

Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

Annual General Meeting Minutes – May 2005

Approved

Chair: Donald Macgregor

1. Attendance

Community Councillors

Bette Christie, George Davidson, Ken Fraser, Ian Goudie, Stuart Holdsworth, Chris Lesurf, Pete Lindsay, Dennis Macdonald, Murdo Macdonald, Donald Macgregor, Patrick Marks, Elise Methven, Joe Peterson, Bruce Ryan, Carole Tricker, Penny Uprichard.

Students' Association Representatives

Simon Atkins, Frederic St Johnston.

Nominated

Ewen Sparks.

Fife Councillors

Sheila Black, Jane Ann Liston, Frances Melville, Bill Sangster.

Apologies

Ken Crichton, Keith McCartney, Richard Douglas.

2. Minutes of the 2004 AGM

Approved

3. Chair's Report

Taken as read.

4. Treasurer's Report

Murdo Macdonald noted a description confusing surplus and deficit; questioned use of the newsletter account instead of the administration account and suggested some refinements to the presentation.

Dennis Macdonald felt the total balance too high; Murdo Macdonald reminded the meeting that moves were underway to render the community council trust fund more accountable and accessible for community use, at which time it would be possible for monies raised by community council independently of Fife Council's grant to be moved to the trust.

Accepted subject to minor alterations.

5. Dates of Meetings 2005 – 2006

12 meetings, on the 1st Monday of the month (except January 9th 2006 due to New Year holidays).

7. Election of Officers

Meeting agreed that this would not be necessary so soon after the March 2005 inaugural meeting's election.

Monthly Minutes – May 2005

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 late 1997 on are at <http://www.louisxiv.demon.co.uk/standrewscc/>)

1. Attendance

As AGM

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

April 9.2.1

Bette Christie had been unable to attend a *Water Customer Council* (not East Sands Leisure Centre) meeting in The Scores Hotel the room it was held in was up stairs and not accessible to her in a wheelchair.

Amended minutes accepted

4. Fife Councillors

4.1. Frances Melville (West)

4.1.1. Consultations

Has been busy with her response to the consultations; appreciates and applauds the hard work put in by many of those responding; noted the difficulties of working with the multiple interlocking consultations and documents and necessary cross-referencing. The documents are much more complex than the existing structure plans.

While the official deadline for submissions was Monday 2nd May, submissions will be accepted for the rest of the week.

4.2. Sheila Black (South)

4.2.1. Consultations

Echoed Frances Melville's remarks, adding her thanks for the responses and copies of submissions received by the Fife Councillors, keeping them informed. She hoped they would be able to bring in a result that people want.

4.2.2. John Knox Road Affordable Housing

Noted that Hillcrest has started work on the affordable housing site. There had been some hold-up over funding.

While Ian Goudie admitted the need for affordable housing was desperate he hoped that better would be available in future. The site is not suitable being on a steep hill, and having disabled accommodation at the top seemed foolish. It was not clear yet whether the current plans met the requirements for ramp access to all open spaces, nor that they could be fitted in with acceptable gradients. Cllr Black said she would keep an eye on this aspect.

Elise Methven asked about further building she understood would take place after the affordable units. Councillor Black was unsure which properties these would be, she thought there might be some confusion between the developer (Hillcrest) and the contractor (Thomas Mitchell) rôles, but she will investigate.

4.2.3. Cockshaugh Park Toilets

Disappointed to learn these are to be demolished. They were poor, but she was disappointed there was to be no modern replacement. She will continue to press for this.

4.3. Bill Sangster (Central)

4.3.1. Consultations

Backed previous remarks and praised the very professional way the various residents associations had responded and the great deal of time that must have been spent on the submissions he'd seen.

4.3.2. North Street Water Mains

The current phase of work on the mains themselves seems to have been completed quickly, leaving the street clear now. There will be work later in the year to replace the spur pipes leading off the mains.

Joe Peterson questioned the presence of large steel plates covering holes in the road – were they to remain all summer? Bill Sangster will check what is intended for these.

4.3.3. Affordable housing

He called for the need for affordable rented housing not to be overlooked in the discussion of affordable-to-buy housing. It is a much more pressing need in his view, particularly for the elderly.

4.4. Jane Ann Liston (South East)

4.4.1. Kilrymont Road Chip Van

[April 4.4.6.] The appeal against the licence conditions (100m 'exclusion zone') has been postponed due to more pressing court business. It will probably be processed at the end of May.

4.4.2. Cycleway Closure for The Open

[April 4.4.8.] Met with Police and Transportation Service officials who admitted they had not thought of consulting the Transportation Service's St Andrews cycle liaison group. They noted it for next time. They also explained their concerns over safety on Old Guardbridge Road if cyclists were riding against the flow of pedestrians or in the path of the bus one-way system that will be operating. Cyclists could, they said, dismount and push to go this way.

