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Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

Minutes September 2001

approved

Chair Murdo Macdonald

0. Presentation

Group Captain Martin Routledge, Station Commander at RAF Leuchars (and from 1st October Air Officer (Scotland)), re-presented the repaired Burgh Chambers Lectern, now enhanced with a special knocking plate in the hope that this will preserve the dedication plate that had been damaged over the years.

1. Attendance

Community Councillors: Ken Crichton, Ken Fraser, Ian Goudie, John Landon, Chris Lesurf, Pete Lindsay, Dennis Macdonald, Murdo Macdonald, Donald Macgregor, Joe Peterson, Frank Riddell, Archie Strachan, Cynthia Tero.

Students' Association: Tom Plant (VP Representation), Jane McCulloch.

Co-opted: Bill Sangster.

Fife Councillors: Sheila Hill, Jane Ann Liston, Frances Melville.

Apologies: Lindsay Murray, Helen Lawrie.

2. Minutes of July 2001

July 4.2.6. Cynthia Tero's query on seat sponsorship referred to the Byre Theatre rather than park benches.

Corrected minutes accepted

3. Presentations

3.1. Strategic Planning

David Sneddon from Fife Council Central Area, heads the team responsible for the Fife Structure Plan. He gave an overview of the position of Structure Plans in the planning system, then turned to the Scottish Executive's consultation on the review of strategic planning. Points that he emphasised were of concern to Fife Council included the possibility of Fife losing its rôle for coherent strategic planning, with the possibility that north Fife may become part of a Dundee-based planning zone possibly leading to the fragmentation of Fife. It is unclear how public scrutiny of strategic planning would be implemented in the proposed system. Further, national policy would become more prescriptive in the new strategic planning system but is not subject to the degree of public review that the current structure plan system is.

Secretary Pete Lindsay read some passages from a recently-arrived letter on the subject from Menzies Campbell MP, who sees the proposals as akin to the 1970s attempt to split Fife between Tayside and Lothian Regions.

There followed a wide-ranging debate and further questions as to the possible effects of Scottish Executive's paper. Concern was expressed at the city-centric approach (especially if that city is Dundee) and the implied centralisation of authority. On the other hand some there are undeniable common interests with the other side of the Tay, such as medical links with Ninewells Hospital. It was also seen that there could be advantages to simplifying the planning system by removing a planning 'layer'. It was felt that the current proposals were too

vague to judge where the advantage of St Andrews lay in the matter.

On a show of hands it was decided to write saying that the proposals were too vague, as yet, to back any change.

Pete Lindsay to write

3.2. CCTV

Detective Constable Tom Coutts and Stuart Ward, force CCTV Liaison Officer, made an extensive presentation, including video (NB acted as it is illegal to use real CCTV recordings, for privacy reasons), on the advantages of CCTV. They listed as objectives of the system: reassurance of the public, prevention of crime, detection of crime, appropriate response. Overall to reduce the *fear* of crime. It is hoped the system be watching by next summer (2002).

They showed the proposed sites of cameras, and some alternative locations to increase cover at the West Port. In positioning the cameras an overlap of field of view important for tracking of a moving incident, following a group or individual. Locations may change later with experience of the effectiveness of the system in operation.

On privacy: It is illegal to view into private property hence the electronic privacy block (a blanking of the CCTV picture over windows, doors etc); however a senior police officer (the duty Inspector in the CCTV control room) can authorise switching off the block to follow an incident in progress. The monitoring code of practice is the strictest in the UK, they claim, in addition to the protections of human rights legislation, data protection legislation etc.

CCTV is not just a crime-orientated system. The ability to see what is going on makes the operators better able to target resources by calling an ambulance rather than waiting for a police officer to attend a reported incident. But it was emphasised that the system is not all-seeing. There are a limited number of operators watching some 70 cameras across Fife. They still need the public to call in to draw the operators' attention to problems in case they are watching somewhere else.

Questions and comments:

Tom Plant expressed misgivings about the control of the operators monitoring the cameras. Who will be considered as 'suspicious' and therefore watched. How open will the process of reviewing misuse be to public scrutiny?

In reply it was said there is a Scotland-wide standard for monitoring by which the system will be governed. Misuse of the cameras by an individual operator will be difficult as there are more than one screen showing the scene viewed. As well as the operators' camera control room screens there will be monitors relaying the view into police operations rooms. If inappropriate use were made of a camera a lot of people would see it, it could not be hidden. Further, operators will be carefully chosen and further trained in the legal responsibilities and constraints of their jobs.

