

Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

DRAFT Minutes – November 2007

For approval

1. Attendance

Community Councillors

Ken Crichton, George Davidson, David Finlay, Kenneth Fraser, Ian Goudie, Stuart Holdsworth, Zoe Smith, Dennis Macdonald, Laurence Reed, Patrick Marks, Carole Tricker, Judith Harding, Patrick Marks, Joe Peterson, James Potton.

Students' Association Representatives

Tom D'Ardenne

Matthew Guest

Nominated

Jude Innes

Fife Councillors

Robin Waterston, Dorothea Morrison, Frances Melville, Bill Sangster

Apologies

Mrs Denyer, Cllr Melville

2. Minutes of October 2007 Meeting

Page 3 - 4.3.4. Cllr Waterston felt that the minutes which quoted him as asking the Community Council should submit an objection to the Land Housing Requirements appraisal were incorrect and could be misinterpreted. He said that he had suggested that the Community Council should submit comments on matter. Correction noted for the record

3. Presentation

There was no public presentation or Police presence.

4. Fife Councillors

4.1. Frances Melville

Not present

4.2. Cllr Sangster

4.2.1. Chewing Gum Recycling

Following a query last month about the containers mounted at various locations in St Andrews, Cllr Sangster confirmed that the gum collected is used for material used in running tracks

4.2.2. East Sands Leisure Centre

The Leisure Centre has a new committee. Cllr Sangster hoped that the Community Council would be able to send a representative to this committee.

4.2.3. Taxi Rank Location

The Taxi Ranks in Bell Street are to be temporarily relocated to Greyfriars Gardens and a bit in Market Street from Bell Street when the latter is resurfaced in the near future.

4.2.4. Street Resurfacing

Cllr Sangster informed the meeting that work is three weeks ahead of schedule. Union Street will eventually close for this work. South Castle Street is to be resurfaced and a number of other streets around the town.

4.2.5. Xmas Lights

Cllr Sangster noted that the Xmas lights in Market Street had gone up.

4.2.6. Night Time Noise Team

Ms Harding commented on recent problems that neighbours had suffered when a bouncy castle had been erected at a property in the Ladebraes, and it had been used to 3 am. There had been no notice of the intended party to neighbours. Cllr Sangster asked if the police had been contacted, and explained the procedure used by the Call Centre to record calls, which included giving callers a reference number. He reminded her of the Night Time Noise Team. Ms Harding thought that her neighbours had phoned the police, had but no police had called. She undertook to find out if her neighbours had been given a reference number.

4.2.7. Landlord Registration/Tenancy Rules

Ms Harding in a point related to the previous one, wondered whether when Landlords were registered, if they were encouraged to have anything in their contracts for their tenants about levels of noise after a

certain time, which would not be acceptable. Cllr Sangster replied that there were different regulations for HMO owners and Landlords. He suggested that Ms Harding could phone up the Licensing Dept in Fife Council, and establish who was licensed at a particular address, so that she could approach the owners/landlords directly, if necessary. Ms Harding asked the student representatives for the University opinion. Mr D'Ardenne replied that the University would take any complaints about irresponsible behaviour seriously. He added that the University did not want irresponsible behaviour to damage its relationship with local residents.

4.2.8. Problems with Foreign Workers and Police Response

Mr Holdsworth asked Cllr Sangster to check that they would continue to monitor problems in the Winram Place area due to foreign workers causing disturbances. The Police had responded to some initial concerns, but Mr Holdsworth hoped that this wouldn't drift and be forgotten.

4.2.9. Query about Private Business in Learmonth Place

Mr Holdsworth asked about the legality of running a private business from a private household. Cllr Sangster replied that permission would be required. Mr Holdsworth had had several neighbours knocking on his door to raise their concerns. They had claimed that if they complained to Fife Council about the application they'd be ignored. Mr Holdsworth gave more details about a taxi business being run in recent weeks from the address, which was causing noise and other problems. The property owner has recently applied for planning permission. Mrs Tricker who lives in Learmonth Place confirmed the problems in her street. Cllr Morrison said that she was aware of this situation and was looking into it.

