

Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

Provisional Minutes –7th April 2014

For Approval

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1. Attendance

Community Councillors

Ian Goudie, Ken Fraser, Henry Paul, Marysia Denyer, Kyffin Roberts, Izzy Corbin, Carol Ashworth, Judith Harding, Howard Greenwell, Robert McLachlan, Ken Crichton, Henry Cheape, Alice Alexander, Tom Waterton-Smith, Harry Stewart.

Students' Association Representatives

Zara Evans

Chloe Hill

Co-Opted

Lindsey Adam

Fife Councillors

Dorothea Morrison, Brian Thomson,

Apologies

Callum Corbin, Francis Melville, Keith McCartney, Patrick Marks, Penny Uprichard, Bernadette Cassidy

2. Minutes of Meeting – 3rd March

Page 4 – 2nd para – Mr McLean should be Mrs McLean

Page 8 – Botanic Gardens - amendment to be made

Minutes accepted with above corrections

3. Presentations

None

4. Fife Councillors

4.1. Frances Melville

4.2. Brian Thomson

4.2.1. Tayplan

Cllr Thomson reported that the Main Issues report of this plan had been published. He added that officials were keen to have as many Community Councils as possible attend the consultation event, which is being held on 15th April at Enterprise House in Dundee from ending Machine

4.2.2. Robertson Homes – Flats Development – Reporters Decision

Cllr Thomson reported that the Reporter is minded to approve the application to develop 17 flats subject to the developer negotiating 30% affordable housing provision. The applicant has been given 8 weeks to negotiate on this requirement with Fife Council. The Reporter had otherwise reduced the number of flats from 17 to 16, deleting the penthouse flat from the application. Mr Greenwell confirmed that despite concerns expressed by Mr Crichton the two blocks of flats would have to have the same footprint.

4.2.3. House Numbers - Forrest Street

Cllr Thomson had approached officials about the missing house numbers at Forrest Street and this matter is being checked out. Cllr Thomson will chase up officials to establish how soon action will be taken to rectify the lack of signs. Mrs Alexander pointed out that other signs in the area towards the Police Station were also in need of some attention with some being virtually illegible.

4.2.4. Double Yellow Lines – Greenside Place

The missing double yellow lines at Greenside Place have now been painted. Mr Greenwell thanked Cllr Thomson for getting the double yellow lines painted and felt that the traffic situation was greatly improved as a result.

4.2.5. Vending Machine

Cllr Thomson understood that the main problem was between 23.00 and 03.00. He understood that it needed advertisement consent. Fisher and Donaldson will be doing their own noise monitoring exercise in the coming week and will report their findings to the Council.

4.2.6. Road Subsidence – Allison Place

Mr Greenwell brought an issue of road subsidence to the attention of Cllr Thomson. A local resident had noticed that the roadway had sunk by Allison Place on the side away from the Westburn development. He thought that the subsidence should be checked. Cllr Morrison commented that she'd reported the subsidence the previous week after it had been brought to her attention. An engineer from the Council is to look at the subsidence.

4.2.7. Car Park Maintenance

Mrs Harding asked Councillors about the maintenance of the car parks. She'd spoken to the Council staffs that clean the streets and was informed that they don't clean car parks.

4.2.8. Sandyhill Road – condition

Mrs Denyer reminded Cllr Thomson that he mentioned the poor state of Sandyhill Road at the previous meeting but hadn't noticed that any work had been done. Cllr Thomson agreed to check on the matter.

4.2.9. Speed Signs - Hepburn Gardens

Mrs Ashworth commented upon the positive impact of the new speed restriction signs at the beginning of Hepburn Gardens before Lawhead School. She thought that they were making a real impact upon motorists' speed. Cllr Thomson acknowledged the effectiveness of the signs and added that the main issue about having more was the cost.

4.2.10. East Sands Path

Mr Greenwell commented that the path along the East Sands was designated as a walkway. However despite a sign by the yacht club asking cyclists to dismount he felt that few ever did. There was not however a similar sign at the harbour end. He wondered if more signs relating to the pedestrian status of the path could be installed, particularly with the future likelihood of having over 100 students in the new student accommodation by the Leisure centre? Cllr Thomson acknowledged that the issue was a tricky one given the need to encourage a healthy lifestyle and he was never that keen to discourage cycling particularly children. He agreed to take advice from officers on the matter.

