

Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

Minutes – 9th January 2017

0. New Member

1. Attendance

Community Councillors

Callum MacLeod, Howard Greenwell, Ian Goudie, Gordon Shepherd, Iain Munn, Izzy Corbin, Patrick Marks, Judith Harding, Henry Paul, Greg Newman, Harry Stewart, John Jardine, Penny Uprichard

Students' Association Representatives

Aine Bennett

Co-Opted

Lindsey Adam

Fife Councillors

Brian Thomson , Frances Melville, Dorothea Morrison

Apologies - Keith McCartney, Ken Crichton, Charlotte Andrew, Gordon Shepherd, Niall Scott, Dita Stanis-Traken, Kyffin Roberts

2. Minutes of Meeting – December 2016

The minutes were accepted as correct.

3. Presentations

3.1. Community Kitchen – Jill Anderson

Mr McLeod introduced Jill to the meeting and reminded members of the past information they'd received about this project. Jill introduced herself and gave members a brief bio about herself. Currently she works for the Express Group Fife, which provides services for people with mental health problems Fife wide. She also runs a Community Lunch at the Episcopal Church at the end of Queens Gardens. It was through her involvement with these groups that she realised there was a need for something to support the most vulnerable members of the local community in a more consistent way. Apart from the community lunch on a Wednesday she also told the meeting about Blether Together Group on a Monday morning and the Men's Shed on a Tuesday morning. There was also a Therapeutic Gardening Group on a Thursday morning as well groups in Cupar in which she was involved. It had become apparent to her through her work that people who are vulnerable through mental health, unemployment or through old age were struggling in St Andrews to find a place, which was for them. There was a lack of places for such folk to drop in and get support. She wanted to provide a place where people could drop in, get a good meal and some support.

The Community Kitchen she said was a pattern found in all sorts of places over the UK, so the idea was nothing new but would be new to St Andrews. She also felt that through the contact in this kitchen people would be empowered to support themselves helping out in the gardens run by transition growing some food, which they could transform into nourishing meals for themselves and their families. Another part of the idea might be to provide evening meals for the housebound and the elderly with an added extra of a befriending service. She described

how she'd made contact with the Students Association, which has a volunteer aspect with students keen to volunteer as befrienders. She acknowledged that the idea was ambitious and there was still a long way to go, with major aspects such as having premises in which they could be based still to be resolved. She said that Fife Council, the MSP & MP for the area were all supportive of the idea. She returned to the issue of premises and the possibilities she'd been investigating but so far there had been no definite permanent premises identified. She felt that it should be out in the periphery of town where the bulk of the low cost housing was located. Possible premises had included the St Davids Centre and part of the Police Station.

Mr Marks asked if she'd looked at the Sheltered Housing Complex at Scooniehill Road. Jill said she had and that it was quite well used. She then described how the kitchen to be used would require facilities for cooking, storing and freezing.

Mrs Harding asked about possible numbers attending the Community Kitchen? Jill couldn't give a figure but indicated that her contacts with various organisations and professionals had given her confidence to think that quite a few might attend. Mrs Harding also mentioned the Hope Park Church Hall. Jill was aware of the hall but said that those premises wouldn't allow her to have sufficient space required to store food, as the church would have its own need to store food for the activities then were running. Ideally the Community Kitchen would need a space they could access whenever they needed it.

Miss Uprichard wondered about the Kitchen being at the Local Office at St Marys Place? Jill thought that might be getting sold by Fife Council. Similarly for the St Davids Centre, which she said Fife Council weren't against the Kitchen, using the premises but Jill didn't see a long-term future for the centre if it might also be sold.

She thought that the idea she was presenting ticked all the boxes for Health & Social Care because it would provide self-help and community involvement with people being able to get work experience. She felt that it would be a positive benefit to the community but recognised the difficulty in St Andrews with its lack of public spaces.

Mr Stewart asked Jill if the idea was receiving any financial backing? Jill replied that it was hard to raise funds without having a venue where the activities would take place. She was trying to get the idea across to as many people as possible in the hope of something turning up. If the premises could be sourced she could start applying for funding from various sources.

