

Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council Agenda – April 2006

(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.standrewscc.net/>).

1. Apologies

2. Minutes of March 2006

Read for accuracy in matters of substance – harangue the secretary for minor errors (spelling etc) outwith the meeting.

3. Presentations

3.1. New Hospital Proposals

Presentation by the Hospital Liaison Group about the proposals for the new hospital.

4. Fife Councillors

4.1. Frances Melville (West)

4.2 Sheila Black (South)

4.3 Bill Sangster (Central)

4.4 Jane Ann Liston (South East)

5. Planning Committee

5.1 Minutes

Appendix F

5.2. Objection to St Andrews Bay Hotel extension plans

Appendix A

6. Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

6.1. Community Council Vacancy

– see Appendix B

6.2. City Park Kitchen Closure

– see Appendix C

6.3. Park and Ride

– Further Developments – see Appendix E

6.4 World Heritage Site Status

Letter from Ted Brocklebank with an update and copies of letters from MPs, MSPs, Academics, Voluntary Organisations *etc* supporting his World Heritage campaign will be circulated. Letter requests decision from Community Council about its view on the matter.

6.5. Reports from representatives

6.6 Any other Matters Arising

7. From Committees

7.1. Recreation

8. New Business

8.1. Possible Visit from University Rector

– see letter Appendix D & Appendix H

8.2. Age and Experience Consultation by Scottish Executive

8.3. Charitable Law Seminar

9. Reports from Office Bearers

9.1. Chair

9.2. Treasurer

9.3. Secretary

9.3.1. Correspondence

see Appendix G

10. Any Other Competent Business

Please notify Chair of AOCB items before the start of the meeting or at the break. Hint: Given that the end of the meeting is often taken in something of a rush, unless items are urgent it might be better to submit them for next meeting's New Business.

Appendix A

Planning objection by P M Uprichard for Planning Committee

Application 06/00348/EEIA – Extension to St Andrews Bay Hotel Resort

The Planning Committee of the Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council wish to OBJECT to this application.

The main points of our objection are as follows:

- The site is in prospective Green Belt
- The site is in an Area of Great Landscape Value
- The proposed application would constitute Development in the Countryside

In the original application in 1999 the developers were given permission for a spa on the steading site. They do not have planning permission for accommodation on this site. However, if planning permission for the steading is approved, we will not object to this part of the site. We do however, wish to object strongly to the development of the holiday lodges.

The developers say in the EIA that the site is not in prospective Green Belt. They are incorrect. Fife Council has not seen fit to set the boundaries since the Green Belt policy was included by the Scottish Executive in the Structure Plan of 2002, but the policy is there – for a Green Belt encircling the town. The development would therefore be premature to the setting of the Green Belt boundaries. More significantly, its landscape location is a visually important one for the Green Belt, and this form of development would normally be regarded as unacceptable within such an area.

St Andrews Bay say that they need more rooms to meet demand. They do not offer any proof for this statement. In the first half of 2005 bed occupancy in Fife was only 40% (Visit Scotland) It would be helpful to have a record of bed occupancy during this time at St Andrews Bay.

If approved, the application will establish a very clear precedent for further development. In appearance and potential future use, there is little to distinguish it from a conventional housing development. It could well represent the "thin end of the wedge" and could lead to further future development, which in planning terms it would be virtually impossible to refuse.

It is not dissimilar from Drumoig, originally seen as a modest development of a limited number of houses, subsequently increased over time. Although the use of the proposed lodges as tourist accommodation could be controlled through a Section 75 Agreement, in time and in changed circumstances, Fife Council could be seen as being unreasonable if it refused to remove this legal restriction to 'help' the hotel. A similar situation arose at the Gleneagles Hotel some years ago, leading to the removal of restrictions on 'corporate suites' in the grounds to allow them to be sold as houses. This in turn was followed by an application for a further 200 houses and flats (all subsequently built) in the hotel grounds on adjoining land. It is clear from the proposed design of the lodges that they are houses in all but name.