4.2.11. A915 Flooding

Mr Roberts thanked Councillors for getting the drainage repaired above Morrisons where there had been a flood for some time, which had been a hazard particularly in icy weather.

4.3. Keith McCartney

4.4. Dorothea Morrison

4.4.1. Flooding Issue - South Street

Cllr Morrison reported that following Mrs Denyer's request at the previous CC meeting on this topic she'd spoken to officials. An inspection will take place soon of the area to determine what may need to be done to rectify the flooding problem

4.4.2. Parking Changes in Kennedy Gardens etc

Cllr Morrison announced that there are going to be changes in parking restrictions in Kennedy Gardens and eventually Wardlaw and Donaldson Gardens. The change has been approved because of parking problems in those residential streets.

4.4.3. Scottish Water Work

Cllr Morrison reported that it was hoped that the major drainage works being undertaken by Scottish Water to deal with flooding issues in the Pilmour Links area, which have meant major digging up of the area from City Road around to Granny Clark's Wynd. It was hoped that most of the work would be completed by mid-April and fully completed by mid-May

4.4.4. Vending Machine

The owners of the vending machine set up at Macarthur's Bakery are now going to have to apply for a late licence because hot food is being sold late at night. Mrs Denyer reminded the meeting that some local residents in the area were not happy with the vending machine in its present location. Miss Hill acknowledged the problem as she lived above the vending machine. Cllr Morrison informed advised her who she could contact to raise her concerns.

4.4.5. Parking Issues

Cllr Morrison said that she'd had a lot of complaints about cars parking on double yellow lines across the road from the Town Hall by Holy Trinity Church. Cllr Morrison had checked with officials and been informed that the matter wasn't straight forward as the area in question although it has double yellow lines belongs to the church, so there is uncertainty about what can be done legally to enforce the parking in that area.

4.4.6. Queens Gardens - 20 mph limit query

Cllr Morrison has been approached by residents of Queens Gardens concerned about the poor compliance of drivers with the 20 mph limit. More signs will be put on lampposts to ensure drivers are aware of the speed restriction.

4.4.7. Argyle Street Car Park – speeding cars

Cllr Morrison had received complaints about cars speeding through this car park using it as a bit of a short cut. Cllr Morrison has contacted officials who will determine what can be done to reduce this problem.

4.4.8. Kirkhill Road Surface Replacement

Mrs Denyer expressed the thanks of the residents of Kirkhill for the replacement of the road surface in that area.

4.4.9. Bus Shelter – North Street

Mrs Denyer reminded Councillors of the need for a bus shelter at the east end of North Street where a number of elderly residents live in sheltered type accommodation. Cllr Morrison agreed to raise the issue again but wasn't certain if it would be possible.

5. Planning Committee

5.1. Planning Committee Report

Mr Greenwell reported that it had been quite a quiet month in planning terms. The committee had only raised three objections in the past month. One had been in relation to Cromar's planning applications and the parking issues taking place. Mr Greenwell felt that the parking issue had become a joke with Cromar's regularly parking their vehicles on the pavement outside the shop, restricting pedestrian access to the pavement and forcing pedestrians to walk on the road. Other obstructions included tables, plants and A Boards. Nearby the vans delivering Dominoes Pizzas continue to park on the double yellow lines at that corner. He thought that something needed to be done about the area and suggested some form of bollards to stop inappropriate parking. Cllr Morrison commented that Transportation Services were taking the situation clearly and asked Mr Greenwell to email his photos of the parking to her. Lindsey Adam asked about the planning applications mentioned and Mr Greenwell confirmed that the firm had put in three planning applications for their signage retrospectively, also for some external work. There was also no permission for the four bushes standing outside the restaurant.

