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Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

draft Minutes October 2001

for approval

Chair Murdo Macdonald

0. Welcome

Murdo Macdonald welcomed two new representatives - Cllr Bill Brooks for St Andrews Central Ward and Students' Association President Dana Green.

1. Attendance

Community Councillors: Ken Crichton, Ken Fraser, Ian Goudie, Helen Lawrie, Pete Lindsay, Dennis Macdonald, Murdo Macdonald, Donald Macgregor, Lindsay Murray, Joe Peterson, Frank Riddell, Archie Strachan, Cynthia Tero

Students' Association: Dana Green, Tom Plant

Co-opted: Bill Sangster

Fife Councillors: Bill Brooks, Jane Ann Liston, Frances Melville

Apologies: Sheila Hill, Hugh Gray

2. Minutes of September 2001

Helen Lawrie was omitted from apologies

amended minutes accepted

3. Presentations

3.1. Police

none

3.2. Water Industry

Neil Munro gave a slide presentation on the structure of the water industry, with reference to the role of the Water Commissioner and the Area Consultative Committees.

The role of the Area Consultative Committees is to find out what people think about water and the industry that deals with it - both supply and disposal. They are the eyes & ears of the Water Industry Commissioner Alan Sutherland (a St Andrews resident, he parenthesised).

He noted that finding out what people think can be difficult. A Water Board meeting was held in St Andrews earlier in the year. It was open to the public and various technical experts were on hand to make presentations and answer questions. Only two members of public, including himself, turned up.

Water is owned, in the broad sense, publicly by the Scottish Executive, through 3 water authorities who manage it, though they are soon to merge into one for reasons that will be outlined. The Scottish Environmental Protection Agency, SEPA, enforce regulations on quality etc.

The Commissioner exists to promote the interests of customers of the water industry. The office is in Stirling. It has

a web site at <http://www.watercomissioner.co.uk/>. He can deal with complaints about the water industry but only as a last resort after water authority's procedure exhausted. Generally the Commissioner oversees the industry's codes of practice.

Water is not as 'free' as people think. To meet standards for supply of clean water and disposal of waste water requires annual spending of £1.6 billion - waste £650m, clean water £1 billion.

The infrastructure also needs work. Much of the network was set up in Victorian times but is only now beginning to break down. In some ways their engineering was too good because in the century or more since then people have forgotten that piping etc must be paid for. Even pipes that are physically intact need replacing: he showed a section of water pipe which deposits had reduced to less than half its original bore.

The Commissioner advises the appropriate ministers on how the industry run. He is concentrating on improving economic efficiency of the water industry, hence the move to integrate the Scottish water authorities into one body. If there is no improvement in efficiency it is projected that water bills will rise by at least 70% by 2005/6. The area efficiency improvements are looked for is mainly in the corporate structure of the industry. Mr Munro commented how impressed he'd been on various occasions by the commitment and enthusiasm of the ordinary water worker.

Commissioner seek water users views through a variety of channels: a Large Users group (industry), Consumer panels, various non-domestic consultation, and the Consultative Committee represented by Mr Munro - who feed back 'a wide range of customer views'

To this end there were a number of questions Mr Munro would have raised with community council but as time was pressing he agreed to send them on to the secretary for later consideration.

3.3. Mr Christie

Attended the recent Tourism Management Programme Forum public meeting at the Eden Clubhouse. He congratulated Donald Macgregor on his chairing of the forum. As a result of contacts made at this meeting he will be meeting such as Kate Hughes, Fife Council Locality Manager, and Tourism Manager Alison Lochlin to arrange displays of the golf charters and related historical material in the Burgh Chambers display case. He suggests at the British Golf Museum & Eden Clubhouse would be suitable places for displays as well. He showed some examples of the sort of Memorabilia he'd like displayed.

Fife Councillors

4.1. Frances Melville (West)

4.1.1. Museum Parking Fire Brigade not concerned about parking *provided* they can get access to the museum in an emergency. It may be possible to widen the roadway.

