

Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

DRAFT Minutes – September 2007

For approval

1. Attendance

Community Councillors

Ken Crichton, George Davidson, David Finlay, Kenneth Fraser, Zoe Smith, Marysia Denyer, Dennis Macdonald, James Potton, Laurence Reed, Patrick Marks, Joseph Peterson, Carole Tricker, Judith Harding

Students' Association Representatives

Nominated

Jude Innes

Fife Councillors

Robin Waterston, Dorothea Morrison, Frances Melville, Bill Sangster

Apologies

Stuart Holdsworth, Dr Ian Goudie

2. Minutes of September 2007 Meeting

6.3.5. Bandstand Concerts - correction: Women's British Open not Ladies Open.

3. Presentation

3.1. Sergeant Kinmond - Team Force Sergeant, St Andrews

3.1.1. Neighbourhood Watch

Mrs Denyer asked Sgt Kinmond about the Neighbourhood Watch in the Scooniehill Road area. She'd received a letter from a local lady pointing out the apparent demise of the local scheme. A sign mentioning the scheme is still present in the area. Sgt Kinmond acknowledged problems with Neighbourhood Watch schemes, particularly with getting co-ordinators to run them. He agreed to take the matter back to the local Community Officer.

3.1.2. Community Police Street Presence

In the same letter, which Mrs Denyer had received, there had been a query about the perceived lack of a Police presence on the streets, as opposed to driving around in police cars. Sgt Kinmond explained the way the police presence was structured in the local area. There are two local Community Officers, Brian Robinson and John McLeod who concentrate upon St Andrews; therefore Sgt Kinmond thought that they should usually be more evident on the streets of the town. He also highlighted some of the community based work being done to tackle vandalism and litter.

3.1.3. Drug and Alcohol Abuse in St Andrews

Mr Peterson asked Sgt Kinmond what action the police in St Andrews are taking to tackle the growing problem of drug and alcohol abuse before it gets as bad as Dunfermline or Kirkcaldy.

Sgt Kinmond acknowledged that there was a low-level drug culture, compared to Kirkcaldy or Dunfermline. The local police were aware of a hard core of drug users whom they kept an eye on taking action when necessary to keep the problem manageable. He said that there were no heroin sellers in St Andrews with users having to go further a field to obtain their heroin. The student community had a bit of a soft drug culture.

The drink problems the police have been tackling with fixed penalties for the most part and have issued a considerable number. He felt that this problem had reduced in the time he'd been in the town. The police knew those who were the main offenders locally and were also working with the younger group to try and manage the problem in a preventative way.

Mr Peterson also asked if Sgt Kinmond thought that there had been an increase in the past year of break-ins and vandalism due to these problems. Sgt Kinmond in his reply talked about an improved detection rate and an initiative, an also about a team of four officers who were in a team called, "Time to Act" aiming at young offenders, in an attempt to reduce the problem.

He encouraged local people to continue to pass information to the police in relation to offences. He felt that the detection rate had improved and the crime rate had reduced.

3.1.4. Difficulties Calling the Police

Ms Harding asked Sgt Kinmond about the way the police service was structured to respond to calls from the public. She cited recent attempts to contact the police following minor vandalism on her car. She had been unable to directly contact the local office and had been filtered through a call centre in Glenrothes. Sgt Kinmond acknowledged that all calls are now routed through the call centre and are graded according to certain criteria. This will dictate the expected response time.

3.2. Flora Selwyn

3.2.1. St Andrews in Focus

Ms Selwyn gave the meeting a review of the magazine, its history and commented on the positive response she'd already had to the current issue. She said that the magazine had been successful, but so far she'd been unable to set it up as a business, which was a disappointment to her as she felt that it would benefit local businesses and the town generally. She gave an example of a magazine from Lincolnshire, which had inspired her to set up her magazine. This magazine had in four years become very successful, and had benefited the community in a range of ways. She viewed her magazine as a resource for the town, and mentioned a recent food supplement she'd issued with the summer edition, sponsored by Visit Scotland and the Old Course Hotel. She informed the meeting of plans for a similar supplement for Xmas, and has been seeking sponsors, so far without success. She asked the Community Council about the possibility of getting financial backing for this supplement. She thought that it would cost up to £2500, but she hadn't priced it formally as she hadn't managed to obtain sponsorship to underwrite the supplement. The previous food supplement had made a profit. She believed that with advertising and sales, an Xmas supplement could also achieve success. She viewed the magazine generally as having potential, but as it is a solo effort, areas like the magazine web site haven't been fully developed to allow Internet sales.