Though she wasn't surprised that officials would not change their minds she had hoped to ensure that the unnecessary inconvenience could be avoided next time. Work has started on upgrading Old Guardbridge Road. This includes the lights that should have been put in years ago by the Old Course Hotel, a planning condition, but which were overlooked until the hotel itself asked for lighting to be upgraded recently, and moving the cycleway off-road. She asked at the recent East Area Services committee meeting for backing that the new cycleway should be routed in such a way that major golf events don't close it for the duration, but this was opposed by a councillor representing a ward outwith St Andrews, who said that everyone must make sacrifices for the Open, including cyclists. Cllr Liston hopes that it was just a case of the point she was trying to make being misunderstood, but there was not committee agreement.

Joe Peterson asked what where the sources of funding for the various improvements on Old Guardbridge Road. Cllr Liston understands that as the lights were a planning condition and 'arrangement' has been reached with the hotel; other works are paid for by Fife Enterprise.

4.4.3. Flooding at Kilrymont/Scooniehill

Murdo Macdonald noted that there was a access cover in the road close to the entrance of Madras College's entrance on Kilrymont Road which is blown off whenever there is significant rainfall which he takes to indicate a blockage somewhere. He wondered if it might have any connection to the recently-cleared culvert and pool in the school grounds? He also mentioned water running down the road continually in wet weather.

She said that there was a study under way into the run-off from the fields; a report should be forthcoming in July. On the cover and water running down the streets she'd get further details from him and ask council officers to investigate.

Elise Methven added that the Madras pool was silted up again.

5. Planning Committee

5.2. Newsletter

5.2.1. Delivery

Pete Lindsay outlined concerns about the coverage of the newsletter delivery. On the basis of reports by community councillors and members of the public it seemed very patchy. Penny Uprichard and a band of volunteers had done much to fill in the gaps, but this should not have been necessary.

Murdo Macdonald mentioned Kilrymont Road and Winram Place as missed. Carole Tricker had checked her neighbours and found delivery patchy in Learmonth Place.

Penny Uprichard had received a checklist from the delivery company who had conducted their own spot checks.

Joe Peterson said he'd been against using an out-of-town commercial delivery service in the first place and was sad to see his fears had been well-founded, to the loss of community council and the people of St Andrews.

Pete Lindsay to follow up

5.2.2. Hospital Response

Ian Goudie circulated a draft response to comments by Fife Health Board on the recent newsletter, asking for comments. A number of minor revisions were suggested, which will be accommodated before the response is made public through the press.

Murdo Macdonald asked what involvement community council had had as a 'stake-holder' in hospital discussions. Ian Goudie responded that at first, 1994, community council had been heavily involved, a number of members meeting relatively regularly with the Health Trust, as a core Dr Riddell, Mr Peterson and himself were the most frequent attenders in later days towards 2001/2 when the outline business case was being drawn up, giving such assistance as community council could. In late 2002 / early 2003 the Trust changed direction and selected the Largo Road site; then community council were no longer welcome inside the project. The view of the community, and at that point Fife Council, was that the correct site was still St Leonard's Fields.

5.3. Outstanding Business

5.3.1. St Leonard's Fields

Ian Goudie noted that an application for four blocks of flats on part of the site would be coming before the next East Area Development Committee. While no comment had been made yet, something would be submitted. If the flats went ahead it would not necessarily block the use of the rest of the site for a hospital as the remainder of the Fields site is large, particularly taken with the existing hospital; it would however be unhelpful.

He reported that attempts to use freedom of information legislation to explore Fife Council's position on the St Leonard's Fields were proving less effective than required by the legislation. Answers which should come from Fife Council within 20 working days were only just arriving now in dribs and drabs – three months late.

5.3.2. Draft Response to the Draft Structure Plan

Circulated at the meeting. Ian Goudie asked for comments and any further points for a final submission to be passed to him as soon as possible with a view to submission very soon after a final review at the next planning committee meeting. Any member with questions or points to discuss is welcome to attend the planning committee meeting, though practical constraints of time mean it is essential that anything new should be passed to Ian Goudie before then.

5.3.3. Local Plan – outline points

Circulated at the meeting. Again comments and points to Ian Goudie soonest, through time is slightly less pressing than for the structure plan.

Frances Melville drew attention to an item of concern in the Local Plan – the lack of reference to the Harbour Trust in the sections dealing with the harbour area.

5.3.4. Area Transport Plan

A survey of community councillors' opinions on aspects of the Area Transport Plan (ATP) will be circulated at the end of the meeting; for return to Pete Lindsay or Bruce Ryan by the next planning meeting. These will be then be rendered into a single outline response.