4.1.2. Petheram Bridge

Cost of a bridge for pedestrian/cycle use currently estimated at £110,000. While there is not yet complete funding available Roads Service are to start preliminary design work.

4.1.3. Harbour Clachan Construction starting work on the pier on 8th October.

There is also a bid in for work on Fife Council's bridge at the harbour gates.

Environmental improvements to the harbour area are being consulted on. Initial plans have gone back to the designers for refinement in the light of comments received.

Cafe - a planning application is in progress for a permanent building, incorporating showers and toilets, located slightly closer to the cathedral wall.

Asked about the state of funding. Cllr Melville said that the Harbour Trust have the money to cover estimated costs, but all donations received gratefully in case of contingencies.

4.1.4. West Sands toilets There are (still) problems here, they are under investigation.

4.1.5. West Entrance to St Andrews

Ken Crichton asked why there was a new wall built at the west extremity of Station Park. This is part of the Scottish Enterprise Fife environmental improvements to the western gateway. Ian Goudie was able to show a design for the wall incorporating the Community Council arms as has previously been agreed. Ken Crichton further asked if the existing metal road sign could be removed as it would spoil the view of the wall from the A91 approach - to have both the wall and sign would be redundant. Frances Melville believed that SEF were consulting Roads Service about this.

4.3. Jane Ann Liston (South East)

4.3.1. Pipeland Park

[Sep 4.4.5] The whole park is to get a general facelift which should address the problems pointed out last month.

4.3.2. Coastal Path [Sep 4.4.3.] See Agenda Appendix C.

4.3.3. Putting Green

[Sep 4.4.12.] she has confirmed with Community Services that the reason the putting green did not open last year was the lack of any application or enquiry.

Murdo Macdonald said that he understood that the lack of applications was due to the high rent charged in previous years.

4.3.4. T M P public forum

This had a good turn out for a public meeting in St Andrews, with about 40 members of the public present. They heard and asked questions of several presentations. She highlighted two as being of particular interest to St Andrews: the Parking Puzzle exercise where an international conference of town planning experts looked at the parking situation in their host town - St Andrews. Suggestions of these entirely independent experts included more park and ride services, . There was also a progress report on the Paramics town centre traffic simulation.

4.3.5. Geology Wall

this interesting and educational project, a short section of wall made of various types of Fife rocks, was formally unveiled in a small rain-soaked ceremony by Dr Roy Macgregor in the presence of the Lord Lieutenant of Fife and various worthies including Cllr Liston, Iain Smith MSP (and your humble secretary).

Joe Peterson suggested that there should be a signpost to draw people's attention to it.

4.3.6. Town Hall [sep 4.4.4.] see agenda appendix B.

4.3.7. Kinnessburn

there have been complaints about the state of the burn, an ongoing problem. She reminded the meeting

- Giant Hogweed was dealt with after she had raised the subject with Environmental Health Service
- Rubbish in the burn should be cleared every Monday (weather and water levels permitting). This has not been happening as regularly as it might due to staff problems in Cleansing & Waste Management. Roddy Mann (acting head in East Area) is taking a personal interest in getting this sorted out though.
- Vegetation and silting - Cllr Jane Hunter Blair investigated this: SEPA control what Fife Council can do to the stream, and their opinion (from a memo to JHB a year ago) was that the silting and vegetation were entirely natural, indeed to be welcomed as wildlife habitat. The increased risk of flooding due to the buildup was minimal, they said.

Various members of community council disagreed with the assessment, calling the vegetation untidy and overgrown, for it to be cleared, and expressing fears of the 'wildlife' being rats and other vermin.

Cynthia Tero also complained that the path along the north bank of the burn, east of Maggie Murray's bridge (Bridge Street), is overgrown and impassable. She suggested it too should be cleared.

4.3.8. Garden waste collections Murdo Macdonald complained that the dates have been poorly advertised.

4.3.9. Lade Braes

Archie Strachan agreed with description of the state of the Lade Braes as a 'disaster' in the responses to the recent Bulletin. At least grass of playing field cut, he said, but the state of the rest of it left much to be desired. Cllr Jane Ann Liston replied that Cllr Sheila Hill would be having a site visit with Community Services to discuss programmed tidying work soon.

