

Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

Provisional Minutes –9th May 2016

1. Attendance

Community Councillors

Callum MacLeod, Howard Greenwell, Kyffin Roberts, Ian Goudie, Gordon Shepherd, Iain Munn, Izzy Corbin, Patrick Marks, Henry Paul, Harry Stewart, Ken Crichton, Christopher Wallard, Penny Uprichard, John Jardine, Jamie McLeod

Students' Association Representatives

Patrick Mathewson

Aine Bennett

Charlotte Andrew

Co-Opted

Lindsey Adam

Fife Councillors

Brian Thomson, Dorothea Morrison

Apologies - Keith McCartney, Frances Melville, Alicia Schultz, Judith Harding

2. Minutes of Meeting –April 2016

The minutes were accepted as a true record of the April meeting

3. Presentations

3.1. Stephen Sinclair – Byre Theatre

Presentation didn't take place due to non-appearance of speaker.

4. Fife Councillor.

4.1. Frances Melville

4.1.1. Central St Andrews & Hepburn Gardens Conservation area

Cllr Melville informed the meeting that North East Fife Area Committee had finally approved the proposed updates on the conservation areas.

4.1.2. Seagull Proof Sacks

Cllr Melville had been informed by officials of the receipt of seagull proof sacks in the town centre area. Residents in the centre of town who do not have bins will be issued with these first and their use may eventually be rolled out to other areas where seagull proof sacks are necessary. The present issue will be a trial run.

4.1.3. Electric Charging Point

Cllr Melville reported that officials are trying to confirm whether the point in question needed planning permission, but thinks it might not. Cllr Thomson reported that officials had confirmed that the height of the signs, which Mr Munn had queried, had to be around the 2 plus metres clearance from the ground. Cllr Thomson had queried this need, as the signs in the Argyle Street car park were half the height. He'd emailed officials but hadn't had a reply to this point yet.

4.1.4. St Andrews Harbour – Application for funding of pontoons

Cllr Melville reported that at the area meeting the pontoons application had been given funding from the CGF and the area budget.

4.1.5. Broadband Speeds

Cllr Melville reported that they'd had a presentation from a Jonathon Parker on Broadband and he informed the Councillors that large areas of North-East Fife were still not up to scratch in terms of speed to make business more productive. BT is working towards improving matters.

4.1.6. West Sands Play Area Proposals

Alan Bissett of Fife Council had spoken to Councillors about replacing the former play area at the West Sands and also putting in a play area at Kinburn Castle. She acknowledged that such proposals would involve a lot of money with the work at the West Sands costing possibly £150000 pounds while the Kinburn proposal would be less at around £50000 she thought. The West Sands proposal will include landscaping the former play area and confirming a suitable location for the replacement, possibly near the toilets, but there would be consultation with various relevant bodies to firm up possible proposals. In respect of the Kinburn there might be a soft play area and a sensory theme. These proposals will require planning permission. Mrs Harding asked about the location of the Kinburn play area. Cllr Melville thought it would be near the maze. Mr McLeod wondered about the possible use of some CGF money?

4.2. Brian Thomson

4.2.1. Grange House

Cllr Thomson reported on the ongoing problems of Grange House on the edge of town, which has been empty for a number of years despite various planning proposals. It has been subject to a lot of vandalism despite attempts to block entry to the building. Cllr Thomson had contacted the developer and Fife Council. The developer had responded saying that they would be seeking permission to demolish Grange House, but was advised by officials that all current planning permissions had expired. He wasn't absolutely certain if that was the case as he thought there had been some attempt to start some work ¾ years ago and wanted to check if this could constitute active work thus allowing the extant planning permissions to remain valid if work was to be started again. Miss Uprichard commented upon the Grange House former planning proposals, which had been for a small hotel and ten units in the form of holiday chalets/ timeshares (?). These had been agreed by Fife Council on the grounds of economic benefit and tourism, which she thought were dubious. She also recollected that there had then been a proposal for a care home and retirement units. Cllr. Thomson confirmed the hotel and timeshare proposal but said the care home proposal had been withdrawn. Cllr Thomson added that he'd asked officials to double check on the planning permissions in case any might still be extant as he'd mentioned earlier. If there was still an extant permission he thought the developer could seek a variation of their permission to partially demolish the Grange to fully demolish it. Miss Uprichard asked for the planning committee to be kept informed. She felt that any variation would hardly be a non-material one.

