

Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

Provisional Minutes – 5th December 2016

0. New Member

Mr Dita Stanis-Traken introduced himself to the meeting. He said that his decision to stand was born out of a deep love for St Andrews and a longstanding family connection with the town. He acknowledged that in the maelstrom of specific agendas, particular projects and special interest groups the husbandry of St Andrews could be lost. He felt that a special care needed to be taken of the town with its great history and renown to avoid damaging it to a fatal degree and losing what makes it special.

Mr McLeod asked members whether they would be happy to accept Mr Stanis-Traken's application? There was no dissent to Mr Stanis-Traken joining the Community Council and he was welcomed to the meeting.

1. Attendance

Community Councillors

Callum MacLeod, Howard Greenwell, Kyffin Roberts, Ian Goudie, Gordon Shepherd, Iain Munn, Izzy Corbin, Patrick Marks, Judith Harding, Henry Paul, Greg Newman, Harry Stewart, Dita Stanis-Traken, John Jardine

Students' Association Representatives

Co-Opted

Niall Scott

Lindsey Adam

Fife Councillors

Brian Thomson

Apologies - Keith McCartney, Ken Crichton, Frances Melville, Judith Harding, Aine Bennett, Jamie Mcleod, Ken Crichton, Charlotte Andrew, Dorothea Morrison.

2. Minutes of Meeting – November 2016

The minutes were accepted as correct.

3. Presentations

3.1. Police Report from PC Joanne Peddie

PC Peddie started by mentioning campaigns, which Police Scotland had recently started, a major one being a Drink/Drive campaign for the next 4 weeks. She reminded the meeting that the Cycle Campaign was also in full swing with the police and University co-operating to try and get students to take seriously the need to have bike lights and to know how to cycle safely. She thought that the message was gradually getting through about lights with more students acknowledging the benefit. There was also a retail campaign in which the police would be patrolling around the town ready to respond to possible criminal activity and to give the shop owners and public some confidence that possible perpetrators would be apprehended. In January the police would be looking at rural crimes.

She went on to tell the meeting that there had been 55 recorded crimes in the past month in St Andrews. Mr Munn asked for more specific categorisation of the crimes reported. PC Peddie said that the bulk of reported crimes were petty thefts, assaults and breaches of the peace. There were only a couple of more serious crimes within the statistics, related to things like drink driving.

Miss Uprichard asked about the use of mobile phones in vehicles. PC Peddie said that the bulk of car related offences such as phone use was dealt with by the traffic police. Dr Shepherd related an incident he'd seen of dangerous driving by someone using a phone and wondered what members of the public could do? PC Peddie advised that the police could be contacted and if given the car registration details they could contact the driver and make them aware of the fact that their behaviour had been observed and to cease such behaviour. PC Peddie acknowledged that there wasn't much more could be done in terms of prosecution, but was hopeful that a warning might deter most drivers from such behaviour.

Cllr Thomson mentioned an issue with dialling 101 on O2 mobiles. PC Peddie acknowledged that there had been an issue with some networks and Police Scotland were working with phone companies to resolve any connection difficulties.

Mr Greenwell thanked PC Peddie and her colleagues for their support at the beating of the retreat at the end of last month.

3.2. Clean & Green Presentation by David Angus, St Andrews BID

Mr Angus is the Clean & Green Project manager working under the St Andrews Environmental Network banner, but working on behalf of BID. His plan was to give the meeting a run down of the project aims and the work to be done. Early in 2017 they hoped to have funding to employ people currently unemployed to work on the project, getting training in disciplines relevant to their roles. Fife Council would be paying some staffing costs, with BID, St Andrews Environment Network and the Botanic Gardens also contributing something to the running of the project.

He explained that the BID plan was broken down into five areas. One area was to ensure that the visitor experience was a positive one in all ways. He went on to talk about specific problem issues such as the bin saga in the town centre. One of the complicating factors in getting these properly managed so they don't continue to be an issue is that there are about 14 companies involved in managing the collection of the commercial bins. David acknowledged that this was a difficult area to manage but they have been speaking to businesses to try and find a better and less obtrusive way to reduce the problem. Possible ideas like sharing bins has been mooted to businesses as this would reduce the number of companies coming to town.

Seagull proof bags have been seen as another way to tidy up the town. In some properties the use of bins is not possible and these bags are seen as a suitable way to safely dispose of waste with no concern about seagulls gaining access.

