

Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

Minutes – July 2010

For Approval

(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 late 1997 on are on line at <http://www.standrewscc.net/>)

1. Attendance

Community Councillors

Ronnie Murphy, Ian Goudie, Judith Harding, Carol Ashworth, Henry Paul, Marysia Denyer, Audrey McAnaw, Izzy Corbin, Dave Finlay

Students' Association Representative

Rebecca Ladley, Owen Wilton

Nominated

Fife Councillors

Frances Melville, Dorothea Morrison

Apologies

Patrick Marks, Robin Waterston, Bill Sangster, Ken Fraser, Jill Hardie, Catherine Rowe, Penny Uprichard, Derek Skelhon, Marysia Denyer, Meg Platt, Andy Primmer, Holly West, Jude Innes

2. Minutes of June 2010 Meeting

5.3. 3rd Paragraph 1050 houses should be "1090".

5.3. 6th Para – Richard should be "Uprichard".

7.4.1. Delete extra wording to read, "Mrs Corbin mentioned she'd received an invitation etc".

Treasurer's Report – Mr Primmer to be replaced by Mr Pead in two sentences.

3. Presentations

3.1. Presentation by Mrs Ashworth

Dr Goudie sought the Council's approval to let Mrs Ashworth briefly talk about some thoughts and concerns relating to the Community Council.

Mrs Ashworth explained that her decision to speak related to events at the June meeting and how these had led her to consider resignation. She felt that there needed to be changes as to how the Community Council was run. She wanted to suggest ways to address the issues, which concerned her in this area.

She thought there should be an induction pack or booklet for new members, detailing how the Council and its sub-committees worked, as well as the activities in which the Community Council participated and the responsibilities of each Councillor. She felt that new councillors were often given little guidance about how they could contribute depending upon their abilities/interests.

She was concerned that some Community Councillors had their own agendas, which she felt stifled democracy.

She felt that the broad issue of politeness needed to be addressed. This encompassed politeness to each other and to those members of the public attending meetings, whom she felt should be welcomed and names. Invited guests should not be kept waiting.

With respect to fundraising she sensed a degree of negativity. She felt that a Coffee Morning should be held, as this would have multiple benefits, including the chance for local people to interact with their Community Councillors.

She also wanted to see the students more included in Community Council activities.

Going on to the format of Community Council Meetings she felt that Sub – Committee Convenors should put meeting reports online, prior to the monthly meeting. Members could then ask questions at the main meeting about the sub-committee reports. She thought that there should be time limits for each Convenor, with Planning limited to ¾ hour.

She felt that there should be time within every meeting for an invited speaker, such as HMOs, the remit of the Locality Officer and the issues of concern in their working day for the Fife Councillors.

She felt that the Community Council should act as a team, working for the town's best interest.

In response Mrs McAnaw acknowledged that she might have benefited from an induction pack as suggested by Mrs Ashworth. Mrs McAnaw also acknowledged the difficulty she had a finding time to read the minutes before the CC Meeting and questioned the need of the minutes to be so verbatim. Dr Goudie acknowledged that there was no requirement on Mr Marks to write such a detailed minute, but added that with modern technology it was possible for minutes to be much closer to a verbatim account and he thought this might take less time than attempting to précis the minutes. Mr Crichton added that in 1999 an issue had arisen in the Community Council that had led to a decision to write minutes with greater clarity.

Mr Wilton felt that Mrs Ashworth's points were very relevant with respect to the Community Council operated and wanted the meeting to concentrate on those, rather than the issues of the minutes, which he felt was a bureaucratic matter.

Mrs Harding said that she appreciated what Mrs Ashworth had said, and agreed with quite a lot of it. She felt that issues like making sure members were aware of the remit of the sub-committees were worthy of further consideration. Mrs Harding also briefly commented on the mention of the Planning Committee by Mrs Ashworth and the time it required in the full Council meeting.

Dr Goudie thought that while there had been major planning matters, he didn't think that the Planning Committee had taken as much as ¾ of an hour in the last few meetings. However he acknowledged that planning issues could arise in other parts of the meeting, so could add up to a longer period of time.

Dr Goudie reminded the meeting of Mrs Ashworth's comment about the way the Community Council should work for the town, not for narrow interests and supported this fully. He also recognised the potential different values members had in relation to different issues affecting the town.