General Purposes Committee to discuss request for financial support

3.2.2. Welcome Ceilidh for 1st Year Students - 23rd September

Mrs Selwyn is organising a Welcome Ceilidh at the BB Hall for new students in conjunction with the Students Association. This idea had arisen after a large number of students had visited one of her Sunday afternoon ceilidhs last year. This year she would like to make it more organised, with a view to giving the new students a taste of Scottish music and culture. She has received some funding assistance from the Kate Hughes, which has paid for the hall and musician. Her request to the Community Council was funding to pay for a demonstration Highland Dancer. She thought that this would cost around £20.

The Community Council agreed to give a grant to pay for the Dancer

3.2.3. Outdoor Summer Ceilidh

Ms Selwyn also described the idea of having outdoor ceilidhs in the summer as a visitor attraction. At present she runs ceilidhs over the summer in the BB Hall, which break even. Such ceilidhs take place in Edinburgh and Scone Palace and are very successful. She felt that the Cathedral would be a super venue. She is willing to organise the event, but would require support to deal with the official side such as insurance, negotiating with Historic Scotland etc. She asked the Community Council to give the idea some thought, believing it to be an added attraction for tourists.

Referred to the Recreation Committee for consideration

3.3. Pete Lindsay

3.3.1. Comment on Community Council Newsletter

Mr Lindsay thanked the Community Council for the recent newsletter. He passed on the information, that a member of the public had congratulated him that the recent newsletter, viewing it as a "very fair document" and couldn't understand "what all the fuss had been about".

4. Fife Councillors

4.1. Frances Melville

4.1.1. Lawhead School 20 mph Zone

This development to which there have been some objections and concerns raised by nearby residents is gradually being resolved. It may not have to go to Committee if all the issues raised by objectors are amicably resolved. As a related issue, Cllr Melville mentioned local residents concerns about the proximity of the 30 mph limit to the roundabout beside the school. Cllr Melville has tried in the past to get the 30 mph limit pushed further out without success, but hopes that other markings to slow traffic approaching the roundabout may be possible.

4.1.2. Canongate Breakfast Club Bus

The bus, which was set up to take children to the school for the Breakfast Club following the amalgamation of Canongate and Kilrymont Primary Schools, has been extended to the October holidays, after which the free service will be withdrawn. The small numbers of children using the bus was a factor in not continuing this service. A free bus service for children living more than a mile from Canongate will continue as per timetable.

4.1.3. Fife Strategic Development Fund

Cllr Melville mentioned a report on this fund, which is money, retained by Fife Council from Visit Scotland. It is described as a drawing down fund for developments across Fife to aid tourism. The report by consultants looks at the development of a future sustainable and more accountable partnership organisation to replace World Class St Andrews. The report is available for viewing on Fife Direct.

4.2. Cllr Sangster

4.2.1. South Street/Bell Street and Church Street

Cllr Sangster noted that the resurfacing and pavement replacement work has started. It will stop over the Xmas period from 16th December. As an added bonus, Union Street will also get resurfaced and get new pavements. Mr Fraser asked how the public would know when work would start on a particular area. Mr Sangster replied that notice would be published in the press. The only street to be completely closed will be Union Street for up to a couple of weeks. Mr Finlay asked about possible replacement of the zebra crossings by Madras. Mr Sangster had asked for the crossings to be upgraded to controlled crossings, but had been informed that this was not possible due to the proximity to the mini roundabout and would not conform with current design standards. Mr Macdonald in relation to the earlier upgrading in St Mary's

Place commented on the confusion caused by the raised area close to Hope Street. Tourists in particular were often unaware that it wasn't a crossing and were walking out without looking. Cllr Sangster said that they'd raised this problem with officials, but had been informed that people would get used to the raised areas. He felt that this demonstrated a lack of understanding of the nature of the town and its tourist population. He couldn't see the raised areas being removed or changed into crossings.

