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Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

Draft Minutes - June 2002

Approved

Chair: Murdo Macdonald

0. Introduction

Murdo Macdonald introduced Rory O'Hare, the Students' Association President-elect, who will take over from Dana Green from July.

1. Attendance

Community Councillors: Ken Crichton, George Davidson, Ken Fraser, Ian Goudie, Joe Lamb, Chris Lesurf, Pete Lindsay, Murdo Macdonald, Donald Macgregor, Gordon Pay, Joe Peterson, Archie Strachan, Cynthia Tero, Penny Uprichard.

Student Reps: Dana Green, Rory O'Hare.

Nominated Reps: Bill Sangster

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

Apologies: Richard Douglas, Dennis Macdonald, Callum Macleod, Lindsay Murray, Frank Riddell, Jean Thompson, David Reed, Sheila Hill

2. Minutes of May 2002

approved

3. Presentations

3.1. Fife Council Allocations Policy

Louise Sutherland, Fife Council Housing Service, spoke on the new housing allocations policy. She explained that where there had been three policies, derived from the those of the three district councils, running in Fife since reorganisation there is now one. In fact this policy is very similar to the NEFDC one which was closest to what is now regarded as best practice in housing allocation.

The Fife policy is needs-based rather than taking account of time on a waiting-list. The sorts of factors scored include overcrowding, medical need, local support etc. Not included, by legislation, is current tenure eg someone who has bought a council house under right-to-buy legislation sells it and then applies for another. The result of an assessment may be to make alterations to a property rather than moving someone. A Management Transfer (swap) of tenants whose needs are complimentary is

another possible tactic.

The new policy is intended to be open and accountable as it is based on known criteria. The Letting Plan will also be available for each Locality so that the council is open about the needs and resources in an area, reporting how many properties are occupied by legally homeless people, the numbers of management transfers undertaken and other facts about the housing stock.

The new scheme comes into effect in July, though East Fife won't see much difference. Staff training has started. There will be informational leaflets in libraries, locality offices and details circulated in the tenants newsletter. These will contain half a dozen worked examples so people can better see how the rules will affect them.

Policy in housing has to abide by national legislation, and major changes are coming into force soon. For instance the council have to add to the waiting list anyone of 16+ years who asks, though are not obliged to award points for housing need if they have no local connection. She noted that St Andrews has few vacancies while other areas have difficulty letting properties and would welcome approaches from potential tenants. The council cannot produce more houses, but can show how the process works so that people can choose either to wait for a house in their current area or apply for another area where they will be housed quicker.

4. Fife Councillors

4.1. Frances Melville (West)

4.1.1. Lighting at Kinburn Park Officers are getting a funding package together for the required im-provements.

4.1.2. Care & Repair While this is a very worthwhile scheme it has strict aims and limitations, for instance can install/replace a central heating system but not just the boiler unit - as she'd found in a case she'd looked into.

4.1.3. Waste Recycling Seminar A survey report presented to a recent seminar found 71% of the surveyed public in Fife want improved recycling. She and her fellow LibDem councillors will continue to press the administration to improve Fife's currently abysmal record.

4.3. Jane Ann Liston (South East)

4.3.1. Library Funding Following up the query from last month she has received an email from Iain Whitelaw which had not clarified things quite as much as it could have, though she read it out in case anyone found it helpful. She will be pressing for a clearer explanation of the present situation, though it sounded like the improvements project is still looking for money.

4.3.2. Town Hall Flag Problems with the state of the rope reported before Christmas, Property Services admit fault over the delay.

4.3.3. Bus Station toilets It is reported that these are cleaned daily, first thing in the morning.

4.3.4. Emissions monitoring Levels are thought to be transitory in the bus station due to the occasional nature of the traffic. More monitoring is underway in City Road where there is continuous traffic. Gordon Pay asked if this is measuring particulates as well as gas levels, also he understands there is strong variation between the 'climates' of the two sides of City Rd due to the layout of the buildings.

4.3.5. Pipeland Park chippings These are to be replaced by bark when money is available.

4.3.6. Kilrymont Buses In view of the crumbling state of the road surface on Kilrymont Place and Priestden Road she has asked officials to look at the possibilities of re-routing some of the 12 double-decker buses a day delivering and removing kids from Madras Kilrymont to complete some journeys along Kilrymont Road. There are concerns about interaction between bus traffic and children arriving at Langlands Primary in the morning, but no clash exists in the afternoon. A turning circle in Madras' grounds, so buses go back the way they came, is another possibility but finding the £83,000 required may take a while. In the meantime she thinks any way of removing load from the poor surfaces will at least slow deterioration until proper remedial work can be undertaken.