In the Environmental Statement, the Planning Policy Statement relies rather heavily on the Consultative Draft Local Plan – particularly in terms of the assumption that the site will not be within the Green Belt and that the AGLV designation will be dropped. Given the extent of objections to both Structure and Local Plans, it would be appropriate to start the assessment from a 'worst case' scenario from the developer's perspective.

Although it is expected that AGLV will be replaced by another designation, AGLV still exists and should be taken into account for the purposes of this application.

The economics case is over-stated. The potential benefits to the local economy are relatively minimal, with the prime beneficiary of the development being the hotel owners. It is possible that the proposals have been developed as a means of recovering recent losses, rather than being designed to meet any well researched tourism need.

The Economic Impact report fails adequately to take into account displacement effects, *i.e.* the development is primarily based on transfers of existing business from the town rather than attracting new business. This also likely in terms of employment. St Andrews enjoys full employment status, hence there is no benefit during the construction phase, and future works will either transfer from existing businesses in the town or be recruited elsewhere. The report attributes these new jobs to Fife, although they are more likely to be recruited from Dundee.

The report assumes that off-sire expenditures will primarily benefit St Andrews and Fife. Given the nature of such expenditure, and the US ownership of the hotel, it can be assumed that a high percentage of such expenditure will be of no local benefit. Indeed a considerable proportion will not be of any benefit to the Scottish economy.

There are two specific aspects of the assessment, which require comment. The first is an inherent assumption that the damage to the landscape has already occurred through the hotel development and (by implication) the present proposals will not make it much worse. The second are the long range viewpoints, particularly from the Links, which are completely ignored. The latter is one of the most important, being the 'iconic' perspective of St Andrews and the one seen by virtually all visitors. The

perspective has already been significantly compromised by the hotel on the skyline, and the proposed development will simply add to the 'urban' appearance of this part of the town's landscape setting. This is precisely what the Green Belt designation is intended to protect.

The Ecology report highlights the fact that due to the hotel's maintenance regime there is little of interest left on the site. Although it says that a management plan to enhance biodiversity should be produced, no detailed proposals are made on what this might involve or how it might be achieved.

The Transportation section appears to be based on the assumption that the 'ongoing' Travel Plan is working well and needs to be extended to include the proposed development. The form of development being proposed is based on car-based tourism and is inconsistent with conventional notions of sustainable forms of development. It appears that the hotel has introduced services primarily geared to its own staff, but has been less enthusiastic in encouraging guests to avoid use of private cars.

Transportation's assessment that it is not envisaged that the proposed new steading development 'will have any significant impact on the local road network and traffic flow' is surely inadequate. Would any other application involving a possible 200 people and a considerable number of buildings have this statement attached to it?

St Andrews has waited for over 10 years for a Green Belt. It is to be hoped that for once the wishes of residents will be listened to, rather than the demands of developers

Appendix B – Community Council Vacancy

1. Letter from Jane Hunter-Blair

Dear Donald,

I should like to express my interest in applying to the Community Council. For those members I do not know, a brief personal history.

I grew up locally – went to school in the town – left and went south to university and then to work in London.

Returned to Fife in 1990. My children have all gone to primary school in St Andrews. We moved into the town in 1997.

I was elected to Fife Council in 1995 and served until 2001. In my last two years I was the member for St Andrews Central. I resigned when we moved to Russia.

Now that we are back I should like to become more involved in the town and its activities.

2. Letter from Ben McLeod

Dear Patrick,

Please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Ben McLeod and I am the general manager of Grill House Restaurant in St Mary's Place. I sit with Ewen Sparks on the Merchants' Association and at last week's AGM was co-opted as representative for the Community Council.

I was also wishing to enquire as to whether there is still a vacant position on the Community Council proper, as I recall reading of one such in The Citizen recently. As someone who both lives and works in the town I would be interested in learning more as it would make sense, were I to be attending the meetings in any case, to be able to exercise a vote on issues affecting me both as a merchant and resident.