4.2.2. Overnight Parking Problems at East Sands

Mr Crichton asked Cllr Sangster about progress in getting signs up to prevent Camper Vans parking in the parking areas beside the East Sands. Cllr Sangster replied that this was being looked at by officials.

4.2.3. South Street/Bell Street Mini Roundabout

Mr Finlay asked about the possibility of this roundabout being replaced by a give way in case this made it easier to replace the Zebra Crossings. Cllr Sangster was doubtful as officials he said followed the regulations, but he'd bring it up at the next local meeting.

4.2.4. University and Parking Restrictions

The University is taking parking management seriously with restrictions on parking in its own car parks. Wardens employed by the University will enforce the new regulations. They will also be attempting to discourage staff and students from parking on the central streets of the town.

4.3. Robin Waterston

4.3.1. St Andrews Design Guidelines

Cllr Waterston informed the meeting about these new guidelines which are meant to encourage developers to build in ways which will fit in with the heritage of the area and be of the highest quality. Cllr Waterston viewed the new guidelines as a positive recognition of the need to prevent developers and planners repeating mistakes, as has happened in some past developments. Mr Peterson asked about the definition of quality, contemporary design? Cllr Waterston replied that the guidelines didn't give definitive answers, but stated that judgements would have to be made on individual applications by officials. If there were any controversial plans they would be decided by the Planning Committee. Cllr Waterston reiterated that the guidelines want to retain the essential nature and character of central St Andrews. Cllr Morrison added that the guidelines had been in the making for ten years in the making. In response to Mr Peterson, she commented that contemporary design should always be able to fit within the traditional design, and this design guide should allow the planners to see what fits well. She gave examples of good and bad design in local shops. She felt that it wasn't necessary to stay in the past, and that good contemporary design should be in harmony with what has gone before, which is what the design guide is trying to say.

4.3.2. Parking Charges

Cllr Waterston told the meeting how he'd researched the logic behind the recent increases in parking charges, which are more than the usual inflation plus 1%, a total of 3 _ % in one year, or 11% over three years. The increase would appear to be income led in his assessment, following a decision by the Policy and Resources Committee in late 2005. Services are responsible for managing their charges with due regard to income targets set, with the above inflation plus 1% being the figure used to set targets. He commented that there appeared to be two different objectives, one related to traffic management, while the other related to revenue. The first objective if it achieved a reduction in traffic congestion in the town centre, would therefore see a reduction in revenue if drivers moved to cheaper parking areas. Past parking charge increases in Fife have not led to the expected increase in income, so on this occasion it was decided that to match expected revenue, the charge should increase by 21%. Cllr Waterston felt that the policy relating to parking must become clearer. He didn't feel it was reasonable to view it mainly as a revenue raising measure. Cllr Melville added that there would be a review of parking charges throughout Fife because of the anger about parking charges.

4.3.3. Planning Decision about New Hospital

Cllr Waterston commented that when the plans had been discussed, Cllr Melville had attempted to get a condition included that access beyond the hospital would be for agricultural purposes only. However officials informed the meeting that that wasn't a valid planning matter and couldn't be included in the plans.

4.3.4. Green Belt

Cllr Waterston confirmed the determination of all four local councillors to support the principle of a Green Belt hard against the existing southern town boundary. This may be firmed up next summer when the Local Plan is discussed.

4.3.5. Structure Plan Consultation Display/Meeting re Housing Needs Re-appraisal

Cllr Waterston reminded the meeting about the planned display of the Structure Plan at the BB Hall on Thursday, where officials would be present to answer questions and note comments on the local housing needs.

