

# Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

## Provisional Minutes –1<sup>st</sup> October 2012

### For Approval

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## 1. Attendance

### Community Councillors

Patrick Marks, Ian Goudie, Ken Fraser, Henry Paul, Marysia Denyer, Penny Uprichard, Kyffin Roberts, Izzy Corbin, Andy Primmer, Carol Ashworth, Ken Crichton, Catherine Rowe, Bernadette Cassidy, Alice Alexander, Ronnie Murphy, Judith Harding, Howard Greenwell.

### Students' Association Representatives

Freddie Fforde, David Patterson

### Co-Opted

Lindsey Adam

### Fife Councillors

Keith McCartney, Dorothea Morrison, Brian Thomson

### Apologies

Frances Melville, Callum Corbin, Robert McLachlan

## 2. Minutes of Meeting

7.4.2. Mrs Denyer raised the point that the War Memorial is not judged as part of the Britain in Bloom competition. Mr Crichton confirmed that this was the case and the secretary acknowledged an error in the minutes as a misinterpretation of Mrs Corbin's comments. Mrs Corbin said that she had just commented that the War Memorial was getting judged but not by whom.

7.4.1. Mrs Corbin sought a correction in the wording about her report about the seagull problem, to make it clear that the seagulls had moved to another area of the town.

7.2. Miss Uprichard sought a change in the report of her comments, saying that she'd not actually expressed a concern about the number of student members of the Community Council but had sought clarification about how many student places there were on the Community Council.

## 3. Presentations

No presentations this month.

## **4. Fife Councillors**

### **4.1. Frances Melville – apologies on holiday**

### **4.2. Brian Thomson**

#### **4.2.1. Ladebraes Path Closure**

Cllr Thomson confirmed that the path closure related to works taking place in Newpark School by the contractors. A new surface water retention basin is being created in the former school grounds above the path. This will be connected to the Kinnessburn. Cllr Thomson acknowledged that the public should have been better informed of the planned work. He was critical of the inadequate notice and poor crowd control measures by the contractor. Cllr Thomson contacted Fife Council who got the contractor to put in proper fencing. He wasn't certain if correct procedures had been followed by the contractor. Part of the reason for the poor communication might be because the path wasn't an adopted route so not subject to the same procedures for notification.

#### **4.2.2. Old St Andrews Police Station**

Cllr Thomson has had discussions with Council officials about the future of the site, which may be sold on the open market. He got a promise from officials to undertake a feasibility study to determine the viability of conversion to affordable housing. Fife Police have already provisionally earmarked funds from the planned sale for refurbishment of the new St Andrews Police Station and other work across Fife.

#### **4.2.3. New Police Station**

Cllr Thomson had spoken to Sgt Brian Poole about the query about the lack of a sign about the opening hours of the new Police Station. Sgt Poole had informed Cllr Thomson that the station was open 24 hours so didn't require a sign and there was a buzzer to get attention should the door not be open.

#### **4.2.4. Westport Tavern Pergola**

Cllr Thomson reported that the work undertaken so far didn't comply with the plans submitted and Fife Council may take enforcement action. The owner has offered to remove some of the offending items. Listed building consent was apparently not required according to Council officers because the structure wasn't physically connected to the listed building.

#### **4.2.5. Kenly Windfarm Application**

Cllr Thomson reported that at the recent North East Fife planning meeting the Kenly Windfarm proposal had been refused.

#### **4.2.6. Private Student Accommodation – Wonderyears**

The application for private student lodgings at the Wonderyears site beside the East Sands Leisure Centre had also been refused at the planning meeting. This application had been recommended for approval by officials but turned down by councillors.