4.4. Bill Brooks (Central)

As he is just settling in after his election on 20th Sep he had no business to report. He said he would listen to community council with interest.

4.4.1. Hospital Bus Stop

Ken Crichton brought to the new councillor's attention a possible problem with a substantial flow of water during the recent heavy rain from a wall drain off the hospital grounds in the immediate vicinity of the bus stop.

4.4.2. Greyfriars School/Cosmos parking

Ken Crichton also made sure Bill Brooks was aware of the problems with parked vehicles on Abbey Walk raised last month with the police. Helen Lawrie asked is there was any news of the pedestrian crossing proposed here? It was thought that this would be going ahead soon, possibly as part of the St Leonards Fields development. It was hoped that this crossing would partially relieve pressure on parking on the west side of Abbey Walk by providing a safe crossing from the eastern footpath.

5. Planning

Ian Goudie circulated the following report and a draft of a detailed response on the strategic planning review document to go to the Scottish Executive, following up the preliminary response to Fife Council last month.

Report of the PLANNING COMMITTEE Meetings of 10.9.01 and 24.9.01 for the Community Council Meeting of 1 October 2001.

1. Environmental work, etc.

The proposals from Scottish Enterprise were considered. Mrs Murray agreed to write to Scottish Enterprise about the proposed café and amenity building at the harbour, suggesting that a pitched roof should be used, and that the roofing material should match the neighbouring building. It was noted that the proposed environmental work in South Street had not taken on board the suggestion from the Community Council that part of the wide pavement to the west of Madras College be designated for cycling, in order to make a start on safe cycling access to the school. Dr Riddell agreed to look into the matter.

Regarding the environmental work at the harbour, Mrs Murray agreed to object to the use of buff sandstone for the steps that are to be replaced to the north of The Pends. The proposed "intersecting needles" style of lamppost was also seen as inappropriate.

2. Planning applications.

(i) Temporary car park.

Mr Lindsay agreed to write pointing out the dangers to pedestrians in Doubledykes Road of increased vehicular traffic entering and leaving the proposed temporary car park on the tennis courts via the access to the Old Station car park. Any change in the location or arrangement of the proposed Portacabins that would make them less visible would also be welcome.

(ii) Abbey Street environmental work. Mrs Murray agreed to object to the proposed new perpendicular parking, which we see as dangerous and liable to hinder traffic flow.

(iii) 135, Market Street.

The proposed materials for the fascia were seen as inappropriate. 3. Strategic Planning A response to Fife Council was drafted by Mr Lindsay. The finalised version appears in Appendix D of tonight's papers. IBJG is working on a more detailed response to the actual questions asked by the Scottish Executive. A draft will be available.

4. Craigtoun B housing site. It is understood that new plans are to be submitted.

5. Public Inquiry - 130, Market Street. Mrs Murray will speak on behalf of the Community Council.

The report was accepted without query.

<8-ish 5min break>

5.2. Draft of Follow-up Strategic Planning submission

This is to address specific points raised by Scottish Executive in their consultation document. The Planning Committee see this as a second line of defence as Scottish Executive have made clear that the status quo is not an option in all areas of Scotland. Ian Goudie apologised for 3 page letter at short notice but the timescales for responses to Fife Council, the Executive and Community Council elections required it.

Ian Goudie went over the main headings of the draft, taken from the Scottish Executive's questions.

Meeting agreed Planning committee should finalise and submit the letter. The meeting was reminded that the Planning committee is not exclusive and would welcome comment and participation on this, or any other planning matter at the regular committee meetings.

Cllr Frances Melville added that there had been a second public meeting in Tayport which was 100% against a Fife split. She reported that LibDem councillors, MP, MSP also against a split.

6. Matters arising from previous meetings

6.1. Library

Community Council overall very doubtful of any suggestion of involvement of the Common Good Fund.

Suggest a full briefing from Iain Whitelaw of Community Services for the new community council.

