

Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

Provisional Minutes –1st September 2014

For Approval

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1. Attendance

Community Councillors

Henry Paul, Marysia Denyer, Kyffin Roberts, Izzy Corbin, Judith Harding, Ken Crichton, Patrick Marks, Penny Uprichard, Howard Greenwell, Harry Stewart, Ronnie Murphy, Alice Alexander, Bernadette Cassidy, Ken Fraser, Ian Goudie

Students' Association Representatives

Zara Evans, Pat Mathewson

Co-Opted

Lindsey Adam

Fife Councillors

Dorothea Morrison, Frances Melville, Brian Thomson

Apologies

Callum Corbin, Tom Waterton-Smith, Niall Scott, Robert MacLachlan, Keith McCartney

2. Minutes of Meeting – 9th June

The minutes were accepted as a correct record

3. Presentations

3.1. None

4. Fife Councillors

4.1. Frances Melville

4.1.1. West Sands Management

Cllr Melville briefly commented that it would take time for the management plan of the West Sands to demonstrate its effectiveness.

4.1.2. Scottish Station Fund

Cllr Melville reported that after discussions about the possible extension of car parking at Leucahrs it had been agreed that Fife Council would manage any extension to the parking. Fife Council has now put in a bid to the Scottish Station Fund in the hope that it will be awarded funds to build the additional car parking in front of the station.

4.1.3. Domestic & Commercial Waste Bin Problems

Cllr Melville commented on ongoing problems with domestic and commercial waste bins in the town centre. Problems included where in some streets such as College Street could the bins be put. Officers were looking at the problem. Mr Greenwell commented that he was pleased to see that a lot of commercial bin emptying was taking place before shops opened. However he thought that there were still a lot of commercial bins sitting out in parking spaces all day after being emptied.

4.1.4. Parking Area by Tennis Court

Cllr Melville reminded the meeting that this car park at the end of the tennis courts had been created as a temporary measure when the bus station was being refurbished and had been used as a car park ever since and she acknowledged its usefulness. However some car drivers were leaving their cars for lengthy periods in the parking area, which hadn't been planned for long stay parking. There will be a discussion at the next locality meeting though there was some uncertainty about which Fife Council department ran the parking area. It was hoped that this could be resolved so that the parking could be more effectively managed.

4.1.5. Empty Lockups

Mr Stewart made the meeting aware that there were 304 lockups in St Andrews owned by Fife Council and rented for use by householders in Council rented properties. He said that 122 were currently empty and he thought that there didn't seem to be the demand for them. He added that many were in a poor state of repair. He wondered what the Council policy was in relation to these lockups? Cllr Morrison agreed to find out Fife Council's policy.

4.2. Brian Thomson

4.2.1. Affordable Housing @ Abbey Park

Cllr Thomson reported that the affordable housing at Abbey Park has started to be built with 22 two bed roomed homes and 7 three bed roomed homes will be built by Robertson Homes for Fife Council and will be for rent with no right to buy. He thought they should be completed in a year's time. Miss Uprichard while acknowledging the positive aspect of the development reminded the meeting that in a scheme where housing being built on the site was approaching 500 there should be 30% affordable. Cllr Thomson acknowledged that developers could find ways around such a commitment and this included classifying some of their privately purchased development as special needs housing thus reducing their responsibility to build more affordable for rent. Cllr Thomson added that the Council would continue to pursue the issue of truly affordable housing with developers as a long-term policy. Mr Greenwell thought that there should have been over 50 affordable properties built. Mr Greenwell confirmed that the affordable rented housing would be behind Adamson Court.

4.2.2. Golf Museum Café Development

Cllr Thomson reported that the fencing concealing the development of the new café at the Golf Museum had been improved following concerns being raised with the R&A.

4.2.3. Abandoned Van

Cllr Thomson reported on a van apparently abandoned in the Petheram Bridge Car Park by the owner of the shop the Disc Depot situated by the West Port. The van now had plants growing out of it. Fife Council had contacted the owners to make them aware that they were impeding maintenance of the car park as a way to get it moved by the owner. Fife Council Environmental Health Officials might be able to move it on health grounds.

4.2.4. Police Station fence

Mrs Alexander asked if there was any news on possible work to get the fence behind the Police Station fixed. Cllr Thomson acknowledged that he'd raised the matter with officials but hadn't had a response to date.

4.2.5. Hope Park Roundabout Fencing

Mrs Alexander also asked about the fencing around the Hope Park roundabout, which was to be extended to reduce the tendency of pedestrians to take shortcuts. She was informed that the fencing had been erected but it wasn't completely stopping such behaviour.

