Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council
Annual General Meeting Minutes – May 2008

For Approval

0. St. Andrews Young Citizen of the Year Award 2007

Ms Smith awarded the Quaich, cheques and certificates to the recipients of this year's awards, recognising their valuable contributions to St Andrews.

1. Nyree Littler – Received a Commended Certificate for activities included assisting with Charity Week at her school, the hockey activities for younger children and her involvement in her school's Young Enterprise Group
2. J T Baird – Received a Commended Certificate for his involvement in the Echo Club at Newpark, his work in the school's Young Enterprise Group and general commitment to school activities
3. Rachel Foster – Received a Highly Commended Certificate for her volunteering work with young children during church services, voluntary work in the Barnardos Bookshop, looking after younger children at St Leonards Newpark, also volunteering at the fund raising for the Montgomery Trust
4. Niall Watson (11) - Received the Winner's Quaich for his work in collecting household recyclable waste from households where people would not have otherwise been able to recycle. He collects the waste on his bicycle and takes it to the Recycling Centre.

1. Attendance

Community Councillors

Dave Finlay, Ken Fraser, Ian Goudie, Laurence Reed , Ken Crichton, Patrick Marks, Zoe Smith, Marysia Denyer, Alex Bain, Shaun Atkinson, Rob Fett, Fiona Harden, Karen Hutchence, Henry Paul, Catherine Rowe, Matthew Ferrell.

Students' Association Representatives

Tom D'Ardenne, Matthew Guest, Sarah McCusker

Nominated

Jude Innes

Fife Councillors

Dorothea Morrison, Robin Waterston

Apologies

Frances Melville, Bill Sangster, Carol Ashworth, Judith Harding, Coral Dyer

2. Minutes of the 2007 AGM

Approved without dissent. Proposed by Ken Crichton, seconded by Ken Fraser

3. Chair's Report

Taken as read.

4. Treasurer's Report

Mr Fett explained how he'd reorganised the accounts to make budgeting easier to understand and to make it clearer how much money the Community Council had given away. He'd put £1100in the donations account and with interest to be earned, he explained how it would be easier to see how much money was being given to worthy causes etc. Mr Crichton queried a couple of points in Mr Fett's report. He asked that the description of the wreath used for Remembrance Day, be amended to say wreath, as it was described

in the report as poppies. It was agreed to correct this description for the record. Mr Crichton also queried the description of the Senior Citizens Xmas Tea as a "free lunch". After description it was agreed to take out the word "free".

Mr Finlay queried the amount set against the Band costs at £2070. He noted that there had been two cancellations so he couldn't understand the cost detailed, and thought that there must be something wrong. Mr Fett wasn't clear on the matter and agreed to check on the details and agreed to advise Mr Finlay of his findings.

5. Dates of Meetings 2007- 2008

Mr Marks reported that the usual dates had been booked. Dr Goudie queried whether the usual exceptions had been made, such as the Lammas and New Year. Mr Marks said he'd check, but knew that the caretaker had pencilled in dates provisionally from past experience.

6. Any Other Competent Business

6.1. Query about Student Councillors

Mr Crichton suggested that it would be useful to have an idea when current elected student councillors would be finishing their courses and be likely to depart the town. He thought that this would enable the Community Council to advance plan the organisation of replacement councillors. Mr D'Ardenne queried what Mr Crichton meant about replacing them. Mr Crichton clarified his comment, saying that he was trying to think ahead when student members graduated and left St Andrews, so it would be useful to have an idea of their intention to leave in advance, rather than at the last minute. The Community Council would then be able to advertise for replacement councillors.

7. Election of Officers

7.1. Chair

Dr Goudie proposed Mr Reed , seconded by Mr Finlay

Ms Smith proposed by Ms Hutchence and seconded by Mr Crichton

Ms Smith was re-elected by 12 to 4

7.2. Vice-Chairs

Mr Paul proposed that all officers be re-elected unless anyone else wished to stand. Mr Fett seconded the proposal.

Mr Fraser and Dr Goudie were re-elected.

7.3. Treasurer

Mr Fett was re-elected.

7.4. Secretary

Mr Marks was re-elected.

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(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 late 1997 on are on line at http://www.standrewscc.net/)

1. Attendance

As AGM

2. Minutes of April 2008 Meeting

The minutes of the April meeting were accepted as correct

3. Presentations

PARKING METERS AND PARKING PLAN

In October *2006,* without consultation, the East Area Services Committee discussed replacing vouchers with a pay and display scheme. This could mean discs, small machines in shops, (etc. Shops only receive 5p per voucher from the charge of 85p not worth the time and trouble. If shops were paid a reasonable amount, and virtually every shop carried them, there would be no need for machines. Parking meters will mean problems for parents, who will require the correct change (another burden on shops), and must decide whether to leave children in cars, or take them to the meters and then back to the cars. Meters were the only method seriously considered by officials.