David explained that the project aimed to cover a diverse range of issues which were having varying effects upon the environment of the town such as street access, commercial waste, public bins, telephone boxes, monitoring temporary signs etc. David added that the public could report anything, which might fit into this broad range of categories and about which there might be a solution to resolve the problem. In relation to the way commercial bins are put on the street often blocking cycle racks he said that his project would record the offender and try to get businesses to act more responsibly, partly by briefing their staff to place the bins properly. He felt that staff were a major part of the problem taking bins out and dumping them thoughtlessly by the racks etc. He hoped that a bit of education would see a reduction in this problem.

Another area causing some public disquiet were the "A" boards used by businesses with some businesses worse offenders than the other. He thought that Fife Council had to be proactive in speaking to businesses rather than just arbitrarily removing the boards without warning the business in question.

On-street storage was another growing problem with Domino's Pizza a prime example of partly blocking the pavement with stacks of boxes. This was also an enforcement issue for Fife Council with Dominos needing to be told to adhere to the rules about clear pavement space. At present the firm have responded by stacking the boxes against the wall of their premises, not really solving the problem of the unsightliness of the boxes.

Fife Council litter pickers have also been observed not doing their job properly and this has been taken up with the relevant manager in Fife Council who has responded by speaking to staff.

Another regular issue at specific times of year are blocked drains causing flooding because leaves and litter haven't been cleared. Dave said that South Street and the Scores were not well serviced with clearing the leaves etc.

Removal of temporary street work signs has been a bit of an issue as well, with signs, which should be uplifted within a specified time still in places weeks later causing an obstruction. Dave has spoken to Fife Council about the subject and said that he had been responding by moving the errant signs and piling them out of the way with Fife Council permission.

Graffiti is another regular issue disfiguring buildings etc. Dave has a direct line to a senior manager in the relevant Fife Council department to press for work to be done more speedily. Paint spills in public are something Dave suggested members should report to Fife Council although he has scraped some from pavements as well.

Dave explained that they were also working with Fife Council and Fife Countryside and Coastal Trust to manage litter in public areas. The group had also cleared the garden at Greyfriars Gardens and junction with St Marys Place, which is private but has been neglected for many years. They will continue to baby sit that area.

A big area of work is dealing with students inappropriately dumping household refuse because Fife Council doesn't give them sufficient facilities to place their rubbish. Dave said that this problem was partly because Fife Council assumed that students didn't produce as much litter as families. Dave felt that private landlords also had a responsibility to provide sufficient bins and he was discussing with the Student Association about putting information in student packs about refuse disposal.

Another problem is the sticking of fliers on to phone boxes and public bins. This is mainly a student problem. A more widespread problem creating unsightly areas is the disposal of chewing gum and cigarettes. Currently ashtray areas on top of public bins are the norm but can be unsightly. A possible solution for cigarette butts and chewing gum he thought might be specific boxes into which to put these items making their disposal easier and reducing the unsightliness of the bins.

Continuing on the bins theme Dave commented about the excessive number of public bins with around 50 in Market Street alone. He added that many were on their last legs and some were misleading claiming to be recycling bins but in reality Fife Council was just putting the rubbish from the bins into landfill.

Dave then introduced the idea of what are known as Big Belly bins, which are solar powered bins, which crush the waste and can take 8 times as much rubbish as normal bins. There are some in Anstruther but Dave wanted to get one into St Andrews as an experiment prior to arguing the case for their installation replacing the old bins. He wanted the Community Council to support his attempt to get such bins. Dave also later mentioned that he and his team were going to repair some of the rubbish bins as Fife Council haven't the funding to do this job and they have given Dave some equipment to do this work. They would be doing some of this work on the castle walk. The bins he said were worth over £600 each plus VAT. He added that Fife Council knew that a good number of bins were scrap.

The Clean and Green team have a Citroen flat bed truck to use with local organisations to help them with their needs to transport materials or water plants or a range of other activities.

Dr Shepherd said that he would be keen to see bins labelled with the name of the owner and contact details. Dave replied that his team had no jurisdiction to label bins but could suggest to owners that it would be a good idea. He added that having the Fife Council enforcers to follow up on some of his team's finds was useful though he could understand that they were stretched as there were only 2 staff covering North East Fife.

