

# Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

## Minutes March 2000

*As Approved 3/4/00*

### 1. Attendance

#### Community Councillors:

Ken Crichton, Ken Fraser, Ian Goudie, Hugh Gray, John Landon, Helen Laurie, Chris Lesurf, Pete Lindsay, Murdo Macdonald, Lindsay Murray, Joe Peterson, Cynthia Tero, Chris Young.

**Students- Association:** Steve Durrant, Linda Piálek.

**Co-opted:** Bill Sangster, Archie Muir.

**Fife Councillors:** Sheila Hill, Jane Ann Liston, Frances Melville, Jane Hunter-Blair.

**Apologies:** Maries Cassells, Dennis Macdonald, Archie Strachan, Donald Macgregor.

### 2. Public Submissions

#### 2.2. Ian Lawrie

brought two problem areas to the meeting's attention:

##### 2.2.1. Western Cemetery

- welcomed the improvements to car access and parking but pointed out some other problems which were causing some distress to those visiting and tending graves.

The tap available for those tending graves to fill watering cans is in a muddy area which is difficult to reach without boots.

Flowers being left on graves are being eaten by rabbits within a few hours.

Some graves have sunk and not been made up.

Murdo Macdonald confirmed these problems, with further agreement from around the table, and hoped that the Fife Councillors would be able to get something done.

**2.2.2. Flowerbeds at Winram Place/John Knox Road** - these are being neglected, briar rose is spreading from them into nearby gardens. Also the rose beds at Safeway look poor because, he said, when Safeway's store was upgraded rather than planting new the roses from the old beds were stored and replanted, which is not a good thing to do to roses.

Ken Crichton added that the state of the rose beds in the Safeway area had been a cause of concern in Best Kept Town competition over the summer and called for Safeway to replace any plants in the beds on their borders that were sub-standard.

Cllr Sheila Hill will contact the Grounds Dept about the rose beds again, but noted that it was a department that always seemed to be having its budget cut.

#### 2.1. Police

In a slight change of plan PC Cumming appeared again, to introduce PC Louise Thomson who will be taking over as the town Community Policing Officer while PC Balmaves (introduced in February) will concentrate on the surrounding villages and countryside.

##### 2.1.1 Speeding

- in response to complaints raised both at Community Council and directly to the Police the speed camera unit has been active in the Buchanan Gardens/Hepburn Gardens stretch resulting in some 40 cases being dealt with. A similar number has resulted from the camera on the St Andrews-Anstruther road.

**2.2.2. West Sands Road** - damage to verges and grassed areas etc - PC Cumming has now caught some offenders in the act and the area is still being monitored.

##### 2.2.3. Parking on Pavements

- declined to give out figures on offences on the grounds of confidentiality and data protection. He assured the meeting that all calls to the police about this will be dealt with. The fixed penalty system is still not with us, but when it arrives traffic wardens will be able to issue the fixed penalty notices for illegal parking as well as police officers. Having checked the point raised by Chris Lesurf of Fife Council being able to take on parking enforcement, no such general powers exist except in council-run parking spaces.

Murdo Macdonald felt it was time to draw a line under the illegal/pavement parking issue for now as it had been thoroughly aired. There was nothing further to be done until the new

powers come into force he felt.

## **Fife Councillors**

### **2.3. Cllr Frances Melville**

**2.3.1. Draft Structure Plan** - David Sneddon, head of Central Area Planning, who drafted the current revision, will be speaking to the East Area Development Committee about it. Cllr Melville asked that anyone who cared about St Andrews, especially the community council, should put in a strong response.

There is an East Fife public meeting on the Structure Plan 7pm 4th April at Cupar Corn Exchange.

**2.3.2. Harbour weight restriction** - a 7.5 tonne road vehicle weight restriction is to be imposed at Shorehead because of the damage being done by heavy vehicles turning there, such as the tour bus.

### **2.3.3. West Sands -**

Preservation Trust have raised concerns of a proliferation of signs with current Fife Enterprise improvements.

**2.3.4. Zebra Crossings** - noted a story from The Courier that Cowdenbeath has replaced zebras with pelican crossings. Bill Sangster had also seen this and investigated further. The zebra crossings are on a main through-road, for which they are not considered suitable. Streets in St Andrews with zebra crossings however are not considered 'main'. Cllr Jane Ann Liston added that North Street was a through route that would not be suitable for zebras, but Market Street and South Street should not be being used by through traffic, hence are suitable.

### **2.4. Cllr Jane Hunter-Blair**

#### **2.4.1. Red Cross**

have moved out of their South Street premises and are looking for a new home. They have approached Fife Council about keeping equipment - wheelchairs etc - in the store of the JP court room and also to convert the court room itself into an interview/meeting room for general use.