The first application for Parking Meters was published on 22 Dec. *2006.* The objection period was extended to 26 Jan, but this was of little use to people who had not seen the advertisement. There were about 40 objections.

In Jan *2007* the Parking Plan was published, with a consultation period of Jan. - May. It proposed a maximum stay of 1 hour in Market Street, South Street and connecting streets, and a charge of 70p per hour in the Inner and Middle Cores. Although this Plan has not been to committee, the charge per hour is already 85p. There are over 6,000 objections to the Plan, mostly on a petition, which are lying somewhere in Fife Council's dungeons.

Two weeks ago I received a letter from Transportation saying the Plan ' is in abeyance pending the outcome of the parking meter planning application'. I have always believed that if the Parking Meters were approved, they would be rolled out over the wider charged area. There have been discussions on the Parking Plan, but the public has not been informed. Clearly the Parking Meters and Plan should have been considered together.

There has been confusion between Meters and Plan, including press articles, which concentrated on the intention to charge for Petheram Bridge. The Parking Meters file in Cupar contains copies of the Parking Plan although they were separate applications

The Parking Meters came to committee in April 2007, and were in effect refused, following a proposal by Councillor Melville, seconded by Councillor Sangster. Another local Councillor proposed approval, but failed to find a seconder. No other Councillor was otherwise minded. An official then asked to speak, and, said 'Of course, it could be continued'. I believe that this was an improper intervention, and that Councillors should have pointed out that they had made a decision. Instead two Councillors from Newburgh and Auchtermuchty proposed continuation, and the Committee agreed by 8 - 6.

Councillors were also told that if refused, the application would be called in by Ministers: This was incorrect - if approved, it would be called in.

In September 2007 the Council lodged a new application. The first application had been under the NID (Notice of Intention to Develop) system, where a Council has an interest. Fife Council clearly has a huge

interest, as parking revenue is a very large part of their budget. The NID system, whereby the application would be called in by Ministers for decision, was abolished in April 2007. BUT, having started under this system, it could have continued as a NID. The changes from the 1st application - 4 inches less in the height of the meters, reduction in number from 38 to 28 - were minor and should have meant an amended rather than a new application. But a new application meant that.40 objections were removed.

In a letter dated 8th October 2007, AFTER the new application had been lodged, Fife Council wrote to some objectors. The letter said that the papers would be on view in the Cupar ·office. It did not mention the need for new objections. Answers were required by 22nd:October - this should have been 29th October, as the meters· are in the Outstanding Conservation Area.

In mid-April 2008 I telephoned Development Services and asked for a hard copy of the objections. My request was refused. The Council's Publications Scheme says 'By post most information is also available in a paper copy form ... ' The Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 'says' ... you have the right to request, and receive, information in the format that is most convenient to you and an authority should comply and supply the information requested (provided it is reasonable) ... '

The common response to such requests is 'it's on the web'. I am not, but I know computer-literate people who have difficulty in accessing information. The Council's view, that you press a button and get the information you want, is not ·realistic. There is also the question of WHEN information is put on the web, and whether it is complete. Objections, if published at all, are 'redacted' - signatures and addresses are removed, although hard copies sent to Councillors are not redacted. Objections effectively disappear into a black hole. They are no longer available for the public in planning meetings.

A report by the Council (Review of Pay and, Display On- street parking machines) put forward and refuted every possibility, except meters. It was not subject to consultation, being intended only to persuade Historic Scotland to withdraw its concerns. It said that there were similar machines in Dunfermline, Stirling, Edinburgh, Durham, York, Norwich, Bath and Cardiff- all of them larger than St, Andrews with more than' one shopping centre, and none of them 'the most important small historic burgh in Scotland.'

A report to the North East Fife Committee on 2nd April 2008 said 'the proposed scheme has been the subject of extensive consultation. ' The results of the first and second consultations have never been published and are unknown to the public: There is no 'consultation' -the public. are invited to comment and their comments are buried, being sent only to Councillors, who receive huge amounts of paper and have little time to read it all.

Objections are rarely quoted in committee.

The second parking meters application, after being lost to public view for 7 months, came to committee on 30th April 2008. After the debate Councillor Waterston proposed approval, saying that 'there was no viable alternative. Councillor Scott-Hayward objected to this phrase. Councillor Waterston withdrew it, but repeated it in a Courier article the next day. In a Citizen article on 2nd May he said that he could not find sufficient planning grounds to oppose the application.