4.2.10. Query about 08451 Fife Council Number.

Mr Crichton asked about the new Fife Council number. He noted that 0845 numbers have a cost and felt that the new number was a bit of a money-spinner for Fife Council. Cllr Sangster asked for other Community Council members experiences in contacting Fife Council. Mr Marks commented that even employees were not entirely happy, as members of the public were often struggling to get through unless they had a direct extension number, and that it was taking time to get used to the system. However given the investment by Fife Council, he didn't foresee any major changes and everyone would have to get used to it. The system is VOIP based and is meant to be a saving for Fife Council on its phone costs. Cllr Waterston added that British Telecom are supposedly to introducing an 03 prefix for Local Government which if used by Fife might solve some of the problems.

4.2.11. Pipe on Fife Coastal Path

Ms Zoe Smith wondered about a white pipe, which is sticking out into the route of the Fife Coastal Path, just after the beginning of the new Links Castle Course. She was concerned that this would cause erosion of the path. She'd seen a channel which water had eroded into the path, and was concerned that this would increase in size causing further damage. Cllr Morrison said that there was due to be a meeting with the Rangers and she'd ask the Ranger who had responsibility for the Coastal Path about this pipe.

4.3. Robin Waterston

4.3.1. Chewing Gum Recycling Containers

Cllr Waterston reported on contact with Jim Carroll of Fife Council on this matter. He'd been told that the contractor had given up on recycling the contents as the containers were routinely contaminated with other items, such as cigarette stubs. He'd asked why the containers weren't being removed in that case. He was informed that the containers were removed if damaged and not replaced, but that in Mr Carroll's view at least some chewing gum was not going on to the pavements. The emptied contents were now being placed in with general waste.

4.3.2. Bottles and Tins Recycling Query

There had been a query about bottles and tins being seen to be put into the same Fife Council recycling lorries, which Cllr Waterston had followed up. He had discovered that bottles and tins are collected in the same lorry and are then separated at the recycling depot. There was an economic reason for not collecting separately, and concerns of local people who had queried what they had witnessed, and who had thought that they might be getting dumped in landfill were unjustified. Mr Fraser wondered how the Council separated aluminium cans? Cllr Waterston thought that there would be a system for their extraction at the recycling depot.

4.3.3. Market Street

Cllr Waterston had had a meeting with an official from Scottish Enterprise recently, at which their plans to start up public consultation about the future of Market Street were outlined. It was hoped to have an initial consultation with local interest groups such as the Community Council presenting imaginative ideas for public use of the space. Initially the street would not become traffic free, but would become more pedestrian friendly.

The first consultation to be before the end of this year, with a second consultation by the end of January after having firmed ups some of the thinking from the first consultation. It would be hoped to have a full public consultation by about March, with public presentations etc, with work hopefully starting towards the end of next year.

Mr Crichton hoped that Fife Council wouldn't forget to plant or reinstate trees when work was done in Market Street or any of the other streets where work was taking place. He also wondered about the use of the trees for hanging xmas lights due to increasing constraints of Councils for health and safety reasons on xmas decoration erection. Ms Innes advised him that this would not be possible. Cllr Waterston acknowledged the importance of trees in the townscape and said that this would be one of the options considered as part of the consultation process

4.3.4. Scheme of Delegation for Planning Decisions

At a recent Planning Committee this scheme had been reviewed and a recommendation by officials that the trigger for automatic referral to Committee be raised from 5 to 10, was turned down by Councillors. However the request for the Preservation Trust to be given honorary statutory status with respect to planning applications was rejected.

4.3.5. Community Land Trusts

Cllr Waterston had obtained information and passed details to the Secretary of the Community Council and to Mr Crichton. He also had copies available for interested members at the meeting.

4.3.6. Disabled Access to Polling Stations

Mr Crichton queried whether there was disabled access to all the Polling Stations in the St Andrews catchment. He was informed that all had disabled access.

4.3.7. Bins Policy

Ms Smith asked what other policy Fife had in relation to over full bins other than the sticker on the bins. Cllr Waterston agreed to check on this matter.

4.4 Dorothea Morrison

4.4.1. Trees in Market Street

Following on Mr Crichton's earlier query, Cllr Morrison related that this very matter had been discussed at a recent World Class Meeting. While viewed as a worthwhile idea, it was felt to be difficult in much of Market Street, because of its narrower width on much of its length and the greater width of pavements. Only in the Market Square area trees might be possible.

4.4.2. HMOs

Regulation and Licensing are aware of the problems and are trying to do more to tackle the problems arising from absentee landlords etc. Cllr Morrison hinted that there may be more happening, but couldn't say at this stage.