Mr McLeod asked Jill what more the CC could do to assist her project developing. Jill replied that she was at present looking for ideas from the CC for both premises and funding sources. She was hoping to have a public launch for the project sometime later in the spring possibly in the Town Hall. She acknowledged that her presentation had probably raised more questions than it had answered but she felt that it was an idea worth exploring and seeing whether it could be made to happen.

Mr McLeod later asked the meeting if a donation from the CC might be appropriate to help cover the costs of room hire and an advert for the Community Kitchen's public meeting. A figure of £75 was suggested and agreed by members.

4. Fife Councillor.

4.1. Frances Melville

4.1.1. Feddinch Appeal

Cllr Melville reported she'd spoken to June Barrie, Legal Services of Fife Council on this longstanding development. June Barrie had indicated that the condition relating to the development had been completed and signed and should be on Fife Council's website in the coming week. She added that the developer had wanted to make changes to the conditions set by the Reporter.

4.1.2. Ladebraes Work

The application for £50000 for the work to be done in the Ladebraes is to finally be put to the Area Committee this month. She acknowledged that a lot of work was needing done and the walk they'd done with officials through the Ladebraes last year had identified most of the areas needing work, particularly the paths. She commented on some issues with fencing as well.

4.1.3. Bin Storage Issue

Cllr Melville reported that there was a request for Fife Council staff to look at adopting the Edinburgh system, which only allowed bins to be on the street in the hour before collection. She felt that this system had made a real difference in Edinburgh.

4.1.4. Queens Gardens Road Changes

Cllr Melville reported on correspondence with Transportation Services about Queens Gardens where residents are very keen to see a one-way traffic system being set up. Cllr Melville was sympathetic to the idea.

4.1.5. Level Crossing @ Church Street

Cllr Melville reported on a report from officials, which had suggested the possibility of building a level crossing at Church Street like there was at Bell Street. Cllr Melville said that Councillors had responded by indicating that they weren't convinced about the need for such a crossing at Church Street, as there had been no complaints and was it necessary? Officials agreed to reduce the status of the proposal. Cllr Melville added that she'd not received any concerns about that junction.

Ms Adam didn't think there were any problems in Church Street. Mr Greenwell agreed with Ms Adam that there wasn't any major issue with traffic on that street.

4.1.6. Concerns about Town Infrastructure to cope with increasing population

Mr Marks asked the three Councillors about Fife Council's plans to cope with the increasing population of the town. Concerns had been voiced to him by residents when it became clear that the university would be continuing to expand with another couple of thousand students. There were concerns about the ability of the town's infrastructure and utilities to cope with a continually increasing population and the facilities, which would be required to cater for more housing, industry and other aspects of such an expansion. He'd heard about problems in the town centre of electricity blackouts and concerns that the increased number of cafes/restaurants was putting a strain on sewage facilities. He wondered how Fife Council was expecting St Andrews to cope with such an expansion?

Cllr Melville commented that when the additional sewage facility at Kinkell Braes was added the plans had indicated that there was an expectation that it could cope with a population of up to 30000.

Cllr Thomson added that talks take place regularly between senior Council staff and their equivalents in the University. He wasn't aware of any infrastructure upgrades but was only aware of proposals for additional student and post-grad housing at this moment.

Mr Marks indicated that he'd got his information from senior University figures and was inclined to believe that there might be plans for another couple of thousand students, particularly from USA.

Dr Goudie informed the meeting that it had been stated at the Housing Group that the University has 8200 and had plans to increase that to 10000. The University had also stated that it would be providing another 900 bed spaces, still leaving questions as to where the other 900 students would be accommodated. He felt that this was a serious situation, which required a solution. Mrs Harding also noted the potential additional strain on health resources. Mr

Greenwell reminded the meeting that Robertson Homes had plans for another 100 plus beds at Abbey Park.

Miss Uprichard informed the meeting that the developer of the student accommodation at the East Sands had stated that St Andrews had the highest proportion of students compared to any other town in the UK, some 49%. She was however certain that the percentage would now be greater as the new Principal she said had talked about 8900 students.

