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# Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

## Minutes - December 2003

### *Approved*

(Copies of Agendas and Minutes of the Community Council are held at Fife Council's Local Office, St Mary's Place and the Town Library, Church Square. Those from mid-1998 on are online at http://www.louisxiv.demon.co.uk/standrewscc/)

## 1. Attendance

**Community Councillors**: Laurel Aguilar, Ken Crichton, George Davidson, Richard Douglas, Ken Fraser, Ian Goudie, Joe Lamb, Chris Lesurf, Pete Lindsay, Dennis Macdonald, Murdo Macdonald, Donald Macgregor, Joe Peterson, Frank Riddell, Ewen Sparks, Archie Strachan, Cynthia Tero, Penny Uprichard.

**Students Association**: Derek Macleod, Bonnie Ryder, Will Macfarlane.

**Fife Councillors**: Jane Ann Liston, Frances Melville, Bill Sangster.

**Apologies**: Sheila Black, Gordon Pay.

## 2. Minutes of November 2003

Approved, however Pete Lindsay noticed that an editing error had resulted in some items being omitted from the printed minutes:

**8.3.4. Bins Roy Stewart** will respond to this; he spoke to Dr Gilroy who was in the public gallery for the meeting.

**8.3.5. East Fife Local Plan** noted

**8.3.6. Web Site mentions "Twinning"** no action

**8.3.7. Bus Letter** agreed

## 3. Presentations

### 3.1. Police report

**3.1.1. Bike Lights** Dr Riddell to write to Inspector Dewer re widespread lack of bike lights.

### 3.2. Homelessness: Temporary Accommodation Options in St Andrews

John Mills, Housing Service, circulated a briefing paper then

spoke to outline the issues regarding the Fife homeless strategy and St Andrews.

There is a legal requirement on Fife Council to house people claiming to be homeless during the period of assessment, which is the temporary accommodation referred to here. The circulated paper outlines a strategy for St Andrews area. There is an outstanding need for temporary accommodation in St Andrews. He emphasised that Fife Council were not coming with a single option for agreement; no agenda; the council wants community council's opinion after they have considered the situation. The appendix to the briefing paper gives a number of alternatives for providing accommodation and discussion of the dis/advantages. There is no timescale though he would like to report to the relevant Fife Council committee by end of the financial year, but that is not, he emphasised, a deadline.

Murdo Macdonald commented on the need to keep people informed and consulted in the neighbourhood of any proposed accommodation. He also said no one wanted 'antisocial' neighbours even temporarily. John Mills agreed with the importance of communication; that is what this presentation is intended to start. It is important to understand that homelessness is not something that happens just to the 'antisocial'; almost anyone can become homeless, eg due to loss of employment and failure to keep up loan payments.

Asked how long 'temporary' was, he replied that there was a statutory duty on Fife Council to house people presenting as homeless while their needs were assessed. The target time for assessment and subsequent placement is 12 weeks, but in practice this can stretch to months due to the lack of long term permanent rented housing. This is a significant problem which is hoped to be addressed by the 20 year Fife housing strategy. Buying more houses on the open market is difficult for the council, because of prices, though not impossible.

Meeting agreed to read reports over Christmas and consider how to proceed next month.

**Jan agenda**

## 3.3. St Andrews in Focus

Flora Selwyn, founder and editor, spoke on the new magazine's inspiration, aims and to ask for Community Council support.

The magazine was inspired by family connections with Stanford in Lincolnshire. They have a magazine running successfully for a town of 5000 pop; indeed their magazine has expanded and is credited with contributing to increased business in the town.

St Andrews many threads, she said, yet feels under siege. She hopes that St Andrews in Focus will help to give the town a sense of purpose and community.

There has been lots of verbal support and positive reports from advertisers. However producing a magazine costs money and while she has personally covered the several thousand pounds start-up the next issue has to show it can pay its way.

After some suggestions as to sources of advertising revenue it was agreed that the publicity committee and treasurer should look at paying for the Bulletin material to be published in St Andrews in Focus instead. To report in January, with an indication of the recommendation to Ms Selwyn beforehand.

**Publicity & Treasurer**

### 3.4. Public Toilets

Judy Routledge of New Gilston recounted some problems faced over the last few month trying to find open toilets when visiting St Andrews with her elderly parents. There seem to be particular problems with the East and West Sands toilets and the harbour. She had also heard that on occasions coach parties had been obliged to use museum toilets when public facilities were unexpectedly closed.

