

Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

Approved Minutes – September 2009

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0. Election of Chairman

Following the resignation of Mrs Zoe Smith as the Chair of St Andrews Community Council, the process of electing a new Chair took place with Cllr Melville, temporarily taking the Chair to conduct the process of the Election.

Mr Larry Reed was nominated by Ms Catherine Rowe and seconded by Mrs Carol Ashworth

Mr Ronnie Murphy was nominated by Mr Henry Paul and seconded by Mr Patrick Marks

Dr Ian Goudie was nominated by Miss Penny Uprichard and seconded by Mr Derek Skelhon

A vote was then taken with Dr Goudie receiving 12 votes, Mr Murphy 5 votes and Mr Reed 2 votes. Dr Ian Goudie was therefore formally elected as the new Chairman of the St Andrews Community Council.

Dr Goudie upon election and following a suggestion from Mrs Harding, asked the secretary to send of letter thanking the former Chair, Mrs Zoe Smith for all the good work she'd done in her time as Chair of the Community Council. Dr Goudie also asked that Mrs Smith also be asked to consider remaining as a member of the Community Council as her letter of resignation didn't make that entirely clear.

Dr Goudie in his opening remarks as new Chairman thanked the Community Council for electing him, and said that he hoped the Community Council could move forward by consensus as he felt that that was the time when the Community Council spoke with the most powerful voice. He also commented that the next few months would be particularly challenging, with the Local Plan Consultation scheduled for this autumn

1. Attendance

Community Councillors

Ken Crichton, Ken Fraser, Patrick Marks, Ian Goudie, Carol Ashworth, Marysia Denyer, Ronnie Murphy, Catherine Rowe, Henry Paul, Dave Finlay, Judith Harding, Larry Reed, Izzy Corbin, Kyffin Roberts, Derek Skelhon, Ray Pead, Penny Uprichard

Students' Association Representatives

Andrew Keenan, Georgina Rannard, Matthew Guest

Nominated

Fife Councillors

Frances Melville, Bill Sangster, Robin Waterston

Apologies

Dorothea Morrison

2. Minutes of July 2009 Meeting

Miss Uprichard asked for a small correction in 4.3.2. to change "Golf Courses were allowed in the Green Belt" to Golf Courses can be allowed".

3. Presentations

3.1. P.C. McLeod

3.1.1. Littering Issue – Madras Kilrymont

PC McLeod described how he'd spoken to the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Years to educate them on their social responsibility particularly at lunchtime and the issue of litter. He made them aware of the Police stance on both littering and offensive behaviour towards local residents. He will also move on pupils and will send letters to parents/guardians if he has witnessed inappropriate behaviour such as littering.

3.1.2. Litter behind Changing Rooms in Cockshaugh Park

Mrs Harding mentioned that litter tended to accumulate behind the Changing Rooms in this park. PC McLeod said that the Police had recently confiscated a lot of alcohol from youngsters in the same location and were aware of the location as a place, which needed regular checking.

3.1.3. Cycling on Pavements

Ms Rowe asked about the legality of cycling on pavements. She has concerns partly because of being registered partially sighted. She has been experiencing some difficulties in the Market Street area when cyclists have been on the pavements. PC McLeod confirmed that it was illegal to cycle on pavements, but added, that it was very difficult for the police to deal with the problem unless they were in an area at a time someone was cycling on a pavement. He felt that more education might reduce the problem a bit. In response to Ms Rowe's comment about University students, he replied that the University usually gave new students a pack, which included information about safe and responsible cycling.

3.1.4. ASBO Tickets

Mrs Harding asked how ASBO tickets worked. PC McLeod explained that anyone caught committing a minor anti social act such as urinating in a public place or with an open container of alcohol in an area designated as an Alcohol Free Zone could be given an on the spot ticket which was a £40 fine. The individual could then opt to pay within 20 days or go to court. The tickets could only be issued to offenders over the age of 16.

4. Fife Councillors

4.1. Frances Melville

4.1.1. Lawhead School Traffic Restriction Order

This order has now been approved by Fife Council, despite a couple of objections from residents of nearby housing. It will however be reviewed in six to eight months as there will be additional pressure on parking with the Nursery School starting up. The School has tried to encourage parents to use parking areas such as the lay-by, but it was recognised that there could still continue to be parking in restricted areas.