4.4.3. Lack of Toilet Provision in St Andrews

This is an ongoing issue which Cllr Morrison has had raised to her by constituents and others. She feels that St Andrews does not come out well in comparison to cities like York, which appear to be able to provide, good, free public toilet access. She is going to continue to press this matter with Fife Council. Mr Peterson asked about how the idea of free toilets would be implemented in St Andrews given financial constraints on the Council. Cllr Sangster replied that there was a scheme being promoted to encourage local businesses to allow public use, particularly on areas such as the Coastal Path route. These "Comfort Stops" it was hoped might help relieve the lack of Council run toilets in some areas and possibly improve trade for businesses participating. Cllr Morrison acknowledged that the Council is finding it difficult to maintain Public Toilets for cost reasons, particularly when vandalism occurs in the more remote ones where there's no attendant. Cllr Morrison also noted that it remained vital for a town such as St Andrews heavily dependent on tourism to have public toilet facilities in areas such as the West Sands, the Harbour and East Sands.

4.4.4. Wheelie Bins

This is an issue in the town centre. Many households still have black bags due to space problems in keeping wheelie bins, but businesses are sometimes keeping bins out the front for lengthy periods. Cllr Morrison feels that the presence of wheelie bins on the street in the town centre is not appropriate for a medieval townscape, and has proposed that new businesses when applying for planning permission should be able to demonstrate that they can provide a suitable location for their bins off the street.

4.4.5. Graffiti in St Andrews

Cllr Morrison is to have a meeting with local officials to decide what can be done to stamp on offensive graffiti appearing on buildings in town. Ms Harding mentioned problems with graffiti in the Playing Fields at the beginning of the Ladebraes, as well as vandalism in the form of fires behind the changing rooms. Cllrs Morrison and Sangster said that this graffiti had been reported to Fife Council.

4.4.6. Abbey Street Road Improvements

These works will take a bit longer than expected. It will be nearer the end of the month before restrictions will be lifted.

4.4.7. Public Lighting Problem

Ms Harding brought up the issue of a light, which hasn't been functioning in the Argyle Street Car Park beside her flat. It has been a problem for a couple of months. Work has been started by a sub contractor but not completed by the main contractor. Ms Harding has been in contact with Fife Council, but wondered with whom the ultimate responsibility lay for ensuring the job was completed. Cllr Morrison acknowledged the frustration felt by Councillors at times when they've raised an urgent matter and find that it hasn't always been actioned as quickly as hoped. Cllr Waterston confirmed that Fife Council do have responsibility for this work to be completed, particularly as it is an adopted area. If the street is not adopted by the Council it would be a matter for residents to negotiate such work. Cllr Sangster added that in a case as cited by Ms Harding that there is the issue of public safety.

4.4.8. Play Parks

Ms Smith brought up the issue of poor Play Park provision in St Andrews. She noted that Cupar are getting a new Play Park installed today. She cited problems such as graffiti at the park close to her in Pipelands Road, amongst others she uses with her children. She hoped that the Councillors would

actively think about Play Park provision and push for improvements. Cllr Sangster in his reply said that the East Sands play area is to be upgraded this autumn. Mr Peterson wondered where the money for Play Park upgrading would come from, given the financial situation of Councils and the proposal to freeze Council Tax by the Scottish Government.

5. Planning Committee

5.1. Minutes of Planning Meetings - Appendices B & C

No matters arising for discussion.

5.2. Structure Plan Housing Reappraisal

Dr Goudie had emailed his submission to Community Council members and distributed printed copies before the break, to allow members without email to consider his submission. Dr Goudie acknowledged that the submission is past the date requested by Fife Council. He felt that it was still worth consideration, and had brought it to the meeting, to ascertain if members felt that it would still be worth submitting to Fife Council and/or the Scottish Government. He felt that there was a serious question about what small sites would be able to meet in terms of housing requirement in the coming 19 years. Fife Council he said had apparently radically reduced their estimates from the original Structure Plan and he quoted the reduction for the St Andrews area, as well as for the overall Fife estimates.

Another issue related to household sizes and how this had been estimated. Fife he said had changed their estimate about household sizes from 2 to 2.1. He felt that the way Fife Council had taken on board that change was algebraically incorrect in terms of the housing land requirement.

Another issue related to Fife Council's attempt to predict housing land requirement beyond 12 years, which was ignoring the Scottish Government advice that such a requirement couldn't be predicted beyond 12 years.