4.3. Keith McCartney

4.3.1. Lade Braes

Cllr McCartney reported that the work on restoring the metalwork has been completed. The metalwork on Plash Mill Bridge, Hallowhill Bridge and on the 'gates' at Plash Mill, Lawmill Pond and on the three paths leading from Lawmill Gardens to the Lade Braes was sanded down and undercoated before the final coat of paint was applied which should ensure the metalwork is protected for years to come.

4.3.2. Bike Tagging

Cllr McCartney reported that over the summer months 29 bikes were tagged and removed.

4.3.3. Hope Park Roundabout

Cllr McCartney reported that the extensions have now been added to the barriers at the end of Double Dykes Road and on the corner by The Blue Stane which will hopefully encourage pedestrians to use the pedestrian crossings rather than risking crossing over the roundabout.

4.3.4. Kinburn Terrace

Cllr McCartney reported that the footpath has been reinstated.

4.3.5. Melville Road

Cllr McCartney reported that the 20mph sign on the south side of the road at its junction with Craigtoun Road was knocked over. This was reported and remedial action taken.

4.3.6. Market Street

Cllr McCartney reported that – a number of branches on the two trees outside Subway were tied back against their trunks to give space for a fairground ride at the Lammis Market and the metal grill at the base of the easternmost tree was damaged. This was reported to the appropriate officer and it was also arranged for the ties to be removed and the damaged branches pruned back.

4.3.7. Graffiti

Cllr McCartney reported that graffiti has been reported for removal at the following locations:

Langlands Road – bus stop by Boys Brigade Hall.

Kinnessburn Road – metal junction box by footbridge leading to Queen's Terrace and yellow grit bin at north side of footbridge.

Pipeland Road – bus stop by park and skateboard ramps in park.

4.4. Dorothea Morrison

4.4.1. Victoria Café Sign

The issue about the sign on the Victoria Café is still in progress mainly because of a breakdown in communication with the company, which is now resolved. Lyall Smith the Fife Council official dealing with the matter will hopefully have a chance to progress the issue.

4.4.2. Town Hall Toilet Signs

The signs making the public aware of the availability of public toilets at the Town Hall have now gone up.

4.4.3. Gulls and Rubbish

Cllr Morrison gave an update on the problem with gulls and their habit of raiding bins and black bags left out for collection in the town centre mostly. Cllr Morrison acknowledged that there was no easy solution. Part of the problem was with bins being collected at the wrong time and the Public Protection Team was trying to encourage people not to feed the gulls. The Council she added had no money to spend on large scale preventative measures. The Council she reminded the meeting had given money to the East Enders to progress some preventative measures and this would be reviewed at a forthcoming Local Area Committee meeting.

4.4.4. Camper Vans @ West Sands

Cllr Morrison reported a possible way to manage the presence of camper vans overnight at the West Sands. This issue had been discussed at the West Sands Liaison Group and Alison Irvine Access Officer had contributed her thoughts on managing the issue. She thought that management rules, which applied to Fife Council parks, could be applied to the West Sands area. The Links Trust had suggested the possibility of enacting a bye-law to manage the problem as well, but Cllr Morrison received legal advice from Fife Council lawyers to say that such a law would take time to get set up and it would be better at present to try the use of the management rules to see if that was effective. Mr Crichton was concerned that the East Sands and Kingsbarns beaches might see the problem from overnight caravaners if it was eliminated at the West Sands. Cllr Morrison in reply said that it might be best to see what happened at the West Sands, but was aware of other affected areas in St Andrews citing the harbour area as another locality where the mobile homes parked. Mr Marks mentioned another problem of bikers camping at the far end of the West Sands where they were undoubtedly going to cause some damage to the environment as well as using the area for toilet purposes. He wondered about ways to dissuade unofficial camping such as by the use of the police when there were no rangers or other staff to speak to them. Cllr Morrison said that while the police patrolled the area it was difficult for them to get folk to move on due to their lack of legal backing to force a move. She reiterated the need for there to be management rules to at least give some clear notice to potential campers or mobile homes that they shouldn't stay over night. Mr Greenwell asked about the enforcement of the management plan rules and asked if it was the police who would be going around the campers to tell them about the rules? Cllr Morrison replied that FCCT staff would be involved in trying to enforce the rules putting leaflets about the management rules on windscreens where appropriate, but if someone arrived at night the police had agreed to speak to them. Mr Greenwell thought that once leaflets were being issued it might begin to filter through to others that the idea of camping or parking overnight was not being encouraged.

4.4.5. Other West Sands Issues

Cllr Morrison also reported on a response to negative comments on a local website on the management of the West Sands such as the decision to leave seaweed on the beach. Cllr Morrison thought that in contrast to the criticisms the management of the West Sands had been a success story with dune restoration working well and the more recent grazing regime to help in restoration of the grass at the northern end. She suggested that the CC might be interested to have a presentation on the work, which had been done to improve the West Sands environmentally and for public use and had mentioned the idea to Robbie Blyth of FCCT.