#### **4.2.7. "A" Boards**

Cllr Thomson reported that there had been some movement on this matter at the recent Area meeting. He reminded the meeting that the Council and Police could remove offending boards under existing legislation of 1984. Cllr Thomson

acknowledged that an official to whom they'd spoken had not been keen to have a zero tolerance approach. He preferred to just remove what were viewed as the worst offending boards, but Cllr Thomson thought that this was difficult to implement. A temporary compromise had been agreed with officials being allowed to follow their approach to "A" Boards for a month then reporting back. Cllr Thomson had been informed that since this had started three boards had been lifted in the town centre. Cllr Thomson still expressed his preference for a zero tolerance approach. Mrs Adam commented that the merchants were keen to have a clear "A" Boards policy, which was fair. The merchants felt that there should be an allowance for some boards where it was necessary due to shop location, but agreed that where a shop had good street frontage these might not be necessary. Cllr Thomson acknowledged the difficulty of the issue of shops down wynds and closes and sought the meetings view on this issue. Mrs Rowe thought that a compromise solution could be to have boards chained flat against shop fronts or walls, as this would stop the major obstruction they could be in narrow pavements. She also added that for shops up wynds there could be boards on walls by the wynd or close entrance. Mr fforde pointed out an additional complication for the idea of boards on walls. The Union café in North Street was not allowed to have any boards on its wall because of its listed building status so they have had to get an "A" Board otherwise the café would be unable to advertise its presence. Miss Uprichard added that there are no guidelines on the size of A-boards or the 'floor area' they cover.

Cllr Thomson also reminded the meeting about the plan to have the leader of Fife Council, Alex Rowley walk around the town centre blindfolded.

#### **4.2.8. Greyfriars Garden**

Work has started again to try and do a better job following the poor work done earlier in the summer leaving the pavements in a mess. Fife Council has written to local residents to apologise for the original mess created.

#### **4.2.9. Madras College**

Cllr Thomson announced that there would be a couple of meetings this week with the Parent Councils of Madras College and the feeder Primary Schools. These will be addressed by Cllrs Alex Rowley and Brian Poole giving an update about a preferred site/s. Cllr Thomson suggested that the Community Council could also have a meeting. Mr Roberts sought Community Council views on how to proceed in this matter. It was agreed that the Cllr Poole should be invited to the next Community Council meeting in November by which time much more information might be available for discussion.

#### **4.3.10. New Bins Policy and its effects**

Mrs Rowe expressed concern about the major changes in the way bins were to be collected, particularly with reference to the town centre. She was concerned that bins would be left out for much longer periods creating more problems for local people. She wondered what could be done about this matter. Cllr Thomson acknowledged that he wasn't certain what could be done, as it would depend upon the time bins were collected in any particular area. Cllr Thomson agreed to look into this matter for Mrs Rowe and report back.

### **4.3. Keith McCartney – report Appendix E**

#### **4.3.1. Disabled Parking bay – Queen's Gardens**

Mr Crichton asked Cllr McCartney if he'd ever questioned the legality of the disabled parking bay in Queen's Gardens? Cllr McCartney acknowledged that he hadn't as it had never been mentioned to him as an issue when he'd requested repainting. Mr

Crichton repeated his view that he doubted that the space was a legal disabled parking space. He added that such a space should have appropriate signage on the nearby wall or pavement. Cllr McCartney replied that Fife Council had it in their list for work in October. Mr Crichton suggested that if it wasn't legal anyone could park in it. Mr Roberts suggested that the matter needed clarification. Mr Crichton agreed. Mr Roberts said that he'd check out the situation with Fife Council.

#### **4.3.2. Lighting Problem – John Knox Road Area**

Mrs Denyer mentioned a light that wasn't functioning close to the John Knox Road roundabout. She wasn't certain if she should report it directly to Transportation or via a Councillor. Cllr McCartney advised that lights are code marked so anyone can phone up with the number and report the matter to the Transportation Dept.

### **4.4. Dorothea Morrison**

#### **4.4.1. Toilets at the Harbour**

Cllr Morrison reported that the Fife Council Policy Advisory Group would have a new look at toilet provision within Fife to determine what was needed and looking again at the Comfort Break Scheme. No toilets will close while the review is taking place. It is hoped that by Xmas a report will have been prepared to be taken to the Fife Council Executive.