4.1.2. Strathkiness High Road – Traffic Restriction Order

The publication of an advert to publicise the proposed order was agreed by Committee in June, but Cllr Melville had had to chase up the Council, as there had been a delay in sending it for publication. She announced that the advert would be in the newspapers in mid September and would then be considered by Committee. If there were no objections it would go ahead eventually.

4.1.3. Footpath/Cycle Path – Strathkiness High Road

Following an enquiry from Strathkiness Community Council, Cllr Melville had asked for the feasibility of a path to be considered by Fife Council. She had forwarded correspondence to the Secretary; as such a project would be of interest to St Andrews Community Council as well. Dr Goudie wondered about the availability of Fife Council budgets to pay for a path?

4.1.4. Britain in Bloom Awards

Cllr Melville reminded the Community Council that the awards for this competition would be announced on 23rd September. She wished the Community Council well for possible success in this competition.

4.1.5. Site Visit by Strategic Planning Committee

Cllr Melville had requested a site visit by the Strategic Planning Committee following concerns expressed by the East Area Committee in relation to the advice given by Council Officials about the possible location of housing in the west of St Andrews. Members and officials visited various locations, to get an idea of the views and the concerns of the local community about the potential loss of historic views and the possible alternative locations for housing needs. The results of the site visit and the report of the Consultants conducting the Landscape Study are to be discussed at an additional Planning Committee meeting scheduled for the 1st October. Dr Goudie asked Cllr Melville if she was happy with the brief given to the Consultants doing the Landscape Study, given the multiplicity of such studies, which had been undertaken. Cllr Melville replied that in her understanding the Consultants had been given "Carte Blanche" to undertake a study, which would be independent in its perspective. Miss Uprichard said that she had a copy of a letter from senior Council Officials, which appeared to say that there was no need to commission a further Landscape Study. This letter was dated as recently as the previous month. Cllr Melville replied that the minute of the last Area Planning Committee had stated that there would be a further study. Cllr Melville acknowledged that she didn't know what the letter implied and would need to check.

4.1.6. "A" Boards

Cllr Melville thanked the members for emails received detailing some of the problems. She added that Cllr Sangster had uncovered a draft report on this topic dated 2005, which had never been actioned. She had passed on copies of the report to Stuart Nichol, Executive Director Environment and Development Services and Bob McLellan, Head of Transportation Services. Mr Nichol has asked Mr McLellan to provide a report on a draft policy for the next Environment Services Committee. She hoped that this would eventually lead to a policy being approved. Ms Rowe mentioned that she'd received more correspondence, which she'd pass on to Cllr Melville in relation to the "A" Board problems.

4.2. Bill Sangster

4.2.1. "A" Boards

Cllr Sangster related how he'd had contact with a planner in Transportation in Edinburgh City Council in 2004 who gave him the full plans relating to Edinburgh's "A" Board policy. Cllr Sangster had given the information to Peter Milne who adapted the policy to suit St Andrews and Fife. Unfortunately the report suggesting possible policy stalled. Cllr Sangster suggested that if the policy was adopted, it could be tried out for a year's trial in St Andrews, followed by a roll out across Fife.

4.2.2. Empty Sheltered Housing

Cllr Sangster reported that 14 sheltered houses had been lying unlet in St Andrews for a considerable period of time, apparently because the need wasn't there for the properties in question. The properties are in Langlands Road, North Street and Market Street. The properties are unsuitable because of external or internal stairs. The proposal is to decommission the properties and refurbish and let to prospective tenants over the age of 50 on the general Housing List.

4.2.3. New Fife Licensing Board

Cllr Sangster is a member of the Fife Licensing Board. The running of this has been changed with the new legislation about the sale of alcohol, and will operate under its new set up from 1st September. In the past year the Licensing Board has dealt with 1200 applications for the whole of Fife. Under the new rules the main differences which members of the public will notice relate to the time when they can purchase alcohol and where it can be displayed.