Pete Lindsay passed on the official opening times and dates for St Andrews toilets received from Roy Stewart of Environmental Services. Chris Lesurf suggested on a practical level that a RADAR key be sought to give access to disabled toilets, increasing the options available. She had raised the opening times of the East Sands toilets some months ago. Joe Lamb had written to the local press on the state of toilets in the town previously. Penny Uprichard feared that Fife Council intends to close may of the toilets in the guise of 'rationalisation'.

Cllr Frances Melville said the way the review of Fife toilets had dragged on for about three years was a dreadful state of affaires but it was moving again now. While decisions have not been made yet the feeling seems to be that facilities should be fit for the 21st century clean secure and staffed. In the matter to hand though she was aware that the West Sands had had bad vandal problems. She asked Ms Routledge to put her problems in writing so she can bring them up with officials and perhaps the East Area Services committee. Cllr Jane Ann Liston added that she had spoken to Roy Stewart who said something has gone wrong over the East Sands. There are staff paid to open these. He will investigate.

Agreed to write to Fife Council to express general concern over toilets.

**PL**

## 4. Fife Councillors

### 4.1. Frances Melville (West)

**4.1.1. Harbour Trust** Joe Lamb asked for various information concerning the make-up of the Harbour Trust and the electorate of the fishermen's representatives. Cllr Melville referred him to Ian Donald, clerk of the Harbour Trust for that information but pointed out again that the composition of the Trust is to be modernised. This is a complex legal process but she hoped that changes will be possible in the coming year.

**4.1.2. Enforcement of Planning Conditions** Ian Goudie asked if there was any progress to report on the issues raised in October 4.1.8 Craigtoun Housing? Not yet.

## 4.2. Sheila Black (South)

**4.2.1. Fire Station Grounds** noted

## 4.3. Bill Sangster (Central)

**4.3.1. Crawford Arts Centre** Meeting with Iain Smith MSP and the centre's board to discuss the threatened funding cut for 2005.

**4.3.2. Abbey Walk** Works on the roadside walls will require traffic controls (lights) up to 7th December.

**4.3.3. Farmers Market** Reasonably successful; hope to be able to stage again sometime. Ewen Sparks, Chair of the Merchants' Association, confirmed that they had no concerns about the market.

**4.3.4. Homeless Bins** Now making a report on bins left out in the Town Centre eg West Port & Raisin mentioned last month. Hopes for action from Environmental Services.

Dennis Macdonald raised a concern that the new paper recycling (blue) bins will be a bin too far; three per household is too many and take up too much room. He proposed the brown bins be used alternately for compostable waste and paper instead of yet another bin, but this did not gain support. Cllr Sangster agreed delivery needs to be better managed than were the brown bins.

**4.3.5. Byre Theatre** Ken Fraser noticed recently that on the Byre's list of funders there is no mention of the St Andrews Common Good Fund, just a blanket entry for Fife Council. He asked that Cllr Sangster investigate having the CGF acknowledged in its own right.

**4.3.6. Traffic Calming at Schools** Ian Goudie noted Fife Council had received an award for work on Safe Routes to Schools for a school in Torbain (west Fife). He asked if the initiatives involved will be brought to east Fife? Councillors replied that this was purely a west thing; they knew nothing of it until they saw the press reports.

## 4.4. Jane Ann Liston (South East)

**4.4.1. Bin Sizes** following on from 4.3.4 above she will continue to press for people to have a choice of bin sizes suitable for their needs. People do have the option not to take a bin, but she wondered what should be done about people opting out without good reason.

**4.4.2. University Liaison Meeting** Councillors were given an overview of how the university sees its future. Absolute maximum size is 7,000 students some years hence, with an increased proportion of postgraduates. They are reviewing their property occupation throughout town.

# 5. Planning Committee

Planning convenor Ian Goudie added to the printed reports:

## 5.6. John Knox Road

The developer's appeal against refusal of permission on the housing here was successful. Ian Goudie noted this continued erosion of the landscape setting of St Andrews. He pointed out that developers threats of loss of funding for low cost ("affordable") housing if permission was not granted immediately were, as expected, shown to be hollow. He cited this decision as yet another to add to the list of idiosyncratic planning appeals results allowing a near doubling of housing density from indicative planning guidance.

He asked what steps can be taken to ensure section 75 agreements area actually enforced in relation to this and other developments. He reiterated community council's concerned that there would be no long term gain (<15 years) of affordable housing to mitigate the loss of environment as owners will be able to sell for market prices then. He suggested other ways of providing a continuing supply of affordable housing must be considered urgently, such as the idea of co-operatives.