#### **4.4.2. Westport Tavern**

Cllr Morrison reported that the Westport had applied for an extended licence to include its new outside covered area. Cllr Morrison and other neighbours had put in objections to this application and there is to be a meeting on this matter. She had also noted that the pergola was attached to the building when she paid a recent visit, despite the reassurance of officials that it wasn't so therefore hadn't needed listed building consent! She had also noted on a family visit to the Westport that quite a lot of users were smoking in this area despite officials thinking it was a no smoking area.

#### **4.4.4. "A" Boards**

Cllr Morrison acknowledged the frustration of Councillors that the issue was still unresolved and blamed the reluctance of officials to take effective action during the last administration as having allowed the issue to continue. She did however hope that now officials would take the matter more seriously and see that they could take significant decisions in a legal way.

#### **4.4.5. John Knox Road - flooding**

Cllr Morrison reported that she was trying to get some action on this problem, but changes in council officials had delayed responses and the new officer involved is now only getting on to the job. This may require some action from Fife Council regarding the field behind Cairnsden Gardens, where broken field drains may be a part of the problem.

#### **4.4.6. HMOs**

Mrs Rowe informed the meeting that she'd had a couple of phone calls about a couple of local HMOs with a mixture of concerns from their poor garden maintenance to problems with their bins in recent windy weather. Mrs Rowe blamed absentee landlords for much of the problem. Cllr Morrison acknowledged the responsibilities of the landlords to keep their properties, including gardens in good order. Mr Primmer added that concerns about HMOs should initially be directed to the Council who would have the landlord details so that they could be contacted if necessary.

#### **4.4.7. Lack of Police Presence in Town Centre**

Mrs Rowe had also had a contact from a local person about the lack of a police presence now in the town centre. Contact with the police can be made via the library staff who have to phone the new Police Station to ask for a police presence. Library staff are not happy about the arrangement.

Cllr Thomson explained that it would be impracticable to have a constant police presence at the library and explained that the library staff when they phoned could let the person speak to the duty policeman on the phone.

#### **4.4.8. Castle Sands**

Mr Greenwell asked about the date for the reopening of the Castle Sands, which had been promised earlier in the year but had been delayed for various reasons. Cllr Morrison replied that movement was taking place with an October date for work to start, albeit several months late. Hopefully there would be a completion of the work in the next few weeks.

### **5. Planning Committee**

#### **5.1. Proposed Central Planning Committee for Fife Council**

Mr Roberts commented upon this Fife Council proposal of centralising planning decisions, which go to committee in one major committee in Glenrothes. He added that both the Community Council Planning Committee and the Preservation Trust were opposed to this idea. Mr Roberts in conjunction with the Preservation Trust had circulated an email on the matter to all other existing Community Councils in Fife.

Cllr McCartney in reply said that all North East Fife Councillors were opposed to the idea and wanted to maintain the status quo. One possible acceptable option might be to divide Fife into three areas, which would increase the area covered by an East area committee. Cllr Morrison added that the 3-area option was a fall back if the status quo for North East Fife proved unacceptable for the rest of Fife committees, but she was hopeful that the status quo could be maintained as North East Fife generated 40 % of planning applications. Miss Uprichard expressed the view that a central Planning Committee would make work very difficult for councillors because of the large amount of paperwork they'd have to examine and often from outside their own area so would be undesirable. Cllr Morrison hoped that Mr Birrell would appreciate the arguments about trying to keep a local context in the planning committee structure, when local knowledge would benefit decision making.

#### **5.2. Golf Museum – Café Application**

An objection has been submitted by the Planning Committee for this application to have a café on top of the Golf Museum.

