

Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

Provisional Minutes – March 2012

For Approval

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1. Attendance

Community Councillors

Patrick Marks, Ian Goudie, Marysia Denyer, Izzy Corbin, Robert McLachlan, Carol Ashworth, Judith Harding, Ronnie Murphy, Kyffin Roberts, Henry Paul, Ken Crichton, Ken Fraser, Penny Uprichard, Keith Cordrey, Andy Primmer, Meg Platt, Catherine Rowe

Students' Association Representatives

Chloe Hill

Nominated

Niall Scott

Lindsey Adam

Fife Councillors

Robin Waterston, Dorothea Morrison, Frances Melville

Apologies

Bill Sangster, Callum Corbin, Howard Greenwell

2. Minutes of February 2012 Meeting

Accepted without alteration.

3. Presentations

3.1. Introduction of 4 Bin Recycling – Paul Doherty

Paul Doherty from Fife Council presented the details of the changes to the bins taking place as recycling from kerbside increases. This has been taking place across Fife with St Andrews the latest to begin to receive the additional bin and hear about the changes in the existing bins.

Mr Doherty explained that the 4-bin service will start on the 19th March in St Andrews. He added that there will be large areas of exemption, notably the town centre and some peripheral streets such as Queens Gardens. Households exempted are being contacted by letter by Fife Council.

In the new service there will be a new green bin for plastics and tins, with the blue bin becoming the general waste bin, the grey bin the paper bin and the brown bin will now take all food waste as well as garden waste. He informed the meeting that areas, which already have the 4-bin service the recycling rate has increased to over 60% in contrast to areas with the 3-bin service where recycling is around 40%. Information packs have been delivered to local residents in recent weeks and bins are being delivered from this week.

Mr Marks asked why glass hadn't been included in the new scheme? Mr Doherty explained that this might happen eventually but for a range of reasons, such as health and safety including glass with plastic and paper in the green bin wasn't possible.

Mrs Rowe asked whether commercial premises might be receiving extra bins? She was concerned that bins were not being taken in, in reasonable time and that extra bins would constitute an obstacle for her. Mr

Doherty confirmed that the current scheme related only to domestic bins, but he also acknowledged the need for commercial and domestic users to take in their bins as soon as possible after they were emptied. His dept was looking at ways to encourage better practice in this area. He added that it was easier for the Council to encourage businesses to take in bins if they were owned by the Council but the Council had little control over bins from private waste contractors used by businesses.

Mrs Harding asked about the possibility of text messages being sent to anyone who wanted to have a reminder to put out their bins. She believed there had been a scheme tried out a few years ago. Mr Doherty replied that the Council might look at an email system of reminders but texting would be expensive and difficult to set up, so would be unlikely to be considered. Mrs Harding asked if such messages could be sent to agents of properties to get them to remind the tenants of their properties about their responsibility for putting out their bins? Mr Doherty thought that the Council might consider this as part of a development of the service.

Mrs Corbin wondered how Fife Council might get out the message to elderly residents who didn't access computers? Mr Doherty said that information posted would be the way that nearly everyone would be informed about the changes unless they had opted to receive information online. Mr Doherty added that Fife Council would be willing to send an officer out to speak with residents in any vulnerable category, such as some older people.

Mr Crichton queried Fife Council's inability to move bins obstructing the pavement if they were stopping use by pedestrians. He also asked how the bin collection would be organised in the expanded regime. In reply Mr Doherty said that it was difficult to catch commercial bin owners who didn't bring their bins in promptly because of the sporadic nature of the commercial collection, however the concern had been passed on to another team within Fife Council who would investigate the problem. In relation to the collection generally Mr Doherty said that there were dedicated lorries for each type of waste and if two bins were required to be out then the contents would be collected by two different lorries.

A member of the public asked Mr Doherty about the change in bin colours and the effect it would have upon areas like Hope Street, heavily used by tourists. She felt that the change of general waste bins to bright blue was inappropriate for the area and this was aggravated by the fact that properties were mostly sub divided thus increasing the number of bins needing to be put out, adding to the visual blight of the area. Mr Doherty acknowledged the concern and said that Cllrs Melville and Sangster had taken up the issue with his department and he would be happy to have further discussion outwith the meeting. The rationale behind the blue bins he said was that these bins had been used for paper recycling for several years and it was more economically viable for the Council to buy in similar bins at this time rather than look at an entirely different colour scheme.

Cllr Melville reminded the meeting that there were other conservation areas and wondered it wasn't possible to have bins in more subdued colours? Mr Doherty replied that they hadn't had this situation to date, but acknowledged that they had not been to many conservation areas. Le He concluded by saying that in the short term the Council couldn't change the bins at such short notice with the scheme starting in a couple of weeks, but might be willing to look at the situation later.