## 5.7. Petheram Bridge

He highlighted the lack of coherent transport overview for the North Haugh area or data justifying the need for more car parking spaces. Despite this officials have recommended approval.

## 5.7a. Kinnessburn Road

Developers had not co-operated with requests for scaffolding to help East Development Committee members get a feel for the size and layout of the proposed flats on their recent site visit. What indications there were, were incorrect according to reports of Fife Councillors who had been at the site. Despite the various problems with the size of development in this site officials have recommended approval.

### 5.8. Feddinch

A brief objection has been submitted on the reapplication to note community council's position formally without gong into detailed arguments; this application my be overtaken if the appeal over the previous version is successful.

### 5.9. Environmental Impact Assessments

Cllr Frances Melville has passed the questions raised in Appendix J to Development Service to investigate.

## 6. Matters Arising from previous meetings

### 6.1. Jubilee Tree

Archie Strachan reported that the tree itself cost about £180. Penny Uprichard has now found a bench of African hardwood costing £450 including flagstone and plaque.

Archie Strachan proposed approval of this expenditure. Murdo Macdonald seconded.

Pete Lindsay proposed an amendment that approval should be conditional on establishing that the wood was from a sustainable resource. Richard Douglas seconded. The amendment was unopposed.

Purchase of a bench etc approved provided the wood is from sustainable resources.

**approved**

### 6.2. Development Survey

**Noted**

## 7. New Business

### 7.1. Bus Station meeting

**Ken Fraser**

### 7.2. Access to Western North Haugh

Meeting did not feel that community council involvement would help at this stage. It was suggested Mr Clements try a direct approach to the Principal.

**PL**

### 7.3. Removal of BT Pay Phones

No objection to loss of town centre boxes with nearby alternatives.

### 7.4. 1 Greyfriars Garden

Inform the solicitors we are not maintaining the garden and suggest they contact Bill Sangster.

**PL**

### 7.5. Safety at the Lade Braes

Noted

### 7.6. Spectrum

Decided not to subscribe to this magazine.

### 7.7. - 7.10.

Noted

## 8. Reports from Officers

### 8.1. Chair

none

### 8.2. Treasurer

**8.2.1. Millennium Account** Totals over £3,000; Archie Strachan asks that community council consider soon what disposal should be made of this - a project, add to general funds, etc?

**8.2.2. 200 Club** As he will be leaving community council at the end of its current term, in May, Archie Strachan wishes to hand over to a new administrator at the end of this administrative year, which is the calendar year.

Richard Douglas agreed to look at taking this on.

**Richard Douglas**

### 8.3. Secretary

**8.3.1. Bus Services Letter** Chris Lesurf noted that the basic fare is now 80p.

**8.3.2. - 8.3.4.** Noted

## 9. Reports

### 9.1. From Committees

Report circulated:

**Recreation committee report**

1. Bulb planting by Canongate school Thursday 7th November with Hamish Matheson from horticultural society

2. Banner purchased cost £140, above budget but worth the extra.

3. Floral enhancement grant for £750 applied for 28th November to purchase plant tubs for road circles at

Craigtoun road and Strathkinness Low Road.

4. St Andrews week exhibition opened by Jim Brennan as Fife Council's Arts and Leisure spokesperson. New trophy donated by Michael Joy. Various other donations. Full report next meeting when all relevant information collated.

Committee convenor Joe Peterson added:

5. Links Trust to put in a flowerbed at the entrance to the Eden complex. R&A will consider extra funding.

6. Investigating a display at the war memorial; this may need planning permission.

7. While the banner was slightly over the original expected cost the new banner was very effective at advertising the Art & Photo Exhibition which had a very high attendance; mostly run by photographic club.

Community council thanked Joe Peterson and Ken Crichton for their work on St Andrews Week and the exhibition.

## 9.2. From Representatives

**9.2.1. Kate Kennedy Procession Committee** noted

# 10. Any Other Competent Business

## 10.1. Pipeland Road Seat

Dennis Macdonald reported that a bench at Pipeland Road health centre is rotten and in danger of collapse. He asked if community council should consider giving a replacement?

Cllr Bill Sangster to check who is responsible for the current bench.

**WS**

**11. Seasonal Refreshments**

Mince pies and sherry, etc, provided by Jane Ann Liston and Pete Lindsay.

Happy [insert festival here].

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