

# Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

## Approved Minutes – 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2008

### For Approval

*(Copies of Agendas and Minutes of the Community Council are held at Fife Council's Local Office, St Mary's Place and the Town Library, Church Square. Those from late 1997 on are on line at <http://www.standrewscc.net/>)*

## 1. Attendance

### Community Councillors

Ken Crichton, Ken Fraser, Zoe Smith, Patrick Marks, Ian Goudie, Marysia Denyer, Rob Fett, Henry Paul, Judith Harding, Laurence Reed, Matthew Verrell

### Students' Association Representatives

### Nominated

Jude Innes

### Co-Opted

Penny Uprichard

### Fife Councillors

Frances Melville, Bill Sangster, Robin Waterston, Dorothea Morrison

### Apologies

Catherine Rowe, Carol Ashworth, Karen Hutchence (resigned), Dave Finlay, Matthew Guest, Andrew Keenan, Shaun Atkinson

## 2. Minutes of October 2008 Meeting

There were no amendments or corrections in the October 2008 Minutes

## 3. Presentations

### 3.1. P.C. McLeod

#### 3.1.1. Bikes with No Lights

Ms Harding asked PC McLeod about the ongoing problem of cyclists with no lights. PC McLeod replied that by coincidence, himself and a colleague, Linda Grey who is the University Liaison Officer were going to be going round the University Halls of Residence and would be sticking tags on every bike. This would be information telling the cycle owner that it was illegal to cycle in the hours of darkness on a public road without lights. Anyone caught without lights would be given a warning in the first instance, but on a second occasion would be given a £30 fine or could elect to go to court. PC McLeod said that the tags could also be used to get a discount on bike lights at Spokes. Mr Marks asked if the police would be treating the rest of the St Andrews community in a similar fashion if caught without lights. PC McLeod confirmed that there would be no discrimination as it was still the same offence. Ms Smith commented that the Police and the University Authorities had in past years offered heavily discounted lights.

### **3.1.2. Vandalism at Madras College Kilrymont**

Mr Crichton asked PC McLeod if he'd heard about vandalism of the greenhouse at Kilrymont. PC McLeod wasn't aware of the specific matter, but related problems at Greyfriars just below Madras and how these were being tackled.

### **3.2. St Andrews University Student Charities Campaign**

Mhairi McGaan introduced herself as a member of the Student Charities Campaign Executive. She started by describing how they were planning to place more emphasis on more Town/Gown community events.

Last year the Student Charities Campaign had raised around £160000 for charity of which £58000 was raised directly by the students. Six charities are nominated each year, with the money being split equally between them. This year's Charities are Breast Cancer Campaign, UNICEF, Chest, Heart and Stroke (Scotland), Alzheimer's Scotland, Refuge and Joy to the World, this latter being a St Andrews University student charity. Fundraising is a mix of street collections, lots of events and an International Hitch Hike. This year Mhairi said they had a greater variety of events, including hiring the local cinema for the premiere of the new James Bond film, with sponsors paying an increased ticket price. This raised some £500. Collections this year have exceeded previous years with some £6000 in the last few weeks in a number of Scottish cities and towns. Other events include a golf tournament in March and a Town and Gown Ball in February. A half marathon is another fundraising event.

Mhairi is in charge of the Rag Week, which takes place next February. There will be a range of events taking place in the Students Union, Halls of Residence and other venues around town, with the hope of raising more than last year's £11000. Town/Gown events with local young people will hopefully include a Ceilidh at St Leonards and various events with Madras College. Mhairi encouraged the Community Council to think about what other town/gown events could be set up and in which people could participate.

Ms Smith asked about local charities benefiting and suggested that a joint event could see half any profits going towards a local town worthy cause, as this might be more of a catalyst for some local people to support the event. Mr Crichton confirmed that the Community Council remit for supporting anything would be limited to the town, whereas the University could look at worldwide charitable causes.

## **4. Fife Councillors**

### **4.1. Frances Melville**

#### **4.1.1. Canongate School Eco Schools Green Flag Award**

Canongate Primary have been awarded the 700<sup>th</sup> such award in Scotland

#### **4.1.2. New Street Sign – St Mary Street**

Cllr Melville had received a reply about the reason for moving a sign to a different lamppost. Apparently any sign over 1/3 square metre in size has to be moved to a more suitable post as the modern lamp posts are made of softer metal for road safety reasons. Robbie Blyth is to meet up with Mr Crichton to discuss the matter.