The poor consultation with local interests on the location of the cameras was raised by Bill Sangster, both as chair of the Community Safety Panel and as Merchants' Association representative. He was particularly concerned that the planning application had come before any consultation. Murdo Macdonald reported that there had been some consultation now and he has been assured nothing is 'set in stone'. DC Coutts confirmed that a consultation process was now under way.

Ian Goudie was very unhappy with what he had heard. He was appalled by the lack of consultation. The picture presented in the 'sales talk' of a town centre living in fear of crime that CCTV is supposed to relieve was quite unfamiliar to him from his 15 years on community council. He wouldn't deny the possible benefits of CCTV, but wondered if they are worth the price.

In response to a question from Chris Lesurf about the storage and processing of the tapes which record all that the cameras see, it was explained these will be kept for 31 days then wiped and reused. If an incident is reported in a covered area a police officer can request permission to review the appropriate tapes. If material of relevant to the incident is found on a tape it is taken out of the system and sealed for court use.

Final question was whether cameras track such 'minor' crimes as illegal parking, littering etc? It was thought

unlikely unless a member of the public made a complaint and the tape became important in a court case.

3.3. Community Policing

Insp Pow attended to answer questions. These all focussed on parking problems.

3.3.1. Station Car Park

- Frank Riddell asked if there had been any progress on dangerous parking at the Doubledykes Road entrance to the Station Car Park. Cllr Frances Melville was able to tell him that the process to obtain a Road Traffic Order to allow parking controls and double yellow lines had been started. Ian Goudie added that traffic pressure on the area would be increased if the proposed use goes ahead of a disused tennis court at Kinburn Park for relief parking during Scottish Enterprise Fife's environmental improvement work on South Street.

3.3.2. Greyfriars School

- Frank Riddell also reported parking problems outside Greyfriars School at Abbey Walk, due to parents delivering/collecting kids from the school. Ken Crichton, who lives close by, backed his remarks.

Insp Pow agreed parents' inconsiderate parking by schools was a perennial problem but he would put some extra emphasis on this area in the near future.

3.3.3. St Mary's Place - The concerns over taxi waiting were aired again.

3.3.4. Bell Street

- Dennis Macdonald passed on a complaint about car parking in a designated lorry bay on Bell St. Deliveries to businesses in the area are impossible if the bay is blocked. He asked that traffic wardens move cars on more actively here. Murdo Macdonald, whose office overlooks the bay, confirmed wardens do move cars on, but it appeared to be an endless task for a limited number of wardens who have the rest of St Andrews to cover. Insp Pow suggested that if deliveries could be scheduled for particular times the wardens could target the problem more effectively.

3.4. Mr Christie

Commented on the effect of the Lammas Market on residents and businesses over the years, and how it had changed its nature since his youth. He was worried that citizens and shopkeepers had only been allowed access to their properties on foot this year, for the first time since he had occasion to lobby the Firemaster in the '40s over a similar problem, which was then resolved by a new layout of the rides and stalls. He also drew attention to the original Lammas charter of the 16th Century.

Fife Councillors

4.1. Frances Melville (West)

4.1.1. Kinkell Farm

- departure hearing on the 4-Wheel drive/quad bike/leisure development proposal will be on 6th September.

4.1.2. David Russell Hall redevelopment

- the quality of the design was widely held to be unacceptable and the university have withdrawn the plans for reconsideration.

4.1.3. Future of the Lammas Market

- Cllr Melville reported that the emergency services are extremely worried about access to the town centre during the fair and market. She invited town opinion on the future of the Lammas. A working party of Fife Councillors and members of relevant services will be set up to come up with recommendations for future location and conduct of the Lammas Market.

4.2. Sheila Hill (South)

4.2.1. Bus Services

- reported that problems have surfaced with the recent reorganisation of bus services by Stagecoach, particularly access to the Health Centre from some areas. Fife Council will be discussing this with Stagecoach.

4.4. Jane Ann Liston (South East)

4.4.1. Tourism Management Programme

- there will be a public meeting to inform/discuss tourism strategy on 27th September at the Eden Club House.

4.4.2. SEPA Waste Management Strategy consultation - encouraged community council to reply to this in view of its importance to the future of waste management in Fife. (see 7.4.)

4.4.3. Coastal Path

- the Countryside Ranger Service is arranging work to make a path available to avoid the area made difficult by the caravan site drainage. There is some possibility that money originally scheduled for a footpath to Kingask along the A917 as part of the Kingask section 75 agreement will be redirected to the coastal path. Cllr Frances Melville was able to explain that this was the result of a Kingask liaison committee decision, based on local opinion that a footpath along the road was unnecessary. Support for a roadside path was expressed by a number of community councillors and questions asked about how the current decision was reached. Archie Strachan drew attention to the overall state of the coastal path in the East Neuk, noting that sections in other parts of Fife were in much better condition. Cllr Liston said this was because the St Andrews-Craik section of the path had not yet been adopted by Fife Council and so was not maintained.

