

Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

Draft Minutes - July 2000

as approved

Chair: Murdo Macdonald

1. Attendance

Community Councillors: Ken Fraser, Ian Goudie, Hugh Gray, John Landon, Helen Lawrie, Chris Lesurf, Pete Lindsay, Dennis Macdonald, Donald Macgregor, Joe Peterson, Frank Riddell, Archie Strachan, Cynthia Tero, Chris Young

Students' Association: Craig Buchanan

Co-opted: Archie Muir

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

Apologies: Maries Cassells, Ken Crichton, Lindsay Murray, Marcus Booth
(NB Marcus Booth is the new Students' Association President)

2. Minutes of June 2000

June 5.8 - items referred to should have been May rather than June. Thus:

May 4.3.2. Gibson House, date should have been 13th June not 4th July as written.

3. Presentations

3.1. Locality Planning

Kate Hughes, St Andrews Locality Manager, was ill and unable to attend..

3.2. Community Policing

PC Thomson answered questions

3.2.1. Fires on the West Sands - John Landon asked about the history difficulties here - when were fires on the Sands last a problem?

A - will look into this

3.2.2. Drivers and mobile phones - Hugh Gray asked if it was an offence to using a mobile phone while driving?

A

- this would probably be prosecuted as careless driving. She recommended that drivers at least fit some form of hands-free kit. Pete Lindsay commented that the government was reportedly considering making a specific offence to cover use of phones while driving.

3.3. Mr Christie

Started by noting the poor state of the presentation plate (due to its use as a gavel plate in years past) on the lectern presented by the RAF in the 60s to mark their Freedom of the Burgh. He drew it to the attention of the RAF at this year's march past and was told that their technical services would be able to fix it. He suggested they should be approached formally to do so.

He had also noticed that the Freedom scroll on display at the Freedom reception is not the original, but an undated copy. The University (Library?) hold an original or an image of the full dated document, and could reproduce it for £20.

3.4. Wilcon Homes

Gave a presentation on their revised plan for Craigtoun Road development. They said that though they had full consent for a normal estate they now wanted to go for a radical design with mews, boulevard, village green and terraced housing and a manorhouse-style block of flats, with the aim of providing a more focussed community than a typical modern isolated housing estate. Buildings are to be styled after the local vernacular. They intend to upgrade and maintain the trees bordering the scheme.

As part of their community involvement policy they like to keep the community involved, hence this presentation. They will be opening an information office on-site soon, opposite the end of

the Bogward Road. They will also be sending out information packs to nearby residents.

Various diagrams and plans were shown showing the area of the current application, the 'village green' and surrounds in context of the rest of the application.

In view of the strong recommendations of Planning Advice Note 47 no discussion was permitted by the Chair.

3.5. Winram Place Residents Association

Peter Rodgers spoke on behalf of a delegation about the John Knox Road development proposal.

Raised several questions about the development

Special Needs housing is mentioned on the plans - what sort of special needs - the plans shows the special needs facilities with stairs rather than, for instance, wheelchair ramps. As someone working professionally in Housing himself Mr Rogers expressed some surprise and asked "What sort of Special Needs?"

Expressed concern at the proximity of the main building to John Knox Road itself.

The height (3 storeys) on the steeply rising hillside, taken with the previous point, will overlook Winram Place.

Noticed that 'change of use' was mentioned on one of the plans, but it was not clear for what, again; they would like more information.

Concerned at the proximity to the site of the proposed Amenity and Recycling Centre.

Expressed some concern at the reports in the press that there was some problem with the CA site and asked for clarification.

Sheila Hill could not reply on the Civic Amenity Site as a report on the matter is not coming before Regulation Committee until August. She did say that she had raised most of the points mentioned with Planning Service, though not the change of use - she too now wondered what that was for. The other concerns had been passed to the developer who was to provide more detailed information.

4. Fife Councillors

4.1. Frances Melville

4.1.1. More trouble at the West Sands - on Friday 30th over 100 Madras College pupils gathered on the West Sands Road. Police, responding to calls from the public moved them on, but only further out along the West Sands. The next morning £1200 damage was discovered in the area, with picnic tables, information boards and lifebelts destroyed. Bottles and broken glass littered the area. As this was an unofficial, unapproved gathering the Fife Council itself will have to meet the cost - there is no-one to recharge.