Appendix C – City Park

Letter from Sandra Brydon, Housing Manager, Viewpoint Housing, re City Park.

Thank you very much for your recent letter in connection with the services at our City Park sheltered housing development.

City Park in Fife has operated for some time now with housing voids due to the low uptake in bed-sit accommodation. To address this and improve the standard of housing accommodation we have a bed-sit strategy, which involves transforming this accommodation into one-bedroomed flats. This will result in a direct improvement in the standard of living for the tenants at City Park.

One of the other issues we have had to address is the catering services provided by Viewpoint. Historically there has been a very low up-take of this service. When we reviewed it as part of a major review of sheltered housing services, we discovered that only six tenants were using it on a regular basis, that is other than casual users, and it was running at a significant deficit each year. The majority of tenants either cooked their own meals, or received assistance to cook meals within their own flats. The option of a home help service to cook meals, meals on wheels or frozen meals does ensure that a substantial meal is provided every day. Many local authorities, whose task it is to ensure the provision of meals to older people, already successfully operate these choices for tenants.

We also have to look at increasing the housing allocation at City Park to meet the housing needs of the community as well as ensuring financial stability within Viewpoint. We gave consideration to conversion of the kitchen and dining room into additional flats. Although City Park has a communal room for social events and meetings, some of the tenants feel that the existing dining room is the preferred choice for such events. To this end housing staff are consulting with tenants to decide what future plans may be developed for the use of the dining room and communal room.

In order for Viewpoint to ensure financial stability and have a long term future, some immediate adjustments had to take place. At City Park we must do several things and I'll try and summarise them:–

1. Up grade bed-sit accommodation to one bedroom flats to improve standard of living for tenants and reduce losses through voids.
2. Increase the accommodation on offer by creating additional flats where possible to reduce void losses and aid the local authority to meet the housing needs by reducing waiting lists
3. Help to ensure that Viewpoint is an organisation 'Fit for the Future' and offering 'Best Value' through eradication of operating deficits.

If you need any further information please do not hesitate to be in touch

Appendix D – Letter from University Rector

From Simon Pepper, Rector, St Andrews University

I was very honoured to be welcomed by a representative of the Community Council during the Drag, and would be grateful if you could pass on my thanks for helping to make it a memorable day.

Please note that I am very committed to fostering good town-gown relationships, and will be asking my Assessor, Ben Nicholson, to try and fix a suitable time for me to meet the Community Council for a more leisurely discussion than was possible last week

Appendix E – Park and Ride Rescue Plan

From Patrick Laughlin, St Andrews World Class

We met yesterday with Fife Council Transportation to discuss a "rescue plan" for the 2006 P&R Service.

The proposal now on the table is as follows:

A free of charge P&R Service can be provided, running between the same dates (mid-June – mid-Sept) as last year, at the same times of day (in fact, slightly longer, 0830-1745) and on more or less the same route (a new stop would be added at the new bus station).

The difference would be that only one continuously circulating bus would be used, instead of two vehicles as before. This however would still be enough to provide a guaranteed service every 15 minutes from each of the pick-up points around the town; the average passenger waiting time would therefore be 7.5 minutes.

The gross cost of this service is anticipated at £12,000-£13,000. So far, there have been contributions offered by Fife Council Transportation, Fife Council Local Office, the University, and the Merchants' Association, but the current shortfall is £4,500-£5,000. We have exactly one week to raise this amount, as that is when the Council has to make its decisions.

I am therefore asking all of the SAWC participants whether you, the bodies you represent, or indeed any other benefactors you can think of, might be able to make a contribution towards the budget shortfall. All sponsors would receive space to promote themselves on the cover of the printed bus timetable, on timetables at bus-stops throughout the town, and – potentially – within the bus itself. There would also be PR benefits at the launch, such as a press photocall. Whilst each sponsor would retain their own individual profile, the whole rescue package would also be badged under the "World Class" banner – which would be a good demonstration to the town that we can actually achieve something!