Dave also mentioned the inflexibility of Fife Council in relation to the way their street cleaners duties were proscribed. He said that there were three cleaners with one for each of the three main streets and that the cleaners couldn't move from their allocated areas of work.

Mr McLeod thanked Dave for his presentation and asked what the CC could do to support Dave's request. Dave replied that it was just the agreement of the CC that they would support his request that would allow him then to approach Fife Council with more confidence.

Mr Greenwell asked about the cost of the Big Belly bins. Dave replied that they were about £4500. He went on to say that if the experiment was successful their thought would be to lease the bins as this would give them a more cost effective way to ensure that the bins were best used and would be maintained by the manufacturer during the lease period. The lease cost he said would be £23.50 per month for each bin. Dave had had some conversation with Fife Council about the bins and whether they'd manage maintenance if funding for the bins was found from a source such as the Common Good Fund but he'd not had a reply to date. He still hoped there would be a response.

Miss Uprichard suggested that the CC should consider supporting the lease of a bin. This met with some show of support but no clear decision was minuted.

4. Fife Councillor.

4.1. Frances Melville - apologies

4.2. Brian Thomson

4.2.1. Old Station Car Park – flooding issue

Cllr Thomson reported about a flooding issue at a location in the car park near one of the speed bumps, caused it seems by a blocked gully connected to a soak away on Common Good land. Councillor officers are trying to work out the exact reason for the flooding and will report back to Cllr Thomson hopefully with an action plan.

4.2.2. Pavement repairs - Market Street

Cllr Thomson had noted some comments on Facebook about some pavement repairs done after the pavement had been dug up for some emergency work near Bonkers. The pavement had been temporarily repaired with tarmac because of damage to the Caithness slabs. The replacement slabs will take several weeks to deliver hence the need for the temporary repair.

4.2.3. Pergola removal – West Port

Cllr Thomson reported that the infamous "pergola" at the West Port inn had finally been dismantled.

4.2.4. Church Square Improvements.

A start date for this work is scheduled about 13th February 2017 and will take 16 weeks but will be suspended over Easter weekend - 14-17th April. The projected completion is 2nd June.

4.2.5. Replacement Bus Shelter - John Knox Road

The contractor is taking receipt of the replacement for the bus shelter damaged several weeks ago but an actual date for reinstatement has not been confirmed due to issues with the contractors.

4.2.6. Madras College

Cllr Thomson reported on the news about the possible location of the new Madras being the original site at Langlands close to the university sports centre. He said that there had been ongoing discussions with the university in recent months between Cllr Poole and himself and the university after the judgement at the High Court in March. Confidential discussions then took place between senior council officers and university staff leading to the recent announcement. The next stage will be a report to the Council's executive committee that will be on 13th December.

Mr Greenwell reporting on a report about the issue in the Citizen asked what remained to be signed to seal the deal and what was the timescale? Cllr Thomson replied that there is no formal deal, as planning permission has to be granted. There will also have to be a statutory education consultation prior to the confirmation of any deal. He couldn't give a timescale as to when the deal would be signed to allow the building to start. Mr Greenwell then asked whether there was still any ongoing negotiation between Fife Council and the University or are heads of agreement in place subject to planning permission etc? Cllr Thomson replied that he understood that the main issues had been resolved thus allowing the announcement to go ahead in the past week. Cllr Thomson understood that matters were much more advanced than they had been when the original discussions had taken place several years ago. Mr Greenwell thought that there had always been support in the CC for the Langlands site and that he'd be very unhappy if anything happened to derail the new site. Mr Paul added that it was a building within the Green Belt on development land so he couldn't see why anybody should object. Mr McLeod concluded that the CC position would be that we wait to see how things develop and respond accordingly.

4.3. Keith McCartney - apologies

4.3.1. Illuminated Road Signs (Roundabouts)

Cllr McCartney reported that the lights on the following signs were not working and were reported for repair

Learmonth Place – 'mini-roundabout' sign on west side of Learmonth Place at junction with Canongate.

South Street – 'No Entry' sign on south side of South Street at West Port.