Ken Crichton asked why the Red Cross had quit their current premises before they had secured a replacement. She didn't know why they had chosen to go now but understood that their old location did not meet the standards required by health and safety legislation coming into force soon. They do want a town centre location for their wheelchair loans to visitors. Joe Peterson suggested the Local Office might be a better location for this, with parking available, but was told that there was no room inside to store the wheelchairs and other equipment.

**2.4.2. Commercial Wheelie Bins** - she is to meet with Bob Lawrie, Head of Cleansing & Waste Management, 7/3/00 morning to look the various problem commercial wheelie bins.

#### **2.4.3. Byre Theatre**

- there is nothing to add to what has appeared in the papers recently. Talks to secure funding are still in progress and at a quite sensitive stage. Hope is for an agreement by the end of the week.

### **2.5. Cllr Sheila Hill**

#### **2.5.1. Gibson House**

coffee morning raised £1,000 for which they were very grateful to the generosity of the town. However the sheer upkeep of the building, especially located as it is in the Conservation Area, constantly demands money, let alone the services provided. Any donations gratefully received.

**2.5.2. Crawford & Lindsay Gardens** - trimming and pruning of various overgrown shrubs and trees in this area is now underway.

**2.5.3. Canongate Traffic Calming** - work commences on the 4 roundabouts and cycle lanes on Monday 13th, lasting about 3 weeks. The aim is to reduce the speed of traffic in the immediate area of the Canongate Primary School. This will reduce the number of parking spaces available outside the school.

Ian Goudie reiterated the disquiet felt by the Community Council at the attitude of the Roads Service to these measures. They were inconsistent, he said, varying between seeing parents parking to un/load their children as a problem on one hand and as an informal traffic calming part of the solution on the other. He was particularly concerned though at the attitude, all too common, to consultation. Having spend nearly two hours agreeing appropriate methods of consultation with representatives of the Community Council they then ignored the agreement

with out even having the politeness to inform the community council. Sheila Hill indicated she understood the concerns.

## **2.6. Cllr Jane Ann Liston**

### **2.6.1. Abbey Street**

- the day after the February Community Council meeting when we heard of one resident's concerns regarding parking she had been buttonholed by another who had given a rather different picture of the problem we heard described. There is obviously a diversity of opinion in the area.

### **2.6.2. LibDem group**

on the council heard from Stagecoach and Transportation Section recently. Asked about the timetable changes recently they said that they would avoid public holidays and undertake more planning beforehand, so something has been learned from the problems experienced in January.

### **2.6.3. Buses & Trains**

- there was recently an announcement that it would be possible to buy tickets allowing travellers to travel by train and bus on the same ticket between Edinburgh and St Andrews. However it is not at all clear whether it is possible to buy equivalent tickets for the opposite direction. She is investigating. On the subject of bus-train integration she also noted that despite the claims of Stagecoach and Transportation Service there is not in fact a bus every 15 minutes between St Andrews and Leuchars. There may well be 4 buses an hour (between 8am and 7pm) but that isn't quite the same thing, as can be seen from the timetable

Lindsay Murray pointed out that it was difficult to get from St Andrews to Cupar for 9am without arriving noticeably early or late. Cllr Liston agreed that there was a gap, which she understood was caused by the use of so many buses to move school children around at about that time.

### **2.6.4. Flowers**

- St Andrews in Bloom Committee: 1st meeting of the year 6.30pm 9/3/00. The Community Bulb Plantings should just about be coming up now. Take a look at Kinburn Park.

### **2.6.5. Residents' Parking**

- provided some information to counter misapprehensions evident in newspaper articles in the last few days. Of the 350 places available for residents' parking only 70 have been taken up. There is demand in St Andrews for multiple permits for residential parking. Residential parking areas are not, as claimed, immediately blocking shop-front parking bays, but away from the shopping area. There was never any question of the parking scheme discriminating against students, none of the councillors nor officials had ever stated that they would be excluded from the scheme.

### **2.6.6. Pothole Watch**

- circulated a list of responses from Roads Service to previous matters raised.

Murdo Macdonald asked when something more than just barricading off the disintegrating part of South St/Abbey Walk would be undertaken, it has been that way for some weeks. Bill Sangster added that the Safety Committee had also raised this matter. Cllr Jane Hunter-Blair is on the case.

Ken Crichton wondered when the St Mary Street bridge, which has been controlled by traffic lights for some months, would be strengthened, and called for the pavement to be extended across the bridge to improve access to the hospital when the time came.

## **3. Minutes of February**

### **Correction**

#### **4.3.**

Chris Lesurf pointed out that she had asked for and received permission to write about her competition proposal.