4.4.6. HMO Overprovision

Cllr Morrison reported that she had been at a meeting discussing the issue of HMOs in St Andrews and the level of provision. She acknowledged that for certain parts of St Andrews there was an overprovision, but it was how to go about tackling the issue was the big question.

She had suggested that it might be something the Housing Commission could be asked to look at, as there were representatives from all interested parties on it.

4.4.7. Nail Lounge Sign

Miss Uprichard asked whether there might be a way to deal with the large sign on the sign of the building where the Nail Lounge was located. It had been there for a considerable length of time and she disliked it intensely. She couldn't understand how it couldn't be dealt with in a similar way to the Victoria Café sign. Cllr Morrison also confirmed her dislike of the sign but had not received any positive indication of support from Fife Council about the potential of forcing its removal legally. It would have to be considered by the Procurator Fiscal and even then it might not be progressed if he felt it wasn't worth pursuing. Mrs Adam thought that it was a shame that the Council wasn't prepared to take action on the sign at the Nail Lounge, as it would potentially have a knock on effect to other businesses and the signs they might be tempted to put up if they knew about the Council's reluctance to take action. Cllr Morrison felt that there was still merit in monitoring such activities and she was encouraged by the pursuit of the Victoria café over its controversial signage.

4.4.8. Bell Street – Parking Issues

Miss Uprichard observed that most of Bell Street appears to be marked "Loading only" with the loss of about ten parking spaces. She wondered what was going on? Mr Greenwell replied that some of the area is marked "Site loading only" due to the development of the new shops/houses on the street. He explained that the developer had paid Fife Council a commuted sum to use a number of parking spaces for the duration of the development. Miss Uprichard commented that the end of Bell Street nearer South Street was in fact marked "Loading Only". Mrs Adam added that the area thus marked was to allow the shops in the street to get their commercial deliveries. Also in order to allow customers to legitimately load or unload the merchants had managed to come to an agreement with traffic wardens to allow a little extra time for such an exercise.

4.4.9. Harbours, Flood and Coast Report in relation to Pipeland

Miss Uprichard had read this report on the school website which talked both about parking proposals and possible flooding issues. Miss Uprichard wondered about Councillors awareness of the report and whether this would require further consultation with the new information now available? Cllr Morrison didn't know if there would be a further consultation but she knew that the report was the reason why the Pipeland application had been delayed. Cllr Morrison said that officials had acknowledged that there were a lot of questions to be answered so didn't think the application would be ready for consideration until possibly November. Cllr Melville concurred on the possible timescale due to officials needing answers to questions raised by the report. Mr Greenwell commented that he thought that there needed to be a three week consultation if new information appeared on the website? Cllr Melville agreed to check with Alistair Hamilton.

4.4.10. Whyte –Melville Fountain

Mrs Adam asked when the fountain would be operational? Cllr Morrison acknowledged that she'd hoped to have some news. An application had been made to the Pilgrim Trust to help cover any outstanding costs. Cllr Thomson added that he thought that there might also be more problems with the infra structure than had been realised. Cllr Morrison also suggested that the delay was technical not due to any difficulties in obtaining funding.

5. Planning Committee

5.1.1 Planning Committee Report

Mr Greenwell reported that the Planning Committee had had 3 or 4 fairly short meetings over the summer, as there had been few planning applications. There had been about 8 objections issued over the past 2 months. These included signage at Tesco, which the firm has agreed to change, the full planning application for Madras Pipeland, two houses at Balone in Greenbelt

and illuminated signage for Barclays Bank against the design guidelines. Cromar's various tables, A Boards etc continue to be an issue as there has been a distinct creep of various items of their street furniture across the pavement and this now includes an attempt to have an awning. Two other objections related to plans for installation of a flat roofed dormer in the Bell Street redevelopment and to the wind turbines of the proposed West Sands Visitor Centre as well as a lack of provision for parking for visitors. Most recently the CC Planning Committee had put in an objection to the proposed new restaurant in Greyfriars Garden where there used to be a coffee shop on a number of grounds.

Mr Greenwell also commented upon the letter, which he'd circulated to CC members commenting upon the report from Harbours, Coasts and Floods to be sent to the Fife Councillors asking that all the questions from that report be answered before the application proceeded. Mr Greenwell asked CC if the Planning Committee could continue to circulate the letter with a view to sending it if approved by CC members.