#### **5.3. Scores Hotel**

The Scores Hotel has submitted a "streetscape" development that seeks to create an outside seated area with disabled access to the hotel made easier. The hotel owners had a meeting with the Planning Committee, the Preservation Trust and other relevant parties in the past month to float this idea. Mr Greenwell thought that this appeared to be quite a responsible development. The hotel would take over maintenance of the green area from Fife Council. Mr Crichton queried whether this land might be Common Good and therefore liable to a charge for use to the Common Good Fund. Mr Greenwell acknowledged that this hadn't occurred to them as they had been informed that it was Fife Council land. Dr Goudie questioned the state of the proposal? Mr Greenwell replied that the meeting had been to sound out local views before any formal application might be made. Miss Uprichard cautioned about

speaking to developers in pre application consultations as she felt that these meetings could be abused by the developers if the Community Council had been seen to be consulted and might have a favourable view. Mr Roberts replied that this matter had been a subject of discussion at Planning Committee meetings and he recognised that there was a difference of opinion on the value of meetings with developers. He viewed such meetings as having some value in the overall process. Miss Uprichard suggested that at meetings with developers the developers should be asked to sign an agreement not to use the content of these meetings as an opportunity to make claims about the meetings and their outcome until after the submission of their plans, and the opportunity for the Planning Committee to scrutinise those plans and form an opinion.

#### **5.4. Meeting with McCarthy, Stone**

Mr Greenwell and Mr Roberts met with McCarthy, Stone who may take over part of the development between Greenside Place and St Nicholas House from Knightsbridge. The developers were seeking to understand the reasons for the objections received to their planning application. Mr Greenwell and Mr Roberts spelt out the local concerns and objections and McCarthy, Stone have agreed to revise their proposals and come back with fresh proposals.

#### **5.5. PAN for Memorial Hospital site**

The Community Council has received a notice from developers for a major change in plans for the site. Original proposals had been for affordable accommodation but the new proposals are for a Class 7 hotel, which is an apartment hotel with fully, managed student accommodation.

#### **5.6. Feddinch Appeal**

Miss Uprichard reported on the outcome of this appeal, which had been lodged on the 1<sup>st</sup> July. Responses should have been in by the 28<sup>th</sup> July but the Community council was able to get an extension until the 3<sup>rd</sup> August. Fife Council's submission wasn't in until 4<sup>th</sup> September. It was also noted that there was a lack of inclusion of the Planning Committee's points in the Fife Council submission from both the March 2012 and the 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2012 responses. The Reporter's acceptance of the late submission by Fife Council but not the Community Council response to Fife Council's late submission was met with dismay by Planning Committee members. A letter of complaint will be submitted following further discussion at the Planning Committee to the appropriate official in the Scottish Government.

### **6. Matters Arising**

#### **6.1. Martyrs Monument Update**

Mr Roberts reported that the work has started and is ongoing and on time to complete the required renovation of the monument.

#### **6.2. Craigtoun Park**

Mr Roberts reported that there is a small business development group within the Friends Group working on what will be operating next spring. He reported that the original train from the park had been discovered in reasonable order and the owner of the Cairnsmill Caravan Site had offered to get it back and working for the next summer season. It was also hoped to have the boats back on the water again with volunteers working to get them water tight over the winter. Fife Council has given the group access to work sheds in the park. Dr Goudie asked about the long time

organisation of Craigtoun and progress being made in this area. He reminded the meeting that Dr Sneddon had offered his expertise in this matter. Mr Roberts reported that local law firm Murray & Donald had offered a year's worth of legal advice pro bono. Mr Crichton raised the issue of the availability of safety equipment if the boats were operational again. Mr Roberts confirmed that safety equipment would be available.

#### **6.43. Botanic Gardens Update**

Mr Paul who is now a Deputy Chair of the Friends of the Botanic Gardens reported back. He reported that the University had put in a PAN for the site. There will be a public presentation eventually but it is unclear what exactly will be presented by the University.