4.4 Dorothea Morrison

4.4.1. Ladebraes Walk

Cllr Morrison talked about the issue of the Ladebraes and the core path proposals. She remained firmly against the idea of the Ladebraes becoming a core path, which would allow cyclists to share the route. She suggested that an alternative, which the Preservation Trust would favour, would be the development of a cycle path on the opposite side of the Ladebraes. She detailed her thoughts on the possible route for this alternative. Mr Peterson commenting thought that the multi purpose use of the path should be encouraged and reminded Cllr Morrison that not all the Community Councillors opposed the use by

cyclists. He said that the path was underused, and was concerned if the Councillors opposed the idea of the Ladebraes becoming a core path. Mrs Tricker commented that she used the route a lot and had never met a cyclist who wasn't considerate of other path users. Cllr Sangster informed the meeting that core path designation is on the back burner at the present time. However he was concerned at the general state of the Ladebraes, citing vandalism of bins and seats and other problems, which required some action. He has asked the locality manager to look at some of the problems. Mr Marks agreed with Cllr Sangster's comments, and added his concern about the state of the Mill Pond, which he viewed as a health hazard should anyone fall into it. He also commented on a recent visit he'd made to Latvia, where he'd seen lots of public sculpture in parks an added attraction he felt for anyone walking along. He suggested that it might be an idea, which the Community Council or another body could develop.

4.4.2. Parking Meters

Ms Innes asked about the situation re the proposed introduction of parking meters. Cllr Melville in reply said that there was a possible reduction in the number of meters. Mr Marks said that he'd read something about the Council withdrawing the parking meter application. The Councillors appeared unaware of this decision. Mr Peterson informed the meeting about possible alternative designs of parking meters.

4.4.3. Castle Sands litter

Mrs Denyer related her shock at seeing the state of the Castle Sands area recently. There was evidence of a bonfire and empty drink bottles and cans. Cllr Sangster suggested that Mrs Denyer should phone the Council but would also report it. Cllr Sangster acknowledged that the area was prone to such litter being a little bit out of the way.

4.4.4. West Sands Upgrade Phase Two

Mr Finlay asked about this project, its costs which he quoted as £1.3 million, and where the funding might be coming from if going ahead. Cllr Melville replied that part of the issue was to do with partnership funding in phase one. There was a need to know if all the partners would be on board. She cited Scottish Enterprise Fife as contributing £400000, and looking for contributions from the Community Services and the Links Trust. There is a European element to the funding if the project can be organised before March 2008.

4.4.5. Pipeland Road Play Area

Ms Smith suggested that the condition of this play area should also be considered by Cllr Morrison, given its present condition, with broken glass an added hazard for children

5. Planning Committee

5.1. Minutes of Planning Meetings

No comment was made on the minutes in the agenda.

6. Matters Arising From Previous Meetings

6.1. Community Council - Election for current vacancy

Two candidates were considered, Mr Ian Hunter and Mrs Catherine Rowe.

Mr Hunter received 7 votes and Mrs Rowe received 3 votes. Thus Mr Hunter was elected to the Community Council.

6.2. Community Council Election Date

For information. Mr Fraser also reminded that the Community Council's 1st meeting after the election is usually held under the auspices of Fife Council, with a Fife Councillor chairing. Fife Council also sets the date for the 1st meeting. After discussion it was agreed that would be 17th December.

6.3. Best Kept Village and Town Award

For information.

6.4. Reports from Representatives

6.4.1. Links Trust

Mr Holdsworth had attended a meeting of the Links Trust, which had discussed the Castle Course.

6.5. Web Site

Mr Marks reported that Dr Goudie has been liaising with Pete Lindsay on this matter. He has taken over the web site management and the subscription has been paid.

6.6. Water Board Signs - response

For information

6.7. Annual St Andrews Garden Awards - 2007

For information.

6.8. Any Other Matters Arising

6.8.1. Harbour Trust Meeting

The keys for the toilet are to be handed over to the Trust this week. Fife Council will refurbish the Ladies Toilets.

6.8.2. Drain Cover - St Nicholas Street

Cllr Sangster asked about the location of this cover, as he'd been unable to find it on a previous visit. Mr Peterson described the location and Cllr Sangster agreed to have a look at it and report the problem.

6.8.3. Kinness Burn Clearance

Cllr Sangster is still hoping that the damaged boards along the edge of the Kinness Burn can be replaced from some local budget before the winter.

6.8.4. John Knox Road Crossing & Morrison's Crossing

The Morrison's Crossing is to be upgraded to a Puffin Crossing. He explained the difference between a Puffin Crossing and a Zebra Crossing. The crossing on John Knox Road is going through planning.