Mr Roberts thanked Mr Doherty for his interesting contribution to the meeting.

3.2. includeME – Mrs Davidson

Mrs Davidson explained that she represented an organisation called includeME, which is the Citizen Advocacy organisation for North-East Fife. There are two other similar organisations for other parts of Fife.

includeME works with anyone from 16 years upwards with learning difficulties. Advocacy is a statutory right for people with disabilities and they must be able to have an independent person to stand with them when required for a wide range of issues, such as meetings. includeME goes beyond mere advocacy and asks their volunteer advocates to become the disabled person's friend if possible for a longer period.

Mrs Davidson acknowledged that the main reason for her visit was to promote the need for more advocates from the community as there are never enough to meet the demand. She hoped that Community Councillors might be able to identify someone who is interested in taking on such a role. The University students have proved a good source of support. However not all of their users of the service can cope with a student advocate because of the long holiday breaks, hence the request for more local residents to act in this way.

The organisation tries to match advocates and users according to their interests and always matches according to sex to avoid any difficulties, which could arise in a mixed sex advocacy relationship. Support continues to be given to advocates by the organisation on a regular basis.

Mrs Davidson said that referrals came from a wide range of sources, from parents to organisations such as Rymouth. She acknowledged that there was a waiting list.

Mr Roberts asked about the time commitment required by advocates? Mrs Davidson suggested about 3-4 weeks as the period between contacts, though it was an individual decision and some advocates and their clients met up more frequently.

3.3. Byre Theatre – the future direction – Mr Frank Quinault

Mr Quinault, Chair of the Byre Theatre Board gave a presentation about developments at the Byre Theatre. One major change will be the Byre's involvement with the new Fife Cultural Trust, which will start in October 2012. This will cover the libraries and museums etc run by Fife Council as well as the five Council owned theatres after a consultant's recommendation. The Byre Board are minded to accept the idea, especially following the Consultant report recommendations, but do want to be certain that the strengths of the Byre can be safeguarded, such as its long history, community support and the St Andrews brand.

Mr Quinault described briefly the set up of the Fife Cultural Trust. The board includes the four Fife Councillors, himself as an independent director and Stewart Cross the Managing Director of Atfife. There is to be an advertisement to recruit seven more independent directors and a CEO has also to be appointed.

Mr Quinault went on to describe how the changes would impact upon the Byre. He acknowledged that significant savings will have to be made, partly because of the loss of a major grant from the Scottish arts Council this year. The exemption from the payment of non-domestic rates will be one source of savings, but other savings will have to be made through cost-cutting and sharing of resources. Despite this the Board felt that there would be benefits being within the bigger structure.

Mr Quinault reminded the meeting about a recent award achieved by the Byre, the Creative Place Award for 2012. This is a new initiative from Creative Scotland, partly sponsored by the Scottish Government. The byre and St Andrews had put a bid in in the category for towns of between 10000 – 100000 population and won against the competition. The award is £150000 and the byre will be doing three things with this funding. It will be used to support a range of creative activities in St Andrews this year the Creative Year of Scotland 2012. Various festivals such as Stanza and the St Andrews festival will be supported.

A second initiative will be a Community Musical called McPherson's Rant hopefully as a centre piece of the St Andrews festival.

A legacy element will be the setting up of office space in a nearby building to allow local festival organisers to have a base from which to develop their festivals.

Mr Primmer asked how the use of the Common Good Fund would change if the Byre became part of the new Trust? Mr Quinault acknowledged that he didn't know and reminded the meeting that the original decision to use Common Good Funds to assist the Byre was nothing to do with the management committee at that time. Funding from Fife Council is the Byre's only reliable source of income. Cllr Waterston confirmed that there was no intention to change the Common Good Fund payment going to the Byre even if it became part of the new Trust.

Ms Platt reminded the meeting of the Student Arts Festival – the On The Rocks Festival taking place next month with the Byre assisting in the Festival.

4. Fife Councillors

4.1. Frances Melville

4.1.1. Local Plan

Cllr Melville reminded the meeting that the publication of the Local Plan would be taking place in a couple of days. She acknowledged that the overall detail didn't contain a lot of good news. She confirmed that it was 724 pages long. She confirmed that the Southern hillside had been saved from development, but couldn't pre-empt the publication.

4.1.2. Traffic Markings – Lawhead School

Cllr Melville reported that new markings to resolve the parking issues at Lawhead have been down. How effective these will be is to be monitored.