4.3.7. Fly Posting This has become a particular problem since the Kate Kennedy Club fly-posted advertisements for their parade, many of which they did not take down afterwards and others are following their lead. Posters on streetlamps and signs etc are not allowed by Fife Council. Local traders object, quite rightly she said, when it is competition for their businesses. Only statutory notices are permitted and those ought to be removed once they have served their purpose.

Dana Green suggested that it is not widely appreciated that the practice is forbidden and asks for notices to be posted saying No Notices so people know.

4.3.8. John Knox Road Trees were not removed due to leaves in neighbouring gardens, as rumoured last month, but because they were damaging footpath surfaces and overhanging the road. The rose beds are to be grassed over as they are 'rose sick'.

4.3.9. Cycleways There will be a safety audit to look at the usefulness of the funny short stubs of cycle lane dotted about the town.

A recent survey of cycle use showed 350/day on Hepburn Gardens and 120/day on Viaduct Walk. Surprise (ie outright disbelief) was expressed by some, but others pointed out that perception of the number of cyclist on a stretch of road differs significantly if one walks or drives along or actually stops and counts because of the length of time involved/level of attention in the trip.

4.3.10. Accommodation for the Homeless Consultation with communities on suitable facilities for homeless people was promised after the Guardbridge debacle. It is not clear yet which service is undertaking this or when.

4.3.11. Trains to the West There is a fares anomaly at Leuchars. Travel to the West Coast cannot be through Dundee, a shorter, quicker route than via Edinburgh on a ticket from Leuchars. The restriction does not apply on a Glasgow-Leuchars ticket bought at Glasgow. She has asked Transportation Service to pursue this discrimination with the Scottish Rail Authority.

4.4. Bill Brooks (Central)

4.4.1. environmental improvement projects

a. West Port pavements and road Major part of the work is almost finished. some lighting and cobbles outstanding. He reported that most comments on work here had been favourable, with a couple of notable exceptions.

There were general call for the early return of parking controls at the turning circle at the end of South Street. As there are no yellow lines (because of the resurfacing) motorists are parking inconsiderately and blocking it to the considerable inconvenience of turning vehicles and those passing through the Port.

Asked if the unsightly and inoperative floodlight over the West Port would be removed Cllr Brooks thought it might go when the uplighting is installed.

b. College St resurfacing Almost finished - doorsteps to do.

Concerns were raised about the use of cobbles here: i) they are joltingly unsuitable on a designated cycle route and ii) are a poor surface for prams/buggies and less able pedestrians when the footpath pavement is taken up by tables and chairs from the Central Bar and Brambles restaurant.

c. Harbour resurfacing and lighting On schedule.

d. Abbey St resurfacing 3 weeks behind

4.4.2. CCTV Expected to be operational by July

4.4.3. College St and Crails Lane Archie Strachan commented that despite the work to improve the appearance of the town centre commercial waste bins were partly blocking the footpath, and were not appealing to see. Can the owners be approached to keep them under cover/out of sight?

Cllr Brooks answered that the possibility of underground storage was being examined with Scottish Enterprise Fife.

4.4.4. CCTV St Mary's St/Bell St Cynthia Tero complained about the poor location of this pole on the edge of the pavement, after witnessing a bus hit it while turning left from Bell St. Pete Lindsay reminded the meeting that Community Council had commented on this problem at the planning permission stage; a "We Told You So" was in order.

4.4.5. Open Scotland Is a government initiative which will pay for 4 computers plus an internet connection for three years for anywhere that can provide public access for 40+ hours a week?

4.4.6. Complains about Town Hall flag There had been complaints that this had not been flying for the jubilee. See 4.3.2.

4.4.8. Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council arms He asked if the deal referred to last month to exploit the merchandising of the arms had been signed, as he had received representations on the subject. Murdo Macdonald explained that, as instructed by community council last month, he had consulted with the VPs and also with other members about the revised contract. He was aware of an objection from one particular businessman whom he had met. He was now happy to sign the contract on behalf of Community Council. Cllr Brooks was concerned that control of the use of the Arms could pass out of St Andrews; it was explained that it already had, in effect, and that a primary aim of the current deal was to regain control. Also some £14,000 should be available to community council for community use over the next few years.

4.4.9. Abbey Walk seating Support pillars but no seat stand, forlorn, across from Greyfriars Primary School. Could these be reinstated? Cllr will investigate.

