

Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

Approved Minutes – April 2008

For Approval

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1. Attendance

Community Councillors

Ken Crichton, Alex Bain, Kenneth Fraser, Ian Goudie, Zoe Smith, Marysia Denyer, Karen Hutchence, Laurence Reed, Catherine Rowe, Judith Harding, Fiona Harden, Carol Ashworth

Students' Association Representatives

Nominated

Fife Councillors

Robin Waterston, Bill Sangster, Dorothea Morrison

Apologies

Coral Dyer, Jenny Rentenberger, Rob Fett, Patrick Marks, Dave Finlay, Matthew Verrell, Shaun Atkinson

2. Minutes of March 2008 Meeting

Correct apart from error in Ms Rentenberger's Christian name which was incorrectly put as Karen not Jenny.

3. Presentation

3.1. PC John McLeod

PC McLeod answered questions from Councillors. Ms Harding asked about CCTV in the Ladebraes, close to her home. She'd seen the sign, but didn't know where the cameras were located. PC McLeod replied that at present there weren't any cameras, only the sign. The idea being to have the sign up and determine if that alone proved an effective deterrent. If that wasn't sufficient, a camera could be installed, if the council approved costs of installation etc.

3.2. Events Newsletter – Presentation by Pete Lindsay

Pete outlined the history of the Events Newsletter, both the paper edition and the web edition. Recently he decided to revamp the web site, and this now operates under the name: www.events-standrews.co.uk. Pete asked if it was okay to continue using the same name for the web site, given the connection with the Community Council during his period of membership. He would also appreciate being kept up to date with events either organised by Community Council or other local organisations. Listing is free. Pete finally asked about the noticeboards in South Street and at the Bus Station, and whether there was any word of their replacements. He would also be happy to put up a shortened version of his web site news in the Community Council notice boards. Ms Harding asked about the possibility of a printed version of the events news sheet going into the Tourist Board office. Pete wasn't averse to Community Council printing off a

copy from his web site and distributing it around town, but no longer saw this as his role.

4. Fife Councillors

4.1. Cllr Frances Melville

4.1.1. Cash Pay Point Changes

Local offices will no longer deal with cash payments, but Cllr Melville re-assured Community Council that there will actually be more pay points, with four in St Andrews. Details of these and other in Fife can be found on the Fife Direct web site. It was hoped that this change would free up local offices to deal with other more important work affecting local people.

4.1.2. West Sands Road

Fife Council is trying to put together a package of funding to improve the road at the West Sands. It is acknowledged that it is in a poor state, and a recent "accident" highlighted the need to improve the road. If funding can be secured it is hoped to start work after the Dunhill.

4.1.3. St Andrews Post Office Closure

Dr Goudie noted from the Courier that Fife Council is looking at the issue of rural post offices. He wondered if the St Andrews Post Office in South Street could be also considered a candidate for Fife Council intervention, with financial support if necessary from Scottish Enterprise? Cllr Melville acknowledged that in the longer term local authorities might have more control, but thought that it might be too late for St. Andrews.

4.2. Cllr Bill Sangster

4.2.1. Pavement Work – Martyr’s Church Area

Cllr Sangster had been informed that Transportation had found a little more money and were planning to do pavement work outside Martyr’s Church to Union St and College St.

4.2.2. Bridge St/City Road Work

Ms Rowe asked how long the work in this area was expected to last. Cllr Sangster said that it had been planned to be done when the school buses were not being used, so hopefully would be finished by the end of the school holidays.

4.2.3. Query about Councillors’ ability to comment on Planning Matters

Dr Goudie commented upon a recent article in the Courier about the Planning meter issue, which had been recently discussed. The article had implied that Cllr Arbuckle had made a comment prior to the meeting in relation to the application. Dr Goudie was aware of the restraints imposed upon Councillors in relation to commenting upon planning applications. He was aware that there had been instances elsewhere in the country, where developers had taken legal action, when they believed that Councillors had discussed the application prior to the planning meetings. He wondered whether Fife Councillors might be under pressure from officials to comment upon matters relevant to the concerns of their constituents. Cllr Sangster replied that Councillors had a code of conduct, which basically advised them that they shouldn’t comment on live applications before they’d been decided upon, in case it prejudiced the outcome of the planning meeting.