4.1.7. Greenside Place

Mr Greenwell asked about the chances of work being done to repair the badly potholed Greenside Place? Cllr Melville said that there was a point system used by officials to estimate the level of priority they might give to a particular stretch of road. Greenside Place apparently is not rated high enough under this system to warrant repairs in the near future. Cllr Melville quoted from a letter received from a senior Transportation official in Fife Council, which explained the points system used making it clear that Greenside Place was quite far down the list. Consideration had been given to a patching job but it had been considered that this wouldn't last and that a proper more structural repair would be the best option.

4.1.8. Path along Kinnesburn from Greenside Place

Mr Greenwell commented on the poor work done by Robertson Homes on a path by the Walled Garden area. They had laid a chip stone path without a liner and the path now in wet weather is a quagmire at that location. He wondered what could be done about it? Cllr Morrison agreed with Mr Greenwell's assessment and thought it was something, which needed to be taken up with the developer Robertson Homes.

4.2. Brian Thomson

4.2.1. New Road Surface Hepburn Gardens

It had been noted that the new road surface in the western part of Hepburn Gardens was wearing away very rapidly. Cllr Thomson had sent photos and details to Council officers who were contacting the contractor for that part of the road to get the problem corrected. Cllr Thomson personally thought that the whole surface should be relayed but was waiting for the outcome of discussions between the Council officers and contractors.

4.2.2. North Haugh Bus Stop Crossing

Cllr Thomson had been made aware by Mr Scott of the dangers for staff crossing the road at the bus stop across the road from the North Haugh, close to the roundabout. It was reported that staff were finding it risky to cross such a busy stretch of road when they got off the bus. Transportation officers have had a look at the situation and Mr Scott is to do a survey of staff using the bus stop. Cllr Thomson will report back on the outcome of the research and any possible solution suggested to make crossing safer.

4.2.3. North Street/City Road junction issue

Cllr Thomson had been approached by a cyclist concerned about the way drivers were coming from North Street and often not stopping at the junction, despite it having a give way sign. This behaviour was a potential hazard for anyone approaching in the opposite direction and turning right up towards the bus station. Cllr Thomson had contacted Mr Stirling in the Transportation Dept to see if there was anything he could do to highlight the nature of the junction and the need to behave correctly when at the junction.

4.2.4. Queens Gardens

Cllrs Thomson & Morrison had recently attended the Queens Gardens Residents Association AGM. He had found that the residents were keen to change the street to one way. Cllr Thomson had suggested the possibility of a cycleway, which might be possible subject to the width of the road.

4.2.5. Cycle Action Group

Cllr Thomson mentioned that there were plans to set up a group to look at improving cycling facilities in St Andrews. He'd been working with Tony Waterston and the latter would be writing to the Citizen to publicise the plans. He added that anyone with an interest could join the group. Cllr Thomson explained to Ms Bennett that the group would be looking at a range of issues from infrastructure to cycling safety. The ultimate aim he added was to try and make St Andrews one of the most cycle friendly towns in the country.

4.2.6. Fife Council Budget

Cllr Thomson advised the meeting that Fife Council would have to make further cuts of an estimated £32 million this coming financial year.

4.3. Keith McCartney - apologies

4.3.1. Illuminated Road Signs

Cllr McCartney reported that the following illuminated road signs were reported for repair:

Abbey Walk – 'roundabout' sign on the west side of Abbey Walk at its junction with South Street.

Argyle Street Carpark – 'give way' sign on west side of north entrance to carpark leading on to Double Dykes Road.

Hope Park Roundabout – south side of St Mary's Place (outside The Blue Stane) at junction with City Road, west side of City Road at junction with Double Dykes Road, north side of

Double Dykes Road at junction with City Road, east side of City Road (outside Hope Park Church) at junction with St Mary's Place.

South Street – 'no entry' sign on east side South Castle Street at its junction with South Street.

Westburn Lane – 'no entry except for access' signs on east and west sides of Westburn Lane at junction with South Street.

Double Dykes Road – 'Humps for 50 yards' sign on east side of entrance slip to Petheram Bridge Carpark at junction with Double Dykes Road.

