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Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

Minutes - March 2003

Approved

Chair: Murdo Macdonald

1. Attendance

Community councillors: Ken Crichton, George Davidson, Richard Douglas, Ken Fraser, Ian Goudie, Joe Lamb, Chris Lesurf, Pete Lindsay, Dennis Macdonald, Murdo Macdonald, Gordon Pay, Joe Peterson, Ewen Sparks, Archie Strachan, Cynthia Tero, Penny Uprichard

Students' Association: Rory O'Hare

Nominated/Co-opted: Bill Sangster

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

Apologies: Frank Riddell, James North, Donald Macgregor

2. Minutes of February 2003

4.3.1. Madras Swimming Pool Bill Brooks had noted the scheduled opening but had gone on to add that the safety of the children using the pool was more important than deadlines.

Corrected minutes accepted

3. Presentations

3.1. Locality Assistant

Rachel Hay, the new Locality Assistant as of the last month, introduced herself. She is based in the Tourist Office.

3.2. Police

Insp Dewar and PC Hazelwood attended

3.2.1. Alcohol Free Zone Police find this very helpful. In 2001-2 21 persons were charged and lots of warnings given; in 2002-3 to date 9 charged. Officers will issue warning in first instance. He hopes to use the byelaw against the outside tables at many town centre establishments.

3.2.2. Crime level Low in St Andrews However the anti-vandalism initiatives not too successful compared with other parts of Fife and will be priority for the next two weeks. Police are looking to identify perpetrators – at the slightest sight of

something untoward, get in touch, all info useful.

3.2.3. Peace march At RAF Leuchars Sat 8th (International women's day) Police intend to support and keep safe. Main Street, Leuchars will be closed for a while. Prominent people delivering speeches out-side the gate.

3.2.4. Cycle accidents 2001-2 14 road accidents involve cycles, 6 injuries resulting; 2002-3 9 accident; 2002-3 (to date) only one injury. The Police do not hold location information ie accidents in cycle lane as opposed to outside.

Cllr Frances Melville asked if Insp Dewer had any further comments on the cycle routes. He has very serious concerns about safety of The Scores and suggested the path should run on the other side of the road, by monument. He is not so concerned, but still uneasy, about Greyfriars Garden.

3.2.5. CCTV How many crimes are detected via CCTV? Insp Dewer replied that many were but he did not have figures to hand. Very useful for tracking shoplifting, vandalism. Joe Peterson reported that the re-cent CCTV consultation group meeting he attended recently expressed worries about crime displacement out of the area viewed by the CCTV to uncovered surroundings. Insp Dewer acknowledged this is a concern and was investigated very seriously, but no evidence of displacement has been found.

4. Fife Councillors

4.1. Frances Melville (West)

4.1.1. Hospital She has written to the Health Care Trust asking for assurance that the health service reorganisation recently announced by the Executive won't delay the St Andrews hospital project.

4.1.2. Water problem Strathkinness Low Road/Buchanan Gardens Seems to involve a 'forgotten' manhole: officials can't trace which utility/service is responsible for closing it.

4.1.3. Harbour lights She has been assured that new lights at harbour will be switched on in the very near future.

4.1.4. Blocked drains Murdo Macdonald drew attention to the number of blocked drains in the after-math of winter gritting and commented on the infrequency of regular maintenance clearing, it seems to be once a year. Reply was that keeping an eye on this is now part of Town Assistant remit so trouble spots can be identified more rapidly in future. Cllr Jane Ann Liston added that the cleaning vehicles can be called out for specific problems if they are reported.

4.1.5. Healthy meals initiative for schools Ken Crichton asked what would stop the kids going out for chips instead?

Nothing if there is a chip van at Kilrymont. However such vans are subject to licensing.

4.2. Sheila Hill (South)

Nothing to report and no questions.

4.3. Bill Brooks (Central)

4.3.1. Harbour lights He heard the lights should have gone on Friday night (2/3/03), but hasn't checked.

Joe Lamb suggested there should be navigational lights at the end of the pier to assist access to the harbour.

4.3.2. Blackfriars Chapel lighting There is some difficulty in determining who is responsible for the upkeep of this. Currently the ball is in Historic Scotland's court.

4.3.3. Holy Trinity lighting Some lighting has disappeared. Boots Ltd supplied it; it was on what was their building. Investigating whether it went with them and possibilities of replacement.

4.3.4. Kinnessburn Workers are doing basic trimming and maintenance of the banks but not full scale dredging. Council looking to get full reports re flood risk.