Dr Goudie in his calculations has stuck to a 12 year period in contrast to Fife Council's 19 year estimate, which he acknowledged would give a very different figure in comparison to Fife's estimates.

Dr Goudie asked if the document could go into Fife Council, despite being beyond the official consultation period. Mr Sangster asked Dr Goudie if he had submitted the document already to Fife Council. Dr Goudie confirmed that he hadn't as he had to bring it to the Community Council meeting for approval. If Fife Council didn't accept it, he'd send it direct to the Scottish Government, but he hoped that given the major differences demonstrated by his calculations that Fife Council would accept his document. He commented that despite the consultation period being over since mid October, Fife Council still had another couple of months in which to consider submissions and respond to them. He felt that there would still be a need for further public response before submission to the Scottish Ministers, after there had been consideration of the public submissions, hence his hope that his document would be seriously considered. Cllr Sangster had concerns about how Fife Council would respond given the official deadline in October.

Mr Holdsworth thought that there should be a vote of thanks to show the Community Council's appreciation of Dr Goudie's hard work in putting together a detailed and erudite submission, and that this should be recorded. Mr Fraser accepted that this was an appropriate consideration. Mr Peterson supported Mr Holdsworth's suggestion, and also hoped that Fife Council would recognise the value of Dr Goudie's detailed analysis of Housing Requirements.

Mr Fraser asked if there were any objections to the document being put forward as an expression of the views of the Community Council. There was no dissent.

6. Matters Arising From Previous Meetings

6.1. Remembrance Sunday - November 11th

For information. Members of the Community Council are invited to attend and take part in the procession to the War Memorial.

6.2. Community Council Election

Mr Marks informed the meeting that Fife Council had received 8 nominations by the end of the previous week. He believed that there would be more applicants, but an election looked doubtful. He reminded members planning to stand to submit their forms as a matter of urgency. Mr Fraser reminded the meeting that the date of the next meeting will depend upon whether there is an election or not. The 3rd of December will be the meeting date if there is no election.

6.3. Waterstone's Book Store Air Conditioning Application

See Appendix F of November agenda for correspondence details. The letter replying to the Community Council enquiry from Alastair Hamilton indicates that the application is a new one, which is why it is allowed to be submitted as a new planning application.

6.4. Reports from Representatives

6.4.1. Links Trust Meeting - see Appendix E for report by Mr Fraser.

6.4.2. RAF Liaison Committee Meeting

Mr Macdonald and Mr Holdsworth reported on their attendance. Mr Holdsworth reported that the training on the new Eurofighter won't take place as originally planned at RAF Leuchars but at RAF Coningsby. When the Eurofighter is stationed at Leuchars around 2010/11, the squadron will be fully trained.

6.5. Preservation Trust - Letter & Reply

For information - Fife Council are not prepared to allow the Preservation Trust any special status as an

objector to planning applications.

7. From Committees

7.1. Recreation

7.1.1. Photo & Art Exhibition

Mr Peterson circulated a form to request volunteers to assist in policing this exhibition while it is open in November. All Community Councillors are invited to the Opening Reception on the Tuesday evening 6.45 - 7.00 pm, to be opened by a surprise guest. Mr Peterson also reminded members of the latest dates for entry to display and compete in the Exhibition.

7.1.2. New Year Ceilidh

Mr Crichton confirmed that this event is organised, with only tickets needing printed.

7.1.3. St Andrews Day Reception

Mr Crichton requested assistance. He confirmed that everything was organised. Kate Hughes would be assisting from the Local Office. Volunteers would assist in setting out the food, welcoming the guests and giving out drinks etc.

7.1.4. Senior Citizen Christmas Tea

This will be 10th January. He invited Community Councillors to attend and assist at the event. Mr Fraser proposed a vote of thanks to Mr Crichton for all his hard work in organising these events.

7.2. General Purposes

No report

7.3. 200 Club

7.3.1. 1st Prize No. 75 - £30 - Miss C Lowry, 2nd Prize No. 113 - £20 - Mr M D Wilson, 3rd Prize No. 111 - £15 - Mr E A Howe.

The 200 Club will need a new Administrator when the Council reforms in December, and the registration of the Club will have to be confirmed with Fife Council.

8. New Business

8.1. APRS - Subscription renewal

Request for renewal of subscription of £15 - Mr Crichton proposed and Dr Goudie seconded the payment. Agreed without dissent.

