

# Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

## Minutes – December 2005

Approved

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### 1. Attendance

#### Community Councillors

Bette Christie, Ken Crichton, George Davidson, Richard Douglas, Ian Goudie, Stuart Holdsworth, Pete Lindsay, Donald Macgregor, Keith McCartney, Patrick Marks, Joe Peterson, Bruce Ryan, Maggie Stracey, Carole Tricker, Penny Uprichard.

#### Nominated

Ewen Sparks

#### Fife Councillors

Sheila Black, Jane Ann Liston, Frances Melville

#### Apologies

Chris Lesurf, Bill Sangster, Ben Reilly, Alex Yabrov, Les Beech, Dennis Macdonald, Elise Methven.

### 2. Minutes of November 2005

Ken Fraser queried the lack of item 4.2 in the minutes. The secretary's practice has been to omit from the minute any agenda items which have no output. Cllr Sheila Black had to leave the meeting early, and so there was nothing to report under her business at item 4.2.

Approved

### 4. Fife Councillors

#### 4.1. Frances Melville (West)

##### 4.1.1. Replacement of Gas Mains

[November 4.1.3.] She had made representations to have the date of the work changed, to avoid the Christmas shopping period, but was unsuccessful.

##### 4.1.2. Buchanan/Hepburn Gardens Roundabout

Ewen Sparks passed on local concern that the roundabout painted here was ineffective. It is missed, or ignored, by some drivers who only see an open sweep of road ahead of them. This makes the junction less safe for those who do obey the road markings and expect others to do likewise. Cllr Melville replied the two ends of Buchanan Gardens were being monitored and adjustments may be made. Keith McCartney suggested rumble strips on the approaches to warn drivers.

Ian Goudie reminded the meeting that the community council had predicted this problem with the layout and had called for minor realignment, in the form of an outcrop on the northern side of the road, to make the junction and roundabout more obvious, particularly from Buchanan Gardens. At the other end of Buchanan Gardens, the junction with the Strathkinness High Road, community council had suggested a roundabout rather than a T junction which, despite various realignment work, still has poor vision lines for traffic turning right out of the High Road.

#### 4.2. Sheila Black (South)

##### 4.2.1. Lade Braes Upgrade

The recommendation is to postpone the proposed resurfacing, lighting and safety work. She said there were strong and opposing views on this which makes things difficult for Fife Council.

##### 4.2.2. Recycling Centre

She had heard that work may be able to start in January and will keep pushing for it.

#### 4.4. Jane Ann Liston (South East)

##### 4.4.1. St Andrews-Guardbridge Cycle Path: Night Visibility

[November 4.4.6.] following this night time inspection a number of improvements will be made to reduce the problems of glare and dazzle from headlights on the adjacent A91 affecting path users. These will include hedge replanting to fill in some gaps and edge marking at difficult points and at gates and junctions.

Ken Fraser asked if any consideration had been given to the Old Guardbridge Road section which suffers from glare from the adjacent hotel and practice range. Cllr Liston agreed that the driving range was still a problem, though she's found the hotel lighting had changed since last winter and was much better now, with little light overspill. She thought the problems would be addressed when the promised 'planning gain' (from the Old Course Hotel) lighting was installed.

##### 4.4.2. St Andrews Festival

She thought this had gone well. She was disappointed by Fife Council's lack of support for St Andrew's Day in St Andrews: ceasing the St Andrew's Day Address last year, now no reception, and not even a cup of tea after attending the St Andrew's Day service at Holy Trinity. Particularly irritating was that the day after St Andrew's Day the Provost of Fife held a reception in Dunfermline to meet the press. She said it was a very poor showing by Fife Council. She thanked community council for stepping in and keeping the tradition of the reception going.

As last year Ian Goudie pointed out the University's minimal observance of St Andrew's Day with lectures as normal in the morning, the 'holiday' in the afternoon being of particularly little consequence this year because Wednesday is already a university half day.

**St Andrew's Day Rep. Keith McCartney to write.**

Cllr Sheila Black praised the Holy Trinity service, revitalised by the new minister, Rory Macleod.

#### **4.4.3. Primary Schools Reorganisation**

Cllr Liston condemned the decision to close Langlands. It is the school which serves the most under-privileged part of St Andrews. She was flabbergasted that the Labour and Communist members of the committee had voted to attack the under-privileged in this way.

Ewen Sparks asked when there would be reliable information from Fife Council on the timetable of the merger with Canongate; there was none so far, everyone was uncertain of the future. He had heard that one result of the merger would be the loss of afternoon nursery provision at Canongate, specifically against Fife Council's own policies. He also condemned the merger for increasing class sizes, against government policy.

#### **4.4.4. Flyposting**

There has been a rash of flyposting by student societies recently. No attempt seems to be made by those responsible to remove their posters from lamp posts *etc* after the event. Despite assurances from the Students' Association that their societies are told this isn't permitted in St Andrews, the problem seems to be out of control again.