4.4. Jane Ann Liston (South East)

4.4.1. Gas supply 15-16 weeks of works planned, one third in Cllr Sheila Hill's South ward, rest in her own South East. Transco say some people with very old connections may need them replaced into the house, but not many. Most of the work will be replacement of old fracture-prone metal pipes with the more robust modern plastic ones.

4.4.2. Pipeland Park improvements Work has started. There has been a meeting with the kids who use the park to approve skateboard etc equipment. They are reported to be delighted with the plans.

4.4.3. Payphones OFTEL say BT cannot remove single call boxes unless they have written approval from Local Authority and Parish Councils; she assumes CCs are equivalent. She has objected to 3 removals, suggested Fife Council should object, and perhaps CC should do too.

PL to write

4.4.4. Housing Fife Council is holding a consultation meeting 6-9pm 5th March, Cupar. She has been assured CCs invited [Nothing received by the Secretary]. Applications for 'pressured area' status may be discussed; that and changes in borrowing rules may mean councils can afford to build houses again.

GP

4.4.5. Woodburn Park path Joe Lamb reported that the

bottom path is breaking up as discussed some while ago. Cllr Liston to investigate what is being done.

4.4.6. Warrack St/Lamond Drive junction Chris Lesurf noted that potholes filled a while ago are now open again. Cllr Jane Ann Liston agreed that the problem was probably the heavy use by bus-ses for Madras Kilrymont. A short term solution would be to spend £86,000 (at last estimate) on a turning circle at the school. The long term solution is for another school in NE Fife to eliminate the need for such bussing.

4.5. General

4.5.1. Affordable housing Joe Peterson asked the Fife Councillors where the shortfall of 662 affordable houses should be built in St Andrews and whether they should be Council houses.

Cllr Frances Melville replied that the forthcoming Local Plan discussions were the appropriate forum for this. It is for the public to decide where they want the necessary housing and in what form.

Cllr Sheila Hill emphasised the need for a lot more affordable housing to help local residents.

Ian Goudie added that we should get away from the blanket use of 'affordable' for houses that only remain 'affordable' for 15 years at best. It merely puts off the problem with a temporary fix. Need to look at other ways of maintaining affordability in perpetuity.

Dennis Macdonald suggested compulsory purchase of suitable sites for council houses.

5. Planning Committee Report

5.1. General

Ian Goudie apologised for the lack of a written report. Planning workload immense; worst for 10 years he's been in job. Committee met three times this month. Two had special visitors:

5.1.1. Scottish Enterprise Fife Alan Jeffry is the consultant on South St lighting project. Two new lighting designs now under consideration. Planning committee's preferences differ from the Preservation Trust's.

5.1.2. Pathways Scotland (Scottish Right of Way Society) was a very helpful meeting. They would like CC to encourage signposting of local routes around the town.

5.2. Planning applications

5.2.1. Harbour bridge Warning siren appears excessively loud

from the literature provided, but it seems from further information that it won't be running at full volume. Also questioned whether wood was sustainable

5.2.2. Bank of Scotland Applied for internally illuminated signs within the conservation area – objecting.

5.2.3. West Port Flats Draft letter of objection circulated

5.2.4. John Knox Road Draft letter of objection circulated. Ian Goudie expanded on the concern over the danger of people looking at the statistic of affordable houses built rather than looking at the quality of life in them. This site layout not designed for the benefit of the future residents. Austin Cook reports pressure from Community Scotland saying that funding may be withdrawn if planning permission withheld. This seems unfair pressure.

Archie Strachan sympathised with the views but feel the last sentence of the letter gratuitous and confrontational. Does it add weight to our opinion?

Cllr Frances Melville also had sympathy with Ian Goudie's remarks and understands it comes from the sheer workload and the pressure from the developers. At no time though have planners been 'rolled over' by the developers; the developers asked for the extended timetable. Many times the planners have thrown the plans back at the architects. She too is very irritated by Community Scotland's remarks.

Ian Goudie added concerns that some plans over wheelchair access/accommodation are not in the public domain. He has found out that the disability advisors were not consulted over the designs, as claimed by Planning officials, and that there was no mechanism for doing so.

5.2.5. Responses outstanding Flats off Kinnessburn Rd; 3 St Leonards Fields; Greenside Place, Housing on hospital site; St Leonards house; Application from St Leonards school for new student accommodation. There are two sites needing Environmental Impact Assessment. The Feddinch application is combined with an EIA. The Links Trust have a scoping opinion from Fife Council. He noted that Planning's letter on this was sent to Secretary Pete Lindsay but at Chair Murdo Macdonald's address rather than directly to Ian Goudie as Planning Convenor as is normal practice.