Dr Goudie didn't object to the letter but questioned whether the implications of flooding had been considered in the context of the stability of the proposed terracing behind Jamie Anderson Place. He felt that anyone living next to the terracing should be given firm assurance about its safety, though with more frequent meteorological extremes he still had concerns that this was still a potential area of risk. Mr Greenwell thought that the terracing would be seven metres in height above Jamie Anderson Place.

5.1.2. Planning Concerns

Miss Uprichard mentioned that before the recent NE Planning Meeting about the Fifeplan the CC Planning Committee had circulated a letter to all Councillors about various things of concern such as the fact that officials often put things forward for approval which didn't accord with the Development Plan which is followed unless some material considerations dictate otherwise. She added that virtually everything in St Andrews was recommended for approval. She cited the application to build 10 Equestrian Lodges at Brownhills, which had been continued at the recent NEFAC meeting, but she was concerned about the fact that a major policy relating to development in Greenbelt was not clearly quoted in the report to Councillors. This policy stated that, "development will only be supported where it will result in an overall enhancement of the landscape and the environment quality and character". She said that this was not quoted and the Countryside Policy was not clearly mentioned either and was only referred to as E15. She was very concerned about the planning rules and asked Councillors if they could look into this with the Planning Department.

5.1.3. The Golf Museum Development

Mr Greenwell reported on contact with Ken Duncan of Fife Council over the summer and he'd given Mr Greenwell a copy of the terms and conditions in relation to the new lease of the ground on which the Golf Museum and its new café is located. The Ground rent will be raised from £590 p.a. to £10000 p.a. a much fairer commercial rate with a five yearly review and the rate could be raised by market value or RPI whichever is higher. Other new conditions include the ability to sublet the running of the café, something previously not in the terms and conditions. A license to serve alcohol, which was previously not permitted, will now be possible, but they will have to apply for this like other businesses.

6. Matters Arising

6.1. Defibrillators

Mr Paul reported on the progress of the installation of the defibrillators being promoted by Dr Hamish Tait. He reported that so far none had been fitted or approved. One had been planned for the front of the library and the CC were told it would require a planning application which was completed and paid for by the CC. Fife Council then refused the application because the library was a listed building. Fife Council had then suggested that it could be stuck on a pole in front of the building but Mr Paul questioned the wisdom of that suggestion. A couple of others have been set up, one on the Bruce Embankment, the second on a university building at

Woodburn Place but it has not been connected as no one will take ownership of it. He reminded the meeting that these devices required regular checking to ensure they were functioning and hadn't become faulty or been vandalised. Other locations being looked at are North Street and on the Spar in Tom Morris Drive. There is one at Craigtoun Park as well. Mr Stewart offered to put one on the Royal Mail Building on Largo Road but Mr Paul emphasised that the devices were best placed in areas with high footfall.

7. Committee Reports

7.1 Recreation Committee

Mrs Denyer reported on the activities of the Recreation Committee such as the Garden Awards which are to be awarded to winners in September and also the Coffee Morning on October 11th asking for assistance with both from Community Councillors. Mrs Denyer also reported on the Beautiful Fife Award and the Beautiful Britain Award. The results of the latter won't be known for another few weeks, but St Andrews picked up awards in the Beautiful Fife competition.

7.2. GP Meeting

Mr Greenwell reported that there had been a short meeting at the beginning of August, which had discussed the Welcome Pack aimed at new Councillors. This will be ready for Councillors elected at the CC elections in November. Mr Greenwell promised to have a pack available for inspection by the next meeting.

7.3. 200 Club

1. Mr Bill Sangster 2nd Mr Docherty 3rd David Paul

7.4. Health, Education and Welfare Committee

Nothing to report

7.5. Rail Sub Committee

No report

8. New Business

None

9.1. Chair

Mr Greenwell reported that he'd attended the welcome for the Japanese Exchange students with Mr Paul in the New Golf Club.

Mr Greenwell and Mr Paul had also attended the Drumhead WWI Service in Edinburgh in August with the weather being the only negative factor in the later stages. He reported that a lot of Community Councillors from Fife had also attended.

9.2. Treasurer

No major expenditure to report in the past couple of months. He appealed for members to bring him their expenses claims ASAP.

9.3 Secretary

9.3.1. Correspondence

Further details of correspondence available from the secretary as requested.

10. Any Other Competent Business

10.1. Bandstand Concerts

Mr Robert reported on the Bandstand Concerts held from July to late August. Six concerts had been scheduled, but one was cancelled due to the weather. He commented that the numbers of people listening were quite good but the collections weren't as good as the previous year. Mr Roberts thought that support from Community Councillors was again less than he would have hoped. He did however feel that he'd made a couple of possibly useful contacts for future years such as the university. He planned to have concerts next year. Mr Greenwell thanked Mr Roberts for running the concerts.