Among planning grounds, which should have been produced, were the following:

Failure to carry out a town centre Health check

Failure to carry out a Conservation Area Appraisal BEFORE assessing this application (an appraisal is now in progress, but clearly its results are being pre-empted).

Failure to obtain planning permission for the town centre streetscape works currently being carried out and to integrate parking requirements into the scheme.

Following these streetscape works, failure to provide a new map showing the proposed sites for the meters. Because of the extension of the pavements, the previous map is now obsolete)

Failure to assess objectively, the proposed impact of these 6' high meters on the Outstanding Conservation Area.

Failure to ensure proper consultation. As far as I know, the second application was never in the local office. Queries about it met a blank wall.

Failure to take into account the ‘substantial body of objection' to this application, including those from Community Council, the Preservation Trust, the Merchants Association, the Architectural Heritage Society of Scotland, the Confederation of St. Andrews Residents Associations, and Historic Scotland. Historic Scotland sent in three letters of 'concerns' the first detailing these concerns, the second maintaining them, and the third- (after considerable pressure' from the Council) saying that some had been resolved but that:

'In previous letters, we 'have made the point that however well designed and discretely, situated parking meters have a negative rather than positive contribution to the character of conservation areas'

Plainly they are maintaining some 'concerns'. The planning file, which I saw in Cupar last Monday, does not contain the first detailed letter from Historic Scotland

In the vote, this application was opposed by the following Councillors - 3 Conservatives, 2 Independents and 1 Lib-Dem (the latter was not given an easy ride by Chairman Arbuckle). It was· approved by 8 Lib-Dems and 1SNP. There were no letters of support for this application. With reference to the 9 Councillors who voted for approval, whose views were they representing? Councillors are elected to represent residents' views, not to put forward personal opinions. Was there a pre-meeting consensus?

In a second vote on whether to refer the application to Ministers, Councillor Waterston proposed that it should be referred, but the motion was defeated by 9 - 6.

In committee and in the Courier, Councillor Arbuckle said that the decision should be made locally. 'We are after all elected to represent people in this area', he said.

Planning Advice Note 82, about developments where the local authority has an interest, says that they can be called in to Ministers where they are contrary to the development plan or have 'been the subject of a substantial body of objections'. It also says that a Community Council's objection 'might reasonably be treated as a substantial body of objection', and that the number of objections or objectors cannot be the sole deciding factor as to whether the body of objections has been 'substantial', and then in Bold, **'but the quality and relevance of the arguments presented will be paramount'**. I suggest, in all modesty, that the quality and relevance of objectors' letters was considerably higher than the Planning Report's. Were they read and taken into account by Councillors?

There was no mention in the Planning Report of objections from Architectural Heritage or the Merchants. The précis of Historic Scotland's concerns was selective. Officials simply count objections as follows - Community Council, 1, Mr. Jones 2, Preservation Trust 2 Mrs. Smith 4, etc. No mention of the Trust's 800 members, or the Merchants 84 members, or the wide area covered by Community Council. Councillors nowadays simply, follow the lead from officials. The Council' s method of assessing objections should be the subject of an investigation.

In 1999 planning permission was granted for St. Andrews Bay two days after the decision meeting. On 30th January 2008 an application for a huge extension was refused. It took over 2 months for the decision letter to be issued, and a further month before I acquired a copy. Planning permission for the parking meters was issued the day after the meeting - surely a record - and I believe contracts are already agreed.

Officials have refused to answer the query lodged by a solicitor on my behalf two days before the committee, questioning the procedure for Neighbour Notifications, and the statement that the Council is the owner of the roads, rather than simply being empowered to manage and maintain them. Councillors took no notice of this intervention, and were not concerned by the thought that they might be approving an unlawful planning application. The Council will have to answer these points, but has not yet done so.

Students who are only here for a few years probably find it difficult to get involved in planning when there are so many other activities available, all of them far more interesting ' than parking meters. The University is a tremendous asset to the town, but proposals in the Structure Plan, for the western extension of 1000 houses are very worrying - there seem to be continual demands on the landscape setting of St. Andrews, which is irreplaceable.

Housing pressure inside the town· is also intense - in a recent Scotsman article the number of students at the University was said to be 8965.

I hope that Community Council may consider looking into the way in which planning applications are largely decided by Councillors from other areas, the procedure for objections and supplying information to the public and the desirability of having feedback from 'consultations' .

Mr D'Ardenne on a point of information corrected Ms Uprichard's figure for the number of students. He said that her figure probably includes distance learners and students studying languages who go abroad for a year, so the actual number is a little under 7000.