Jane Ann Liston drew attention to the section of the ATP dealing with the St Andrews rail link. This specifically refers to a flawed study which concluded a rail link economically unfeasible, but which only considered St Andrews from the perspective of the travel north, without considering the effect of a

connection southbound to Edinburgh and the airport.

Penny Uprichard commented on a couple of points, firstly that the ATP gave incorrect figures for the population of St Andrews, second that it misquoted the conclusions of the 'Your Place, Your Plan' consultation of 2002.

6. Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

6.1. Honorary Citizen Proposal

[April 7.7.] Count given in printed agenda was wrong (online corrected) due to miscounting of late votes. Final figures:

For	14
Against	4
Abstain (active)	3
Abstain (no vote)	1

The proposal failed to meet the minimum of 16 votes for success, and does meet the veto requirement. The fact that number of voting members is only 22, as there is a vacancy, has been taken into account. (Nominated members (from external organisations) and *ex-officio* members (the Fife Councillors) did not have a vote.)

Pete Lindsay added that some of those who had voted For, let alone Against, had commented to him that they had voted For only because it had been proposed in the way it had. They were not entirely sure that this was the sort of use appropriate to the Honoured/Honorary Citizen Award. Some who had voted against said that the two awards should be for people who had done something directly for St Andrews over a substantial period of time. He pointed out that while that was a legitimate point of view to hold, in fact no such constraints had been put on the award. People were however free to vote how they wished.

Murdo Macdonald commented that he thought the proposal had been taken too quickly in the press of business at the last meeting and that the proposal should have been put in rather more detail. He felt this was a rather awkward situation if left as it stood, as it looks like a snub to Jack Nicklaus. He was concerned about how it would be reported. While Mr Nicklaus may not have worked specifically for St Andrews, that was not a condition for the award, and he certainly had done a lot for golf over a long period of time, and St Andrews is, after all, the "Home of Golf".

6.2. St Andrews in Focus

Donald Macgregor reported that he had been in contact with Ms Selwyn about the next community council article for the magazine.

6.3. Bandstand Concerts

[April 7.3.] Unfortunately he'd made no progress due to pressure of work; he hadn't had time to even involve Elise Methven as discussed last month.

Transport of the community council chairs from the Victory Memorial Hall to the Bandstand and back: agreed that use of a local delivery firm be investigated.

6.4. 33 Fraser Avenue

[April 5.2.] She has asked for a site visit to look at the concerns raised here.

7. New Business

7.1. Stanley Smith House Right-of-Way

Cllr Sangster thought it was only locked at night, against vandalism; perhaps someone had forgotten to unlock it one day.

Cllr Liston had been contacted by a constituent about the locked gate. It was quite clear two years ago that this was a de facto right-of-way, which was recognised in the conditions of a planning decision which said while a gate could be installed it may not be locked. She had passed this matter to the planning enforcement officer for investigation. Personally she noted that 20 years of use were an important milestone in RoW legislation; she herself has been using this route for 20 years. Other people who had contacted her have been using it for longer. Shutting off a Right-of-Way, even just at night, is not permitted. Planning Service's enforcement officer is having some difficulty finding who actually shut the gate – immediate neighbours all seem to be denying responsibility. If someone wants a RoW formally stopped up there are procedures to follow; it can't just be shut.

Bruce Ryan reported that he had found the gate shut in the day on more than one occasion.

Pete Lindsay suggested that, though he was not in favour of the indiscriminate deployment of CCTV on the streets, it would be appropriate in a specific location such as this to discourage vandalism and other illegitimate behaviour without inconveniencing ordinary passers-by.

7.2. Ship to Ship Oil Transfer, Firth of Forth

Ken Fraser

7.4. Friends of the Earth Subscription

Renew subscription £36, agreed.

Agreed

7.5. Calor Scottish Community of the Year 2005

Murdo Macdonald, Chris Lesurf

7.6. Constitution

Pete Lindsay suggested that consideration should be given to whether the old constitution should be updated to meet requirements of the current Fife Council Scheme for community council, or whether the defaults it provides are adequate and acceptable. He felt the question should be actively considered rather than the Scheme being adopted by default.

Elise Methven added that a constitution was often essential for receiving funds from grant-awarding bodies. Pete Lindsay said that there was a paragraph in the Scheme that stated it was the default constitution, but agreed that it would be easier to be able to point to a document actually titled "Constitution".

General Purposes

7.7. Picture

Pete Lindsay to arrange

7.8. 60th Anniversary VE Day

There were some concerns over the practicality of trees; previous attempts have suffered substantial delays. Joe Peterson suggested a makeover of the Victory Memorial Hall garden could be a possibility.

It was agreed that the Recreation Committee investigate suitable plants, sites and costs.