4.2.4. Local Holiday Parking Charges

Cllr Sangster explained the reason for the changes. He said that charging on some Public Holidays, but not Sundays, Xmas or New Year would allow for better traffic flow and was not a fundraising exercise by Fife Council. Previously with no Parking Warden service on Public Holidays, Cllr Sangster said that some

drivers parked all day, thus depriving other drivers of parking spaces and leading to worse traffic congestion in the town on busy days. He felt that by charging on these days both drivers and shop keepers would benefit. Mr Finlay asked that if there were now going to be holiday parking charges, were these going to be happening throughout Fife. Cllr Sangster in reply reminded the meeting that there was a history to the charging policy. Fife Council Transportation Dept had assessed the perceived need and how charging levels might affect a community economically, hence the lower charges for smaller towns such as Cupar and the higher charges for St Andrews. Cllr Sangster thought that it might now be a good time for Fife Council to review its parking charge policies. Mr Finlay felt that a variation in parking charges could be beneficial. He said that the high parking charges put off many residents on fixed incomes parking in town during the winter period, when there might be more spaces. He felt that this would benefit the town centre shops, as local people put off by high town centre charges would opt to shop in the peripheral supermarkets, thus depriving the town centre shops of income. Cllr Sangster reminded the meeting that Cllr Melville had tried to push for a period of free parking in Market Street, namely the first half hour. It had been felt that this might be beneficial to local shopkeepers.

4.2.5. Taxi Parking

Ms Rowe asked why so many taxis were parked opposite the Town Hall. She said that some taxi drivers were using the parking spaces opposite the Town Hall entrance, while waiting for space in the Taxi Rank across the road. Someone she knew who took their elderly relative into town had difficulty parking near the Town Hall to access the bank because of the taxis parking in ordinary parking spaces. Cllr Sangster acknowledged that it was a problem and that taxi drivers didn't have enough parking spaces. He accepted that if parked outwith their reserved spaces, taxi drivers should pay for parking. Mr Crichton expressed an opinion that far from there being too few taxi ranks, there were too many taxis. He felt that the police or Traffic Wardens should move on taxi drivers who were parking without tickets. Cllr Sangster replied that while acknowledging that there were a lot of taxis, he added that the companies running them must be making a reasonable income or they wouldn't have so many on the road.

Mr Skelhon mentioned that Glenrothes had lots of free parking. Cllr Sangster agreed that there were anomalies and mentioned the cheap multi-storey parking available close the Kingdom Centre. He added that it was probably a good time to revisit the whole scheme of parking charges throughout Fife.

Mr Reed asked Cllr Sangster to get Fife Council to look into a voucher scheme or similar for small businesses. He felt that the Traffic Wardens were treating local tradesmen and businesses inconsistently with regard to their parking, resulting in some being given parking tickets. Cllr Sangster remembered that there had been a scheme run by the police for daily vouchers to be issued to Tradesmen, but Mr Reed said that this no longer took place. Cllr Sangster agreed to check out the situation. Cllr Melville said that when the second phase of the Parking was looked at there might be the possibility of various parking options to be considered. However as there is a judicial review still ongoing in relation to the Parking Meters this second phase is in abeyance. Mrs Harding mentioned that she had a Residents Parking Ticket, which cost her £80 per year, but if she lived in Dunfermline or Burntisland a similar ticket would be much cheaper. Cllr Sangster agreed that this reflected again the need to review charges. Cllr Melville thought that there would be a big change in the parking charges once Phase 2 of the Parking could be implemented. Cllr Sangster added that they continued to press for a Park and Ride Scheme, with a shuttle bus to the town centre. Ms Uprichard reminded the meeting about the Parking Plan Review a couple of years ago in which there had been some six thousand objections. She added that there had been some indication at the time that parking in the town centre would be restricted to an hour, and that parking charges would be applied to Petheram Bridge.

4.2.6. Right of Way – Kinnesburn near Hospital

Mr Crichton reported that a Right of Way along the Kinnesburn near the hospital had been blocked again by developers in the nearby former St Leonards land. A gate to the Right of Way had been locked by the developers. Cllr Sangster agreed to get it checked out.

4.2.7. Ladyhead Pavement Repairs

Ms Rowe asked whether there was any news about possible repairs to the pavements outside the Ladyhead Bookshop/café. Cllr Sangster acknowledged Ms Rowe's ongoing concerns but said that while Fife Council was aware of the problems with the pavements, finance was a major factor in approving work and there was a shortage of funds.

4.3. Robin Waterston

4.3.1. Footpath/Street Lighting

The Councillors meet occasionally with Transportation Services to plan priorities for work to be done in their areas. A couple of roads such as Middleshade Road have been prioritised and work will start very soon. Dr Goudie suggested that Councillors should approach the Community Council to seek thoughts on footpath repairs, as he felt that members could quite easily make useful suggestions about locations requiring work.