4. Fife Councillors

4.1. Robin Waterston

4.1.1 Work Shop on Locality Management

North East Fife Councillors had attended a workshop recently with staff from Community Services. The Work Shop was looking at the work of Locality Managers. Cllr Waterston explained that every ward in North East Fife has a Locality Manager who has the remit to ensure that as far as possible local community planning happens along with Councillors and local organisations such as Community Councils. Cllr Waterston commented that in other parts of North East Fife co-operation between local communities, Councillors and officials worked quite well, but in St Andrews the relationship wasn't as well developed. He felt that this was due to a degree of mistrust displayed by part of the community in St Andrews towards Fife Council. Cllr Waterston thought that this was very unfortunate and suggested that he and his fellow Councillors would be more than happy to try and help facilitate more constructive dialogue in relation to community planning. He added that some areas had local community plans, in which priorities were identified and he thought that these could help energise local groups and organisations to work towards shared objectives and goals. One of the difficulties he and his fellow Councillors thought lay in the fact that as a community, given its distinctive nature, St Andrews might not have shared goals. He thought that Councillors could help towards solving this difficulty and he also thought that the Community Council could have a very important role in this respect.

4.1.2 Parking Meters

Cllr Waterston reported on the recent meeting at which the decision to go ahead with the parking meters was taken. He had come to the conclusion that there wasn't a realistic option to the meters, so decided to support a revised plan. This plan included a reduced number of meters, sensitively sited and the smallest solar powered meters available. Historic Scotland had been involved in the consultation regarding siting, and had eventually withdrawn their original objection. Another issue discussed was whether Scottish Ministers should look at the process. The four local members were in favour of this, but were outvoted by other Councillors. Ms Innes asked whether the new meters would take credit cards and/or give change. Cllr Waterston replied that neither would be the case. Ms Innes felt that this would put local merchants in a difficult position, as visitors would be coming in to seek change. Cllr Waterston replied that "experience elsewhere seems suggest that this might not be as much of a problem". Ms Smith asked about what would happen to overpayments if someone didn't have correct change? Cllr Waterston suspected that Fife Council would keep the money. Cllr Waterston later said that they had consulted with Historic Scotland and that the location of every meter had been considered the least intrusive option possible. Dr Goudie asked why the solar meters would work against the walls in North St and not in South St. Cllr Waterston replied that the Historic Scotland inspector didn't want the meters against the walls in South Street. The street layout in South Street includes a band of street furniture, so it seemed obvious to group all street furniture to allow the pavements to be as uncluttered as possible.

4.1.3 Ducting

Dr Goudie asked about plans for ducting. He referred to a previous presentation by a Transportation Official on plans for improvement work in South Street, when he'd asked about ducting. He'd had in mind the possibility that with ducting, smaller powered meters could have been installed, set back against the buildings. Cllr Waterston replied that there was ducting in South Street, mainly to deal with power required for lighting and for additional temporary needs, such as the Lammas Fair. The access was at the trees lining the street. Cllr Waterston didn't think there had been any suggestion that the ducting had been intended for electric powered parking meters.

Cllr Waterston then explained the positioning of the parking meters in South Street. They are going to be aligned along by the trees, along with other street furniture, consistent with the Local Plan. In North Street they will be close to the buildings. Dr Goudie later commented that there seemed to be a divergence of opinion between information given to Fife Councillors on the subject and what had been stated at the meeting in 2007.

4.1.4 Traffic Jams/Gridlock at West Sands

Mr Marks asked Cllr Waterston about the traffic management problems on Bank Holiday weekend. He'd witnessed queues of cars attempting to exit from the West Sands, meeting traffic coming down North Street, resulting in long tailbacks. Latterly the police were directing the traffic, but he felt that it raised an issue on the management of traffic at the junction in question. Cllr Waterston agreed to follow up on this matter, as he recognised the difficulties at the junction.