Dr Goudie after some reflection thought that the Community Council would have to go through Mrs Ashworth's points and see what could be done about them. He added that in relation to the idea of an induction pack, much of the relevant material was already on the website and he was trying to improve upon that. He reminded the meeting that induction packs would require work from someone to put together. Mr Murphy added his support for the idea of a web-based induction pack. He felt that the one of the most important issues raised by Mrs Ashworth was the need for Convenors of committees to put meeting reports online. Dr Goudie supported Mr Murphy's view on the meeting reports. He also reminded the meeting that being a body consisting of volunteers, it would not be good to make the work too onerous. He also acknowledged that to have information from committees before a meeting, would improve the efficiency of the main meeting.

Mr Paul thought that the Convenor of sub committees should send in their reports, when the secretary issued a request for agenda items. He felt that it would improve efficiency if minutes/reports were available before the meeting.

Mr Roberts commented on the need for willing helpers on the council and felt that Mrs Ashworth was a willing helper, which was why he hoped she'd remain on the Community Council.

Dr Goudie in summing up added that if any members had grievances, these should be aired as appropriate to councillors. He acknowledged the difficulty in getting everything right, given the huge amount of correspondence he received as Chair. Dr Goudie advised Mrs Ashworth that he was proposing to have a GP Meeting later in the month to look at the issues raised, and asked if she could provide a hard copy of her proposals.

Mrs Ashworth mentioned the idea of a social lunch for Community Councillors, which she thought might help to get Councillors to know one another better. Dr Goudie replied that he was open to good ideas, and hoped that members would be willing to email round their ideas, to try and get a basis of agreement for them.

Dr Goudie asked Mrs Ashworth if she would be willing to rejoin the body of the meeting if she felt that she was happy with the response to her proposals. Mrs Ashworth rejoined the body of the meeting.

4. Fife Councillors

4.1. Frances Melville

4.1.1. "A" Boards

Cllr Melville reported that she was following up on this matter, raised by Mrs Rowe. There had been another instance of a business almost blocking the pavement with a mix of boards, tables and chairs. She was also seeking an update from the Head of Transportation Services on the information to be given out to businesses on what was good and bad practice in this area. Dr Goudie cautioned against reading too much into the statistical outcome of a survey on 'A' boards, which he thought didn't reflect the true concerns of those most affected by this pavement furniture.

4.1.2. Blue Flag Awards

Cllr Melville reminded the meeting that the Award Ceremony for the Blue Flag status was taking place the following day. The West Sands has retained its Blue Flag status.

4.1.3. Greyfriars Gardens

Cllr Melville reported back on a recent meeting about the Greyfriars Garden issue. Mr Birrell has agreed to write to the owner on a number of issues. She hoped that there would be a positive outcome.

4.1.4. Induction Packs

Cllr Melville commented that Fife Councillors were given an induction pack when they were elected. She wondered whether it might be possible to ask for something for Community Councillors? Mr Paul informed the meeting that he had a booklet produced by Fife Council detailing the Community Council scheme.

4.1.5. Sailing Club Boat Yard Lease

Cllr Melville wondered about the possibility of a meeting of the various parties with an interest in the matter? Dr Goudie felt that this was a valuable suggestion as long as the broader community view was taken into account.

4.1.6. Cockshaugh Park Toilets

Cllr Melville reported that the tenders had been done for work to improve the facilities at Cockshaugh Park in the autumn. Mrs Harding reported on graffiti at the back of the Cockshaugh changing rooms, which she had reported a couple of months ago. Cllr Melville replied that there was a graffiti removal team who could deal with the removal of the graffiti.

4.1.7. Fife Plan

Cllr Melville reported on a recent planning meeting at which the Fife Plan with modifications had been on the agenda. She reported that seven of eight modifications had been accepted. There was a division of opinion on an eighth. Cllr Melville explained that all that could be done when there was a difference of opinion on a modification was for the difference of opinion to be noted and sent as a view to the Reporter. The modification couldn't be changed.

4.2. Bill Sangster

Apologies

4.3. Robin Waterston

Apologies

4.4. Dorothea Morrison

4.4.1. Temporary Closure of Bell Street

On 26th July until the following Monday, Bell Street will be closed for a major gas repair for traffic not pedestrians. Dr Goudie expressed concern about the potential for traffic chaos. Mr Paul wondered about the possibility of reopening the Westport to outgoing traffic, feeling that this might ease some of the congestion. Cllr Morrison agreed to take the idea to the next locality meeting.

4.4.2. Tom Morris Drive Playing Field Facilities

The local junior football team, the Colts would like to lease the changing rooms. Cllr Morrison felt that this was a good move and she'd be assisting in sourcing possible funding to improve the facilities.