If the service can be rescued, the Council has also agreed to sit down with us and discuss in detail how we might collectively achieve a long-term, sustainable P&R scheme in the years ahead.

All offers of support – by Tues 28th March – would be gratefully received and I promise to keep the size of individual pledges confidential for the time being, so that in the happy event of us raising too much money, contributions can be refunded pro rata!

Update:

Received from Patrick Laughlin just before agenda finalised:

I am delighted to report that, thanks to several generous sponsors, it would appear that we have raised sufficient funds to secure the Park and Ride Service for summer 2006.

A report outlining the "rescue plan" has been issued to Fife Council East Area Services Committee, which meets next week, and, assuming it is approved, we can then make an announcement and name all of the benefactors. In the report, I gather that individual organisations and the amounts they have pledged are not named, it is being presented at this stage under the overall "St Andrews World Class" banner. It is likely that there will be some local press coverage of this over the next few days – and surely favourable coverage at that!!!

I'll be in touch in due course to talk about we plan both to maximise the PR for World Class and also to ensure that the sponsors get a high profile in the promotional materials to be produced between now and the service's launch in June.

I am about to go on holiday tomorrow, returning to work on 14 Apr. However, I will be checking my messages on a daily basis and so if you would like to contact me, I insist that you don't hesitate to leave a message on either of the numbers below. I'll get back to you as soon as I can. Please feel free to pass these numbers on to anyone else if required.

Appendix F – Planning Committee Minutes

1. Planning Committee 13 March 2006

Present: Penny Uprichard, Ian Goudie, Pete Lindsay (minutes). Apologies: Bette Christie.

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1.	Dykes End, Doubledykes Rd	Extension to dwelling house		no comment
2.	Ladies Lake, The Scores	extension to dwelling house		no comment
3.	former Macgregor's Auction Hall, Largo Rd	Change use to childrens' play barn		no comment
4.	47 Lade Braes	Alter dwelling house, including enclosure of rear yard		no comment
5.	118 North St	Replace existing extension (listed building)	(seen jan 06; repeat or minor update?)	no comment
6.	28 East Scores	Alter dwelling house		no comment
7.	Lafferty's, South St	Alter frontage, add awning	Return of the 'Criterion' name welcome, but concern over re-enclosure of original pillar(s)	-PL- to check pillar and comment as appropriate
8.	13 Kinkell Terr		no plans	
9.	5 Livingston Cres		no plans	
10.	St Andrews Bay		Review of PU proposed objection text	-PU-

2. 99 South Street

Letter of comment by Pete Lindsay

I write on behalf of the Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council Planning Committee to comment on application 06/00489/EFULL Alteration to Public House frontage, at 99 South Street (currently "Lafferty's").

While welcoming the return of the "Criterion" name to South Street we are concerned that the redesigned frontage encloses the existing decorated window pillar.

We understand this is an original feature of the frontage, probably predating the old Criterion bar, which should be retained and exposed as are similar pillars at other old frontages about the town centre.

There has in the past been talk of a planning policy for the town centre conservation area to retain such features. If such a policy has not yet been implemented we believe this would be an excellent place to start, and if it is in place we believe it should be applied in this case.

Following a report in The Courier querying the comment, on the grounds that the plan was indeed to retain the pillar, the following response was made by Pete Lindsay to a press enquiry:

... the plans (dated 15/2/06) sent by Fife Council's Dev Svcs (letter dated 1 March) to community council planning committee. They do not show any ironwork – the pillar is fully enclosed. I attach a scan of one of the smaller plans, showing the "Exterior elevation as proposed", with no ironwork showing. All the plans supplied to us are similar.