She has asked for a report on the cost of all the damage on the West Sands this year.

4.2. Jane Hunter-Blair

4.2.1. Greyfriars Garden - she now has addresses for the owners (Edinburgh) and their solicitor (Aberdeen) who have made it clear that they want a 'development' price for the plot. Indeed a café owner has recently approached Planning Service with preliminary proposals for the location. She passed the owner's contact details on to the Millennium committee.

Hugh Gray proposed that Community Council take unilateral action and pay £500 to have the garden cleared. Perhaps the CGF could be approached. There was a long debate as to whether the owners could be recharged or forced to undertake the work themselves, but the plot is not a health hazard so enforcement powers are limited to the point of non-existent.

Discussion went to a vote:

Action as proposed by Hugh Gray, 2nd Dennis Macdonald

For 3, Against 6, Abst 5.

Frank Riddell then raised yet again, the possibility of leasing the garden. There was some support for investigating this option provided no more than a token amount be paid.

Frank Riddell to investigate leasing

4.2.2. Mayday Holiday - set for the 1st Monday in May by Local Services Committee.

4.2.3. JP Courtroom

- conversion work for the Red Cross facility (equipment storage etc) will start soon. Though

the Preservation Trust has been asked if they would like the JP bench they have not yet replied.

4.2.4. Shore Bridge

- meeting with Roads Service and Ken Crichton to look again at the possibility of a second pavement. If one were installed on the upstream (hospital) side of the bridge the other would have to be narrowed. Neither would be wide enough for a buggy. Roads now to look at installing more islands on either side of the bridge to make crossing easier for pedestrians.

4.2.5. Zebras

- there will be a meeting with Alan Bryan, Head of Roads Service, 12th July, Murdo Macdonald to attend.

4.2.6. North Street Crossing - installation delayed by the discovery of uncharted utilities. Paving has been completed, but the lights will not now be installed until after the Open.

4.2.7. Southgait development - consideration of the plans has been held over due to concerns about parking.

4.2.8. French Market

- She has received representations from the Merchants Association against the idea.

4.2.9. Church Square benches - Cynthia Tero raised the fact that these were still not fixed, with the Open being only 2 weeks away; it was promised they would be ready for the Open. Rather more to the point, people of St Andrews would like to have the use of them never mind the Open.

4.3. Sheila Hill

nothing to raise

4.4. Jane Ann Liston.

4.4.1. French Market

- [this proposal for a group of French traders to set up a street market came to Community Council in Feb 6.3.6. It was passed to Fife Council as the local authority]

As a Chair of the Street Fairs committee she reported on the lack of response by the Merchants' Association to the committee on this subject. The committee has contacted other towns that have hosted such fairs and received universally positive responses noting the general increase of local trade during the market and the educational possibilities for children - encouraging school pupils to visit the market to speak French for example.

Tony Fusaro, for the Merchants Association put their position. They have no objection in principle to some sort of market, he said, but questioned the idea of a French market, preferring a Scottish market. He accused Fife Council of supporting the French Market because it would take no work on their behalf as a third party would come in and organise it all. With the huge bureaucracy, he said, of the council he saw no reason why they should not organise a Scottish market. He was against outsiders coming in.

In the following debate no one spoke against the principle of a market and several specifically for the French market.

Cynthia Tero thought tourists would be looking for a Scottish market, a view shared by Hugh Gray and Dennis Macdonald. John Landon was against the French on principle.

On the other hand Joe Peterson welcomed the idea for the people of the town, and expressed surprise that the Merchants should be against something that would bring people into the town. Murdo Macdonald suggested that if the Merchants want a street market of their own they should organise it rather than block this proposal, a view backed by Archie Strachan and Frank Riddell. Pete Lindsay felt that a Scottish market would not be a particular attraction for local people, surrounded by Scotland, whereas a French one would be. Donald Macgregor welcomed the educational possibilities (and any proposal that put Joe Peterson and Frank Riddell on the same side). Chris Lesurf suggested that for those unable to travel abroad this would be a chance to see something of overseas.

From the chair Murdo Macdonald summed up by suggesting the French Market should go ahead, so that anyone wanting to organise a Scottish version could see how it was done.