Cllr Waterston thought that Dr Goudie’s point referred to an anomaly in the procedures. In respect of private applications councillors had a quasi-judicial role, whereas with an in-house application they had a different role. However procedures

followed by Councillors didn't distinguish between the different types of applications at this time.

4.2.4. Road Work by Rusack's Hotel at Easter Weekend

Mr Crichton asked Cllr Sangster about the work in this location on a busy weekend. Cllr Sangster agreed that it had seemed bad timing, with the added complication of malfunctioning traffic lights. He emailed Fife Council and had received a reply that it had been the only weekend they could do it, as it was tied in with funding which had to be used before the end of the financial year. Cllr Sangster added that the Councillors hadn't been informed of the work prior to it starting and had received an apology from officials.

4.3. Cllr Robin Waterston

4.3.1. Bell Fund

Cllr Waterston sought advice on this fund, which he said had quite a lot of money, but wasn't used very often because of the tight criteria for eligibility. Mr Fraser suggested that it had been accessed in the past to purchase new flags on the basis that the Scottish flag had a religious origin with the cross of St Andrew. Cllr Waterston suggested that it might be useful for him to discuss the matter in more detail with one of the Community Council sub-committees. Ms Smith thought that the Recreation Committee might be the most appropriate one to discuss the subject.

4.3.2. New Licensing Procedures

Cllr Waterston informed the meeting that Community Councils would be involved in commenting in relation to premises licences.

4.3.3. Information Sheet – "What's The Process?"

Cllr Waterston informed the meeting that Fife Council had put out an information sheet relating to the Structure / Local Plans. This sheet contained basic information on various aspects of these plans. Cllr Waterston then talked about the fact that once the Structure Plan had been approved, the Local Plan could then come into play and the first stage would be the publication of the existing draft plan. Following publication there would be an eight week period of consultation, followed by further discussion and if necessary a local public enquiry, before the plan is finalised. Cllr Waterston added that he and his colleagues were determined to make sure that the consultation would be genuine.

4.3.4. Revision of Areas of Great Landscape Value

Cllr Waterston commented that the procedure, which had been applied to the review of Areas of Great Landscape Value, has come in for questioning for its appropriateness. Cllr Waterston and his colleagues are going to try and ensure, that no final conclusions are made on the basis of the discussions to date, without substantial evidence. Dr Goudie added that he was dissatisfied with the way the consultants appeared to be handling the review to date, acknowledging that they'd not even looked at the public submissions. He was concerned that they were just proposing to write up the brief, which Fife Council had given them in the first place.

4.3.5. Secondary School Situation

Dr Goudie expressed his concern about the recent position taken by Fife Council in relation to a possible school at the Bridge Head. He argued that there were still a range of reasons why a school in that area would be beneficial from environmental to social. He hoped that the Community Council would continue to support the idea of a school in that area. He argued that the finalisation of the structure plan could have an impact upon pupil numbers, given it's plans for considerable numbers of new houses. Cllr Waterston in his reply, acknowledged his role as Vice Chair of the Education Committee, but refused to be drawn into the debate, believing it to be inappropriate in this meeting. Mr Henry argued that small schools did not give the

same curriculum choice and he said that the top performing schools in Fife were three of the biggest, including Madras, while three of the smallest were less successful. Ms Smith wondered about the need to discuss the issue further, given the range of views within the Community Council. She felt that we needed to be able to make CC views clear to the elected members of Fife Council. She suggested that this should be put on the agenda for the next meeting. Cllr Waterston added that the decision on a school in North Fife would be taken in the coming week at the Education Committee.