4.3.2. Planning Changes

Cllr Waterston reminded the meeting about the major planning changes with the introduction of the new Planning Act in August. He felt that these changes would see quite a significant change in the role of the Community Council. This would be with regard to major planning applications, which are defined as any application for 50 houses or over, or major commercial developments or anything, which requires an environmental impact assessment. The emphasis is going to be much more on preapplication consultations. The intention is that any developer will have produce a proposal of application a minimum of twelve weeks before the application is lodged with Fife Council. Cllr Waterston thought that this would have to be proper consultation, not just public meetings, with a proper report on the consultation process required. Fife Council will only accept an application if it thinks the consultation has been done properly. During that time Cllr Waterston said that Community Councils would have an important role. This would include meeting with the developer before hand to discuss to discuss the proposals and if necessary put forward possible improvements/suggestions. He acknowledged that it would also depend upon how much the developers entered into the spirit of the new requirements, and acknowledged that not all might respond positively. He added that it didn't pre-empt the possibility of opposing the application at a later stage. Applications under the 50 houses limit would to some extent be dealt with by delegated powers, unless there were more than five objections. An objection by a statutory consultee such as Community Council could still trigger a referral to Committee. If a local application is refused by an officer without coming to Committee, an applicant can now appeal to the Fife Planning Review Body, which will consist of a small number of Councillors who will hear the appeal.

Dr Goudie admitted that he had personal misgivings on aspects of the new Planning Procedures. One area related to past advice from the Scottish Government in PAN 47, that Community Councils shouldn't have preliminary discussions with developers because they well understood that usually such consultation were used not to amend the Planning Application, but merely get a knowledge of what the likely objections might be and they then deployed their resources to circumvent the objections, rather than taking them on board. However he hoped that this wouldn't be the way things worked out. He was also wary about the fact that it would be the developer themselves who would respond on the nature of the consultation that had taken place. He felt that any report had to be very genuine to be of any value, having seen too many reports, which put a gloss on consultations.

Ms Uprichard commented that she understood that Councillors would not be allowed to review applications relating to their own Ward. Cllr Waterston confirmed that this would be the case. He felt that the process would be similar to current appeal processes, which also don't have local people involved on the appeals. Ms Uprichard thought that lack of local knowledge would be a big drawback in these new Review Bodies. Ms Rowe asked if Planning Committees would get any training. Cllr Waterston replied that the body, Planning Aid for Scotland did free training for Community Councils. He also said that there was a lot of information around.

4.3.3. Saltire

Mr Fraser said that the worn state of the Saltire above the Town Hall had been pointed out to him by Keith McCartney. He hoped that a new one could be procured. Mr Crichton informed the meeting that it was he who usually procured the Saltire, and that because it was the Year of Homecoming it had been flying more than usual. He had held fire in getting a new one hoping to get funding from sources other than Community Council funds. Cllr Melville announced that another Saltire had been purchased. Cllr Sangster however added that there was a problem in getting the old Saltire down. The rope holding the Saltire had become very twisted and he thought it would be impossible for anyone to go up the pole to untwist it and if it were cut the whole pole would have to be taken down.

4.4. Dorothea Morrison

5. Planning Committee

5.1. Planning Committee Minutes – see Appendices B, C & D

5.2. Wonder Years Nursery

Ms Uprichard informed the meeting that there would be a Hearing about the Wonder Years Nursery application. There will be no Community Council representation, but the Hearing will be open to anyone who wants to attend.

5.3. Request for Digital Projector

Mrs Harding put in a request for the use of a Projector to help view Plans. Dr Goudie replied that there had been previous discussion on this topic. There had been some concern that should the Committee go down that route of viewing Plans, that there would be an expectation from Fife Council Planning that all Plans would be viewed by that method. He added that the preference of most members of the Committee was to receive paper copies.

5.4. Public Recording of Planning Committee Minutes

Mrs Denyer commented on the minutes of the Planning Committee as printed in the agenda. She had listed those attending as well as apologising, but these had not been printed in the agenda. Mr Marks explained that for space reasons he had omitted the attendance list, but that it was available on the copy of the Planning minutes on the web. Ms Uprichard added her view that there should be a record of the Planning Committee minutes available, which included the list of those attending.