#### **4.1.3. Yellow Lines – Eastern End of Market Street**

The yellow lines had been removed for a trial period at the eastern end of Market Street following that area's road refurbishment. Unfortunately because motorists were taking advantage of the lack of parking restrictions, it was creating other traffic problems. A local resident had complained recently about the situation. Enquires had revealed an official awareness of the problem. As a result the yellow lines are to be reinstated.

#### **4.1.4. Purchase of Housing by Fife Council**

Dr Goudie mentioned that Falkirk Council were taking the opportunity to purchase housing to supplement Council Housing stock. He suggested that as St Andrews was desperately in need of more rented housing, was Fife Council considering a similar initiative?

Cllr Melville replied that Fife Council was looking at this possibility due to the pressured area status of North East Fife. Councillor Waterston added that houses had been purchased from the RAF at Leuchars.

## **4.2. Bill Sangster**

### **4.2.1. Cobbles in Market Street**

Cllr Sangster said in relation to Mr Connell's letter that the cobbles had never been repaired or reset, due to financial constraints. Cobbles will be repaired and reset later funds permitting. Ms Uprichard added that when she'd spoken to the consultants who had been employed for the Market Street project. They had indicated that the cobbles would be re-laid, but not necessarily in the same place. Cllr Sangster checking which area of Market Street was being referred to, namely the area around the fountain, replied that there were no plans for any work on the cobbles due to financial cut backs.

### **4.2.2. Floral Decoration in St Andrews**

The only area that might be at risk according to Cllr Sangster was the floral bedding display at Petheram Bridge. Cost of maintaining this bed is an issue at some £5000, so there has been talk about looking for sponsorship from businesses.

### **4.2.3. Harbour Toilet Keys**

Still not sorted, but Cllr Sangster was hopeful that they'd get handed over soon.

### **4.2.4. Martyr's Monument Maintenance**

Fife Council is now asking for quotations on the decorative work, which is crumbling. The Pilgrim Trust had received a quote for general repair work details of which have been passed to Fife Council. Cllr Sangster said that it was up to Fife Council to decide how it wanted to spend its budget. He had also asked for the chairs by the monument to be given fresh paint.

### **4.2.5. Cycle Parking Provision/ Street Furniture**

Dr Goudie asked about cycle parking provision. Dr Goudie had an email from a Fife Council Transport official to say that no provision had been made in the 2008-9 budgets for cycling infrastructure. Dr Goudie added that given Fife Council's statement last year about aiming to be the greenest council in Scotland, was the lack of cycling funding compatible with this aspiration? This email had come from a Mr Adamson. Cllr Sangster acknowledged that there had been considerable delay, partly because of disagreement over the street furniture, particularly the seating around the trees. As far as he knew the rest of the street infrastructure would be going ahead quite soon, as the seating had been extracted from the plans. Cllr Waterston confirmed that it would be coming up to the next Area Committee.

On the theme of the seats around trees, Cllr Sangster commented that officials had thought that such seats didn't fit into the streetscape of St Andrews. Cllr Sangster had suggested that one example could be made up to see what it looked like. He imagined that such seating would only be placed around every fourth tree or something of that order. Mr Marks about the possible need for public consultation about the seats to gauge public thoughts for or against. Cllr Sangster agreed that this might be the case. Dr Goudie added that when the Planning Committee had been discussing the idea, the problem of keeping the seats free of organic material from both the tree and birds had been viewed as a

### **4.2.6. Election of University Rector and Procession**

Mr Crichton commented that after the election of a new rector, there was usually a procession around St Andrews stopping at various places. In the past when the new rector had stopped at the Burgh Chambers there had been a tradition of watering the horses pulling the rector's coach. Mr Crichton thought that this had been stopped and wondered why? Mr Fett agreed to ask the rector about stopping at the Burgh Chambers.