4.3.2. Street Signs

Cllr McCartney reported that the following street lights were not working and were reported for repair

Carron Place – lighting column number 3

Craigtoun Road – lighting column number 8

Lawhead Road West – lighting columns numbers 1, 3 and 9

Lawmill Gardens – lighting column number 6

Trinity Place – lighting column number 2

Wallace Street – lighting column number 1

Winram Place – lighting column number 1

4.3.3. Street Light Stickers

Cllr McCartney reported that a request has been made for stickers giving the column number and contact phone number to report repairs to be attached to lighting columns in Old Guardbridge Road.

4.3.4. Street Nameplates

Cllr McCartney reported that operations are working their way through the missing nameplates. The ones in Trinity Place and Priestden Place have both been erected on new poles but the one for Kinnessburn Road is still outstanding.

4.3.5. Potholes

Cllr McCartney reported that potholes at the following locations were reported for inspection and repair as necessary

Lawmill Gardens – centre of road across from house number 2

Lawmill Gardens – centre of road across from house number 31

Old Station Road – beside utilities cover on north side of road at east entrance to Station Park

Old Station Road – on south side of road at west entrance to Station Park

Repairs have been actioned at all locations

4.3.6. Bike Racks

Cllr McCartney reported that six new bike racks have been installed on the north side of South Street outside Nardini's providing parking for twelve bikes.

4.4. Dorothea Morrison - apologies

5. Planning Committee

5.1. Planning Committee Report

Miss Uprichard welcomed Charlotte Andrew and Greg Newman to the CC Planning Committee. The Planning Committee she reported met twice during November and put in objections to four applications of which one had subsequently been withdrawn.

She then commented upon the publication of the updated Fifeplan a document of over 1000 pages. She was critical of the way in which because of its size a hard copy couldn't be printed unlike previous Local Plans. She moved on to comment about the Development Plan, which is a combination of the Fifeplan and the Tayplan. She felt that these changes to planning had been a disaster and had led to very limited responses from the public as the issues written about were on a scale which meant little to most members of the public as well as being difficult to access or influence. Less than 1% of the population in Fife had commented upon the Fifeplan.

The Planning Committee had launched a complaint about the Gatty Planning Report as various internal reports on issues like transportation hadn't been made available to Councillors or the public. A response is awaited about this matter.

Miss Uprichard reported that there was a pre-application in by Robertson Homes for three buildings to provide student accommodation. Miss Uprichard commented upon the huge increase in the number of homes on the site compared to the original 120 in the Local Plan, with now in excess of 500, not counting the former hospital site nearby with capacity for over 240 students. Miss Uprichard asked Fife Councillors who it was had said that special needs and student housing didn't have a need for affordable housing? Cllr Thomson said that it was explained in the previous Local Plan and in the Fifeplan but he wasn't certain of the exact origin of the policy and would have to check.

Miss Uprichard then commented on the Feddinch Mains saga, which she said had been going on for 14 years. She said that Fife Council had failed three times to determine planning applications within the required period thus evading the requirement that the application should have gone back to committee and not be decided by delegated powers and allowing appeals. The reporter she explained had now allowed the developer another chance to complete the development. She quoted the reporter as writing, "although the planning history of this site shows a record of failures only by removing the condition that there be any chance

that the development can proceed to completion. The appellants have a right to seek a renewal to help to resurrect the project". Miss Uprichard added that she felt so strongly that she'd written as an individual to the Chief Reporter to make some of the facts known.

Miss Uprichard had also attended the Fairmont Liaison Group. She'd attended a meeting about a month ago when the proposals for 37 tourist lodges had been discussed. She'd got the groups agreement to ask Transportation Services to consider an alternative route for the traffic associated with any development. She felt that the residents of parts of the usual route such as Lamond Drive deserved a reprieve from more heavy traffic.

6. Matters Arising

6.1. Reports from Representatives

6.1.1. Housing Group

Dr Goudie reported back from the Housing Group. He said that there had been a bit of a hiatus in the Housing Group over the summer when John Matthews had resigned. Cllr Morrison had organised a couple of meetings after his resignation so work is ongoing.

6.2. Facebook

Mr McLeod reported on the setting up of the page for the Community Council in the previous week. Since the page was opened a few days ago it had reached 543 people, 364 engaging and 91 likes. The working group will meet regularly to review the previous month's activity.