5.5. Comment on Availability of Plans for Planning Committee

Ms Uprichard commented on the frustration felt by the Planning Committee about the problems of obtaining paper copies of Plans. The Planning Committee had to continually request copies wasting much time in the meetings. Ms Uprichard also commented upon the problem of trying to view lengthy documents relating to planning on the web. Dr Goudie commented upon the information contained in the Guidance for Community Councils produced by Fife Council in which there was mention of the Community Council being able to request what it required. The present situation did not meet up to the statements in the guidance. Mr Marks confirmed the content of the Guidance to Community Councils.

6. Matters Arising

6.1. The Coat of Arms – taken in camera

6.2. Climate Challenge Fund Application Update

Mr Murphy commented about the considerable amount of work, which still needed to be done to put in a full application. Mr Murphy asked the Community Council to authorise the Climate Challenge Committee to get on with making the applications for the various projects, and to report back regularly on progress to the full meeting, as well as expenditure required. Mr Murphy reminded the meeting that if the applications weren't rapidly progressed the window of opportunity would disappear, as the funding is time limited to 2011. Dr Goudie acknowledged that a large part of the time for the funding had disappeared and asked Mr Murphy what sort of approval the sub committee required. Mr Murphy replied that the sub committee only required approval to get on with making the applications. Mr Murphy also asked if the four separate applications could progress independently if ready for submission, without being held up because another application isn't quite ready. Dr Goudie replied that the Community Council had agreed in principle for the work on the project applications to go ahead. Dr Goudie confirmed that the Community Council were happy with Mr Murphy's request that the sub committee could work towards the applications with the backing of the Community Council.

6.3. St Andrews Partnership

Mr Marks explained that a letter had been received inviting the Community Council to have a permanent seat on the Partnership Board. Patrick Loughlin has written to formally invite the Community Council to nominate a member to the Board. The first Board meeting will be in late October. Mr Pead commented that no one had attended the Steering Group meetings from the Community Council, but he thought that it was important to have a member on the Board who would take the role seriously. Mr Fraser who had attended the World Class meetings agreed that it would be important to accept a place on the Board.

Ms Uprichard voiced her scepticism, claiming that the Partnership would be run by Fife Council and Scottish Enterprise. Mr Pead questioned her statement, adding that while Fife Council and Scottish Enterprise were putting in £300000 initial funding after two or three years, the Partnership would have to then find its own funding. After that time, local businesses and enterprises would take over the funding, and that most of what would happen would be determined by those on the Board. Dr Goudie brought the discussion to a close, by acknowledging that the general feeling around the table was to support having a place on the Partnership Board.

Cllr Waterston read out from the draft constitution of the St Andrews Partnership – “ St Andrews Partnership is an Umbrella Body, which brings together a wide spectrum of local people, businesses, major institutions, Public Sector Agencies and Community Groups. It acts as a Parent Body for a small number of linked subsidiary groups”. He felt that the basic principle is that of it being an Umbrella Body for St Andrews, in St Andrews bringing together various disparate bodies/organisations etc. He felt that it would be a shame if the Community Council wasn't on it. He felt that by being on the St Andrews Partnership Board the Community Council would have a voice and also that the Community Council would get feedback through the representative what was happening.

In response to a question from Mrs Harding, Mr Marks mentioned that there would also be representatives from the Merchants Association, Links Trust, the University, Fife Council, and Scottish Enterprise amongst others. There will also be a twice-yearly forum, which will have a larger group of stakeholders attending to discuss matters with the directors.

Mrs Denyer nominated Mr Fraser for the post, but he declined. Mr Paul nominated, Mrs Ashworth and was seconded by Mrs Harding. Mrs Ashworth accepted the post.

In reply to a query from Miss Uprichard, Mr Pead explained that the exact nature of the St Andrews Partnership had still to be confirmed; e.g. whether it would be a company limited by guarantee or a trust or something else. He confirmed that there would still be a main board, but that there would also be wider participation. Mr Marks from the correspondence received indicated that St Andrews Partnership will be a not for profits company, with a voluntary board of between 10 – 14 directors selected by their organisations. In reply to a further query from Miss Uprichard, Mr Pead said that all the accounts would be public.

6.4. Reports from Representatives

6.4.1. RAF Leuchars Community Forum

Mr Fraser had attended this forum. Most of the business was particular to Guardbridge and Leuchars. The only item of local interest being a request by the Guardbridge and Leuchars Community Councils to have an additional 100 parking places at the Leuchars Railway Station.