## **4.3. Robin Waterston**

### **4.3.1. East Sands Play Area**

Cllr Waterston reported that there are to be additional play items installed including a slide and swings. Mr Crichton queried the omission of the sand pit from the plan. Cllr Waterston replied that only the new play equipment had been highlighted. Ms Smith congratulated Fife Council on providing the new equipment, but felt that there should have been some consultation before going ahead with the new equipment, to confirm whether users had any particular ideas on suitable play equipment. Cllr Waterston said that the Councillors were only informed about the plan last week. It had appeared okay to the

Councillors, but Cllr Waterston suggested that he'd be happy to feed in any ideas from the Community Council.

#### **4.3.2. HMO Interim Policy**

Fife Council has now produced an interim HMO policy to help to clarify what properties can and can't be HMOs. As the policy hasn't been consulted on it doesn't have the status as a fully consulted policy. An example cited by Cllr Waterston related to a flat becoming an HMO. The new policy will only allow a flat to become an HMO if all the other flats in the block are HMOs. Cllr Waterston said that he'd mentioned flats because of a recent appeal about an application in Balrymonth Court which had been refused by Fife Council, but which had recently been allowed by the Reporter, but only on a temporary, three-year basis. Cllr Waterston thought that this was to allow the new policy time to be consulted upon, bedded in and reviewed by the end of this period. Ms Smith asked for the definition of a block of flats. Cllr Waterston replied that it was a common shared entrance.

#### **4.3.3. Strategic Environmental Assessment for the Local Plan**

Cllr Waterston informed the meeting that this plan is being consulted upon for the next six weeks. Cllr Waterston said that Mr Jackson of the Greenbelt Forum had written an article in the Courier arguing that the procedures being followed weren't the correct ones, a view with which Cllr Waterston was sympathetic. Copies of this substantial document will be available in the local office and the library. He went on to explain that this document was entirely different from the revised Local Plan and entirely separate from any consultation on the new Local Plan when it appears next year. This document is related to the so-called 2006 Finalised Draft Local Plan, which has never been published. He acknowledged that it was quite a confusing situation. He wasn't certain of the true importance of this document, but didn't feel it was as important as the consultation on the new Local Plan will be. This latter Plan will also have its own Strategic Environmental Assessment Stage 2, hence his uncertainty about the worth of this document.

#### **4.3.3. Recycling Plastic Bags/Batteries**

Ms Harding had recently asked Environmental Services about the lack of facilities for recycling plastic bags and batteries in the town centre. She had been told that a pilot was to be trialled in Kirkcaldy. She thought that it would be more sensible to try it in St Andrews, given the large student population, and wondered whether that could be promoted. Cllr Waterston in his reply said that Tesco had been asked, but had claimed that they didn't have any space. He welcomed ideas for an outlet willing to act as a collection centre. Ms Harding wondered why Fife Council couldn't do it, beside their bottle banks. Cllr Waterston replied that this was because Fife Council didn't operate a collection system for recycling plastic bags, though the Library did and would be a place to take the bags. With regard to batteries, the Recycling Centre is the only place for disposal. He acknowledged that this was difficult given the small volume of material and the cost of collection and modification of refuse vehicles to have small compartments to hold batteries. He confirmed that there was nowhere in Fife outside Recycling Centres for the collection of batteries for recycling about which he was aware. Mr Crichton said that the SENSE Charity shop would take plastic bags and he thought that other Charity Shops would be grateful for useable bags as well. Mrs Denyer confirmed that SENSE was the only Charity Shop in St Andrews to recycle plastic bags. Ms Harding added that she'd asked because it wasn't obvious to many people where such recycling facilities were available.

#### **4.4. Dorothea Morrison –**

##### **4.4.1. South Street Seats Round Trees**

Cllr Morrison had been led to believe that the idea for the seats around trees had been to conceal the areas of loose earth around the base of the trees. The trees she said might in some cases need to be replaced due to root damage from street repair work.

##### **4.4.2. Market Street – East End**

Cllr Morrison had visited the east end of the street the previous day and had seen 11 cars parked partly on the pavement. She realised that because of the stupidity of some drivers, the only way to stop the behaviour was to put down the yellow lines again.