**The corrected minutes were approved**

## **4. Matters Arising**

### **4.1. 'Friend of St Andrews' Report.**

Hugh Gray was concerned at the potential overlap with the local Burns Club award of a similar nature. Murdo Macdonald pointed out unlike that annual award the report emphasised that any award should only be made occasionally and in very special circumstances.

There was discussion of other honours for the honoured/honorary citizen - a special medallion

struck, the town bell rung as a passing bell on their demise/funeral were suggested.

Cynthia Tero volunteered to look into costs of a medallion. Meeting accepted the report, award agreed in principal, details to be worked out once costs clearer.

#### **Award agreed in principal Cynthia Tero to look into costs**

#### **4.2. Civic Reception.**

Hugh Gray spoke against the idea of the Community Council committing acts of hospitality for special dignitaries. It smacked more of a social club than a community council he said. If such things must, in the view of Community Council, be held he suggested that limits on annual budget and who could be welcomed be set down.

Lindsay Murray spoke for the Community Council taking on such a traditional civic role. She felt that each case should be judged on its merits constrained, as any other activity, by overall finances rather than any imposed limit restriction.

Funding was the concern of several other speakers. It was agreed therefore to hold over further debate until the Treasurer is present.

#### **4.3. Bus Service Changes**

Transportation Service's reply noted.

#### **4.4. St Johns House Garden**

(Feb 2.1.2.) - Steve Durrant reported that a Mediaeval Fair was held there last Saturday. Several hundred people attended and were entertained by jugglers, fire-eaters, mock fights, music... and had an opportunity to sign a petition against the proposed building of a laboratory on the site. He expected that the SRC would be campaigning against the proposal and hoped that the Community Council would join them.

Cllr Jane Ann Liston mentioned that she had already received letters arguing against this development, but that it would be better to write to the Planning Service rather than individual councillors so that the whole East Area Development committee would see the letter. She added that letters on planning applications would be better regarded if they didn't contain obvious errors of fact on other matters eg talking about the "Royal & Ancient Golf Course"...

Cllr Frances Melville suggested writing to her as Chair of the East Area Development Committee via Planning Service in Cupar as an actual application had not yet been received.

#### **4.5. Poster Design Competition**

(Feb 4.3.)- Chris Lesurf has written. Teachers that have replied can not get involved until the new academic year in September. She has now written again to the others with this updated suggestion. Also contacted Fife Council about using Millennium Grants for prizes to upgrade school facilities but the money cannot be used to do work the council should be doing anyway.

#### **4.6. Rectorial Drag**

(Feb 6.1.1.) Steve Durrant passed on the thanks of the Rector for the Community Council's welcome on behalf of the Town.

#### **4.7. Chair's Medallion of Office**

(Feb 6.2.1.) - currently at the jeweller having the final touches of ribbon and name tags for past incumbents fitted.

#### **4.8. St Andrews Day Holiday**

Cllr Jane Ann Liston reported that this is being taken forward at Holyrood by Keith Raffan MSP, though not on the floor of the chamber for tactical/procedural reasons.

#### **4.9. Greyfriars Garden**

Bill Sangster asked if there were any further idea of likely cost for the garden. Various figures were tentatively offered as rumours of past unsuccessful attempts until Ken Fraser pointed out that public discussion of potentially sensitive financial information was unwise.

### **5. New Business**

#### **5.1. Amenity Centre**

Murdo Macdonald asked why, when neighbouring settlements Balmullo, Crail & Cupar have amenity centres or at least a skip, St Andrews has none?

At this time of year he has problems fitting garden debris into a wheelie bin. Driving to Cupar

or Balmullo seems a little out of the way to disposal of hedge trimmings - could a second skip for garden waste sit by the existing bottle banks? Or, he suggested, outside town on the A915 at a particular location towards Lumbo?

Chris Lesurf pointed out that for now special collections can be arranged for Tuesdays by phoning 412724/5.

It was commented by those that remembered such distant times that the NEF District Council had, by the time of its dissolution, money and a location for an Amenity Centre by Safeway, but that the money had been 'absorbed' on reorganisation. Fife was recently noted as second worst local authority in Scotland for recycling - where NE Fife District Council had won an award for its level of recycling just before reorganisation.

Cllr Jane Ann Liston warned that Fife Council would be within its rights to charge for the collection of garden waste, though there were no plans to do so at the moment as far as she was aware. Chris Young hoped that attention would be given to such forms of recycling of garden waste as composting and mulch chipping rather than just dumping.

Cllr Frances Melville pointed out that part of the difficulty with setting up such a centre in St Andrews now is the SEPA (Scottish Environmental Protection Agency) rules which requiring sites to be staffed.

Pete Lindsay to write to ask Fife Council what the current situation is and how this can be progressed.