4.1.3. Rose Park – Mesh Grills

Cllr Melville reported the presence of mesh grills at Rose Park, the origin and reason for which is being investigated.

4.1.4. Lights Replacement South Street

Street Lights are to be replaced in South Street and the work will start over the Easter weekend. She acknowledged that it wasn't the best timing by Fife Council.

4.1.5. Xmas Lights

Miss Uprichard asked why the xmas lights were still on in South Street. Cllr Melville acknowledged that she had asked but hadn't received a reply yet.

4.1.6. Local Plan

Miss Uprichard also asked if it was true that all the objections regarding the western development had been overruled. Cllr Melville silently acknowledged that that was the case.

4.1.7. 08451 Phone No

Mr Crichton asked about the Council's Call Centre number, which he believed was a mere money spinner and had little to do with increasing the efficiency of the Council and the satisfaction of the customer. Cllr Waterston replied that all large organisations used this number, but he acknowledged that there were unacceptable delays at times as the system had become overloaded.

4.2. Bill Sangster – absent – report sent in for meeting

4.2.1. New Changing Facility at Cockshaugh Park

Because of the better weather conditions we have been having and work is progressing better than we thought so the new building is now being delivered to the site on the 5th of March. This is a fantastic step forward in the upgrading of these type of facilities in the St Andrews area. It will be a building which will last for many years ahead and give our sports teams a fit for purpose unit to be proud of.

4.2.2. Melville Fountain

A contractor has been appointed to carry out the repair and replacement of working parts of the fountain and we await the costings of the work which will be required to have it in working order once more. We may have to apply for funding to allow this to go ahead and if successful my aim would be that we can have the fountain in operation for the summer months.

4.2.3. Kinnesburn

Work is still going on reinstating the path alongside the burn, and reseeding of the berms which have been left will get the go ahead soon.

4.2.4. The New Police Station

The building is in the process of getting adapted for its future use. This site is far better for the police being located in the heart of the community. It is hoped that the transition from North Street will take place within the next couple of months.

4.2.5. Bassaguard

The work in this area which is to develop the estate to a local small commercial estate is moving forward in a positive manner.

Development of the 10,000 sq ft area, which is at this time subject to securing planning consent and I think it would be of interest to the community that a more detailed time scale will soon be forthcoming.

4.2.6. Comfort Break Scheme

This is a scheme which is being rolled out through out Fife, it is giving the public added toilet facilities, utilising business premises, and funded by the Council. There is to be more information on the locality of these for tourists and the local community very soon. At present the 4 which in operation are Zest, Drouthy Neebors, the Byre Theatre and the Cosmos Centre. These facilities are recognised by a sticker in the window or door and is self explanatory. These are to compliment the toilets already available in Council properties and of course the existing ones which have always been available. More visible signage is being created at the moment.

4.3. Robin Waterston

4.3.1. New Half Hour Parking Charge

This new regulation is for North Street, Greyfriars Garden and Bell Street. This is subject to a period of statutory consultation and if it starts will be 50p per half hour.

4.3.2. Common Good Fund

Following a query from last month's meeting, Cllr Waterston explained the set up with Common Good Funding. All Common Good Funds are held in two types of account. One account is for revenue balances and the other is for capital balances. The latter are invested in ways to try and achieve a good return or income. Revenue balances can be transferred into the capital balances fund to similarly achieve extra income, but otherwise resemble a current account. The contribution towards the Martyrs Monument Fund was paid out of the revenue balances not capital balances. He added that £8000 had recently been transferred from revenue balances into capital balances to try and earn more interest for eventual expenditure. Mr Primmer asked if the Common Good Funds were audited and was it possible to examine them? Cllr Waterston confirmed yes to both queries. Dr Goudie wondered if Cllr Waterston was happy with the financial management of the Common Good Funds? Cllr Waterston acknowledged that he wasn't very happy about the set up. He added that there was a real difficulty as there were so many Common Good Funds across Fife, from very small to large ones like St Andrews with assets worth around ½ million pounds. He acknowledged that surplus revenue was not transferred as often as Councillors would like and blamed the shortage of staff to administer the funds.

4.3.3. Union Street Road Work

There will be road work in Union Street 5-8 March and 12-16 March. Cllr Waterston acknowledged that this could be frustrating but said that it would be the last for a while. He added that there was going to be some work done at Preistden Place and the bottom of Warrack Street as well.

4.3.4. Botanic Gardens

A consultant Peter Fairlie has been engaged to produce a business report on the setting up of the trust.