#### **4.4.3. West Burn Lane Development**

Cllr Morrison had asked officials whether this building site was likely to remain undeveloped for the foreseeable future. She'd been informed that that was likely because of the economic downturn. She wondered if it might be possible to make this gasp site look more attractive and suggested it as a possible community project. She thought it could be made to look quite attractive, rather than remain in its present state. Ms Uprichard advised the meeting that the demolition had taken place before planning permission had been granted, and there were also conditions, which hadn't been complied with before the demolition. One condition had been to carry out a contamination survey, as the area was a former tanning factory, with the possibility of anthrax in the ground. Ms Uprichard believed that planning permission had still not been given. Ms Uprichard also added that she thought that any idea of tidying up the site should wait until the developer had complied with the conditions. Cllr Sangster thought that there had been two planning applications, one for knocking down the building and one for the new build. The latter hadn't come before the Planning Committee. Cllr Waterston said that the original application had been turned down and had gone to an inquiry at which the Reporter had granted the plan for demolition without the conditions. Planning permission had been granted for the new build subject to a number of conditions and he didn't know if these had yet been met. Ms Uprichard insisted that the reporter had required two conditions to be met when approving the plan for demolition and these were about the rigg wall and about the area to be laid out. These conditions weren't complied with, and she'd not heard that planning consent had been obtained for new build.

## **5. Planning Committee**

### **5.1. Planning Committee Report**

There was no report according to Ms Uprichard as there had only been one planning application at the last meeting and that had been put back to the next meeting.

### **5.2. Availability of Planning Applications**

Following the planning committee meeting, Ms Uprichard had contacted Chris Smith in planning and had spoken to him about the availability of plans. He had informed Ms Uprichard that in future householder applications would not be sent to Community Councils. She had informed Mr Smith that Cllr Sangster had said at the previous Community Council meeting, that Community Councils would decide what applications they should receive. Mr Smith said that Cllr Sangster was wrong in this matter. Ms Uprichard has written a letter to Mr Smith, which has also been copied to other people, including Mr Swinney and Mr Menzies Campbell. She felt that it was time that the removal of planning applications was firmly tackled. Ms Smith asked Ms Uprichard if she'd asked Mr Smith about the Community Council requesting plans, as the Community Council had been informed in the past that if plans were requested they would be sent regardless of the nature of the plans? Ms Uprichard replied that she had asked this question, but felt that the decision to not send householder applications was a dangerous precedent as it could cover a wide range of properties. She wanted to send her letter in the name of the planning committee.

Ms Smith announced that she had arranged a meeting on the 11<sup>th</sup> November at Cllr Waterston's house. She asked for a copy of the letter sent by Mr Smith to Ms Uprichard. She was concerned about the apparent inconsistencies in Mr Smith's responses on the matter. Cllr Morrison felt that the matter had to be pursued. She cited examples of applications in the conservation area, which could come under the householder category, and about which, the Community Council might not be made aware under the new policy, cited by Mr Smith. She acknowledged that it might have to end up with Community Councillors and Councillors looking at plans on computer if paper plans were not being made available in time. Cllr Sangster said that PAN 47 gave some leeway, with Fife Council being able to look at each area on its own merits as to what is important and what is not important. He felt that the same could be said about accessing the plans with eh Community Council being able to say what they class as important.

Ms Uprichard commented on the change in the availability of plans at the local office, despite concerns of local members. She also commented on the unsatisfactory situation in the local office with regard to storage and display of plans and related material. Ms Uprichard had commented to Mr Smith about the difficulty in looking at on line plans, partly because of the lack of online facilities in the local office at meeting times. Mr Smith had suggested that they should perhaps meet in a member's house!

Cllr Waterston suggested that Councillors could try and help the Community Council find a mutually agreeable way forward in this problematic area. He added that it was inevitable that the amount of paper plans would reduce, but didn't think that it would disappear entirely. He felt that there needed to be a compromise between the need to reduce unnecessary paperwork and the need to be able to scrutinise plans properly. The meeting at his house would be with a view to putting forward workable suggestions on the

matter to officials. Ms Uprichard commented on the ongoing difficulty in obtaining planning material and how this could be off-putting to all but the most determined member of the public. She also commented on the amount of major planning related matters due to come forward for public scrutiny in the next few months, from the modifications to the Structure Plan, the Local Plan, the Strategic Environmental Assessment for the Local Plan, two public inquiries and the Parking Plan.