5.2.6. Workload There was discussion on Planning priorities, between smaller day-to-day applications and the large-scale developments. No particular conclusion was reached.

6. Matters Arising from previous meetings

6.1. Bandstand Concerts

postpone to April

6.2. Hustings

progress report April

6.3. A-Boards

In response to Penny Uprichard's reiterated concerns, Ewen Sparks announced that the Merchants' Association, which he chairs, are to try to self-regulate in light of public concern at the proliferation and materials of the signs. It was agreed to see how well this worked, though Bill Sangster pointed out not all town centre businesses are members of the association. Ken Crichton added that materials don't matter as much as the problem of obstruction of the pavements. Cllr Jane Ann Liston cited the planning committee's rule-of-thumb that there should always be room for a double child buggy to pass freely.

ES to report May/June

6.4. Police Level of Service

Murdo Macdonald couldn't attend the first meeting but will go to the next. Wed 7th.

6.5. Cycle Lanes

PL arrange cycle meeting

6.6. East Sands/Woodburn Place

noted

6.7. Honoured Citizen

Charles Armour has been voted an Honoured Citizen of St Andrews in recognition of his long service at Holy Trinity and in the life of the town.

MM to arrange presentation

6.8. Green Belt

Noted

7. New Business

7.1. Alcohol Free Zone review

After a thorough airing of views the meeting split evenly down the middle on a vote.

For 7, Against 7, Abstain 2

PL to write

7.2. Student Dissertation on St Andrews and Golf

Chris Lesurf and Penny Uprichard volunteered to be contacted

PL pass on detail

7.3. Drop-in Centre

Meeting agreed to support the principle of a drop-in centre

7.4. St Leonards Fields

Planning to consider and report

Planning

7.5. Scottish National Heritage Open Event

Noted

7.6. The Story of Societies in St Andrews

Suggested that the Community Council Trust and/or the 200 Club might be able to give small grants in support of such a venture. Also that the Common Good Fund could be approached.

PL to write

7.7. Fife NHS Board

noted

7.8. Tay Estuary Forum AGM and Conference

noted

7.9. Policing Plan 2003-4 – Community Engagement

April

7.10. Water Customer Consultation Panels

noted

8. Reports from Officers

8.1. Chair

8.1.1. Kate Kennedy Parade Kate Kennedy Club has invited the Chair to join the new Parade committee with other independent members from the town (Merchant's Association etc), a response to concerns about the Club itself which came to a head last year.

After some discussion it was agreed to accept the offer of a place in the hope that this represents real change. Who should take up the place to be determined on receipt of more information as to the details of membership and responsibilities.

8.2. Treasurer

2002-3 accounts close at end of March. Please lodge expense claims as soon as possible.

8.3. Secretary

8.3.1-8. noted

9. Reports

9.1. from Committees

9.1.1 Recreation

Date held Tuesday 25 February 2003

Art and Photographic Exhibition as part of the St Andrew's week celebrations. Opening times provisional venue Victory Memorial Hall

Reception 7.15pm for 7 30pm. Thursday 27 November

Main Guest to be arranged.

Exhibition

Friday 28 November 11am until 5pm

Saturday 29 November 11am until 5pm

Sunday 30th November 12am until 4pm

Five-a-side Football Tournament to proceed at Madras Kilrymont Community Use School.

Dates:

Saturday 12th April 13 to 15 year old teams

Sunday 13th April 16 to 21 years old teams

Teams and groups resident in the North East File constituency are being invited to compete. There will be competitions for both all male and all female sides

There will be no **Odd One Out** competition this year as it was felt that as the committee is trying to arrange and organise a car boot sale venue over the summer they would not have the time or the resources to do both.

Garden Awards Presentation is to be held at the Town Hall on Thursday 25 September at 7pm. Guest to be arranged.

St Andrews in Bloom Convenor Bill Sangster reported that matters were well in hand for this year and he would be making regular reports of progress to the Recreation committee.

9.2. from Representatives

9.2.1. CCTV Liaison Joe Peterson: latest meeting heard concerns about displacement of crime from monitored areas; there is to be an evaluation of deployment of police manpower in connection with CCTV.

10. Any Other Competent Business

10.1. Millennium Tree

Archie Strachan asked if this was to go ahead as nothing had been heard for some months. There is still money in the millennium account.

PU & JP to report