The second objection related to the equestrian lodges at Brownhills, a development in Greenbelt. He added that it also demonstrated the issue of the lack of the ability of the CC to request statutory consultee status to defend the Green Belt as the area was just outside the town boundary.

The third objection related to the biomass plant at the Feddinch development. Mr Greenwell commented on email correspondence taking place about whether this was in countryside or the Green Belt and he also noted that it was a retrospective application thus indicating that the Biomass plant must already exist. The CC had agreed to object despite it being outside the town boundary.

Mr Greenwell then mentioned the possibility of a co-ordinated approach to defending the Green Belt by local Community Councils. This idea had been raised by the Green Belt Forum last year and may still be a possibility as most local Community Councils have indicated support.

5.2. Madras

Mr Roberts introduced the topic of the Madras Pipeland application and the recent Fife Council decision to support planning permission in principle. Miss Uprichard had hoped to make a statement in relation to the recent Council decision to make members aware of the reasons for refusal and the fact that the Council hadn't made a recommendation to approve. Mr Roberts went on to remind the meeting that Cllr Poole had emailed the CC within 24 hours of the Fife Council decision, which had been emailed out to members. Cllr Poole in his final sentence was seeking the involvement of the CC with Fife Council as a partner in the development of the more detailed design for the new Madras College. Mr Roberts had replied to Cllr Poole to advise him that a decision about his offer could only be made at full CC. He added that there was some CC members who wanted to wait until the decision by the Scottish Government if the application was called in and the outcome of that known. Mr Paul while accepting that the Scottish Government could reject the application couldn't see why the CC shouldn't be involved as suggested by Cllr Poole. He questioned why despite any delay in receiving a response from the Scottish Government the CC shouldn't be involved in

discussing with Fife Council and the community some of the issues in relation to the school at the Pipeland site. He felt that the CC owed it to the people of St Andrews to back the decision even if it didn't like it. Mrs Corbin said that she understood the duty to provide a school, but there was also the duty to understand that the planning process was a very long lengthy one. She thought that there wouldn't be a new school within three years despite what had been promised. Mr Waterton-Smith supported the need for a cautious response to involvement and he reflected on the issue of the North Haugh site rejected on what he thought were questionable grounds by Fife Council. He questioned the Council's claim considering the open invitation to offer the North Haugh site by the University as a straight swap. He felt that the decision by Fife Council was a flawed one. Mrs Harding wanted to know what Fife Council were going to do while they were deciding if the application should go to the Scottish Government? She also thought that the future of the old Madras building needed to be seriously considered and wondered what Fife Council would be doing to look after it? Miss Hill thought that the CC should try to be involved in the process and not stubbornly refuse to participate. She felt that some of the concerns raised by the CC could be addressed by being in partnership with Fife Council. Mr Paul further commented that he didn't think that the CC being involved with the process would speed it up or slow it down and he didn't want the CC to be outwith the process as it worked its way through the process in the coming year. He reminded the meeting of the duty of the CC to represent everyone in St Andrews. Mrs Alexander agreed with Mr Paul and didn't see why the CC should be obstructive but should go with the flow at present despite concerns from some members. Mr Roberts in reply said that he didn't think that members with concerns would view their stance as obstructive. He acknowledged that at some stage the CC would have to accept the decision, but he queried whether it was premature to be involved at this time and wait until it was known if the Scottish Government would call in the application.

Mr Fraser admitted that he'd always been an agnostic in relation to the location of the school. He queried whether by accepting Cllr Poole's invitation the CC had abandoned all objections to the scheme? If that was implied he could understand a reluctance to become involved at this stage but if it wasn't, he thought that there might be some merit in being involved in whatever the process involved. Dr Goudie didn't think that Cllr Poole's letter was a genuine attempt to involve the CC or that there was any real evidence of an interest in what the CC might think. He felt that it was an attempt to compromise the position of the CC at a stage where the matter had clearly not been determined. He felt that the likelihood of the Council taking notice of any points from the CC was minimal. He felt that the recent decision had been taken in such a way as to lack even the basic information required to know issues like the effect on the town given the likelihood of other pressures such as the Western extension also adding to pressures on the town. He felt that the decision by Fife Council to seek to build the school would see the pressures from the Development Plan coming much sooner and hitting the town much harder. He added that Fife Council didn't have any information from the traffic consultants after 2016 and had also ignored what information they had from that source. He felt that the CC shouldn't do anything to compromise its position, but should look towards what the town might be thinking. He thought that the percentages of local people quoted as supporting the plan were ridiculous. He thought that the CC should remain in a position whereby it was supporting the many local people opposing the plan.