4.1.5. New Medical Science Building Plan Approval/ Fife Park

Mr Crichton commented that Cllr Waterston had not mentioned the recent planning approval for this building. Cllr Waterston acknowledged that this has been approved unanimously. Mr Crichton expressed concern, because he thought that the approval of this building must lead to an increase in the number of students and staff, which would put pressure on accommodation and parking. Cllr Waterston replying said that the proposal as it stood did not mean an increase in the number of students and staff, being a post graduate institution. The university had calculated that demand for parking could be met within the current North Haugh provision. Cllr Waterston continued by acknowledging that parking was a major issue for St Andrews and indeed the North Haugh. Mr Crichton said that he'd been led to believe from a presentation by Dr Lang that there would be new student accommodation built and had mentioned. Cllr Waterston acknowledged that there would be new student accommodation built and Mr D'Ardenne confirmed that Dr Lang had probably referred to the plan for redevelopment of Fife Park. He also added that the current Fife Park residences were not fit for purpose. He informed the Community Council that about half of St Andrews students live in Halls of Residence, by far the largest of any University, and there was as far as he knew no plan to continue increasing student numbers. The University also recognised the lack of student accommodation outwith Halls, so increasing student numbers would not be viable. Mr Bain supported Mr D'Ardenne's comments saying that strategically the University didn't want to increase student numbers, but wanted to change the demographics by having more post graduate students. Mr Finlay talked about a plan to demolish Fife Park and build new apartments, adding that there would be an extra 500 students. He went on to say that local residents in the Fife Park area were not happy with the plans, and might prefer to see Fife Park sold for housing and the student residences, built on University land nearer to town. Dr Goudie wasn't convinced that there wouldn't be an impact on transportation by the building of the Medical Science Building. He was also concerned about the cost to students for the new Fife Park accommodation. Ms Hutchence wondered what would happen to students displaced by the demolition of current Fife Park residences. Ms Smith replied that this issue was being addressed, but acknowledged points of concern by Mr Paul and Dr Goudie in relation to increased costs of accommodation in the new Fife Park residences.

4.1.6. Bicycle Racks - South Street

Mr Fraser asked if Fife Council planned to replace the bicycle racks it had taken away on South Street during works. Cllr Waterston confirmed that they would be replaced.

4.1.7. University/Town Relationship

Cllr Waterston commented that there appeared to be a lot of local uncertainty about the plans the University has, and suggested that perhaps the Community Council ask someone from the university to come along to clarify its plans. Ms Smith reminded the meeting about her role as the CC rep at the town/gown liaison meeting, and her willingness to bring up issues of concern at that meeting. Cllr Waterston hoped that there would be ways to improve town/gown communication as he felt that the relationship between St. Andrews and the University was similar in some respects, to the relationship mentioned earlier between some elements in St Andrews and Fife Council. Mrs Denyer suggested that perhaps there could be a representative from the University attend Community Council meetings to give information on University plans.

4.2. Dorothea Morrison

4.2.1 Student Charity Fundraising

Cllr Morrison felt that we should give due credit to the huge amount of fund raising that students do, which benefits many local charities. There was a general agreement with Cllr Morrison's point.

4.2.2 Parking Meters

Cllr Morrison said that Councillors had been given no option to the parking meters by officials. Her group had been looking at an alternative in the form of a variable parking disc, but officials had never asked them to explain the possible benefits. She didn't know if Fife Council officials had done enough research to look at alternatives, and as a consequence the town is to be lumbered with meters. She also talked briefly about other options for less intrusive ways of paying for parking, such as ticket machines in shops. Mr Finlay wondered why council officials hadn't researched other payment methods. Cllr Morrison replied that she'd tried since she was elected to convince officials about researching the viability of other payment methods, but had met with a constant claim that other methods didn't work for St Andrews. She felt that officials had made up their mind to have meters, despite being presented with evidence about other methods, which might be as worthwhile. Following further points on the subject, including a query as to why they couldn't be wall-mounted.

4.2.3 Parking Plan 2

This is to be looked at again. She hoped that it wouldn't mean more meters, and that they could get officials to look again at parking discs.

4.2.4 HMO System

Cllrs Morrison and Waterston had recently visited Glasgow to look at the HMO system. She felt that there needed to be a policy fair to everyone. She recognised that students attending St Andrews were paying higher rents than any other university. She viewed this as unacceptable. She hoped that discussions on the issue would bring together all the interested groups, as she recognised that any policy had to balance all views/needs.

5. Planning Committee

No report as there have been no meetings. Mrs Rowe mentioned that, Paul Hogarth, a consultant was to come to discuss the plans for the West Sands. This meeting was subsequently cancelled by Mr Hogarth due to family illness.

6. Matters Arising

6.1. Planning Matters

No further comments at this time

6.2. Web Site – Progress Report

Mr Bain reported that the student was near the end of his project and had submitted the site. It meets all relevant technical requirements in relation to access for people with sensory impairment etc, which the old site did not. The site had gone live, but Mr Bain acknowledged that it was far from complete. He was particularly referring to the development of a Councillors only part, which would be accessible by password by Community Councillors. He was going to ask the student to continue to develop this area in particular. He recognised that there was a lot of information about how Community Council worked, which at present was known to individuals but was not written down or easily accessible. However further development would cost and Mr Bain was asking for agreement to spend some funds on the further work. Mr Crichton asked about the possible cost. Mr Bain thought that about £500 was a reasonable estimate. Following a comment by Ms Hutchence, Mr Bain said that all sorts of things might be possible for the web site, but this would also depend upon what the student developer could do for the cost and in the time. Mr Bain confirmed that the site name is still StAndrewsCC.Net, following a query from Dr Goudie who had experienced difficulty accessing the site earlier in the day.