#### **4.4.5. Kilrymont/Scooniehill Road Floods**

The report on this is now out; there is to be a residents meeting to discuss the implications with Fife Council and the consultant. She will be there too of course.

The various proposed solutions will all cost money. Fife Council is not permitted to pay for work on this problem as water is not in Fife Council's remit.

#### **4.4.6. East Area Transport Plan**

Despite comment from the community council and others at the consultation stage, the final edition EATP still enshrines the misleading idea that the Tay Estuary Transport Study rules out a St Andrew rail link as uneconomic. As has been explained, the Tayside study only considered traffic from St Andrews to destinations in the Tay area and completely ignores southbound traffic towards Edinburgh which far outweighs the northbound.

Ian Goudie asked if this would affect the rail link's position in the Structure Plan? She has met with senior Transportation officials who have assured her that the rail link isn't completely ruled out, so she hopes it will remain in the Structure Plan, which isn't site specific. She will continue to campaign for this link to be more than an aspiration in the Structure Plan.

## **5. Planning Committee**

### **5.1. Minutes**

#### **5.1.A.3. South Street Refurbishment**

Pete Lindsay disagreed with the tone and content of the objection. He argued that the loss of 10 parking spaces out of 2165 in St Andrews was insignificant. He was concerned at the blanket nature of the objection to the whole scheme rather than to specific items; he did not want community council to be associated with objections to an increase in disabled parking spaces or to the resurfacing of South Street. He felt that the letter did not sufficiently acknowledge what he admitted might be minority views on community council. Some previous decisions of community council on last year's South Street proposals had been extrapolated beyond their original remit. He regretted bringing this item to full community council but due to pressure of work for him as secretary and the planning committee's disrupted schedule it had not been possible to raise his concerns within that committee.

In a long discussion there was some support for his concerns, but it was agreed not to withdraw the complete letter, so as not to undermine the planning committee who had been operating within their understanding of the community council's position. Instead the committee would clarify to Fife Council that the objection was not to items such as resurfacing and disabled parking, but to the item of loss of parking spaces.

**Planning committee**

### **5.2. Other items**

#### **5.2.1. Fife Structure Plan**

Ian Goudie reported that the finalised Structure Plan is due March 2006 according to the Fife Council web site.

#### **5.2.2. St Leonards Fields**

The planning appeal enquiry is due 14-17 March 2006. Some discussion at the recent pre-meeting

focussed on whether a community council representative would have to be present during the whole four day enquiry. Subsequently the enquiry reporters unit has written to say that representatives can question witnesses on the evidence they have been present to hear, but need not be present the whole time.

## 6. Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

### 6.1. Secretary

After it became apparent that finding a volunteer for the full post was going to be a protracted process, Richard Douglas volunteered to take the title of Secretary so community council can continue to function until a permanent secretary can be found. He made it clear that his other commitments would prevent him taking on the full function; he could be secretary in name only. This offer was gratefully accepted by the meeting.

Donald Macgregor will take on the rôle of correspondence contact point for now.

### 6.2. Order of business

Joe Peterson withdrew this item until the new secretarial arrangements have settled in.

### 6.3. Lade Braes Upgrade

Penny Uprichard criticised the figures of representations in favour of the upgrade. She felt that as they were not classified by type of respondent they were not valid. She disbelieved the apparent lack of evidence for cyclist/pedestrian collisions on mixed use paths; this was due to under reporting. The important remark in the Transportation Service report was that there was 'significant' opposition to the proposals. She did not feel the agenda item correctly represented the situation.

Joe Peterson said that several of the letters against this proposal that he'd read in the local press were making unsubstantiated or deliberately misleading comments. Fife Council had made an effort to establish views of actual users of the Lade Braes. Statements in the press that the Lade Braes was not a multi-user area were untrue in fact. They were also going against Scottish Parliament legislation in the Countryside Act with its principle of freedom to roam responsibly, which does not specify the mode of transport used to roam. In view of concerns over health of the Scottish population he wanted to encourage people, particularly children, to roller-blade, cycle or ride their ponies along Lade Braes. Some in St Andrews, some of those who live along Lade Braes, seem to consider it a part of their own back garden. Everyone 'owns' Lade Braes; it should not be restricted to people on foot. The proposal was a positive one and he called for community council to support it in a vote.

Keith McCartney frequently walks in the Lade Braes, and was one of those surveyed. The only point he had concerns over was the lighting which he thought might encourage people to use it at night which might be unsafe. He agreed it is a *de facto* multi-user area now. Though there are plenty of cyclists of all and mixed ages on it he had not seen excessive speed. He has not found cyclists to be a problem when he walked.

Pete Lindsay also supported Joe Peterson, seeing this as a chance to have the Lade Braes resurfaced for the benefit of everyone, particularly pedestrians who are most affected by the quality of the path surface and to improve disabled access.