Pete Lindsay to arrange

6.2. Lammas Market

There was no support for moving the Lammas Market out of the centre of St Andrews. It was strongly suggested that community council should be represented on the working party looking into the future of the market. Bill Sangster, as Merchants' Association representative called for his organisation to be included too. Other suggestions included a public meeting and/or a referendum; the possible effect of any changes on the Common Good Fund must also be considered. Nonetheless careful consideration must be given to health and safety issues - both access for emergency vehicles and safety of the newer, larger rides. It was also suggested the market be enhanced by inclusion of street performers as were the street fairs.

6.3. Town Hall

Meeting approved suggestions in report

Pete Lindsay to write

6.4. May Day

The matter of the 'late spring'/May Day holiday was extensively discussed. It was pointed out that the 1st Monday of May is widely observed as May Day, that it is a University holiday, a public holiday for most of Scotland and also that it is a bank holiday.

Merchants' Association representative Bill Sangster put their view that some businesses' commercial considerations require their opening on the proposed date of the local holiday, however it was felt that the majority of businesses in St Andrews will open anyway on whatever day is chosen. It was not held credible that, as also argued on behalf of the Merchants Association, their businesses would suffer if May 6th were declared the May Day holiday because people taking the public holiday on the same day would not come to St Andrews thinking it would be closed.

Community council agreed:

- 1) that the holiday should be called May Day
- 2) that May Day must, logically, occur in May or be the object of derision
- 3) therefore to support 6th May as the formal May Day local holiday.

Pete to write

6.5. Coastal Path

This quickly turned into a discussion of the proposals on a footpath to Kingask [Sep 5.1.3.ii]. Following on from September Dennis Macdonald was able to reassure Community Council that he had checked with officials and had not missed any Kingask liaison committee meetings.

Boarhills Community Council said money from the section 75 agreement would be better spent on coastal path as Boarhills residents wouldn't use it. Dennis Macdonald pointed out that Kingask is not in our area of responsibility, it is in Boarhills. Ian Goudie was not surprised that Boarhills not interested in a path from St Andrews to Kingask which is a legitimate interest of this Community Council as it was most likely to be used by St Andreans. The possible effects on pedestrian (and cycle) traffic of the Kinkell Farm activity centre proposals were also mentioned during the discussion. Dennis Macdonald suggested using the coastal path instead of a roadside path - a suggestion not taken entirely seriously.

Joe Peterson made the twin points that support for the roadside path had been accepted as part of the September Planning Committee report, and that as a footpath was part of the section 75 agreement he did not think the developer should be allowed to renegotiate it.

Cllr Jane Ann Liston reported that Planning Service were against a St Andrews-Kingask path along the A917 because, due to the road layout, the path would be required to cross from one side of the road to the other at some point. This was held to be a 'safety risk'. Whether the risk was compared to no path at all to no path at all was unclear.

Cllr Frances Melville informed the meeting that the next liaison committee will be 24 Oct.

7. New Business

7.1. Local Roads Programme

Anyone with views to put on priority of major road works to contact Pete Lindsay for papers etc.

7.2. Scenic Map

Bill Sangster expressed the Merchants' Association's opposition to the Community Council having any involvement with the Scenic Map.

Original advisory gang of three (Frank Riddell, Ken Fraser, Pete Lindsay) to respond.

7.6. Police Local Forum

Dennis Macdonald volunteered to attend

8. Reports from Officers

8.1. Chair

Upper Arlington visit cancelled due to 11 Sep atrocity.

No other officers' reports

9. Reports from Committees

9.1. Recreation

Has started work on art and photography exhibition

9.2. HEW

Joe Peterson reported that due to the short time available he was unable to call a meeting, so he completed the SEPA waste strategy questionnaire, choosing the middle of the five options presented.

10. AOCB

10.1. Millennium Fund

Cynthia Tero asked what was happening to the millennium fund. Despite promises over the last few months no report or proposal had been forthcoming. She drew attention to the point in the Bulletin feedback calling for more seats about St Andrews.

Murdo Macdonald promised that disposal of the Millennium Fund would be an urgent matter for the new Community Council.