4.4.4. Improvements to Town Hall

- will be meeting with Paul Marshall on Friday 7th to discuss possible changes to the JP court room and other matters. Pete Lindsay to attend and raise some community council points discussed over the last few months.

4.4.5. Pipeland Park & Skateboard Ramp

- she will soon be meeting Tricia Ryan of Community Services to discuss what the next steps will be.

Archie Strachan raised a number of problems with the state of the park for her to bring up. The stone chips are spreading into the rubber safety tiles under the children's play equipment, there is a lot of rubbish and broken bottles in the park, and the state of the equipment is poor, especially the older pieces.

4.4.6. Common Good Fund

- there has been a slight change to the decision making procedure. In the event that the local St Andrews members and community council representatives cannot agree on an application the decision will now go to a sub-committee of the East Area Local Services committee.

4.4.7. Petheram Bridge

- there is money available from the Scottish Executive for improvement to cycle and pedestrian safety. It has been suggested that this could be used to help restore a Petheram Bridge.

While some support was expressed for the idea, Ian Goudie warned against cycling and pedestrian money being used as a 'slush fund' to cover Fife Council's responsibilities to restore Petheram Bridge and other responsibilities they should meet directly. If there are funds available there should be proper consultation over its use.

4.4.8. St Leonards Fields - The report at the weekend in *The Citizen* of the decision on the latest development application was completely wrong. Fife Councillors had voted to **reject** the application.

4.4.9. Supermarkets

- reporting on a question from last month [July 4.2.2] on the percent of non-food items stocked in the two supermarkets: there is no constraint on Tesco as there was none on WM Low preceding them. The situation at Safeway is still being investigated. She commented that the definition of non-food items has some odd exclusions, such as pet food, toiletries and nappies.

4.4.10. St Andrews trade booming!

- it's official; good news for St Andrews Merchants from their Cupar counterparts. At the departure hearing recently over Tesco's plans for expansion in Cupar the Cupar Business Association expressed concern that their town centre businesses are losing trade to St Andrews.

4.4.11. Garden Waste collections

- In response to a query on these Jane Ann Liston reported that they will be resumed for an autumn session and had been advertised, as several members confirmed. On a related matter, the recycling centre negotiations are continuing with Safeway, and she noted that the Chief Executive of Fife Council is taking a personal interest in progress.

4.4.12. East Bents

- Ken Fraser asked why the trampolines & putting have not operated this summer? Cllr Liston thought there were safety problems with the trampolines. Not sure about the putting green, thought that no one had come forward to run them - will check.

5. Planning

5.1. Planning Report

The following report was circulated

Report of the PLANNING COMMITTEE Meetings of 9.7.01, 12.7.01, 13.8.01, 20.8.01 and 27.8.01 for the Community Council Meeting of 3 September 2001.

1. Strategic Planning.

After a wide-ranging discussion, the planning committee meeting of 13 August agreed to ask Fife Council Planning Service to make a presentation to the September meeting of the Community Council.

2. Planning applications.

(i) Kinkell Farm.

In response to the next application for the proposed quad bike development, Dr Riddell re-submitted the comments reported to the July meeting of the Community Council.

(ii) 1D, St Mary's Place

Mr Lindsay submitted an objection to the application for change of use of the former betting shop to a hot food take away. The grounds for objection included the traffic impact on St Mary's Place, the increased demand for parking, and the likelihood of litter, not least in the garden of 1 Greyfriars Garden.

(iii) CCTV cameras.

Mr Lindsay submitted a letter, noting the absence of consultation on this matter, and regretting the consequential need to submit a formal objection to a planning application. The committee was concerned at the visual impact of the proposed cameras in an outstanding conservation area, and in particular objected to the introduction of any poles for this purpose. The proposed camera for the Bruce Embankment was seen as a particularly bad eyesore. There were also concerns about whether there were adequate safeguards to ensure personal privacy. Our general principles were that the cameras should be wall-mounted, only installed at locations of proven need and their use confined to times of proven need.

(iv) New Golf Club webcam.

Mr Lindsay also agreed to raise our concerns about privacy in the context of this application.

(v) Wester Langlands.

IBJG submitted an objection to Phase 1 A of the University's proposed redevelopment of the David Russell Hall site. Although keen to reduce the pressure on the existing housing stock caused by increased student demand, the committee nonetheless believes that student numbers are increasing more quickly than was envisaged when the development plan was produced, and the planning implications of this require careful consideration.