We can only work on the basis of the information we have. It does occasionally happen that developers update their plans after Development Service sends an earlier version out for consultation, which we have responded to in good faith. This is what seems to have happened here. This was only a comment, not a formal objection, and I'm sure community council will very pleased to hear that the pillar and ironwork will be exposed; it's a small but valuable enhancement to the appearance and character of the town centre. Our thanks and congratulations to Mr Irving for being ahead of us on this one!

3. Planning Committee – 27 March 2006

Present: Penny Uprichard, George Davidson, Pete Lindsay (minutes), Ian Goudie. Apologies: Bette Christie

1. Plans

1	9 Logies Lane	(listed building) internal alterations		no comment
2	Blackfriars Ruin	add information plaque to existing plinth re geological heritage, Charles Lapworth, teacher of English & geologist		no comment
3	Hazeldene, KY16 8PD	erect dwelling house	no plans (later: post code is by Cameron Reservoir)	no comment
4	Tom Morris Drive	erection of garage in existing garages court		no comment
5	18 Woodburn Terrace	2 storey extension	not sure if this is sea or park side: no plans	
6	79 Roundhill Road	dormer, garage, vehicle access		no comment
7	9 Fergusson Place	extension to dwelling house		no comment
8	St Andrews Bay		discussed wording, inclusion of points from 3rd party analysis	take to CC for approval

2. St Leonards Fields

Planning appeal hearing: Penny Uprichard had attended. She did not feel optimistic about the outcome as Fife Council had not defended the point about this being green field, leaving Cllr Melville on a very sticky wicket (and no bat) against 'aggressive' cross-examination.

3. Westburn Lane

Planning appeal: inquiry scheduled for June, date to be confirmed.

4. Fife Structure Plan

Goes to the full Fife Council on 27 Apr. Any further comments by individuals should be made ASAP.

Appendix G – Correspondence

Date	from	Subject
Mar 16th	Fife Council Community Services	Seminar, 5th April – Best Kept Town Competition – Cupar
March	Fife Rural Partnership	Charitable Law Seminar 19th April County Buildings, Cupar
Mar 24th	Fife Council Development Services	St Andrews and East Fife Draft Local Plan – CDR of representations
March	Marine Conservation Society	Beachwatch 2005 – Annual UK Beach Litter Survey Report
March	SEPA	SEPAVIEW – Magazine of SEPA
Mar 16th	Fife Council Education Service	Greyfriars RC Primary School
March	South East Scotland Local Energy Support Programme	Local Energy News – Spring 2006
March	NHS Fife	Issue 5 St Andrews Community Hospital & Health Centre Project
Mar 06	Scottish Water	Letter about water charges in Scotland
Mar 15th	Fife Council Transportation Services	Canongate, Lawhead and Langlands – 20 mph zones consultation letters
Mar 1st	The Local Channel	Leaflet promoting "Free Web-site"
March	Planning Aid Scotland	Newsletter No. 45 Spring 2006
March	Fife Police	Eastern Community Division Newsletter – March 2006
April 2	FoES	No2Nuclear campaign
April 2	RuralScotland	Newsletter winter 05/06

Appendix H – Meeting with the Rector

Report and proposal by Ken Fraser

Together with Councillor Sangster, I had a short talk with the Rector, Simon Pepper, on the day of his installation. He offered to come and speak to the Community Council about town and gown relationships. I do not recall any previous rector who has made such an offer, and I hope it may be taken up.

Councillor Sangster gave Mr Pepper a Pilgrim Badge as a memento, but, being unprepared, I had nothing. It occurs to me that there are from time to time occasions when the Council might like to present distinguished visitors with an inexpensive memento, and that it would not be difficult to produce one. What I have in mind is that there might be kept online a template for an A4 certificate which would have on the top a full colour reproduction of our Coat of Arms, and on the lower half a partly completed wording on the lines of "Presented by the Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council to... on the occasion of.... (date) with space for the Convenor's signature.

1. Would the Council like to consider doing this?
2. If so, might we present one to Mr Pepper?