5. Matters arising from previous meetings

5.1. Delegated powers required by committees

(carried over from June Appendix A, GP committee report)

A brief discussion clarified that committees would only need approach the full council for permission to act in its name on new business and matters of policy. Where there is general approval for a matter, eg the year's bandstand concerts, it is unnecessary to seek specific approval for each and every band contacted. Sample copies of letters should be filed with the Secretary for records.

5.2. Canongate - Roads Service Response

Ian Goudie felt the letter from Roads Service did not address the concerns raised by council and noted that their 'consultation' meeting his wife had attended had only seven people present, so could hardly be taken as representative itself.

5.3. Garden Waste Collections

Members laid much emphasis on the necessity of good publicity for the trial to succeed. Secretary assured them that C&WM were already aware of this and agreed. Members laid more emphasis on publicity. Secretary read out the relevant section of the letter from C&WM. Members subsided on that issue.

Chris Lesurf was worried that the presence of a garden waste collection/skip/Civic Amenity Centre might be seen as removing the need for he special uplift collections, to the disadvantage of those unable to drive to the site. Cllr Liston said that part of the reason for arranging the trial of the collection points was to reduce the special collection load, one of the largest in Fife. A large proportion of the special uplift load is garden waste, hence the occasional comments from the centre regarding charging for collection, which for garden waste the council has the right to do.

5.4. Possible Amenity Site?

Ian Goudie said that the civic amenity site should go on the originally proposed site behind Safeways, where it is zoned in the Local Plan.

5.5. Gumley Golf match

(June 6.6.) Neither Murdo Macdonald nor Joe Peterson can make it. Apologies have been passed to the appropriate parties in Fife Council.

5.6. ASCC AGM

(June 6.2.) Frank Riddell attended. He spoke to the meeting, non-controversially he hoped, regarding the generalities of Planning in relation to the Kingask development.

He found the tone of the AGM gloomy, picking up a feeling that the days of Community Councils might be numbered. The impression he got from COSLA and other local authority delegates was that Community Councils are often seen as reactive and negative where they should be active and should work positively within and for their communities like, he felt, St Andrews does.

5.7. Healthcare in St Andrews

(June 6.3.) Joe Peterson reported on the meeting held in the Burgh Chambers. It took the form of an introduction by Dr Bell, followed by discussion groups. Lots came up but those attending who had been at the January meeting commented that this was very much a rerun. Joe was not too worried about that, feeling that at least people were still talking even if they were not making a lot of progress just at the moment.

Some points:

- Part of the problem of overcrowding at the health centre was reported to be the lack of independent provision for the 6,000 students of the university or for the schools.
- There was no discussion of a location for the new hospital etc.
- More meetings are planned for the autumn.

Ian Goudie commented that there seemed to be no progress since a similar meeting in December 93.

Chris Lesurf raised the matter of the St Andrews doctors' comments in the current Citizen (31/6/00). She felt that raising the questions publicly for discussion was a more positive move than just talking. She urged that Community Council should write in support of them, in which she was backed by Archie Strachan. Ian Goudie warned that a letter would have to be carefully written, supporting the call for the new hospital but not the doctors' preference for a green field site - the Community Council's policy is for expansion of the present location into the St Leonard's Fields.

Frank Riddell to draft a letter with Health Education & Welfare Cttee

Cllr Jane Ann Liston commented that Cathy Adamson (Director of Planning & Co-ordination, Fife Primary Healthcare NHS Trust) had admitted that the St Leonards Fields site was big enough for the proposed hospital. Cllr Liston wondered if the arrival of car parking charges for hospitals would make agreenfield site, which had to be driven to, less attractive to the staff currently favouring one.

5.8. Advertising boards

(June 9.1) Cynthia Tero reported that an elderly person known to her had recently fallen over an advertising board in the street.

Cllr Jane Hunter-Blair replied that a Fife-wide policy on these was soon to be brought forward.

5.9. RAF Freedom March

(June 6.5.) In the end only Frank Riddell had been able to attend. He reported that it was a splendid parade and that he had congratulated the CO RAF Leuchars on behalf of the Council at the subsequent reception.

5.10. Common Good Fund - Greyfriars Garden

(June 4.4.3.) It turns out that while Fife Council is limited by the District Valuer's report in how much it could spend, it appears that this limitation does not apply to Community Councils. However no award was made because of concerns over details of upkeep and because there was no willing seller. For an award to be made the committee will need much more detail of plans and maintenance arrangements. Ken Fraser reported that the letter from Law & Admin has asked for these.