6.8.5. Street Seating etc

Mr Finlay asked about progress on the problems arising from obstruction on the pavements by various items such as tables, chairs, A Boards etc. Mr Finlay was referring particularly to the problems he'd highlighted at the last meeting outside the Criterion Bar in South Street. Cllr Sangster admitted that this had been a long discussed point. He'd handed into Transportation details how Edinburgh Council licences and regulates businesses to display their A boards, position their tables and chairs etc. Businesses in Edinburgh are charged a licence fee as well. Fife Transportation Dept has been looking at the matter for the past 2 years. He has also mentioned this to the Merchants Association. He felt that there should be no need to put "A" Boards on the street. The matter will be discussed at the local liaison meeting. Mrs Denyer noted a positive change with benches outside Janettas, which have less tendency to move and create an obstruction.

7. From Committees

7.1. Recreation

7.1.1. Annual St Andrews Garden Awards

Mr Peterson reminded the meeting about the Annual Garden Awards, which will take place on 6th September in the Burgh Chamber at 7.00 pm.

7.2. General Purposes

No meeting has taken place since the last Community Council Meeting.

7.3. 200 Club

1st £30 : No.92. Mrs A.L. Rose, 2nd £20 : No.69 Mr I Christie, 3rd £15: No.64 Mrs J Baxter

8. New Business

8.1. Association of Scottish Community Councils

Mr Finlay offered to become representative to this organisation and attend the AGM

8.2. Bobby Jones Freedom of the City - 50th Anniversary 2008

To be referred back to the General Purposes Committee.

9. Reports from Office Bearers

9.1. Chair

9.1.1. Bus Timetable Changes

Mr Fraser reported on changes of bus services following attendance at a meeting at which a representative from Stagecoach talked about changes in some bus services. The X59 is to start once again from St Andrews and go to Edinburgh via Cupar, while the X60 will take longer as it is being routed round the East Neuk to Leven, adding another 20 minutes or so on to the journey. Finally the X26 to Glasgow is going to cut off part of its East Neuk route to shorten the journey.

9.1.2. Name Clips for Chairman's Chain of Office

Mr Fraser asked if anyone remembered where the name clips for the Chairman's Chain of Office were purchased. There was no response so Mr Fraser will investigate from where these can be obtained. Mr Crichton thought that it might be possible to get name clips when he and Mr Peterson were organising the engraving of Cups for the Garden Competition.

9.2. Treasurer

9.2.1. Common Good Fund Bandstand Concerts Award

Mrs Tricker thanked the Common Good Fund for the financial award towards the running of the Bandstand Concerts. She also thanked Cllr Sangster for managing to purchase some folding chairs for the Bandstand Concerts.

9.3. Secretary

9.3.1. Correspondence

Mr Marks mentioned a letter received after the agenda had been completed, from the Principal of the University inviting interested parties to a meeting on 19th September about proposals for a new Medical School on the North Haugh.

10. Any Other Competent Business

10.1. Great Town Awards

Councillor Sangster reported on his attendance at a meeting in relation to this new award, in which St Andrews is being judged against Kilrenny and Winchester. It is run by the Academy of Urbanism set up within the last couple of years. The aims of the Academy relate to the belief that we need to find ways to regenerate the art of "placemaking". "This is the process whereby for many generations, in many different cultures and in many different climates, people came together and created places that uniquely reflected their collective needs. It is now believed that we've lost the art of placemaking. Without it the Academy believes that the life of the community is stillborn and the future of the planet is jeopardised. With placemaking, people can find expression for their own creativity, communities can develop their own vision and leadership and the planet can be secured for the enjoyment of future generations". More details about the Academy's aims and principles etc can be found on its website: www.academyofurbanism.org.uk.

Mr Peterson wondered why the Community Council hadn't been approached while an unelected body such as World Class had been approached. Mr Crichton echoed Mr Peterson's concerns. Cllr Sangster added that Cllr Melville had been approached, but as she had been on holiday at the time of the meeting, she had asked if one of the other councillors would attend in her place, hence Cllr Sangster had attended the meeting.

10.2. St Andrews Cathedral Historic Enactment

Mrs Denyer complimented Historic Scotland on their employment of a young man who was acting out scenes relating to the Cathedral History. She thought he was excellent.

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