4.2.2. Cycle Parking

Cllr Thomson reported that he'd had an apology from an official at the time taken to get back on this matter. Officials will chase up relevant colleagues about the missing cycle racks at Nardinis, which he added should have been put back in place by this time. With respect to the additional spaces sought outside Tesco, Cllr Thomson had been told that this proposal would be subject to the installation of the cycle racks at the Student Association when demand would be better known. However this view may change as it is beginning to be recognised that the Students Association cycle provision may not improve the current situation at Tesco and will be discussed as a priority at an Area meeting. There was a possible issue about the possible

loss/relocation of a disabled parking bay, which could bring protests from other road users. Cllr Thomson also reported that officials were still coming back with excuses on that subject based on the Students Association cycle parking situation, which it is now recognised will have very limited or no bearing on the issue at Tesco. Mr Marks also reminded Cllr Thomson about the cycle rack situation outside W.H. Smith and he acknowledged that there was a need to get the missing racks back. Mrs Harding asked about the racks outside the grounds of Madras College on the opposite side of the road from Nardinis. Cllr Thomson replied that this has been set up when work was being done at Nardinis but that the places for the cycle racks in front of Nardinis were still in place and this meant the racks could easily be put in place again once officials had sorted out matters.

4.2.3. Email re Madras College

Cllr Thomson read out a statement in which he refuted things said by Community Councillor Miss Uprichard in an email in relation to the application for a new school at Pipeland. Members noted Cllr Thomson's statement.

4.2.4. Pipeland Road Garages

Mr Jardine asked Cllr Thomson if he'd heard anything about the issue he'd raised last month? Cllr Thomson confirmed he was still awaiting feedback from officials. Mr Jardine added that he felt that he couldn't understand why a Fife Council employee who was driving a street cleaning machine in the area couldn't clear some of the blocked gullies.

4.2.5. Various concerns about Fife Council Street and toilet cleaning

Mr Jardine also expressed various concerns about the observations he'd made of Fife Council staff at work around the town and he felt that there was poor management of staff and the work they were supposed to be undertaking. He also briefly commented upon lack of cleaning of toilets at the harbour. Cllr Thomson noted his concerns and suggested that he could pursue matters but would benefit from having more specific and clear-cut examples to take back to the Council. He agreed to take the toilets cleaning issue back to Council officials. Mr Jardine had also mentioned concerns about weeds at the harbour not being managed but Cllr Thomson reminded him that harbour management was the responsibility of the Harbour Trust not Fife Council. Mrs Corbin reminded the meeting that the café owner at the harbour held the keys for the toilets and did try to keep them clean. Mrs Corbin also said that she and her husband as part of the work of St Andrews in Bloom did weed the harbour apart from maintaining the flower displays.

4.2.6. Ducting at Students Association

Mr Greenwell reminded Cllr Thomson that he'd flagged up the ducting at the March meeting but hadn't seen any planning application in for this and wondered whether Cllr Thomson might have some idea? Cllr Thomson admitted he'd not seen anything being brought forward either and wondered if Mr Scott University rep might have some information on the matter? Mr Scott confirmed that an application had been made. Mr Greenwell wondered why it hadn't gone out for comment? Cllr Thomson said he'd check but thought it might be that officials weren't happy with some aspect of the application.

4.2.7. Church Square

Mr Greenwell also asked about Church Square and proposals to stop heavy traffic on the paved area. Cllr Thomson replied that a proposal had come before area Committee recently for a Traffic Regulation order but councillors had thought the order had seemed a bit ambiguous and had asked officials to be clearer on what would be banned and what would be allowed. Cllr Thomson added that once the TRO was published there would be a period of consultation as the order would have an effect upon some parking spaces and there might be comments from local businesses on the order and its implications. He added that the CC would also be able to comment upon the TRO.

4.2.8. Station Park

Someone had asked Mrs Harding about Station Park and whether the university was paying something to compensate for the disruption etc and if it was, was the money going to the school or Fife Council? If it went to Fife Council could it be used locally for some maintenance? Mr Scott confirmed that the university had made a payment but couldn't give details. Cllr Thomson said he'd check with the Estates Department. Mr Scott a bit later informed Mrs Harding that the University some time previously when it had been in discussions with traders in Guardbridge had also spoken to St Andrews traders and the outcome was that the university would fund an advertising campaign as a way of compensating for any disruption and possible loss of trade.

4.3. Keith McCartney - apologies

4.3.1. Illuminated Road Signs

Cllr McCartney reported that the lights on the following signs were not working and were reported for repair –

Double Dykes Road – ‘give way’ sign on the east side of the road at its junction with Hepburn Gardens.

Gibson Place – ‘no right turn’ sign on south side of road immediately east of the junction with The Links.

-‘no entry’ sign on north side of road immediately west of junction with The Links.

Grannie Clark's Wynd – ‘no entry’ sign on east side of road at junction with The Links.

Petheram Bridge Car Park – restricted access sign on north side of ramp leading to taxi rank at bus station.

Pilmour Links – ‘roundabout’ sign on north side of road immediately east of junction with Grannie Clark's Wynd.