Penny Uprichard said the Lade Braes was established as a walking path and remained so until Fife Council allowed cycles on it, without any consultation. (Donald Macgregor and Pete Lindsay both interjected to point out that this had nothing to do with the council as the old by-law had been swept away by central government's reforms.) She did not understand why there should not be a path reserved for walkers; there are more walkers than cyclists in Britain.

Ewen Sparks supported the proposals in full, as a family user of the Lade Braes both by foot and cycle. He was in favour of the lighting proposal as it allowed pedestrians more choice of which route to take. Without it the path wouldn't be used at night.

Ian Goudie pointed out that the long term position of the community council was to support regularisation of the position of cyclists on the Lade Braes. While individuals might be strongly against it the question was of a coherent transport policy for the town as a whole. There is no question that mixing pedestrians and cyclists is far safer than mixing cars and cyclists.

Cllr Jane Ann Liston had the consultation responses and analysis. She felt objectors were labouring under a misapprehension. She noted that not adopting this scheme would not remove cyclists from the Lade Braes, but the disadvantages of darkness, poor surfaces and unsafe edges would remain.

Pete Lindsay proposed community council should support the scheme in principle. Seconded by Joe Peterson. Richard Douglas (seconded by Ian Goudie) proposed an amendment reserving the position of community council on the matter of lighting.

In favour of the Amendment: 9, for the original: 4. Abstention: 2.  
(Penny Uprichard was unable to stay for the vote)

**Pete Lindsay to write**

### 6.4. Awards

**January agenda**

### 6.5. Hogmanay Ceilidh

Ken Crichton had investigated, but there will not be one this year as it could not be organised in the time. Recreation Committee will look at it again next year.

## 7. New Business

### 7.2. Helping Community Councils Fulfil Their Role

Pete Lindsay drew attention to the copies of this Scottish Executive document which he had circulated and asked people to review it in time for a submission by the end of February.

## **8. Reports from Office Bearers**

### **8.2. Treasurer**

*Pete Lindsay and Jane Ann Liston left the meeting for the following item:*

#### **8.2.1. Secretary's Honorarium**

**£300 agreed**

## **9. Reports**

### **9.1. From Committees**

#### **9.1.1. Health Education & Welfare**

Stuart Holdsworth reported on the meeting of the hospital consultative group. Of those attending, three were not associated with the Health Board, 21 were. Application for full planning permission is scheduled for July 07, site start October 07, completion February 09, open March/April 09. Cost £20 million. The land is owned by Muir and the University. There is a 20% provision for expansion, including additional height. The planning application has been deliberately phrased to avoid a judicial enquiry. Any attempt to query why St Leonards Fields had been ruled out was ignored.

Turning from the bare facts to his personal impressions, his feeling was that the Health Board were not interested in input from the community now that they have the outline planning permission. They have plans for what will be done with the hospital; queries or alternatives were knocked back without explanation. The community representatives seem to be seen as getting in the way.

#### **9.1.2. Recreation**

Joe Peterson thanked all who helped with the St Andrews Festival Art & Photographic Exhibition, especially the Photographic club. He appreciated it was difficult for people on community council who worked during the day to help out; the photographic club admirably filled the breach. He also thanked the business sponsors of the show, particularly Michael Joy, the Links Trust, the Art Shop in South Street and St Andrews Fine Art in Market Street. He also thanked the judges, Peter Adamson for opening the exhibition and the university archives for the exhibition of historic pictures. The only disappointment was the failure to involve the Primary Schools fully, but that will be corrected next year. Special thanks to Ken Crichton for doing most of the work, particularly preparing the catalogue, and Ken Fraser and Ruth Walker for putting up the pictures.

Donald Macgregor thanked Joe Peterson on behalf of all of Community Council for his work on this.

### **9.2. From Representatives**

#### **9.2.1. Fairtrade**

Bruce Ryan reported that this was very successful from the Fairtrade Campaign's point of view; many useful contacts made etc. Personally he'd have liked to see more community councillors present at this joint function. Financially this came in under budget.

Donald Macgregor thanked Bruce Ryan and the Fairtrade team on behalf of community council. He hoped that this might be a format for joint events with other organisations in future.

#### **9.2.2. St Andrew's Day**

Keith McCartney reported that he'd written to the Clerk of the Enterprise and Culture Committee of the Scottish Parliament and the various MSPs, as requested [November 6.5.]. He'd received replies from three MSPs: Iain Smith, Ted Brocklebank and Andrew Arbuckle. Outstanding are Mark Ruskell and Tricia Marwick. He'll wait for their replies before reporting in detail.

#### **9.2.3. Green Belt Forum**

Richard Douglas had recently attended a meeting but there were no matters to raise with community council.

## **10. Any Other Competent Business**

Mince pies and sherry, from Jane Ann Liston and Pete Lindsay.