It was proposed by Mr Crichton and seconded by Mr Paul that £500 be awarded towards the further development of the web site.

£500 to be allocated towards cost of further web site development.

6.3. Reports from Representatives

6.3.1. RAF Community Forum

Mr Fraser reported that there had been little of relevance to St Andrews at the recent meeting. He added that there were two places available and wondered if anyone else would like to attend as well as himself. Mr Paul was asked if he'd be willing to participate. He said he'd be willing to do so if no one else wanted to go. Mr Fraser finally noted that Squadron Leader Wardlaw had indicated a willingness to come to speak to the Community Council on any issues of concern to St Andrews.

6.3.2. Travel Plan Committee

Ms Rowe has been attending meetings of this committee, which is examining transport needs for the new hospital. She reported that no conclusion had been reached so far on this issue.

6.3.3. East Fife Sports Council

Mr Crichton had attended the annual awards dinner at which the trophy/award from the Community Council had been presented. Mr Marks reported that he'd received a thank you letter from Bob Dick the Chair of that body for the Community Council support.

6.3.4. Cosmos Management Committee

Ms Smith reported her attendance at which nothing relevant to the Community Council had come up. The new Cosmos bus is nearly ready for delivery.

6.3.5. Town and Gown Liaison Committee

Nothing of significance other than the beach clean up idea. Ms Smith reminded members that she'd be happy to take issues to this meeting if members dropped her a note/email.

7. Committee Reports

7.1 Recreation

Mr Bain reported on the recent committee meeting. Items included permission to use the display cabinets in the Town Hall and put Community Council artefacts in them. Mr Fett asked about the Bandstand Concerts. Ms Smith replied that a health and safety check is to be conducted before confirming whether it can be used this year.

7.2. General Purposes

No meeting has taken place since the last Community Council meeting.

7.3. 200 Club

7.3.1. 200 Club Correspondence

This Committee has had its first meeting recently. Mr Reed reported that £2290 had been given out since the beginning of the year.

7.3.2. 200 Club Draw

1st Prize No. 167 Mrs E Reed. 2nd prize No 128 Mr R Murphy. 3rd prize No. 145 Miss Laura Reed.

7.4. Health, Education and Welfare Committee

7.4.1. Presentation on the Future of Madras College

Mr Paul gave a Power Point presentation on possible plans for the future of local Secondary education, namely moving Madras College to a single site. He explained that the Education Committee would make the first decision about a new school, then the Planning Committee would have to approve the plans etc, if the school was moved. He thought that planning permission wouldn't be needed if it were rebuilt on the same site.

He was proposing to the Community Council that we should work with Fife Council on this matter. He detailed some of the current problems, such as the split site. In terms of efficiency Madras is the most expensive of the High Schools to run in Fife due to the split site. A 2006 Inspection listed the split site as unsatisfactory, as did a re-inspection in early 2008. The Education Committee decided in April 2008 to go for a single site school.

To Mr Paul the big question is the timescale for the new school. He said that once agreed and approved, a school could be built in under two years. It is the decision making process that is the lengthy one. He mentioned the various options, including a refurbishment of Kilrymont, which to him was the worst option. Complications include the presence of asbestos, which has not been factored into the refurbishment estimate. The Kilrymont site would also be too small and pupils would still have to be bussed to the playing fields. One option considered by Fife Council had been Fife Park, which Mr Paul didn't view as a serious option given the amount of objections it would raise. The final two more serious options included a site by North Bank, North Haugh behind Andrew Melville Hall, and one out the western end of St Andrews. He felt that the latter had more difficulties in terms of road access. The former he thought had more potential. It was on the right side of town for the proposed housing, was also more accessible to Station Park. He envisaged a possible footbridge to allow access across to Station Park. However he added this choice would be tied to housing development and would be paid for by that development of 1000 houses. Given that PPP is unlikely to be an option, the funding is either jointly with the university or with a body called the Scottish Futures Trust. However this latter body has stalled at present with Holyrood. But at present there is no firm financial mechanism to pay for the proposed school. Mr Atkinson asked about the timescale for building. Mr Paul thought 5 years was realistic, 3 years to decide and 2 to build. Dr Goudie felt that the proposed school location had similarities to what had happened with the hospital development. He viewed it as a bit of a Trojan horse for the major housing expansion, as he viewed the hospital as a potential way in for development of the Southern hillside. He warned about the impact that such a large housing development would have on the town, but acknowledged that it was difficult to object to a new school. He was sceptical as well about the type of housing likely to be built, no convinced that it would be affordable housing but mostly large, expensive houses. He warned about the need to have all the relevant data and the statistics needed to be carefully examined. He commented that in planning terms it might be less contentious to develop to the eastern end of Station Park. Ms Smith explained that part of the reason for Mr Paul's presentation, was to ensure that the Community Council could make moves to get the right kind of information when assessing it's position, with respect to any proposals. She went on to say, that there was a proposal to say that we would support Fife Council in it's plans to develop a single site school, but only in a way that the Community Council was happy with. She would like to see the Community Council working closely with Fife Council in progressing a suitable proposal. Dr Goudie acknowledged the need for a single site school, but also hoped that the idea of a bridgehead school would be reconsidered in the future.