7. Committee Reports

7.1 Recreation Committee

7.1.1. Meeting Report

Mr Reed reported that the last meeting at which the Photographic Competition had been discussed had been poorly attended by Community Council representatives. He appealed for more CCs to attend, as there were a number of events coming up, which would require assistance from CCs. He cited the recent Garden Competition, as an example at which there could have been more assistance. Holly West from the Students Association asked to be made aware of the date of the meeting, as she thought that the students could make a contribution. Mr Reed said that he'd send out an email to announce the date of the next meeting.

7.2. General Purposes Committee

There has been no meeting, but one will be organised in the near future.

7.3. 200 Club

August Winners – 1st C. Roger, 2nd H. Paul, 3rd Dr Ashcroft

September Winners – 1st Carol Ashworth, 2nd Zoe Smith, 3rd M Hastie

7.4. Health, Education and Welfare Committee

No meeting for several months. Ms Rowe volunteered to chair a meeting if there was a clear remit they could follow.

8. New Business

8.1. HMO National Petition.

Mrs Denyer explained the background to the petition. She felt that it wasn't a divisive issue but something, which affected both students and the public. She hoped that the Community Council might be able to go to a straight vote on whether to support the petition. Mr Keenan, President of the Students Association said that he had some issues with the petition. He felt that there wasn't any evidence of student involvement and that it focussed entirely on the negative aspects to the neglect of all positive aspects. He felt that some of the arguments were quite shaky and that some of the definitions were even shakier.

Mrs Harding thought that because of its size, compared to most other University towns, St Andrews was affected disproportionately. Cllr Waterston felt that the question of HMOs was a complex and divisive one. He thought that the petition had two parts to it, one was what it was asking for and secondly a range of other material. What it was asking for was not the broad issue of how we resolve the issue of the lack of sufficient accommodation and how it's divided between HMOs and University accommodation. He felt that it had relatively limited objectives, which were to do with regulation, namely about licensing and planning matters. He reminded the meeting that an HMO needed licensing and planning permission. At the present time HMOs get licensing first then planning permission. In the petition the reverse is requested, that licensing should come after planning permission. He felt that would improve the situation considerably. He thought that the petition wasn't calling for a reduction in numbers of HMOs, but was saying that there was an issue about the regulation being more consistent. He hoped that it wouldn't turn into a divisive issue, and didn't interpret the petition as being against HMO's.

Georgina, the Director of Student Representation commented on some points in the petition such as the need for further enforcement measures, which she thought were already substantial particularly in relation to illegal HMOs.

Cllr Sangster who is on the Regulation and Licensing Committee assured the meeting the Fife Council had a great many powers to use against owners and agents. Fife Council also has enforcement officers who are active in chasing up reported problems. Agents/owners can be brought before the Regulation and Licensing Committee to have their licences reviewed. He added that people should put forward the problems to the Council so they can be examined.

Mr Murphy reminded the meeting that the current legislation was the result of a tragic death at a flat in Glasgow. The legislation was there to protect the occupants of the properties with minimum standards for various hazards. He viewed the legislation as very good and worthy of support. He felt that the petition was inaccurate and inadequate in its presentation. He also reminded the meeting that a landlord couldn't charge rent unless he/she was licensed. He felt that regulation was at a perfectly adequate level. He felt that the petition was an attempt to get more draconian measures passed to prevent future HMOs being approved. He thought that the proposal should be opposed.

Dr Goudie reminded the meeting that in term time up to a third of the town population was students, also constituents of the Community Council. He felt that there shouldn't be a knee jerk reaction to the petition. Mr Keenan reminded the meeting to look at the positive aspect of the benefits to the town of its student population. He felt that the petition's comment on trying to limit the negative impact of too much HMO concentration in any one area was very difficult in a town the size of St Andrews.

Dr Goudie in conclusion commented that there were both positives and negatives in the matter. The decision, which the Community Council had to make, was whether it wished to be associated with what he viewed as a "rather blunt instrument" in the form of the petition.

Ms Rowe asked if there was a limit in the number of HMOs, which an area could naturally support? She also cited an incident in her former home area of St Andrews when there had been an incident at an HMO, which had resulted in the police being called. Cllr Sangster informed Ms Rowe that problems should be reported to the Council, and under new regulations absentee landlords or agents should give their emergency contact numbers to neighbours.