Also raised was a similar set on the Lade Braes behind Madras College, but it was thought this seat had been deliberately removed to reduce the number of break-ins to Madras College over the wall there.

4.5. General

4.5.1. Viaduct Walk cycle lane Joe Lamb raised the very sharp jolt experienced by south travelling

cy-clists at the north end of the walk when passing down the ramp to the walk. He was also unhappy at the tight turn at the south end from the Walk to Canongate.

4.5.2. Consultation Ian Goudie gave 4.5.1. and 4.4.4. as examples of inadequacy of consultation recently. These problems would have been avoided had adequate consultation been undertaken locally and notice taken of the results.

4.5.3. Fife Councillors Appreciated Archie Strachan noted how much the community council appreciated the regular attendance of the Fife Councillors to both report and hear the community's concerns. He was generally backed.

5. Planning Committee Report

Ian Goudie apologised for the lack of a written report due to pressure of work during the university exam diet. He briefly noted five items:

- 1. Pavilion Tearoom** Penny Uprichard to reiterate previous objections.
- 2. 7 Bell St** Pete Lindsay to object to design for sliding window, which might be used for sales directly onto a crowded and busy pavement, also to the materials of the shop signs which do not accord with the conservation area.
- 3. 19/21 Bell St** Penny Uprichard to object to inappropriate materials (aluminium signs).
- 4. Wester Langlands** While there have been some improvements concerns remain over the car parking provision, design of the roofs and windows.
- 5. Craigtoun Road.** Proposed height of central block still a concern.

6. Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

6.1. Bandstand

Contacts for organiser not yet pursued through lack of time [MM].

Two concerts arranged for end of June with Madras College [AS]

7. New Business

7.1. Local Holidays 2003

Bill Sangster gave the Merchants' Association case for any date other than the 1st Monday, as that is everyone else's date. The Merchants concerned that as a holiday destination it would be inappropriate for St Andrews to be closed on the Mayday Monday holiday.

After some discussion community council voted unanimously (15-0) to support May Day being in May with a general proviso that local holidays should align, where practical, with school holidays. This supports the May 5th 2003 date.

Other dates for 2003 are acceptable, again providing school holidays are considered.

7.2. Kate Kennedy Club

There was some concern that Community Council had recently received money from the Kate Kennedy Club. They had already been written to and thanked as common good manners; to go further might be perceived as having an interest.

Dana Green suggested that there were other student organisations deserving of thanks for their work for the town too.

After discussion Ken Crichton agreed to withdraw his motion for the moment.

7.4. Planning Aid

subscription agreed

7.6. Association of Scottish Community Councils

7.6.1. Conference and AGM

Pete Lindsay and Frank Riddell to attend

7.7. In Town, Without My Car

Joe Peterson & Pete Lindsay to attend

7.8. SSPCA Firework Survey

Specifically suggest a limited period of firework sales.

Pete Lindsay to respond

7.9. Scottish Civic Forum

Ken Fraser has attended SCF meetings and explained that it represents any voluntary body that cares to join. It acts as a sounding board for the Scottish Executive for prelegislative scrutiny.

Joe Peterson to report

7.10. Calor Gas Community of the Year

Ken Crichton to report
pass to Dana Green

7.11. Tentsmuir Eden Estuary Management Group

Surprise that the TEEMG would welcome a CC rep and keeps us informed; while the West Sands Management Group does not.

Cllr Frances Melville to investigate

7.12. VONEF newsletters

Pass to HEW

7.13. Rural News

Pass to HEW

7.14-7.17

noted

7.18. Continued use of Arms

Permission renewed

7.19. Strip the Willow

noted

8. Reports from Officers

Nothing further to report

9. Reports

9.1. from Committees

9.1.1. Publicity

Press coverage: it was suggested that Publicity Ctte should review their conclusions on a Citizen column.

Other items noted.

9.1.2. Recreation

Noted

Ken Crichton added that £100 was received recently from the Kate Kennedy Club towards the Senior Citizens' Tea.

9.1.3. Health Education & Welfare

Should we affiliate to VONEF?

Agreed to ask for presentation on their service and relevance to St Andrews.

HEW to contact

9.1.4. Youth Committee

Has not met because of exams.

9.2. from Representatives

9.2.1. St Andrews Week Committee Bill Sangster gave a brief report on a recent meeting developing ideas for this year's Week. Cllr Jane Ann Liston further noted possible future problems with official support as Alison Laughlin would be on maternity leave soon. There is a possibility of gaining funds from the Scottish Executive similar to the funding given to Ayrshire for this year's Burns celebrations.

10. Any Other Competent Business

none