Mr Waterton-Smith questioned how Fife Council could argue that it should be allowed to breach its own development plan given that it would have to convince the Scottish Government that there would be no other potential site. He then commented upon the North Haugh site and how it had never been evaluated like the Pipeland site. He felt that it would be foolish to give up at this stage. Mrs Harding suggested to Mr Roberts that he might want to consider writing to Cllr Poole to seek clarification on what he means by the level of CC involvement. Mr Roberts reminded the meeting that in the recent email Cllr Poole did say that the details of how any partnership might work were still to be worked out and he'd be quite happy to explore the partnership framework with the CC. At this stage he was looking for the CC's initial reaction in principle to the notion of partnership. Mr Roberts added that it was

unclear how CC involvement would be perceived if it agreed to this partnership and whether this would send the wrong signal to the Scottish Government when it examines the application. Mr Greenwell asked if Cllr Poole could be invited to meet with some of the CC in the next week or so to discuss his offer of a partnership and try to establish more details of how it might work and identify some ground rules upon which it would be reasonable for CC members to make decisions? Mr Roberts disagreed with that suggestion and felt that any meeting should be a public one.

Mr Crichton urged caution and felt that the CC shouldn't rush into any involvement until it was clearer how the situation would pan out. Mr Paul in reply thought that if this suggestion was followed the CC would be bypassed and the process would continue whether the CC liked it or not. He thought that Fife Council would be continuing to work on the design of the new school and by the time the decision of the Scottish Government was known the town would be presented he claimed with a de facto design.

Mr Greenwell explained to the meeting that the Scottish Government had 28 days on which to decide whether to call in the application. If it hadn't called in the application by that time Fife Council would be able to go ahead with the full planning application. He expected that Fife Council planners would have already been working on the detailed plans over the past few months. It might be possible he thought that if the application isn't called in the full application could be ready by the end of the summer. He added that once published he expected that it could take 6 – 9 months to go through its various stages before being put to a final vote by councillors whom he expected would approve it. Mr Greenwell's estimate for the new school to be built if there were no problems was 2017-18, but possibly even later 2018-19 if there were problems. If Scottish ministers called in the application they could do a variety of things to determine the application from a site visit to a Public Hearing, which could take at least several months to come to a conclusion.

He felt that as the planners were already working at the design he couldn't see the CC being able to contribute much despite Cllr Poole's offer of some form of partnership. Personally he wouldn't feel comfortable in being involved with such a partnership especially if the problems of the Pipeland site became difficult for the planners. He acknowledged as well his lack of knowledge of design work. He was concerned that if the CC went into some form of partnership Cllr Poole might take advantage of the input to claim in a public way the CC's support, despite what Mr Greenwell recognised as a clear division of opinion within the CC about the application.

Dr Goudie agreed with many of Mr Greenwell's comments on the dangers of the problems still to be dealt with and added that in his view the idea that the CC could have any input on the detailed design work was fanciful. He went on to say that one couldn't even take it as read that now Fife Council had given consent, and even if the Scottish Government gave consent in a months time that Fife Council would still wish to pursue it. He reminded the meeting that since the original application was made there had been a huge number of practical problems thrown up that Fife Council were unaware of at the time the application went in. If as has been claimed by Fife Council that it is sticking to its budget of £40 million, Dr Goudie claimed that it could be very difficult to see how the project could be completed within the stated costs. He claimed that even some supporters of the Pipeland site had commented at the Hearing that if a suitable alternative site was shown to be available without all the additional costs required to make Pipeland viable it might be preferable.

Dr Goudie concluded by suggesting that the response to Cllr Poole should be to thank him for his letter but advise him that the CC did not think it appropriate to take it up at this stage.