Mr Crichton was critical of the rents charged for much of the University student accommodation, which he said was built partly with the intention of attracting other business out of term time, so was built to 3 or 4 star standard. He felt that this forced many students to look for cheaper accommodation, hence the move into private accommodation such as is provided in HMOs. He felt that this also had a knock on impact in making housing more expensive for young families working locally.

Dr Goudie acknowledging the many issues raised, reminded the meeting that the Community Council represented all the interests of the town. The meeting needed to decide whether the petition was an appropriate tool for advancing the situation. The petition was rejected by the majority of the meeting.

8.2. Community Council Website

Dr Goudie outlined the issues, which he felt needed to be addressed with urgency as there were growing concerns about both the functioning of the website. He believed that there were a range of matters to be addressed from the ISP provider to the design of the website, the provision of material and who would be Webmaster. He commented that there were a variety of models on offer and had been made aware by two Community Council members of possible alternatives. Mr Marks suggested that the subject be delegated to the General Purposes Committee. Mr Finlay was concerned that the issue could drag on unless firm decisions were made quickly. Dr Goudie commented that there needed to be a careful look at what might be on offer from commercial sources as he felt that these tended to be less flexible. He added that the site would need regular maintenance to remain relevant to the needs of the local community. Mr Finlay asked that a proposal should come back to the next meeting on the matter. Dr Goudie also added that there was a possibility that his family could undertake the work, but that any decision would have to be taken by the GP Committee on the best route to take.

8.3. Celebrating Fife 2010

For information only. Mr Marks briefly outlined

8.4. Community Council Seminar – November 2009

For information only

8.5. Tayplan Consultation

A matter for the Planning Committee to discuss.

9. Reports from Office Bearers

9.1. Chair

No report

9.2. Treasurer

See Appendix E. Mr Pead passed round hard copies of the most recent report and detailed the contents. He'd discovered that the Millennium Fund had been put into other sub accounts. Mr Pead had reinstated the Fund and thought that funds could be slowly fed back into it. It had £3666.03 originally.

Dr Goudie wondered about having trend information relating to financial expenditure. Mr Pead acknowledged Dr Goudie's comment, and explained that when there was any expenditure large or small from the funds, he made it clear the which account it was coming from.

Mr Pead then discussed the details of the accounts, and confirmed the amount of useable funds for expenditure as £3085. Estimating admin costs at £1500 would then leave just around £1585 for other expenditure. He then looked at the budget for the remaining months of the year in which there were a number of events from the Garden Competition to the Young Citizen of the Year. The budget for the various events he'd estimated at £1270. However there was still a large bill of £850 to pay for tub which the Community Council had agreed to fund for Stunning St Andrews. This would therefore leave the

expenditure budget in deficit by £535. He felt that the Community Council therefore needed to do some fundraising. He acknowledged that the legal expenses in relation to the Arms Contract had a significant bearing on the Community Council finances, but that the true financial position had been masked by a number of unusable sub accounts. These had been rationalised and he now hoped that the true financial position of the Community Council could be seen.

He concluded by making five recommendations:

1. No expenditure in excess of £50 without prior Community Council approval
2. A need to decide on cuts or other funding sources for functions remaining for 2009.
3. He would like to produce an annual budget for 2010 onwards. He asked committees to estimate their budgetary requirements and perhaps to decide what functions/events they wanted to do and how these could be funded.
4. Funds need to be fed back into the Millennium Fund, unless it can be closed. He acknowledged that it would be a slow process.
5. There needed to be an attempt at fundraising in a general way so that the Community Council wouldn't be tied down by the funds raised for specific items. He concluded that without fundraising the Council would be less able to carry on as it has done.

Dr Goudie suggested that the financial issues be delegated in the first instance to the General Purposes Committee for more in depth discussion, given the time constraints of the monthly meeting.

9.3 Secretary

9.3.1. Correspondence – see Appendix A.

10. Any Other Competent Business

10.1. Legal Challenge to Structure Plan

Miss Uprichard reminded the meeting that the Community Council had agreed in principle to support her legal challenge. Her request was in two parts, 1) that the Community Council gives a verbal announcement of support, 2) that the Community Council considers giving a pledge, which could include a financial pledge. Miss Uprichard felt that even a nominal amount would be accepted and that the money would only be required if she lost her legal challenge. Dr Goudie reminded Miss Uprichard of the financial difficulties of the Community Council. Mr Pead didn't feel that the Community Council could make any financial pledge because of its legal set up.