Dr Goudie commented on other aspects of the problem, one being the system set up to notify the Regional Council of the plans required by the Community Council Planning Committee, which had been managed by Ms Rowe who is at present on sick leave, as well as the fact that the plans weren't automatically arriving at the Local Office in good time. He added that this might be an issue under the Freedom of Information Act whereby we could request information in a reasonable form. Dr Goudie felt that to be expected to look at detailed plans on a screen was not a reasonable form.

Ms Uprichard commented that Fife Council's Publications Scheme stated that most papers would be available in paper form. She felt that Fife Council was in breach of this by not making paper plans easily available on request. Mr Fett suggested using the Freedom of Information Act if necessary.

### **5.3. Fife Landscape Study**

This study had been published on 14/12/07, with a six-week period of consultation following, as well as workshops, of which some 50 people attended the Cupar one. A controversial proposal was to remove the designation, Areas of Great Landscape Value to those areas surrounding St Andrews and Cupar. The proposals suggested reducing the number of such areas surrounding St Andrews from around 20 to only two, one of which was the Links. She commented that the Links according to the study is to be within Green Belt, but not subject to the constraints of the Green Belt. She felt that the consultation procedure and the draft report had been entirely inappropriate. The draft report was approved in June 2008, before going to the Area Committees. The North East Fife Area Committee was quite critical of the report. Ms Uprichard had copies of a statement put out to the press on 28<sup>th</sup> October by the Community Council and four other local organisations concerned about the proposals.

Cllr Waterston added that it was true that the Area Committee had expressed strong reservations about the whole process. Cllr Waterston did manage to see a copy of the June report. He noted that the consultants in the final report had changed the two original landscape designations around St Andrews. There was a specific comment in the report on St Andrews South in which the consultants acknowledged, following criticism, that it should be included. Mr Crichton reminded Community Councillors and other members of the public that they could object to issues of concern. He'd recently objected to a plan in his area and had succeeded in getting it withdrawn.

Ms Uprichard added that she'd requested a copy of the 160 representations to the Landscape Study under Freedom of Information on the 29<sup>th</sup> June, but so far hadn't received them, nor she believed had the Councillors or SNH. She'd also requested the details of the over six thousand objections to the Parking Plan, which she said, had never been published or seen. She felt that it was no good putting in objections, unless there was an eventual report published for public consumption. As far as she was aware no report had been issued with regard to this latter matter.

## **6. Matters Arising**

### **6.1. Election of New Councillors – Update**

There are now 4 vacancies, following the resignation of Mr Karen Hutchence who has moved to live in Leuchars and is therefore not eligible to remain on the Community Council. There were four applicants generated by some initial publicity in the local press. One applicant, Mr Andrew McKenzie withdrew his application. Mr Paul proposed that the Community Council should accept all applicants, and this would leave one vacancy for any response from the article in St Andrews in Focus.

The newly elected Councillors being, Mr Derek Skelhon, Mr Ray Pead and Mr Thomas Cahn. Cllr Sangster asked if a revised and up to date list of membership could be issued. Mr Marks agreed to do so once it was known whether there would be any response for the final vacancy.

### **6.2. Art and Photography Exhibition – Update**

Ms Smith made the meeting aware that a collection centre for entries had been sorted out, namely the local office at St Mary's Place. Ms Smith also reminded the meeting of the need for volunteers for the preview and main period of display. Dates are 27<sup>th</sup> November, which is the preview, running until Sunday 30<sup>th</sup>

November. Entries for the Photographic Exhibition can be given into the Local Office between the Monday and Wednesday, but art is only to be put in on the Wednesday at the local office.

### **6.3. Report from Arms Convenor**

Mr Paul reported that Mr White had declined to attend the Community Council meeting until the resolution of certain issues. Mr Paul requested another month to allow him to come back with answers to the issues he'd raised with Mr White and his solicitor. Mr Paul reminded the meeting that there was a time limit for Mr White to reply. Mr Fett if we'd had a reply from the Lord Lyon. Mr Paul replied that he'd had no reply to date.

### **6.4. Climate Challenge Fund – update**

Mr Marks reported that the next Climate Challenge Meeting would be on 13<sup>th</sup> November at the Estates Office at 19.00. Mrs Denyer confirmed that timer and date and the need to get a bid put together. Mr Marks commented upon the recent successful bid by Largoward Community Council.