In our view the amount of parking space proposed, both in the short-term for Phase I A, and under the Master Plan for the complete site, is very inadequate. The volume required, particularly for

conference use in the summer, is very substantial, and it would not be environmentally acceptable to provide it at the front of the site. The access arrangements to cope with this traffic also require thought: we suggested a single access from a new roundabout at the Strathkinness High Road junction. The committee were also disappointed by the design of the new accommodation, which compares unfavourably with New Hall and which was seen as more evocative of a city centre housing scheme than of the local style.

(vi) Craigtoun B housing site.

The committee agreed to object to various aspects of the revised plans for the remainder of this site. Our concerns include the extensive use of shared surfaces rather than proper pavements, the height of some of the proposed buildings, the need for more pedestrian paths and the continuing absence of any neighbourhood shop. It is important to try to ensure that the original excellent vision for the site, as encapsulated in the design brief, does not get lost in a succession of revised applications.

(vii) 2A Montgomery Court.

Mrs Murray agreed to object to the use of uPVC windows in place of the current leaded ones.

(viii) Jannetta's, 209 South Street

Mr Lindsay agreed to object to this application for an outside dining area as this is a busy thoroughfare and the remaining space for pedestrians, wheelchairs, buggies etc is insufficient.

3. Other recent developments.

(i) St Leonards Fields.

Despite a recommendation for approval from the officials, the East Area Development Committee unanimously accepted Cllr Liston's motion to refuse the application for 4 luxury dwellings further down the site from the house. The papers for the meeting, included a statement from the Healthcare Trust that their list of possible sites for the new hospital comprises St Leonards Fields and six greenfield sites on the edge of the town.

(ii) Kingask footpath.

Information had been received that the liaison committee had been considering a suggestion that the new pavement between Brownhills and Kingask, required by the Section 75 agreement, might be abandoned and the money spent on the coastal path. The view of the committee was that the pavement was indeed necessary and that the agreement should be enforced.

4. Public Inquiry - 130, Market Street. Dr Riddell has given notice that the Community Council intends to be represented at this Public Inquiry.

Discussion

2 (vi)

In relation to the Craigtoun Road development there was discussion of the loss of 'public open space' a few months back. Ian Goudie pointed out that the planning committee had objected at the time. It turned out that in this case the phrase 'public open space' referred to space open to the public, owned by another party, rather than *publicly owned* space, which was the main basis of the concerns raised in this meeting.

2 (viii) Jannettas

- Pete Lindsay reported that, on inspection on a busy weekday lunch time, there did not seem to be a problem in practice, so he would not object.

3 (i) St Leonards Fields - Ian Goudie thanked the Fife Councillors for the St Leonards Fields decision.

3 (ii) Kingask Footpath

- representation at the Kingask Liaison Committee was questioned; it may be that our representative, Dennis Macdonald, has not been informed of some 'local' meetings.

6. Matters arising from previous meetings

6.1. Entrust

Archie Strachan has been assured by Entrust that there will not be further in depth investigations of the accounts, so suggests that community council remain a member in case we ever want to claim money from them again, saving a £100 joining fee.

Meeting agreed.

6.2. Town Library

Held over until October as this meeting was running late.

6.3. Meetings with Neighbouring Community Councils

[July 6.2. Local Forum] This is on hold until after the October Community Council elections.

7. New Business

7.1. Future of the Lammas Market

Held over until October as this meeting was running late.

7.2. Opening of the Geological Wall

Noted.

7.3. St Andrews Community Hospital

Joe Peterson, Ian Goudie and Frank Riddell to represent the community council in the consultation.

7.4. SEPA Waste Issues questionnaire

Pete Lindsay informed the meeting that the consultation papers had arrived recently with a rather short deadline. It was agreed Health Education & Welfare committee would take this on.

Health Education & Welfare committee to deal with this.

Joe Peterson to report

8. Reports from Officers

8.1. Upper Arlington exchange

There is a party of school students coming from Upper Arlington in an exchange arrangement with Madras College. We have been asked if we would be prepared to arrange a 'civic reception' to mirror the reception of Madras students in the US.

Meeting agreed
Murdo Macdonald & Frank Riddell
to arrange

9. Reports from Committees

9.1. Recreation

Floral Competition Awards - presentation and reception to honour the prizewinners 27th September

9.2. Publicity

An edition of the Bulletin, mainly promoting the community council elections and encouraging people to stand has been received from the printers and is about to be distributed with the Fife Leader

10. AOCB

Held over due to late running of meeting.