4.3.2. Pavement Repairs

Cllr McCartney reported that on the pavement outside Dr Noodles and Bonkers in Market Street asphalt has been placed as a temporary reinstatement whilst the contractor resources the correct slabs for the permanent repair.

4.3.3. Road markings

Cllr McCartney reported that the cycle lane markings on John Knox Road had been re-painted

4.3.4. Street Nameplates

Cllr McCartney reported that the name plates missing from Sandy Herd Court had been replaced.

4.4. Dorothea Morrison

4.4.1. Pergola

Cllr Morrison announced that the Pergola had gone and she thought that garden looked a lot tidier.

4.4.2. Logies Lane Work

Cllr Morrison reminded the meeting that it was hoped to start work at Logies Lane around 13th February.

4.4.3. Bins

Cllr Morrison commented that Mr Gourlay a senior Fife Council official wasn't certain if the Edinburgh scheme of waste management would work in Fife. One difference was in the way commercial bin operators had a big involvement in Fife whereas in Edinburgh that wasn't the case. She wasn't certain if Mr Gourlay was aware of the difference.

4.4.4. Pedestrian Crossings

Cllr Morrison confirmed the decision by Councillors that the pedestrian crossing proposed by officials in Church Street wasn't considered necessary. It was hoped that the money allocated for that proposal could be used for other purposes such as cycle racks or speed humps in the Argyle Street Car Park.

5. Planning Committee

5.1. Planning Committee Report

Miss Uprichard gave her report of Planning Committee activity in the past few weeks. The committee had had one meeting in December. She said that there was an objection to aspects of plans for redevelopment of the Glass House restaurant in North Street.

The committee had also looked at the street lighting proposals. The committee would like to see the same design of lights used throughout the town.

The committee also objected to aspects of the plan for 2D Howard Place, which it was felt weren't appropriate for a listed building.

The issue of Statutory Consulteeship and the way this has been interpreted by Fife Council officials was the next issue mentioned by Miss Uprichard. She has had considerable correspondence on the subject with Fife Council. Another part of the debate has been a claim by Fife Councils officials that the committee can't comment upon or be a statutory consultee on LBC applications. As the committee has up until this statement been commenting on such applications for about 20 years she was uncertain why this was now being stated as the Council position. Officials claimed that there was no provision in legislation for the CC to be a statutory consultee in such applications and had written to her with what they claimed was the guidance by which such decisions were taken from the Town & Country Planning Act 1997.

Another part of the debate has centred on the 15-day period and when this would start. Miss Uprichard had written numerous letters on the subject to Fife Council Planning. She asked Fife Councillors for their views on this matter. Cllr Melville said she found the response & interpretation of officials completely incomprehensible. A similar debate has taken place around the timescale for requesting to be a statutory consultee and again it centred on the starting date and whether the timing on which the weekly list was published could be viewed as the starting date. She felt that Fife Council was not living up to its promise to "listen, consider, respond" when dealing with the public by its questionable interpretation of the timescales for input from CCs.

Mr McLeod commented on the issue of the timescales and the way Fife Council officials seemed determined not to give a few more hours to CCs. He acknowledged that it was very wearing for Miss Uprichard the Planning Convenor.

Cllr Morrison commented that this matter affected all CCs and there was a plan to bring the matter to full Council to try and get it resolved.

Miss Uprichard then went on to mention that the University had nine applications in the pipeline at various stages of development. She listed the applications which included the Biomass Plant and pipeline, the Kenly Wind Turbines, the Gatty Building, the electric cable associated with the wind turbine, housing to the west of Grange Road and the Western Extension.

Dr Goudie added that in relation to the Grange Road development he thought that the road access might have been imposed by Fife council officials not the developer. A similar situation happened with the new hospital site.

Miss Uprichard felt that the cumulative effect of several major developments shouldn't be underestimated with increases in traffic and other impacts upon the town and surrounding landscape setting.