6.3. Civic Reception

Mr Greenwell reported that it went well although he was disappointed at the numbers of invited guests who had turned up on the evening. He was thankful to all the marshals and police and he felt that the Beating of the Retreat went well. Only 48 turned up for the reception despite having over 50 acceptances. He had sent out 181 invites so less than a third responded positively. He acknowledged that the committee would have to consider whether there was a way to re-invigorate the event. Mr Newman suggested using the Facebook page next year. Mr McLeod thanked Mr Greenwell and those who helped run the event.

6.4. Community Council Ties

Mr McLeod reported that Dr Shepherd had redesigned the tie. Views on the design to be sent to the Chair before the end of the week so that it could be decided whether to place an order.

6.5. Minutes Secretary

Mr McLeod reported that there had been no progress on the issue of getting someone to take the monthly minutes. Charlotte Andrew and Niall Scott were to publicise within the university but there had been no word to say if this had been done. To checked out for the next meeting.

6.6. Community Trust

Mr Greenwell reported a recent meeting at which the committee talked around the issues. Mr Greenwell felt he'd received some good guidance and the main thing coming out of the meeting was that they wouldn't pursue any change of the Articles of Association in the short term. He has however suggested to the other partner directors the need for a meeting before the end of the year or early in the New Year. This would be to resolve the situation of the co-opted directors and whether they should be reappointed as they were all due to stand down at the end of the year.

Mr McLeod confirmed that he was progressing a date for the meeting of the Nominations Committee early in the New Year.

7. Committee Reports

7.1 Recreation Committee

Mr Greenwell reminded the meeting that the Senior Citizens Treat is at the end of the week. He asked if any more members could volunteer to assist and detailed the timetable for the event. The main area of need was between 1-4 with serving drinks and food. He said that the attendance was expected to be about 150.

7.2. GP Meeting

No meeting

7.3. 200 Club

1st Mr Tero 2nd Mr Wallard 3rd Mrs Rutherford

7.4. Health, Education and Welfare Committee

Mrs Corbin showed the meeting the amount of committee minutes she regularly received and said that she was a member of about 24 committees. She acknowledged that this made it difficult for her to report back on individual outcomes in committees. She reminded members that they were welcome to join the HEW Committee and find out what the committee did. Mr McLeod thanked Mrs Corbin for her hard work. He appealed to members to consider joining this committee.

7.5. Rail Sub Committee

Dr Goudie reminded the meeting that the CC had agreed earlier in the autumn to part fund a policy review towards the STAG appraisal. Dr Goudie reminded the meeting that it had agreed to contribute £1250 provided that the balance of funding came from another source. He said that Rail Future would provide the balance.

8. New Business

No new business.

9. Reports from Office Bearers

9.1. Chair

Mr Greenwell asked the Chair if a calendar of events/meetings for 2017 had been compiled? When he was Chair he'd got this organised to ensure members knew what was happening. Mr McLeod acknowledged that this hadn't taken place but would follow up the suggestion and ensure that all relevant dates were available for members and the public.

Mr McLeod gave a report on the duties he'd carried out as Chair since the last CC meeting. He'd written the article for St Andrews in Focus, and then on 8th November he'd attended the Cosmos Centre AGM/Presentation. On 12th November he'd attended a social evening as a guest of the Loches Alliance and 30th November he'd attended the Remembrance Day Church service and laying of wreaths. On 25th November he'd taken the salute at the Beating of the Retreat with deputy provost Kay Morrison and attended the Civic Reception afterwards at which MEP Catherine Stihler had been Guest speaker. On 29th November he'd attended the inauguration ceremony of the new University Principal Professor Sally Mapstone. On 1st December he'd met up with Dave Angus, Clean and Green Manager and Jane Kell to familiarise himself with the work Dave was undertaking. On 2nd December he'd met with a businessman who was possibly going to be making a considerable annual donation to the St Andrews Community Trust.

9.2. Treasurer

Mr Munn reported that his reports on the CC website

9.3 Secretary

9.3.1. Correspondence

See emails and items listed in appendix.

10. Any Other Competent Business

10.1. Community Café

Mrs Corbin had attended the first meeting about the Community Café and suggested that the organiser Gillian Anderson be invited along to the January CC Meeting to give a presentation/report. The meeting agreed to this presentation.

10.2. Microphones

Dr Shepherd reported that he was looking at a possible replacement microphone system for the CC to use given the increasing problems with the old Fife Council system. He was to be seeing someone about a system made by Sennheiser this week. This system would be wireless and a relatively sophisticated system compared to the current one.