4.4.3. Sailing Club Boatyard

She thought that the idea of a meeting was a good one. She felt however that there had been a misunderstanding about the plans of Fife Council. Part of the idea of possibly offering the lease of the boatyard to the Harbour Trust was to give it some additional income, to help pay towards maintaining the harbour.

4.4.4. Roundabout at the New Hospital

Mr Roberts reported on the poor state of this new roundabout with weeds growing in it. There is also an area of ground opposite Morrisons, which has only been half cut and looks untidy.

5. Planning Committee

5.1. Minutes of the Planning Committee

Mr Murphy asked about the reasons for objecting to Hamilton Hall. Mr Roberts reported that the Planning Committee didn't like the idea of two additional stories on top of Hamilton Hall, feeling that it did not fit in with the current building outline. Mr Paul added that the plans would see the roof area level and the tower would not stand out as it does at present. Mr Murphy acknowledged that the plan seemed to be a different one to the original one from earlier in the year. Mr Ashworth informed the meeting that she'd learnt by chance that the Scores Hotel was due to put a planning application in to increase its size. She also thought that the Scores Hotel might not be very happy with the plans for Hamilton Hall given its proximity to that building. Mr Roberts added that the Planning Committee's main concern was the roofline aspect of the overall plans, rather than the idea of renovating the property generally.

5.2. Comments of Tayplan Proposals

Miss Uprichard had noted that the Community Council hadn't put in any comments on the Tayplan. Comments should have been in by the 2nd July, but she'd managed to secure an extension until 16th July.

5.3. World Heritage Status Application

Miss Uprichard hoped that this application would enjoy the support of the Community Council. Details would be discussed by the Planning Committee.

6. Matters Arising

6.1. Climate Challenge Fund

Since the last meeting there had been interviews for the Energy Champions and four people had been offered the positions, though the response to the job advert had been a bit disappointing. He had also advertising for the Co-ordinator post and had a much better response with over 40 responses. Out of that list, six will be interviewed. He had also managed to book the City and Guilds Training for the Champions between the 20th - 23rd July.

A leaflet was produced to promote the new project and distributed at the Hidden Gardens weekend, with some leads obtained. At a meeting with EST and HIS they had been informed about 380 leads for the new project to follow up. A website has also been set up as part of the project.

Mr Paul added that the take up had been a lot more successful in Leven, but in St Andrews there had been a lot of shut doors. He felt that this was partly due to a lack of understanding so Mr Paul thought that a joint Coffee Morning might be a good way to get through to more local people. A provisional date for such an event is the 17th September. Dr Goudie acknowledged that there was a problem with the number of people coming around from various organisations. Mrs Ashworth suggested trying to get more in the press to make people aware of the availability of this service. Mr Paul replied that the press had been muted in its response in using the material sent about the funding, to say the least!

6.2. Arms Report

Mr Paul reported further progress on the proposals.

6.3. Election of New Community Council Members.

Dr Goudie informed the meeting that there were 2 applicants for Mr Pead's place. Onkar S Parmar and Callum Corbin were the applicants. Mr Murphy and Mr Paul commented upon the situation. Mr Paul suggested that both come to the next meeting to present themselves to the Council. Mrs Corbin speaking on behalf of Callum, said that he'd be happy to wait until another space was available and allow Onkar to take the present vacancy. Dr Goudie thanked Mrs Corbin for the offer and reminded the meeting that the decision would be short term anyway as Community Council elections take place later this year.

Dr Goudie explained the way the Community Council election worked following a query from Rebecca Ladley. Mr Crichton also explained the reason for student representation. Dr Goudie also commented that Fife Council would need to be made aware if the St Andrews Community Council election was to be at a later date.

Dr Goudie asked the meeting if the Council was happy to elect Onkar Parmar following Mrs Corbin's offer regarding her son's interest? Mr Paul proposed that Mr Parmar be elected to the current vacancy. This was agreed unanimously by the meeting.

Mr Marks to email Mr Parmar to inform him of his election.

6.4. Reports from Representatives

No reports

6.5. Any Other Matters Arising

No matters arising

7. Reports from Committees

7.1. Recreation Committee

7.1.1 The Bandstand Concerts

The recent Bandstand Concert had to be cancelled, but Tayport Band has been offered the 8th August as an alternative date. Mr Roberts asked for volunteers to help at the concert on the 8th August, as he will be on holiday. The Community Council will also have a licence to hold a charitable collection during the concerts.