Recreation Committee to report

7.9. Patients' Representation etc

She hoped that although there were only two names down for the Health Education and Welfare committee it wouldn't be seen as dead and buried. It is particularly important at the moment now that the local Health Councils (health service "user groups") no longer exist to give feedback on the service provided, only a national level Scottish Health Council, and local advisory groups in particular areas. These are just setting up, asking for volunteers etc. She wondered if there was wider interest within community council in the issues of patient representation, which could be focussed through a HE&W committee, or whether she should continue on her own on community council's behalf. No one else volunteered; as Chair, Donald Macgregor thanked her for her willingness to continue in this rôle.

Chris Lesurf to represent as necessary

8. Reports from Office Bearers

8.2. Treasurer

Financial status report circulated

8.3. Secretary

8.3.2. Housing Pressured Area Status

Elise Methven had some concerns; the sample questionnaire we had received had not been seen by neighbours she'd spoken to at Roundhill Road. She reported that no one she has spoken to knows anything about the implications of the housing Pressured Area Status (PAS) for right-to-buy from council or housing association and were horrified by the closing down of an opportunity to better themselves. She did not feel it would be right for community council to support Fife Council moves until tenants were better informed and their opinions sought. She felt consultation had been inadequate thus far.

Cllr Jane Ann Liston reassured community council that no application for PAS has been made yet. She was very disappointed that consultation had not gone out – she'd understood that it was supposed to go to all current tenants, those on the housing list, and groups such as community councils. What is being proposed will only apply to new tenants once PAS is granted. Elise Methven pointed out that the sample questionnaire stated that the restrictions would apply to tenants dating back to 2002. Cllr Liston was surprised and will check this. She pointed out that selling houses at a discount under right-to-buy had made it impossible for the District and then Fife Council to build more housing, so the stock was diminishing, making it difficult to serve those who did not want to or were unable to buy even at the discount. She was therefore opposed to right-to-buy with the discount. A more practical system of market pricing would have allowed the councils to improve their housing stock with new homes built to modern standards for the benefit of future tenants.

She will report back on who'd been consulted and to whom the proposed restrictions will apply.

Pete Lindsay will also write for clarification from Housing Service on the consultation process

Pete Lindsay to write

9. Reports

9.1. From Committees

9.1.1. Recreation

9.1.1.1. St Andrews in Bloom

Joe Peterson was somewhat concerned about the state of St Andrews in Bloom / Scotland in Bloom preparations following discussions with Cllr Bill Sangster about Fife Council's ability to assist this year. Joe Peterson suggested that the various town centre residents groups could do a lot to help if they were so minded, it shouldn't just be left to the hotels, boarding houses and businesses. He also wondered about the grounds of town centre churches, which he felt looked a little 'flat'; he may follow this up with various churches to see if anything can be done.

Cllr Bill Sangster said the plants themselves were not the problem, it was finding the money to pay for

them. Despite the grant from the Floral Grants Scheme and the Common Good Fund it takes about £8,000 a year to keep them in good condition while on display, as coastal breezes dry the plantings very quickly, requiring regular watering, etc. About half that sum was to be found yet.

Stuart Holdsworth suggested contacting Action of Churches Together St Andrews (ACTSA) which will ensure the idea gets to all the church committees. Write via the Chair, Stuart Holdsworth...

Joe Peterson also mentioned his hopes that the grounds of the Gateway building at Petheram Bridge could be brought up to the same standards as the council flower beds across the A91 from it, but he had been given to understand that would not be possible this year.

9.1.1.2. St Andrew's Week

Provisional dates have been fixed for the St Andrew's Week Art Exhibition (Sat 26 – Wed 30 Nov) and the hall booked.

9.2. From Representatives

9.2.1. RAF Leuchars Liaison

Dennis Macdonald reported that together with Stuart Holdsworth (standing in for Chris Lesurf), he had attended the recent liaison group meeting. There had been no change on civilian use of the base – i.e. private flights, only for the rich and famous, such as the influx expected for the Open this year.

Leuchars is looking forward to the arrival of the new Typhoon fighter, understandably as it is a fighter base, but he warned that his information from connections at RAF Conningsby is that the Typhoon is noisier than the Tornado.

Stuart Holdsworth added on noise complaints that they were told that the best route for complaints about aircraft noise was through the local MP (Sir Menzies Campbell) as complaints to the base itself are just logged, while the MP can raise the issue with the Ministry of Defence.

9.2.2. St Andrews World Class

Joe Peterson cannot attend the next few meetings; Dennis Macdonald agreed to stand-in.

10. Any Other Competent Business

10.1. Co-option

Conducted by a paper vote.

Les Beech	9
Maggie Stacey	7
Anna Spackman	2

Les Beech elected.

10.2. West Port Flats Wall

Carole Tricker had noticed on her way to the meeting that the coping stones of the garden wall here were loose and could easily be moved by hand.

Cllr Bill Sangster will investigate.