4.3.5. Madras School Redevelopment Situation

Mr Primmer wondered if it was true that no decision will be made until after the May Election? Cllr Waterston confirmed that there would be no Education Committee meeting until after the elections, but said that background, preparatory work looking at the options would be ongoing by officials. Lindsey Adam asked why the ½ hr parking charge was only for certain streets and not all the town centre. Cllr Waterston acknowledged that he couldn't be clear on the exact reason, except that these had been the streets originally consulted upon for this change in charge.

4.3.6. North Street Work

Mrs Rowe asked when the work in north Street would be finished. Cllr Waterston confirmed that it would be just before Easter.

4.3.7. Public Lavatory Closure

Miss Uprichard asked about the plans to close some public lavatories in St Andrews and elsewhere to save money, around £200000 a year. She wondered whether this was a good idea? Cllr Waterston in reply made members aware that in Fife some public toilets were administered by Transportation Services and some by Community Services. The announcement about closures only affected those administered by Transportation Services not Community Services. He acknowledged that it was a serious matter and mentioned the Comfort Scheme in which local businesses were being encouraged to publicise the fact that they would allow members of the public access to their toilet facilities if there were no Council run toilets. He did also acknowledge that there would have to be savings though there will be extra money this coming year in local budgets in which communities might have an opportunity to have a say on how they might like it to be spent on local amenities. Mrs Corbin expressed concern at the loss of public facilities and whether the comfort scheme replacements would be adequate or indeed freely available without having to pay for the privilege and she cited an example of having to pay for coffee before getting a numbered access code for a toilet! Cllr Waterston agreed that the scheme had to be properly set up with signing and clear instructions to the premises offering their toilets as to how the scheme operated.

4.4. Dorothea Morrison

4.4.1. Harbour Toilets

Cllr Morrison said that the Harbour toilets will be transferred to the Harbour Trust once the lease is sorted out. At present the toilets are shut in the winter as they have no electricity and the water is turned off to prevent freezing and pipe damage. The new Harbour Trust lease will require the toilets to be open all year round with longer opening times.

Cllr Morrison added that the West Sands and East Sands toilets are run by Community Services. She also added that the Council has no legal obligation to provide public toilets. She acknowledged the problems when toilets were shut and was disappointed with the response from Transportation Services in relation to the Harbour toilets. She confirmed to Mrs Corbin that the toilets proposed to be closed, such as the Harbour Toilet come under the Transportation services remit.

Mr Primmer asked why it required two Fife Council Depts to run the toilets? Cllr Morrison acknowledged that this did seem ridiculous and felt that all members probably had similar views on the subject. Mr Roberts added an example of the issues such a disparity creates with toilets close to each other maintained by different Fife Council Depts!

Miss Uprichard suggested that the council should perhaps consider franchising the toilets to someone to run and maintain them and she also mentioned the need for clearer signposting to toilets.

4.4.2. Half Hour Parking

Cllr Morrison added that some anomalies in the Residents Parking Permits had also been sorted out when the parking charges had been changed.

4.4.3. 08451 Numbers

Cllr Morrison acknowledged Mr Crichton's concerns and added that no satisfactory answer to questions about the system had been received despite several questions being asked of Fife Council.

4.4.4. Lawhead School Parking Restrictions

Cllr Morrison informed the meeting that while yellow lines have been laid down by Lawhead School no signs have gone up. These are necessary to make the lines officially legal.

4.4.5. Craigtoun Park Meeting

Cllr Morrison thought that the Craigtoun Park meeting had gone well and she was impressed by the ideas being mentioned.

At this juncture the recording has been lost due to a technical problem arising before the secretary could save the remainder of the meeting audio!

5. Planning Committee

5.1. Planning Committee Reports

Mr Roberts reported back for the Planning Committee as Mr Greenwell, Chair of the Planning Committee was on holiday. Mr Roberts reported no particularly controversial local planning applications, but there was an acknowledgement of the ongoing issues around Madras College and its future, as well as the Feddinch Plans and the Lingo Wind Farm applications.

6. Matters Arising

6.1. Martyrs Monument & CGF

Mrs Ashworth reported that the tender documents had been sent out for the Martyr's Monument by Fife Council. She also reported that the fund for the monument currently stood at £132895 with the hope of more donations soon. The closing date for contracts would be the 25th March.

6.2. StandEN Report

No report this month on StandEN. Mr Mclachlan queried whether there needed to be a report given the status of StandEN in relation to the Community Council. Mr Murphy agreed that the need for a report was open to question and may not remain on the agenda. There was no dissent to this view.