Mr Greenwell reminded the meeting that Audit Scotland were looking at this application but couldn't say when they'd come out with their verdict based on how they were allowed to comment on the application as value for money. He also informed the meeting that if the Scottish ministers didn't call the current application in, they could still call in the full

application for the same or similar reasons. He did however view this as a less likely but still feasible scenario.

Mr McLachlan wondered about a middle route in the CC response to Cllr Poole's offer by getting his agreement that the CC would explore the possibility of a partnership as long as it wasn't compromised and could opt out to continue with its original position should the CC wish to do so.

Cllr Thomson felt that Dr Goudie's claim that Fife Council might not want to continue with the application if planning permission was granted was nonsensical. He thought that Fife Council would be pressing ahead with its work to develop the application once it received planning permission. Next in terms of Cllr Poole's offer Cllr Thomson suggested that his colleague could be invited to a CC meeting unless the Scottish Government called the application in which case the meeting could be cancelled. Dr Goudie in response to Cllr Thomson's comments asked that if Fife Council was committed to forging ahead with the project had it worked out the costs and how much of the costs would have to be used for the extra costs such as reshaping of the hillside, removing the gas pipe line etc. Cllr Thomson acknowledged that a number of Fife Councillors had sought clarification on the costs since the Council meeting from Fife Council and had been advised that all extra costs would come within the budget of £40 million.

Mr Murphy suggested that the matter should be put to a vote. Mr Roberts sought to move to the vote but Dr Goudie asked to make a further comment. This was in relation to the student representative's position. He reminded the meeting that he'd been a keen advocate of student participation over many years but he wasn't persuaded that in this matter there was any genuine student interest and wondered for whom the student reps thought they were speaking at this time. He felt that there was minimal student interest in the matter and not much more awareness in most students.

Mr Roberts reminded the meeting that the students despite any question about the nature of the vote could still vote as per the scheme of the CC. Cllr Thomson came in with a final comment in response to Dr Goudie claiming that a greater disincentive to recruiting academic staff was not the traffic as the latter had suggested but the lack of a modern purpose built secondary school.

Mr Roberts asked for a proposal upon which the meeting could vote. Dr Goudie reminded the meeting of his proposal that the CC should thank Cllr Poole for his offer but regard it as appropriate for the CC to participate at this stage. Mr Murphy suggested a counter proposal seeking to accept the offer at this time, seconded by Mrs Alexander. Mr Waterton-Smith wondered about waiting until the 28 days were up before making a decision? Mr Roberts asked if there was any support for that suggestion. Mr Roberts asked Dr Goudie if he'd be prepared to amend his proposal to take into account the 28 days. Dr Goudie agreed to that amendment. Mr Roberts put the proposals to the meeting, these being to either accept the proposal by Cllr Poole to work with him or to delay making a decision for the 28 days as mentioned.

The vote to delay the decision until the end of the 28 days when hopefully the decision by the Scottish Ministers as to whether they would call in the application was won with the casting vote of the Chair - 8 - 7. Mr Roberts commented that he thought it was premature to become involved with Cllr Poole and Fife Council at this time.

6. Matters Arising

6.1. Craigtoun Park

Mr Roberts reminded the meeting that Craigtoun is open every day in April and after that will be open at weekends until July when it will be open every day in July and August. There is to be a grand opening 28/29th June to celebrate the fact that the park will be opening all throughout July/August.

6.2. Starter Packs Update

Mr Roberts reported that Mr Stewart had suggested that it would be beneficial if CC members had name cards in front of them at meetings. He offered to get some produced for the next meeting. He had also suggested name badges which he felt would be useful for public events such as the Coffee morning. These would be photo name badges. He felt that these would be beneficial especially to new members like him. Mr Roberts felt that it would be appropriate to go ahead to go ahead with both the name cards and badges. Mr Crichton related a past experience with name badges and how after a couple of years most members had lost them!