### **6.5. Reports from Representatives**

#### **6.5.1. Cosmos Community Centre AGM**

Ms Smith reported on the AGM at which 91 people attended. The bus fundraising has finished and the centre has enough money to run it for the coming year. She only slightly negative aspect was the level of membership, which Ms Smith said, was quite low. She encouraged people to join the Centre. Cost for basic membership is only a few pounds.

#### **6.5.2. IncludeME**

Ms Smith had attended the inaugural meeting of this group in Cupar recently. She felt that it was a good group, though she was disappointed at the lack of representation from St Andrews. The formal launch is in March 2009.

#### **6.5.3. Town and Gown Liaison Committee**

Ms Smith had attended this group earlier in the day. The only thing of interest from the meeting had been the official figure for the number of students at 7240. The University will also provide the Xmas tree, which goes outside Holy Trinity Church this year following the closure of the Paper Mill, which used to be the donor.

#### **6.5.4. Festival Committee**

St Andrews Festival Brochures are now available.

### **6.6. A.O.C.B.**

#### **6.6.1. Old Folks Party**

Mr Crichton reported on a change of venue for this event, due to the unavailability of the Students Union this year. The town hall is to be used on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> January.

#### **6.6.2. Xmas Lights**

Ms Smith reported that this is going ahead as planned.

#### **6.6.3. St Andrews Day Reception**

Mr Crichton explained the background to this event. It had been held by the old Town Council and carried on by Fife Council. The idea was to invite people from the area, not just St Andrews who had been involved in local good works or for other noteworthy reasons. The Community Council has now become involved in running the event with Fife Council. Around 150 people are invited. This year, Dennis Canavan, former MSP and MP, who was behind the St Andrews Day Campaign has been invited to speak at the reception. Prior to the Reception is the Beating of the Retreat in which the St Andrews Pipe Band plays the key role. The switching of the Christmas Lights takes place a little earlier.

## **7. Committee Reports**

### **7.1 Recreation Committee**

Mr Bain reported. The St Andrews Young Citizen of the Year has been advertised in the local media. He hoped that there would be more applications from Madras College, as last year there had been none. The closing date will be in January 31<sup>st</sup> with the awards being presented in February.

### **7.2. General Purposes Committee**

No meeting has taken place.

### **7.3. 200 Club**

Winners: 1<sup>st</sup> R. Bonachek 2<sup>nd</sup> A Tero 3<sup>rd</sup> S Paul

### **7.4. Health, Education and Welfare Committee**

No meeting

## **8. New Business**

### **8.1. Friends of the Botanic Garden Subscription**

It was agreed to renew subscription of £20 with an additional £5 added.

### **8.2. Volunteer of the Year Award**

See agenda – for information.

### **8.3. Core Paths and Lade Bares**

See agenda – Appendix C. Dr Goudie also raised concerns about deterioration of the footpaths in some parts of the Ladebraes. Ms Smith asked about the maintenance programme for the Ladebraes. Cllr Sangster acknowledged that there was no programme, but repairs were done as required. Cllr Sangster thought that Kate Hughes, Locality Manager had used some of the Locality budget to do an upgrade at one time. Cllr Waterston added that Community Services had a responsibility for most of the Ladebraes.

## **9. Reports from Office Bearers**

### **9.1. Chair**

No report

### **9.2. Treasurer**

#### **9.2.1. Treasurer's Report**

Mr Fett reported the present financial situation. There is a total of about £24000 in the bank accounts. He acknowledged however that there wasn't as much "spare" money as he'd thought. He was keen to get a decision about how to manage the money Mr Crichton needed for the events he organised. There was a consensus to create a separate account for this money, which amounted to about £7000. Mr Fett advised the Council that after other necessary costs etc had been deducted, there was only about £6000 left, and this was before payment of any outstanding legal costs.

### **9.3 Secretary**

#### **9.3.1. Correspondence – see appendix**

Mr Marks

## **10. Any Other Competent Business**

### **10.1. Beetle Drive**

Mrs Denyer announced that the Preservation Trust was to be holding a Beetle Drive on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> November.