Ms Smith asked Mr Paul if he'd like to formally propose Community Council support for a single site school. Mr Paul explained that Fife Council might set up a development board for the new school, and would like to get a member of the Community Council on that board, so that the Community Council could have an up to date idea of what was happening. He proposed that the Community Council should try to work with Fife Council and ask to be involved with the Development Board when it starts. He envisaged the board being set up before the end of the year. There were 17 votes for the proposal, none voting against. Dr Goudie said that he wasn't against, but reminded the meeting of how three Community Councillors, including himself had sat on the planning board for the new hospital development for nearly a decade and had been thrown off just when decisions were being made. He was concerned that the same thing could happen in this case.

Letter to be sent to Fife Council to request involvement on the planning board for the new school

8. New Business

8.1. Process for public letter of objections on Planning and other major issues of concern.

Mrs. Harden explained why she'd requested this agenda item. She understood that the sub-committees were set up to discuss and make decisions on items which might be too time consuming to deal with in the full Community Council meeting. She was concerned however about more major issues and referred to the Planning Committee and cited the example of the objection to the Medical Sciences Building. She felt that items like this perhaps should come to the main meeting for agreement before a public letter of objection is sent. Ms Hutchence suggested that perhaps members could be emailed for their views on major issues and possibly vote on them. Mr Crichton thought that it would be a waste of time. He suggested that perhaps the Planning Committee convenor could alert the secretary to any potentially contentious planning application, and the secretary could advise other Community Council members so that they could choose to attend the next planning meeting. He reminded members that issues could arise between CC meetings and with the time scale for decisions; it wasn't always possible to leave a decision to the next CC meeting. In reply Ms Hutchence said that she didn't object to that idea, but felt that for democratic reasons all members should be appraised of what might be happening, so that they could make a decision as to whether they could attend the meeting, or voice their views to the Planning Convenor. Mr Paul suggested that all Community Councillors could be emailed about planning issues. If they didn't reply, it would be assumed that they weren't against any decision being made by the Planning Committee to object or accept a planning application.

Dr Goudie thought that all major planning items were brought to the Community Council, time permitting. He cited the Medical Science Building brought up at the February Meeting of the Community Council and went in with relatively small modifications. Dr Goudie added that no one at the present time is the Planning Committee convenor, but he has sent things out when he has had a chance. Dr Goudie felt that while he'd be happy to send out letters of objection for members to peruse if he had their emails, he felt that there was no substitute to attending the planning meetings to hear the detail of matters.

Ms Smith felt that at the moment the main issue for the distribution of material from the Planning Committee was the lack of a Convenor. Mr D'Ardenne asked who currently sat on the Planning Committee. Ms Smith replied that there was no limit to the number of committee members, and listed those Community Councillors active on it at the present time. Mr D'Ardenne wondered if an external person could be Convenor? Ms Hutchence asked about the duties of a Convenor. Ms Smith explained the basic duties.

There was further discussion around the process of making a planning objection. Mrs. Harden felt that there should be more of a consensus sought in respect of major applications, possibly by emailing members and asking for their comments/views, giving a time scale for reply. Dr Goudie acknowledged that sometimes he sent out letters at a fairly late stage, with an expectation that any comments received might be more in the form of suggesting that a strongly worded ending be toned down a little. Major applications, as in the case of the Medical Sciences building were brought to the main meeting prior to the writing of the objection to get a consensus on whether the Council wished to object or not. He hoped that perhaps the new web site might have documents tabled at a meeting speedily put up so that members could browse and comment in their own time. Mr Fraser commented on the definition of a major planning application. He said that in his experience major applications were usually brought to full council and suggested that the Planning Committee should be left to decide what was major and requiring discussion at full council. The need for a convenor was further discussed, with Mr D'Ardenne and other members querying the lack of convenor, asking a definition of the role and why one of the current members couldn't take on the role. Mr Reed agreed to undertake the role as Convenor of the Planning Committee.