6.3. Craigtoun Update

Mr Roberts reported on the recent Craigtoun meeting, which he felt had been quite successful and had brought together some enthusiastic people to form a management committee. There are currently 10 names on this provisional committee.

Recent surveys of the bed of the ponds have not noted any problems with the beds, which are in good order. Tenders have been issued by Fife Council Procurement to seek proposals to run the various facilities.

6.4. Botanic Gardens Update

Dealt with earlier by Cllr Waterston's report

6.5. The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Celebrations

This may not have a large input from the Community Council as the Byre theatre in conjunction with the St Andrews Football Club are discussing the idea of putting on a weekend of events at the Football Club. There is also some talk about a beacon being lit as part of a nationwide event, something in which the University have a major role, though there could be some form of community participation according to Niall Roberts.

6.7. Reports from Representatives

6.7.1. St Andrews in Bloom

The next meeting is on Friday 9th March. The "Bloom Group" has enlisted the help of many local organisations, local schools & independent groups including the "Gardener's Club". Cllr Morrison is in close links with the University to see what they can do to promote our town's floral displays for 2012, in forthcoming Local & National competitions. The organisers wondered whether in conjunction with Mr Ken Crichton, the CC could assist with the planters surrounding the Cenotaph? VOLUNTEERS are needed for removing old plants, dead heading plants, & general maintenance.

If anyone can offer help, please let the group know by contacting: polonica132@googlemail.com

6.8. Any Other Matters Arising

No other matters arising

7. Committee Reports

7.1 Recreation Committee

There had been no Recreation Committee meeting in February but the next one is planned for 8th March. Mrs Denyer reminded the meeting about the planned Coffee morning on the 14th April. Mr Fraser put in a plea for donations for the stalls, especially the book stall. Mrs Denyer also commented briefly on two other meetings she had attended in which there was Recreation Committee interest as detailed below:

Jubilee Celebrations:

This is well in hand, ably organised by St Andrews United Football Club & the Byre Theatre Logistics team, led by Stephen Sinclair. The CC involvement is minimal, compared with last April's "Wedding Breakfast"! We can help with stewarding in some capacity but we could also run a stall on the Monday "Community Day". It would be appreciated that CC members are asked to put forward proposals as to what kind of stall this should be. Please remember that this is to raise funds for the St Andrews United Football Club!

No 1 Greyfriars Garden:

The recent planning application has been approved. At present the Chair of the Preservation Trust, Mr Graham Wynd, is in dialogue with the owner. We await the results of their communication.

7.2. General Purposes

No meeting report

7.3. 200 Club

1st Sir Michael Bonallack, 2nd Mrs C Rowe, 3rd Mr C Sanderson

7.4. Health, Education and Welfare Committee

Mrs Corbin reported on activity within this committee. One proposal was to try and organise a competition involving the local schools in which the pupils drew pictures of events held by the Community Council with the results possibly being printed into a calendar. There could be a prize of something like a book token for those children whose pictures were chosen for the calendar. This idea is to be investigated further.

8. New Business

8.1. Local Exchange Trading Scheme

This was noted and there was a suggestion that the organisers might want to have a presence at the Coffee morning to publicise this idea. Details were published in the agenda. A public meeting is to be held at the Cosmos Centre on the 9th March.

9. Reports from Office Bearers

9.1. Chair

9.1.1 Chairs Report – Details lost due to software problems

9.2. Treasurers Report

A copy of the Treasurer's monthly report of the state of CC finances was circulated prior to the meeting, with paper copies available for those who required them. Mr Paul also commented upon the St Andrews Community Trust's first anniversary. There had been just under the £30000 given out, and this coming year the Links was putting in £82000 based on the agreed percentage of profits from their shop business. There had also been slight alterations to the wording in the charter of the Charity at the recommendation of the regulator. Mr Paul briefly explained that there would be minor wording changes for specific tax reasons, which wouldn't affect the Charity's general functioning, but could save money. Mr Paul proposed that the CC accept the wording changes, Mr Crichton seconded the proposal. There was no dissent.

9.3 Secretary

9.3.1. Correspondence – see appendix A.

The secretary commented that correspondence of interest was listed in the appendix of the agenda. The secretary briefly went through correspondence for the benefit of the meeting. Mr Marks also brought up the issue of meeting dates in the next couple of months. He informed the meeting that there will not be a meeting at the beginning of May because of the Public Holiday, but the meeting will be the preceding Monday 30th April. Mr Marks also pointed out that the June meeting would be taking place over another long holiday weekend and suggested moving it back a week to the 28th May. These dates were agreed and Mr Marks will inform the hall caretakers of these changes.

10. Any Other Competent Business