7.1.2. Recreation Committee Meeting Date

There will be a Recreation Committee meeting on the 17th July.

7.1.3. Young Citizen of the Year

Mrs McAnaw asked about this event. Mr Roberts replied that there had been difficulties getting names. Some discussion followed about the way to attract nominations. Dr Goudie asked that members pass ideas about the event to Mrs McAnaw.

7.2. General Purposes Committee

Some discussion took place about a possible date and location. To be checked out and emailed to members

7.3. 200 Club

Mr Paul suggested that the 200 Club should list recent donations made when it appears on the Community Council website. This was agreed to be a good idea.

7.4. Health, Education and Welfare Committee

7.4.1. Martyrs Monument Meeting

Mrs Corbin reported on a recent meeting on this project. She felt that the plans were progressing quite well. There had been discussion as to whether the monument should be subject to restoration or preservation. Fife Council will get an architectural survey done. The work will go out to tender when this survey has been done. Historic Scotland will also be consulted about the plans. There will be a public notification consultation at a later stage.

8. New Business

8.1. John Lewis Project

This was discussed as a possible small one off project to assist the Film Company making an advert for John Lewis Partnership. The idea was to leaflet local properties in the Scores in order to try and get agreement to temporarily empty the area of parked vehicles to allow the advert to be filmed. Mr Marks did advise his contact prior to the meeting that the Community Council did not really feel that it was appropriate to become involved, partly because of the very late timing of the request and questions about the idea's viability during a busy period in the town. Mr Marks received no further contact about the matter. The CC meeting also rejected the idea following discussion.

8.2. Blue Flag Award

Mr Crichton is to represent the Community Council at this Awards Ceremony on the 6th July.

9. Reports from Office Bearers

9.1. Chair

Dr Goudie thanked Community Councillors for their replies to the draft of the letter to Mr Headon.

9.2. Treasurer's Report

Mr Paul reported on the state of the Community Council accounts. He asked the Community Council if his use of a spreadsheet format was acceptable. He said that it would let him keep a better track of the accounts.

Mr Paul reminded the meeting that the money held in reserve accounts was only for the specified purposes, namely the Old Folks Treat and the Ceilidh.

Mr Paul mentioned that at the present time there was a projected under spend, as he'd received no requests for money to date. He cautioned the CC not to be too reticent about spending as appropriate because anything under 80% could see a claw back by Fife Council. He asked for suggestions for possible small grants for community causes.

Mr Roberts asked where the Bandstand Concerts came into Mr Paul's calculations. Mr Paul said that he'd costed the concerts into the budget, but expenditure would depend upon the success of various grant applications.

Dr Goudie added that there might need to be a bit of expenditure in relation to the elections later in the year, and possibly following the outcome of Miss Uprichard's legal challenge and the possible need to make local people aware of planning issues if the challenge didn't go favourably.

Mrs Harding wondered about possibly buying some digital storage for the Planning Committee to help it keep copies of plans downloaded from the Fife website. Mr Paul suggested that a portable hard drive might be an answer.

9.3. Secretary's Report

No report – Secretary on holiday.

10. AOCB

10.1. Byre Theatre

Mrs McAnaw wondered if the Community Council were doing anything about the problems facing the Byre financially. Mrs Corbin felt that the Community Council should write a letter to send to the Arts Council supporting the Byre. Mrs Corbin was prepared to write a letter. Dr Goudie briefly commented on the history of the new Byre and added that a decision to withdraw a major source of funding was indefensible in his view. Mr Crichton said that by the CC constitution the CC was obliged to support the Byre.

Mrs Corbin to write a letter following further enquires at the Byre about how best to voice support. To keep the CC informed by email of her progress.

10.2. St Andrews Trusts reform

Mr Paul reminded the CC about these plans by Fife Council to amalgamate various local Trusts into a couple of larger bodies. Mr Paul had contacted Fife Council and Fife Council has responded by agreeing to have a meeting on the 22nd July with Dr Goudie and Mr Paul. Mr Paul suggested that they would be asking for representation on any new Trust as a Trustee. Dr Goudie felt that CC had a very strong case to ensure that funds were used for local needs as originally required.

10.3. Coffee Morning – 17th September

Mr Paul talked about a proposed Coffee Morning. He felt that there should be regular events of this sort to advertise the CC and its work as well as Standen's work and anything else relevant. Mr Paul requested approval to book the Coffee Morning on 17th September.