-‘roundabout’ sign on north side of road on pavement by Links Golf of St Andrews building immediately west of roundabout at junction of Pilmour Links/North Street/City Road.

4.3.2. Potholes

Cllr McCartney reported that the following potholes were reported and, following inspection, Category B repair orders were issued -

Carron Place – centre of road between lighting columns numbers 1 and 2.

Craigtoun Road (C65) – south side of road at junction with road to Mount Melville.

Double Dykes Road – two potholes at entrance to Thornton's

Lawhead Road West – west side of road outside house number 10.

Mount Melville Road (Q19) – potholes in centre and west side of road at entrance drive to Balone Farm Cottage.

Old Station Road – two potholes on south side of road by access point to Station Park to the west of Dr Bell's Pavilion.

Old Station Road – two potholes on south side of road at most westerly entrance to Station Park.

4.3.3. Street Lights

Cllr McCartney reported that the following street lights were reported for repair –

Broomfaulds Avenue – lighting column outside house number 17 (lighting column number illegible).

Canongate – lighting column number 24.

4.3.4. Carron Place/Lawmill Gardens

Cllr McCartney reported that a fallen tree in the open space between Carron Place and Lawmill Gardens was reported and removed.

4.3.5. Doocot Road

Cllr McCartney reported that two protruding paving slabs were reported, inspected and a Category B repair order issued.

4.3.6. Bike Racks

Cllr McCartney reported that three new bike racks are on order to replace those missing outside Sainsbury's in Market Street and two new bike racks are on order to replace those missing outside WH Smith in South Street.

4.3.7. Hope Park Roundabout

Cllr McCartney the section of barrier on the west side of the roundabout at the junction with Double Dykes Road which was removed some time ago following vehicle damage has been replaced.

4.3.8. St Andrews Museum

Cllr McCartney reported that the flagpole which had to be taken down following damage in winter storms has been replaced.

4.3.9. Pedestrian Crossing, Craigtoun Road

Cllr McCartney reported that the green traffic light on the west side of the column on the north side of the road at the pedestrian crossing leading from the Lade Braes to Lawhead Primary School which was not working was reported and repaired.

4.3.10. Students' Association

Cllr McCartney reported that the two trees damaged and removed from St Mary's Place towards the east and west ends of the Students' Association building have been replaced.

4.4. Dorothea Morrison

4.4.1. Church Square Update

Cllr Morrison following Cllr Thomson's comments said that there was a proposal for retracting bollards. Councillors she said had originally thought that the officials report would mention that only large lorries would be banned but the report when presented indicated that no vehicles would be allowed which wasn't the correct idea for the restrictions to the square. There were also other elements of the report, which were satisfactory and demonstrated a misunderstanding by officials, so the report has been sent back by councillors for amendment. At the same time she said that the design for the improvement of Church Square in conjunction with the Pilgrim Foundation has gone out for consultation. It is hoped that a better job can be done with higher quality materials than Fife Council can currently afford. Miss Uprichard commented that there needed to be a clear decision as to whether the area of Logies lane and behind the church would be clearly categorised as a pedestrian area with only limited vehicle access by the church for wedding and funeral vehicles.

4.4.2. Parks & Open Spaces – budget cuts

Cllr Morrison announced that Fife Council has assessed that it needs to save £143000 in the area of parks & open spaces. She gave examples of possible areas where changes will happen such as cutting back on mowing open areas, which aren't actually Fife Council property but had been mown to keep areas looking tidy. She said that councillors would be meeting to look at ways to lessen the blow and she suggested that there might be a need for more joint work with the community and groups like St Andrews in Bloom. She hoped that each ward would be able to put in some money from its locality budget to lessen the blow, but added that there might be areas where the benefit of annual planting might be questioned and an area considered for perennials to reduce costs. Cllr Melville added that ideas such as sponsorship

of roundabouts would be considered as well as the use of perennials as mentioned by Cllr Morrison. Cllr Morrison asked CC members to have a thought about alternative ways to manage areas such as Petheram Bridge, which might save costs. Mr McLeod commented that the cutbacks might be opportunities for community action. Miss Uprichard commented on options for areas like the Argyle street car park and Petheram Bridge and thought that in the latter things like flowering shrubs might be better than the bedding plants and just something like Japanese pebbles in the Argyle Street bedding area.

4.4.3. Cosmos Management Committee

Mrs Harding asked about Councillor representation on the Cosmos Management Committee. She has been involved but the committee feel they need a Fife Councillor as well. Cllr Melville admitted they'd received notification but there had been no takers from the 4 local Fife Councillors. Cllr Morrison said that she and Cllr Thomson had been on the committee but had had to leave because of the actions of another member of that committee. Cllr Thomson said he'd question the value of a Fife Councillor being on the committee due to the way it was being run and had raised this with Andrew Ferguson of Fife Council. He felt that the committee was micro managing the way the centre was being run and wasn't as much about strategic matters which he felt would be more appropriate for Fife councillor input.