4.4. Cllr Dorothea Morrison

4.4.1. West Sands Events

Publicity about events taking place on and around the West Sands will be publicised by various means, including on the Web.

4.4.2. Donkeys on East Sands

Donkeys may be returning to the East Sands.

4.4.3. Parking Meters

The decision about the parking meters will take place on 30th April. This will be Parking Phase 2. Cllr Morrison didn't think it would be particularly contentious.

4.4.4. Craigtoun Park

There has been discussion about the best way to manage Craigtoun Park and obtaining new investment to ensure that it's facilities aren't allowed to deteriorate beyond repair. Ms Smith asked why Craigtoun Park was the only park out of over 200 in Fife to charge an entrance fee. Cllr Morrison replied that the maintenance costs justified charges, as she viewed Craigtoun as more than just a park due to the activities such as the railway. Ms Smith argued that facilities like the railway could be charged separately, citing the example of Camperdown Park in Dundee where access to the grounds are free, but certain activities are charged. Ms Denyer also commented upon past methods of charging separately for activities in Craigtoun, adding that it had always been busy in the summer months. Ms Smith commented upon the sudden loss of the fortress play area without any notice, and with no replacement. Cllr Morrison replied that the fortress play area had a replacement, but acknowledged that it wasn't in the same area. She added that the fortress play area, which had outlived it's usefulness had been replaced by quite expensive new equipment, thanks partly to negotiations with the Duke's Course on a land matter. She felt that there wasn't any other play area in Fife with such high quality play equipment. Cllr Morrison also defended the charging policy, saying that staffing costs etc were such that it wasn't economic for Fife Council to run it the same way. She thought that it might be worth Fife Council looking at a local concession ticket for local residents to have reduced entry costs, but not unlimited access. Ms Smith replied that she'd welcome anything which would give local people free access to the facilities at Craigtoun Park. Cllr Morrison agreed to raise it at the next meeting. Mr Crichton commented that he preferred the current entry payment method, as it would cost him more to pay for multiple train rides for his grandson, if he had to pay for each ride individually.

Dr Goudie added several points including the signing of Craigtoun Park and the change of entry to a point further closer to the rear rather than the front of the park. He also wondered about the possibility of an entrance on the Mount Melville side, which would make it easier for anyone walking from the town.

4.4.5. New Licensing Approval System

Mr Crichton asked how much work the new licensing system would put on to the Community Council. Cllrs Sangster and Melville didn't think it would mean much work, as the Community Council's role would be in relation to comments on new

licences if they were unhappy about them, or were unhappy about significant changes to existing licences.

4.4.6. East Sands Play Area

Ms Rowe commented on the relative lack of facilities for toddlers, which had disappointed friends of hers recently. There was also the discovery that there was dog mess in the sand pit, which Councillors had previously claimed to be sand, which was unattractive to dogs as a toilet stop! Cllr Morrison acknowledged that there needed to be consultation, and that the Councillors hadn't been consulted about what was going to be installed until it was in place. Mr Crichton added that in Glasgow the Children's play areas are fenced and have signs forbidding dogs.

5. Planning Committee

5.1. Minutes of Planning Meetings

No report

6. Matters Arising From Previous Meetings

6.1. Date of May Meeting

To be kept at 5th May.

6.2. BBC Audience Council Meeting

Ken Crichton reported on his attendance and briefly related a couple of the topics he'd raised, such as television reception.

6.3. Planning Committee

A meeting is still to be set up.

6.4. Community Council Website Update

Mr Bain reported that the student is progressing his project, but if he doesn't think it's right, the site won't go live in the new version. Dr Goudie commented on the fact that nom minutes have been put on the old website since February. Ms Smith acknowledged the matter and said that the minutes would eventually be posted on the new site, if approved.