**Pete Lindsay to write**

## **6. Officers Reports**

### **6.1. Chair**

Murdo Macdonald reported that he and a number of other office bearers had formed a welcoming party for the University Lord Rector during the drag in February, thanking the students for changing the location of the welcome from a rather cold Logies Lane to the warmth (and wine) of a St Mary's common room. He thanked Lindsay Murray, Archie Strachan and Pete Lindsay for forming the welcoming party. Cllr Jane Ann Liston also joined the Community Council party.

### **6.2. Treasurer**

Report and Coat-of-Arms committee reports noted.

### **6.3. Secretary**

(NB Agenda misnumbered as 6.2.)

#### **6.3.1. Renewal of APRS Subscription (£12) - meeting agreed.**

**6.3.5. Internet Domain Names.** Ken Fraser raised an item reported on in the APRS newsletter - What was the status of the St Andrews-related internet Domain Names (eg *www.st-andrews.co.uk etc*) given the reports that companies were buying up place name domains apparently with the intention of reselling them at a profit. Pete Lindsay explained that the St Andrews names had gone long before this - eg Kingdom of Fife Tourist Board has *www.standrews.co.uk*, Ken Cochrane has *www.saint-andrews.co.uk* (which carries some Community Council material, by arrangement). There was however the possibility of taking up the *standrews.gov.uk* domain name which will be allocated by a different system to the purely commercial *.co.uk/.com* names and seemed unlikely to be hijacked. While there had been some discussion of taking this up for the Community Council no action had been taken yet.

#### **6.3.10. Loches**

- Bill Sangster asked why the Loches report in Appendix E was not included in the agenda. Pete Lindsay said he hadn't been sure where to include the information as the Loches Alliance isn't a Community Council committee. After some discussion it was agreed that any such reports should be noted as correspondence received and included in an appendix if in a convenient form so to do.

## **7. Reports from Committees**

### **7.1 General Purposes**

Meeting formats - further suggestions made:

- 200 Club draw during the 10 minute break (but why shouldn't the 200 Club get a break too?)
- Questions on reports to be passed to the secretary before the start of the meeting.
- Cut down the time taken by Fife Councillors - this idea from Joe Peterson provoked some

debate. Hugh Gray said that Fife Councillors were only present to listen not speak, according to the original 197x report that proposed community councils. Chris Young championed the benefits of the information Fife Councillors could pass on about Fife Council's actions and Lindsay Murray expressed her gratitude for the Councillors- very generous use of their time to attend community council, which seemed to be the general opinion of the meeting.

Eventually it was agreed that the Standing Orders should make the Chair's discretion on submissions clearer and that they should be reissued regularly to remind us how meetings should be conducted as we seem prone to forgetting.

### **7.3. Health Education & Welfare**

Report noted.

Cllr Sheila Hill surprised that she had not received a copy of the report on Respite Care that HEW were considering.

### **7.4. Millennium**

Report noted.

### **7.5. Planning**

Report noted.

Additional items:

**7.5.5. Vet Hospital** (Largo Road) consent conditions received.

**7.5.6. Temporary Cabins at Purdie Building** (North Haugh) extended for only 1 year as we had requested rather than the two the university had asked for. East Area Development committee agreed that year by year extensions were more appropriate, Cllr Melville added.

**7.5.7. Green Belt Forum** - very concerned by draft Structure Plan recommendation against a green belt for St Andrews, a meeting of the Forum has been arranged for 10/3 with a later public meeting.

### **7.6. Publicity**

**7.6.1. Notice Board.** Helen Lawrie to take this over again, once the papers have been located, to start planning application for Logies Lane site (Besides former Boots).

## **8. AOCB**

### **8.1. Health Consultations**

Chris Lesurf noted that a Health Consultation left very little time for public comment on a consultation document which rather went against the promises of meaningful consultation they promised at the seminar in January. Meeting agreed Chris Lesurf to draft a letter for the Secretary to send.

**Chris Lesurf to draft**

### **8.2. Wheelie Bins**

Helen Lawrie noted that positioning of wheelie bins for collection at Argyle St/John St blocked the pavement forcing wheelchairs and prams into the road to get past. She asked what could be done to arrange collection from points that didn't inconvenience the passing members of the public.

Cynthia Tero reminded the meeting of the continuing similar problems all week round at Melbourne Brae. Cllr Sheila Hill pointed out that some properties there had bin bags because of the difficulties moving/storing wheelie bins there.

**Cllr Jane Hunter-Blair to raise with Bob Lawrie**

(8.3. John Landon raised a matter of allegations made in a newspaper (3rd March, 2000) concerning the Scottish Parliament which was ruled not competent by the Chair.)

### **8.4. 20 mph speed limits by schools**

Joe Peterson raised this but it was agreed that it would be better discussed as an agenda item next month.

**Joe Peterson to pass details to Secretary.**