 7th Course Departure Hearing

Ian Goudie will represent community council along the lines agreed at January 5.2.

6. Matters Arising from previous meetings

6.1. Homelessness

Meeting agreed to support increased provision of homeless temporary accommodation in principle.

In discussions on the types of accommodation available it was agreed that the best judges of what was practical were the professionals; ie Housing Service, but to recommend a scattering of facilities, perhaps rented, throughout the community rather than one or two big hostels which might not blend into the community easily. It was emphasised that provision of accommodation was not the whole story, that there must be support for, particularly, the young who might not find it easy to cope with the responsibilities of day-to-day living without practical experience. The local community must be kept informed and have clear lines of contact should problems arise. Community council would like to be kept informed itself of the progress of this project and were pleased to be involved.

Pete Lindsay to write

6.2. Bus Services, 6.3. Bicycle Safety, 6.4. Phone Boxes

Noted

6.5. Bus Station

Noted. Ken Fraser will attend follow-up.

Ken Fraser

6.6. Loches-en-Touraine

Held over until March

6.7. Parking

No one could remember why this was to be here.

6.8. 200 Club

Archie Strachan was roundly thanked for his years of service as administrator.

The 200 Club committee comprises the administrator, Richard Douglas, Ken Crichton and Cynthia Tero.

7. New Business

7.1. Saint Andrew's Day Holiday

Meeting reconfirmed support for St Andrew's Day as a national holiday and gratefully accepted Keith McCartney's offer to act for us in this matter. Cardinal and Saltire Society to be informed.

Pete Lindsay to write

7.2. East Fife Local Plan

Planning

7.3. Sports Centre Advisory Group

Donald Macgregor had served on a previous incarnation of this group and volunteered to continue.
Accepted.

Donald Macgregor

7.4. Fife CCTV Advisory Group

Suggest that a local meeting system might be better attended.

Pete Lindsay to write

7.7. Volunteer Development Diary

Not needed, pass to a charity shop.

Other January items

7.3a. Harbour Toilets covered in January 4.1.3. 7.5. Police Community Team newsletter. 7.6. What on Earth (Friends of the Earth Magazine). 7.8. Christmas etc Cards circulated at the January meeting. 7.9. Environmental Services Newsletter. 7.10. Water Customer Panels Report on Affordability of Water Charges. 7.11. Strandline Adopt-a-Beach newsletter. 7.12. Postwatch Scotland Newsletter.

Noted

7.13. Community Council Elections

Concern over effects of an October date after previous experience of difficulties resulting from the change of student addresses between academic years – postal ballots going to old addresses, new students being unregistered etc. Fife Councillors agree.

Pete Lindsay to write

7.14. Links with Tabor, Czech Republic

Donald Macgregor to make enquiries at schools and write to press to determine any support for grass-roots cultural links.

Donald Macgregor

7.15. Connecting Communities Training

Noted.

7.16. Dog Fouling

Noted.

8. Reports from Officers**8.1. Chair**

8.1.1. Crawford Centre Letter

Noted.

8.2. Treasurer

No business.

8.3. Secretary

8.3.1. Greetings to Patras Purchase of two 2yd saltire flags for presentation at approx £40+VAT agreed.
2 x £40+vat agreed

8.3.2. Development & Environment Study Executive summary circulated. Agreed to buy a copy of Ben Clifford's full thesis for £10.

£10 agreed

9. Reports**9.1. From Committees**

9.1.1. Recreation Committee minute circulated at the meeting:

Recreation Committee Meeting January

1. Coffee Morning/Plant Sale: Date Sat 10th April, Town Hall, Helpers needed, Raffle Prizes, Any monies raised to go towards floral decoration at the War Memorial.

2. Art and Photographic Exhibition: St Andrews Week, Dates Sat 28th/29/30/31 November.

3. Senior Citizens Treat: Ken Crichton to investigate keeping January date as this years switch seemed popular

Joe Peterson added that negotiations were under way with the University Archive Dept to include some early photographs from the pioneers of the 19th century.

9.2. From Representatives

9.2.1. Bruce Embankment Dennis Macdonald attended the public exhibition of plans for the

upgrade/refurbishment of the Bruce Embankment. The most obvious effect will be to raise the height of the sea wall 50cm by building on the sea side of the existing wall.

10. Any Other Competent Business

10.1. CHAS

Pete Lindsay reported that the Whey Pat Tavern had raised £1200 for the Children's Hospice Association Scotland. Meeting agreed that this generous gesture was worthy of formal recognition and commendation.

Pete Lindsay to write