5. Planning Committee

5.1. Planning Committee Report

Miss Uprichard reported that there had been two meetings during April. In the first one the committee looked at a lot of applications. She added a lot related to changes in listed buildings and that nearly all had been recommended for approval. She said that the CC planning committee usually put in objections to such applications but these weren't generally considered. She thought that this might be because officials possibly weren't aware or weren't told of any reasons they could give for refusal and that they didn't always think about the difference between listed and unlisted buildings. She felt that if listed buildings were subject to a lot of modern changes, which weren't sympathetic to the original design it questioned whether the buildings should be listed. She felt that this was a great pity as such building represented in her view the best of the past.

The second meeting on the 25th saw the committee object to several applications from the Kenly wind turbine electricity cable, and the others for a range of reasons. She had written for clarification on some of the plans and was still waiting for a response from officials a couple of weeks later. She also felt that some of the plans were not user friendly for anyone looking at them online and needed improved.

She then commented on some appeals on the go at this time namely Feddinch and 63 St. Nicholas Street. She had also spent a considerable time putting together a CC response to the Appeals Directorate and the views on the outcome of the appeals judgement on Pipeland.

6. Matters Arising

6.1. Reports from Representatives

6.1.1. Pilgrim Foundation

Mr Roberts who is a CC rep on this organisation reported on the item mentioned earlier by Cllr Morrison, which related to improvements in Logies Lane.

6.1.2. St Andrews Partnership

Mr Roberts who is also on St Andrews Partnership for the CC reminded the meeting about the changes in the way Scottish Enterprise would be funding the Partnership. The partnership has now had to put forward an expression of interest for funding from the Scottish Enterprise Tourism Destination Development Fund. The Partnership are awaiting the outcome of that and Mr Roberts reminded the meeting that the Partnership have still had a project on the back

burner for lighting up St Andrews Cathedral and have some estimated costs for that project. They will now be looking for funding for that project to light up the cathedral for the next 15 years. Funding cost is estimated at £190000.

6.1.3. Fife Licensing Forum

Mrs Corbin who is CC rep on this body reported that they had recently given out three warning to licensed premises for selling products and not being properly licensed.

6.2. Should we discuss Madras Pipeland?

Miss Uprichard asked Cllr Melville about the comments made by the Council leader implying that the Pipeland site remained still the only option. She added that there was an item to be discussed by the Fife Council Executive Committee, which said, “ that the plan in accordance with the court ruling remains live and the intention of the Education and Children’s Services Directorate is that the planning application should be reconsidered. The Council’s Education Authority awaits advice from the Planning Authority as to the preparation required to allow the application to be reconsidered”. She wondered that as Cllr Ross had stated that Pipeland was the only suitable site to be considered was that not a predetermination? Mr McLeod wondered if Cllr Melville could define meaning of a live application if the court judgement brought to an end to the application? Cllr Melville said that the judgement was on the planning in principle not the actual application. She added that the Council had to decide on how to proceed and thought it was quite complicated with all sorts of issues to think about and then there was the emerging Local Plan to be looked at by the Reporter in June. Cllr Melville acknowledged that she couldn’t answer Miss Uprichard’s query, as she didn’t know herself. She’d not had an update since the judgement had come through. Mr McLeod commented that her comments confirmed that the application was still registered as an application on the system. Cllr Morrison felt that the indications were that there would have to be a new application for the Pipeland site.

Mr Wallard brought up the issue he’d flagged up on email to fellow CCs that they should declare if they had an interest financial or otherwise as he’d done in relation to the school application, as he was a member of Parent Voice. Mr McLeod thought that declaring an interest should be a fairly rare thing and that common sense should prevail. He felt that this was shown up with the Links Trust application where he thought that virtually everybody could have excluded themselves from discussing anything to do with St Andrews all being Council tax payers etc. He acknowledged that there were clear occasions when an interest should be declared be it financial or otherwise. He didn’t think that Mr Wallard’s declaration of his involvement with Parent Voice as excluding him from discussions and even voting. He thought that it would be difficult as people active in local affairs would almost inevitably be a member of an organisation relating to a particular issue. He wanted members to be sensible about how matters in relation to any issue could feel that they could be involved in debate. Mr Wallard in reply said that he agreed that declaring an interest didn’t preclude someone from voting. He felt that declaring an interest would give local people more faith in the CC if it were more transparent. Mr McLeod added that as there was no current application for the CC to consider or comment on to come to a decision. The CC hadn’t taken a view or discussed the new Madras since it had been in the courts over the past year and a half. He wanted to guide the CC towards waiting to be asked, as it had been the last time. (At this stage the fire alarm went off and the meeting was abandoned)