6.5. Any Other Matters Arising

6.5.1. Association of Community Councils Meeting/Representation

Mr Crichton mentioned a meeting in Perth which members could attend if interested in Perth, and also mentioned that there is a vacancy for an Area Representative.

7. From Committees

7.1. Recreation Committee

7.1.1. Young Citizen of the Year Award

Mr Bain reported that this would take place next month before the main meeting.

7.1.2. St Andrews in Bloom Committee

Mr Bain had met with this committee, which is trying to raise funds at present. He'd also met with a Mr Jackson from Beautiful Scotland in Bloom.

7.2. General Purposes Committee

No report

7.3. 200 Club

7.3.1. Cub Report

Mr Reed reported that he's trying to deal with applications by the proper club procedures as written in the rules. He's also chasing up various groups, which haven't cashed awards, made or had their awards made due to past club problems.

Ms Smith also mentioned that there had been a list of organisations to which the Club had given regular donations, but this had lapsed. She suggested that anyone aware of this in relation to a club or organisation contact Mr Reed.

7.3.2. 200 Club Winners

1st Prize: £50 – Mr I Syme, 2nd Prize: £30 – Mrs E Methven, 3rd Prize: Mrs B McKenzie

7.4. Health, Education & Welfare Committee

No meeting

8. New Business

8.1. Consultation on Forestry Commission Scotland's Draft Climate Change Action Plan

For information – no discussion

8.2. Letter from Craig Pearson of Criminal Justice Services

Mr Crichton thought that this might be of interest to the Recreation Committee. Ms Smith wondered if Criminal Justice might be in as position to replace the notice board at Spar.

8.3. The Dundee and Edinburgh City Region Strategic Development Plans

For information - no discussion

8.4. Letter about the New Liquor Licensing System – The Role of Community Councils

Cllr Waterston had discussed the issue earlier in the meeting. There was no further discussion.

8.5. Planning Modernisation – Consultations and Electronic Publication Strategy

No discussion took place

8.6. Continental Market Letter

Mr Crichton outlined the letter's content, in which the promoters were asking for the Community Council's views on having a Continental Market.

8.7. Homes for Scotland

Letter from this organisation about a meeting in Dunfermline on 11th April titled "Meeting Housing Needs in Fife".

8.8. Traffic Calming Measures

Mr Crichton mentioned that two emails had been received on this subject.

8.9. Dennis Canavan Invite

Dennis Canavan has accepted an invite to the St Andrews Day reception this year.

9. Reports from Office Bearers

9.1. Chair

9.1.1. Litter Picking in Canongate School

Ms Smith commented on the poor response from Community Councillors to a request for this event. Only one volunteer from the CC, compared to three Fife Councillors. She appealed for further volunteers.

9.2. Treasurer

9.2.1. No report

9.3. Secretary

9.3.1. See correspondence

10. Any Other Competent Business

10.1. Civic Reception 2007 Cost

Mr Crichton reported that the reception had cost the Community Council £128.70. This wasn't the total cost as there was funding help.

10.2. Hogmanay Ceilidh

This was a sell out with 200 attending. £2200 was raised in total from ticket sales. The raffle raised £500, which was donated to the Cosmos Bus Appeal. £100 was given to the Summer Sandcastle Competition. £297 is being held in contingency towards the expenses of the Senior Citizens Tea Party. £200 is to be held in a Contingency Fund towards future Ceilidh expenses for provision of stovies. £100 was given to the Red Cross Shop and a similar amount to St Andrews Church disability access. St Andrews Masonic Lodge raised £750, which was divided between the Boys Brigade, the Fullerton Trust and St Davids Day Centre.

10.3. Suggestion Box

Cllr Sangster reminded the meeting that there is a suggestion box in the local office.

10.4. 200 Club

Mr Reed appealed for more members and also for voluntary groups to whom the 200 Club can donate money.

10.3. Date of the May Meeting 05/05/08 – This is also the AGM