6.3. Reports from Representatives

6.4. Any Other Matters Arising

6.4.1. World War One Commemorative Plaque

Mr Roberts reported that an email had been received in relation to a man who had lived locally who had won the VC in 1915. His family had been approached about getting a commemorative plaque put up in his place of birth, which was further north in Scotland but his family had preferred St Andrews where he'd lived most of his life. The family were seeking a contact with the CC to discuss this matter and how it could be organised. Mr Roberts said he'd sent out the email received just before the meeting for members to be aware of the request so that it could be followed up.

7. Committee Reports

7.1 Recreation Committee

Mrs Denyer discussed the Recreation Committee report and discussed some of the planned events such as the Coffee Morning and the Putting Challenge and the Garden Competition (see report for details of dates or various events). Mr Roberts reported on the state of play of the Bandstand Concerts. He said that three bands had been booked to date as well as an American band doing a mid week concert.

7.2. GP Meeting

Mr Roberts asked members if they had any queries about the report of the recent GP Meeting. Mrs Corbin aid that she had a couple of points relating to the minutes which she'd take up with the secretary on his return from holiday.

7.3. 200 Club

1st Mr P Marks 2nd Mrs Hastie 3rd Mr R Murphy

7.4. Health, Education and Welfare Committee

Mrs Corbin said that there was a lot going on within the NHS but hadn't read all the reports so was unable to report at this time.

7.5. Rail Sub Committee

No report

8. New Business

9. Reports from Office Bearers

9.1. Chair

Mr Roberts reminded the members that the CC AGM would be in May and that he'd be happy to step down as Chair at the AGM. He would remain as a CC but due to other commitments

he would be happy to let another member have a go at the role. He informed the meeting that the only potential nominee to date was Mr Greenwell. Mr Roberts offered members the opportunity to question the candidate but members had no questions. He reminded members that nominations for the post would be accepted up to the meeting date.

9.2. Treasurer

Mr Paul in his report talked about the situation regarding the payment for the Martyrs' Monument work and how this has had to go through the CC. He suggested that his email explanation sent out with his report of the CC accounts should be inserted in these minutes – see below:

“Please find attached the March accounts and the provisional accounts for last year. For the observant you will notice a large sum came in and went out last month, £108,547.36. This was because the Fife Environment Trust (FET) would not pay their share of the Martyrs' restoration costs unless the CC paid the FC invoice for the work. Hence FC sent the CC an invoice for £108,547.36 and the Partnership gave the CC the money to pay the invoice. That has been done and the CC has applied to FET for FET's share of the cost of the Martyrs' restoration”.

Mr Roberts explained in reply to a query from Mr Crichton the way the Martyrs monument payment had to be set up. Mr Roberts reminded the meeting that he'd been on the committee for the Martyrs monument restoration and it had been agreed to make an application to the Fife Environmental Trust and about £30000 had been raised that way. But for FET to repay the CC its grant they needed to see that the CC had actually paid for the project. Hence the payment was set up to go through the CC as explained earlier by Mr Paul.

Mr Crichton queried the need of the CC to apply for a grant from Fife Council towards the cost of the Xmas Tea Party when the CC had money in its funds donated from past fundraising events in which he had been involved such as the Ceilidh. He felt that this was depriving other more deserving groups of funds from those sources. Cllr Morrison commented that all the local councillors had been happy to approve the grant. Mr Roberts suggested that this matter might be best discussed in another committee such as the GP.

Mr Paul then announced that the provisional annual accounts for the past year were available and were being checked out as required so that they could be presented to Fife Council as a requirement before the annual grant would be awarded.

9.3 Secretary

9.3.1. Correspondence

No report as secretary on holiday.

10. Any Other Competent Business

10.1. Resignation of Mrs Ashworth

Mrs Ashworth announced her resignation from the CC. She advised that as she'd been involved as a CC rep on the St Andrews Partnership a new rep would have to be found to replace her. Mr Roberts thanked Mrs Ashworth for her contribution to the CC and expressed his sadness that she was deciding to resign from the CC.

10.2. Hamish the Cat Statue

Mrs Denyer felt that the CC should congratulate Mrs Selwyn for her efforts in fundraising to get the statue made of Hamish the cat.