#### **6.4. St Andrews Community Trust**

Mr Paul will report back in November after the Trust's next funding allocation meeting.

#### **6.5. Community Council Resignations/New Members**

Mr Roberts reported that Meg Platt one of the Community Council members who was a University of St Andrews student had decided to resign due to pressures in her new role on the Students Association. She did hope to still help occasionally with CC events. Mr Roberts then proceeded to discuss the need to fill the vacancy. He reminded the meeting that at the last meeting it had been agreed that the unsuccessful candidates would be offered the new vacancy in order of their place in the election. The place would therefore be offered to Mr Henry Cheape. Mr Cheape to be contacted by the Chair or the Secretary to confirm his continuing interest in becoming a Community Councillor. Dr Goudie suggested that a letter should be written to Meg thanking her for her exceptional contribution to the Community Council. This was agreed unanimously and the Chair will write a letter of thanks. Mrs Denyer will also write as Chair of the Recreation Committee to thank Meg.

#### **6.6. Standen Report**

See Appendix D – no comments made by members.

#### **6.7. Reports from Representatives**

None

#### **6.8. Any other matters arising**

None

### **7. Committee Reports**

#### **7.1 Recreation Committee**

Mrs Denyer had submitted a report by email to the Community Council members with details of all recent activities. The Coffee Morning on the 6<sup>th</sup> October is the next event to take place. She suggested that members should sell tickets in advance to friends/ family and had tickets available for taking away. Support for all the usual stalls would be appreciated. Mrs Denyer also reminded members about the Old Folks Christmas Party and requested volunteers. Copies of the minutes will be available on the Community council website.

#### **7.2. General Purposes**

The General Purposes Committee met on the 24<sup>th</sup> September and discussed a number of items as well as receiving reports from Committee Chairs. One major issue discussed was the consultation about the proposed Community Empowerment Bill, which seeks to identify ways to help communities in various ways to achieve more in their communities. The consultation which had taken place had to have replies by soon after the GP meeting and Mr Paul had co-ordinated responses from GP committee members.

The St Andrews Festival Funding request was also discussed. Ian Jones had written requesting assistance with funding part of the occasion, namely an open air Ceilidh and the 30<sup>th</sup> November. There was a request for a request for £1000 from the Festival Committee. Mr Roberts reminded the meeting that there was money in the Community Council Ceilidh Fund, which could meet this request. He sought comments from members. Discussion followed about the use of the money and the amount to be donated. There were suggestions for the donation to be of £1000 as well as suggestions for half that amount from members. Mr Roberts who had been on a steering committee for the Festival reported that the Festival was short of money so that even a £1000 would be viewed as a welcome donation.

A vote was taken on the two amounts suggested. Mr Fforde had suggested that half of the money in the account namely £600 could be donated this year, leaving a similar amount for a future Ceilidh. The original proposal from the GP Committee was for a donation as requested by the Festival of £1000. Members voted overwhelmingly in favour of the amended proposal of an award of £600. Mr Roberts will inform the Festival of this decision.

### **7.3. 200 Club**

#### **7.3.1. St Andrews in Bloom Committee –Request for grant**

Mr Roberts introduced this topic saying that this committee was in need of funding support. Ray Pead had written to the Community Council asking for funding assistance. He stated that to run the floral displays was costing over £10000 a year. He was asking if the 200 Club could give an annual donation of £500 for the next 5 years. Mrs Harding reminded the meeting that the usual level of awards from the 200 Club was never more than £200. Mr Pead had offered to try and increase the membership of the 200 Club if that might help with their request. Mrs Harding acknowledged that she didn't have a copy of the 200 Club Constitution and would like to check it before making a final decision about this request.

#### **7.3.2. 200 Club Winners**

1<sup>st</sup> M Harrison 2<sup>nd</sup> Mr Sproson 3<sup>rd</sup> Mr R Waterston

### **7.4. Health, Education and Welfare Committee**

#### **7.4.1. Victoria Hospital Questionnaire**

Mrs Corbin mentioned a questionnaire issued by the Victoria Hospital for users of the facilities. She suggested that members could go online and complete the questionnaire.