6. Matters Arising

6.1. Facebook

Mr McLeod reported back on the activity on Facebook since it was set up in the past few weeks. Mr Greenwell queried the statistics and wondered how page visits and people engaged didn't seem to match up? How could 63 page visits equate to over 1000 people engaged? Ms Bennett and Mr McLeod explained how this worked. Mr McLeod commented that a photo he'd put up on the site this month about Sunday parking had generated over 22000 people being engaged. He added that if someone shared a page this increased the number seeing it indirectly through another user accessing the original page.

Mr McLeod reminded the meeting that anyone could post anything though it would be scrutinised by those charged with monitoring page content. Mr Paul commented that he'd seen the post about Sunday parking several times as it had been picked up by different people and groups on his Facebook.

6.2. Community Council Ties

Mr McLeod now had an image of the fabric version of the ties. It would still be several weeks before the ties would become available. He added that the company would also for a couple of pounds embroider the badge on to a sweater etc.

6.3. Minutes Secretary

He acknowledged that this was becoming a bit of a saga. Mr Scott and the student reps were he thought going to advertise the post to see what interest might be generated. There had been no report back from Mr Scott to date.

6.4. Reports from Representatives

6.4.1. St Andrews Community Trust

Mr Greenwell reported that he was to have a meeting with the Links Trust to nail down any changes to the Articles of Association. Later this week there will be a meeting of the partner directors to discuss what to do about the co-opted directors who all had to stand down from their posts in December. Some will need to be reappointed until the AGM, as there will be a meeting to consider awards before the AGM. Mr McLeod also reminded the meeting that there would be a meeting of the Nominations Committee soon to start the process of finding new co-opted directors.

6.4.2. Replacements for Mr Roberts on various organisations

Mr McLeod explained that due to personal circumstances Mr Roberts has had to stand down from his various posts in various organisations where he has been the CC rep. Mr McLeod said that it was important to find replacements to the organisations on which Mr Roberts was representative.

Byre Theatre Management Group - Mrs Harding has indicated an interest and was appointed

Pilgrim Foundation – Dita Stanis-Traken had indicated an interest and was appointed.

St Andrews Partnership – Mr Newman indicated an interest and was appointed

7. Committee Reports

7.1 Recreation Committee

Mr Greenwell reported that the Senior Citizens Treat had been very successful. Dates had also been booked in April and October for Coffee Mornings and the 2017 Senior Citizens Treat. He also sought views on when the Civic Reception should be at the end of November/early December. Mr Greenwell commented that the Beating of the Retreat would be affected by the night chosen, as some nights were not band nights making it difficult to get the full band to play. Possible dates were the 24th November or 1st December. Members were asked to vote on the dates and the majority agreed on 1st December.

7.2. GP Meeting

No meeting

7.3. 200 Club

1st Mrs Harding 2nd Mr Methven 3rd Mrs Room

7.4. Health, Education and Welfare Committee

No report

7.5. Rail Sub Committee

Not much to report at this time. Still awaiting a response from Rail Future Scotland.

8. New Business

No new business.

9. Reports from Office Bearers

9.1. Chair

Report circulated separately.

9.2. Treasurer

Mr Munn reported that his reports on the CC website

9.3 Secretary

9.3.1. Correspondence

See emails and items listed in appendix. Mr Marks also explained the insurance policy and the cover it offered to CCs through Fife Council/Zurich Insurance. Mr Paul commented on the need to write risk assessments for events, which are organised and pointed out that this hadn't happened for some of our regular events. Mr Greenwell commented that there was one completed for the Beating of the Retreat. This was completed on a generic Fife Council form and this could be used for other events such as Coffee Mornings and Bandstand Concerts.

Mr Munn brought up the issue of additional charges for use of the website which he had been alerted about by the secretary. He wondered about the benefit of remaining with such a service given the availability of sites with unlimited access etc. Mr Greenwell felt that the website should be moved to unlimited web posting for a modest cost of £36 pa.

10. Any Other Competent Business

10.1. Calendar

Mr McLeod went through the calendar for 2017. He asked about meeting dates. The options for the May meeting were discussed. It was agreed to continue with having the meeting a

week later and in August it had been decided to stop the meeting in the past for a variety of reasons. A motion to have an August meeting was proposed but was defeated on a vote of members. Other events discussed included dates for the Garden Competition and Senior Citizens Treat.