5.11. Bandstand Concert Cover

(June 6.1.) Bandstand volunteers still needed for 30 July, 6 & 13 August.

6. New Business

6.1. Reception for Loches Footballers

Murdo Macdonald suggested that arrangements be made at the Cosmos Centre. Frank Riddell proposed that up to £100 contribution be found from the 200 Club. Archie Strachan, 200 Club Administrator indicated that this would be possible.

Meeting Agreed

6.3. Review of Polling Places

Suggestions - Boys' Brigade Hall and the Community Centre at Lamberton Place.

Pete Lindsay to write

7. Reports from Officers

7.1. Chair

7.1.1. Sustrans Four Capitals Cycle Ride - Received Sustrans Cyclists - thanks to Cathy Kirkcaldy and Cosmos for the tea and sandwiches, much appreciated by the cyclists.

7.1.2. Attended Opening of the St Andrews Aquarium

Pete Lindsay noted the assistance of the Aquarium over the bandstand electrical problem, reported in the papers recently.

7.2. Treasurer

7.2.1. Expenses - Requested permission to pay car mileage expenses at a rate of 21p/mile.

Meeting agreed.

7.3. Secretary

7.3.3. Report on political decision-making in Fife Council - invitation to comment.

General Purposes to consider

7.3.4. Meeting on Hospital car parking charges - no one free to go on the proposed date.

7.3.5. Graveyard database - suggest Preservation Trust more appropriate.

Pete Lindsay to write

8. Reports from Committees

8.4. Millennium

E1 - Should we have a group photo taken ourselves?

Ken Fraser to write another letter to the Citizen. If there is no response the idea of Millennium Photos to be dropped.

Helen Lawrie proposed that Community Council should lead by example by arranging its own photo. On an informal show of hands this was agreed 6-0.

Helen Lawrie to organise photographer

E2 - Fundraising auction for the Greyfriars garden?

appears to have been overtaken by events and will not be pursued.

8.5. Planning

A report was circulated with a copy of the letter submitted on John Knox Road.

1. John Knox Road.

Joe Peterson expressed grave concern at the questioning of the Special Needs housing in the letter of objection and in the Winram Place residents presentation earlier. He feared that this was a NIMBY reaction and showed prejudice against Special Needs clients.

Ian Goudie noted that Community Council policy is against development at this site, and indeed against inclusion of this site as an area zoned for development. The letter itself points out various areas where the plans submitted are unclear, requesting more information. Chris Lesurf and Murdo Macdonald both took the point of the concerns expressed over the lack of detail on Special Needs accommodation to be concern that there were in fact no firm plans to cater for any Special Needs and that the developer might about turn once permission was granted and change to general residential accommodation.

Dennis Macdonald helpfully added that he had heard a rumour that the 'special needs' would be a drying-out centre.

3. Development at Craigtoun Rd - by Wilcon - Frank Riddell commented that the current application is only for a subsection of the site. Community Council policy is against piecemeal development, but otherwise recognises it a suitable for development. The current proposals were contrary to several provisions of the outline consent and a letter of objection and comment would be sent.

5. Development at the Hungry Horse by Guardbridge - we had previously commented on this but not formally objected.

8.6. Publicity

8.6.1. Bandstand concert picture posters - Archie Strachan thanked Frank Riddell for the bandstand posters with the picture and asked if anyone had places to put the one or two spares he had left they contact him after the meeting.

8.6.3. Purchase of A boards - none against.

8.6.4. A Newsletter for circulation around town - some discussion about order of events, whether costs and thus feasibility be established before committees be asked to produce a report. Pete Lindsay said he could use any articles in Event even if the proposed newsletter did not go ahead.

Report on costs etc to come to September meeting for approval or otherwise.

8.7. Recreation

8.7.1. Noted Ken Crichton ill - sympathy generally expressed by the meeting.

8.7.2. Odd One Out competition - run by Dennis Macdonald, involving over 40 shops this year.

8.7.3. Garden Competition - Judging for the annual competition will be in August.

9. AOCB

Meeting noted with regret the death of Mr Derek Thompson, Chair of Strathkinness CC.

Murdo Macdonald to write