8.2. Cosmos Centre Minibus Appeal

Mr Peterson suggested that this should be supported being a very worthy organisation. Mr Fraser asked for a proposal of an amount to be donated. Mr Macdonald suggested £500. Mr Holdsworth seconded the proposal. There was no dissent.

8.3. New E-Communication Strategy and Future Planning Publications -Appendix A

For information. In future the Scottish Government will send out its publications in electronic form where appropriate. Interested parties have to register to receive these e-communications. The Community Council will receive future information by this method.

8.4. Conference - What does the future hold in playing out?

Ms Zoe Smith expressed an interest in attending this Conference on 11th December.

8.5. St Andrews University Fair Trade Debate - 7th November

For information - Mr D'Ardenne confirmed that any Councillor was welcome to attend and contribute if they wished.

9. Reports from Office Bearers

9.1. Chair

9.1.1. Chairman's Report

9.1.2. Martyr's Monument

As detailed in the Chairman's report. Mr Fraser suggested that the secretary should write on behalf of the Community Council to Fife Council to establish the exact state of repair of the monument and what Fife Council is planning to do about it, as it is owned by Fife Council.

Secretary to write to Fife Council to establish plans to repair the monument.

9.1.3. Talk to Preservation Trust

Mr Fraser had been approached to see if a member of the Community Council could explain the role of the Community Council. Cllr Morrison confirmed that any such invite would not be until the new year as there was no December meeting on the Preservation Trust. The invite will be dealt with by the new Community Council.

9.1.4. Possible Meeting with Professor Taylor about new Hospital

Mr Fraser reminded the meeting that Professor Taylor is keen to have a meeting. He thought that this

would be a good idea, and would be a possible incentive to re-establishing the Health, Education and Welfare Committee.

9.1.5. Questionnaire about possible St Andrews Railway

Jane - Ann Liston had given Mr Fraser some questionnaires which are being circulated to seek views on this matter.

9.1.6. Chairman's Thanks

Mr Fraser wanted to record thanks to everyone who had contributed to the Community Council during this period of its existence. This included the various office bearers, Chairmen and Chairwomen of Committees, also thanks to retiring members for their often considerable work and to those who had retired earlier in the present period, including the sad fact that two members had died during their term in office. Mr Fraser finally thanked the members in general for allowing him to carry out his role as Chairman since June.

9.1.7. University Transport Forum

Mr Fraser has asked the University to approach the Community Council to invite a representative to its meetings.

9.2. Treasurer

9.2.1. Financial Report/ Final Remarks

Unfortunately the Treasurer had to leave the meeting early, but left the reports of the financial situation, plus a thank you and comments on her experiences as treasurer. There was £22,793.93 in the bank at the date of checking and record. Some cheques remained outstanding and the Fife Council grant had finally been approved which when deposited in the bank will bring the bank balance up to £27328.67 before outstanding payments are deducted.

Mrs Tricker thanked everyone who had supported her in her role as treasurer and, and wished the new treasurer well in the role. She hoped that the new Community Council would give more money to deserving groups in the town and advertise the possibility of grants more openly.

9.3. Secretary

The secretary thanked the meeting for their patience as he learnt his role in taking the minutes and that he hadn't bored them with the detail at times. Any queries about the correspondence in the current agenda would be happily answered.

10. Any Other Competent Business

10.1. Mother and Toddler Group - Cosmos Centre

Ms Zoe Smith asked if the Community Council would be prepared to consider a request for financial assistance for this group to allow them to buy play mats etc. Seconded by Mr Laurence Reed. £100 was suggested and agreed without dissent.

10.2. Raisin Weekend

Mr D'Ardenne talked about how the University and Students Association are taking their responsibilities in ensuring that this event runs without causing upset, damage or problems very seriously. He encouraged Community Councillors to report to the police and University any activities which caused upset or were illegal.

10.3. St Andrews University Debating Society

Mr D'Ardenne announced a debate with the title - "This House believes that the students be moved out of town". This will take place on 28th November.

10.4. Ryan Peterson Olympic Achievements

Mr Peterson had handed in a thank you letter from his son Ryan who had recently participated in the Special Olympic Games in China. Mr Marks commented that Ryan had achieved spectacular results with a Gold medal and also bronze and silver medals in his swimming events and was a credit to his family and the town and country.