8.2. Beach Clean St Andrews

Ms Smith expressed her support for this type of initiative. Mr Marks commented that the East Sands had been identified as not being in need of this treatment and was looking for suggestions. Mr Marks said he'd email Roddy Yarr, the University of St Andrews Environment Officer with some thoughts on other possibilities, and would await a response about the eventual plan for some form of action. Ms Smith said that she'd like to see Community Councillors involved in this type of activity.

Mr Marks will email Roddy Yarr on the progress of this initiative.

8.3. Seminar – Installing Civic Pride in your Community through Environmental Improvements - Friday 16th May Falkland Community Hall

Mr Marks explained the set up of this event and informed the meeting that he could supply details as well as an application form for attendance. He said that some members of the Recreation Committee had already shown an interest. Mr Paul and Ms Hutchence also expressed an interest.

8.4. Greenspace Conference – 28th May 2008

For information

8.5. Scottish Government Survey of ASCC Stakeholders

For information – Mr Marks has completed survey.

8.6. NAMING AND NUMBERING OF STREETS – Community Council Suggestions for New Street Names

Mr Crichton informed the meeting that the Community Council had the prerogative already with respect to naming local streets. Mr Marks explained about the letter received from Mr McMichael. Mr Fraser thought that their might be a misunderstanding and explained that Fife Council weren't trying to take away the right of the Community Council. He thought that this was a fairly harmless attempt to deal with situations where there might not be time to go through the local procedures, so Fife Council were asking for suggestions to keep on a database should the need arise.

8.7. Best Kept Town and Village Campaign Meeting – Burgh Chambers, County Buildings, Cupar

Mr Crichton had attended this meeting. He reported that it was mainly for update/information and general talk

8.8. The Gathering - A Big Get Together For Culture in Fife

For information. Mr Marks outlined the nature of the event and who could attend. The invitation is in the agenda.

8.9. West Sands

For information. Meeting with consultant to be on the 12th May

8.10. FOE Subscription Renewal

Renewal agreed.

Treasurer to pay renewal sub.

9. Reports from Office Bearers

9.1. Chair

No report

9.2. Treasurer

No report

9.3 Secretary

See Correspondence list.

9.3.1. Consultation on Future of Community Councils

Mr Marks highlighted that this is to take place and will be of significance for Community Councils future. It needs to be discussed once members have read the email or printed material in the appendix of the agenda.

To be brought up again as an item for discussion at next CC meeting

9.3.2. Data Protection Act Compliance

A letter had been received by Fife Council from the Information Commissioner with respect to Community Council need to register, which apparently few had done to date. Mr Marks suggested that this be further examined at a GP meeting. Cllr Waterston thought that it was extraordinary that Community Councils should be compelled to register, given the limited amount of data processed.

To be discussed at a GP meeting.

10. Any Other Competent Business

10.1. Eco Club Grant Request

Mr Paul put forward a request for a £700 grant to help the Madras Eco Club with purchasing equipment for its work. The PTA has been unable to help as it has committed most of its funds to other school causes. He thought that as the Sea Cadets had been given a £500 start up grant and are still not functioning for a variety of reasons, that his request was a fair one. He anticipated the pupils doing a range of environmental improvements in both Madras sites. He felt that as the sites were Community Schools this added to the merit of the request. Funds are being sought from a number of other sources as well. Dr Goudie queried the proportion of our funds, which this would take up, and the public benefit. Mr Crichton suggested that the Common Good Fund might be more appropriate. Mr Paul replied that an application had been made to that fund. Ms Smith asked if there was an Eco Committee. Mr Paul confirmed that such a committee had been set up. Mr Paul confirmed that the money was required to help by equipment so that work could start on the projects, such as fencing the area around the stream at Kilrymont, which would be planted. It would be hoped to start the work this summer. Dr Goudie mentioned a small grants scheme run by Fife Council and Mr Paul replied that this had been applied for as well, however without some start up money there might be problems accessing other grants. Mr Bain thought that it might be useful with respect to the Beautiful Scotland in Bloom. Ms Smith could see the benefit in tidying up the front of Madras South Street. Ms Smith suggested that Mr Paul could arrange a meeting with the teacher co-ordinating the Eco Club activities, which she and Mr Crichton would be happy to attend to get more detail. Mr Paul accepted this suggestion. She also hoped that the Community Council could give more practical help, not just money.