#### **7.4.2. Bereavement Listening Service**

A new service to support anyone experiencing bereavement is now available. Mrs Corbin had details available for anyone wishing to access the service.

#### **7.4.3. Adult Protection Literature**

Mrs Corbin had details available about Adult Protection concerns and how these concerns could be reported to the relevant authorities.

## **7.5. Rail sub Committee**

See report in agenda at Appendix C

## **8. New Business**

### **8.1. Community Empowerment Bill**

Already discussed under GP Meeting report – for information

### **8.2. Allotments in St Andrews – See Appendix B**

Mr Paul reported on slow progress due to Fife Council officials who while producing an excellent report on the potential allotments appear to have done nothing since then. Mr Peter Duncan had promised action a year ago but this appears to have stalled. Mr Paul has emailed the Councillors to try and get the matter resolved. Mr Paul reported how he'd encouraged people to put their names forward for allotments but when he'd tried to find out more about this list had been stymied by claims that he couldn't be given a list of potential users because of data protection issues.

### **8.3. St Andrews Festival**

Covered in the GP minutes report.

## **9. Reports from Office Bearers**

### **9.1. Chair**

Mr Roberts brought up the forthcoming Civic Reception, which it is planned to be held again in the Holy Trinity Church. This was used last year, but numbers have been an issue. The Burgh Chambers having been restricted to 60 meant that numbers of invites were similar, however there is room for up to 150 at Holy Trinity. The concern now is to invite enough local people to ensure a reasonable turn out. This year it is planned to invite all Community councillors and their spouses. Mr Roberts would also like other suggestions as to potential guests to invite. The date has also changed to the 16<sup>th</sup> November.

Mr Roberts also mentioned an item brought to his attention by Mr Murphy relating to a possible funding stream called BIDS in which non domestic rate payers came together to agree about improvement in their area, funded by a mandatory 3p in the £ increase in the business rates for the area. The money would be managed by a company set up specifically to ensure its expenditure on local projects identified as in need of funding to improve the area. An organisation like St Andrews in Bloom could benefit from this scheme. Mr Murphy had thought that this idea could be initiated by the Community Council and offered to help further the idea. Mrs Ashworth commented that the St Andrews Partnership had looked at this idea, but hadn't progressed it. Mrs Ashworth suggested talking to Patrick Loughlin about this matter. Mr Roberts said he'd contact Mr Loughlin to discuss what the Partnership view had been. Mr Crichton suggested mentioning the idea to Ray Pead of St Andrews in Bloom.

### **9.2. Treasurer**

#### **9.2.1. Treasurers Report**

Mr Paul had distributed two accounts, one being the year's accounts for the bandstand as well as the monthly CC account in which there is £4700. The Bandstand Account still has some £2200 so is funded for the coming year.

### **9.3 Secretary**

#### **9.3.1. Correspondence – see appendix A.**

Mr Marks briefly mentioned the correspondence received, noting that it had been a quiet month with more internal CC emails and less material received by mail.

## **10. Any Other Competent Business**

### **10.1. West Sands Incident**

Mrs Corbin reminded the meeting that she was on the West Sands Users Committee. She mentioned that there had been concern about a recent incident when a polo match had been taking place on the beach and a rider had ridden down the beach hitting his ball in a careless manner, a potential hazard to other beach users. Mrs Corbin when asked said that she was about to report the incident to Fife Councillors.

Mr Greenwell asked if she could check why the grass at the Outhead had been cut and then stacked in piles and burnt rather than taken away for composting. Mr Marks suggested asking Robbie Blyth about the matter. Mrs Corbin said she'd previously discussed this with Robbie Blyth who'd told her that leaving cut grass was not good for grassland management.