

Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

Annual General Meeting Minutes – May 2009

For Approval

1. Attendance

Community Councillors

Ken Fraser, Ian Goudie, Laurence Reed, Patrick Marks, Zoe Smith, Marysia Denyer, Shaun Atkinson, Rob Fett, Judith Harding, Catherine Rowe, Derek Skelhon, Ray Pead, Jill Hardie, Carol Ashworth, Penny Uprichard.

Students' Association Representatives

Holly West, Fiona Kingston

Nominated

Jude Innes

Fife Councillors

Dorothea Morrison, Robin Waterston, Bill Sangster

Apologies

Frances Melville, Dave Finlay, Ken Crichton

2. Minutes of the 2007 AGM

Approved without dissent.

3. Chair's Report

Taken as read.

4. Treasurer's Report

See web site for report. Cllr Sangster had a couple of queries about apparent income and expenditure. Mr Fett explained his rationale behind the method he'd used, with some of the larger sums being transfers of funds rather than expenditure as appeared in the print out. Mr Fett didn't feel that Fife Council would have any difficulties with his formal accounts, which still had to be finalised by the auditor. He'd used the same set up as in the previous financial year and there hadn't been any queries. Ms Smith thanked Mr Fett for all his hard work as treasurer. Mr Fett added that the finalised accounts would probably need to be signed off at the June meeting.

5. Dates of Meetings 2008- 2009

Discussion took place with a range of options discussed. It was agreed that there would be no meeting in August because of summer holidays. The possibility of further meeting changes around holiday periods will be considered in the future. Ms Smith initially proposed to not have an April and an August meeting. Mr Marks reminded the meeting that there was no legal obligation to have a monthly meeting. Mr Atkinson suggested to only cancel the August meeting at this stage and then review the possible need to cancel a meeting at Easter time. Ms Smith proposed cancelling the August meeting and asked for a vote on the idea. There was unanimous support to cancel the August meeting.

6. Any Other Competent Business

6.1. Community Council Objectives

Mr Pead echoed the Chair's concern about the recent difficulties of the Community Council by suggesting that perhaps the Community Council needed to have specific objectives to aim for in the coming year. He felt that this might focus members' thoughts about their role and how they could contribute. Mr Fett voiced his support of the idea. He was concerned that too often issues of new business were shoe horned in at the end of the meeting, and didn't get the time they deserved. He also added that planning whilst important could take up a large portion of meeting time, having a knock on effect, as mentioned in relation to new business. Mr Pead thought that the Community Council needed to be more action based and expressed concern that we could drift through meetings, without doing much of obvious benefit to the local community, which we represent. Cllr Sangster suggested that looking after the bandstand concerts was an obvious input, to which the Community Council could contribute.

Dr Goudie felt that there was a divide in the Community Council, between members involved with planning matters and those not involved. He felt that the comments made by Mr Fett didn't really reflect an understanding of the amount of work undertaken by the Planning Committee, which was quite considerable and demanded considerable time on occasion outwith meetings. Mr Pead in reply said that he recognised the heavy workload of the Planning Committee, but added that not it wasn't the forte of every member. He reminded the meeting that there were other sub committees of the Community Council and that members should give allegiance to at least one, if they were serious about making their contribution to the local Community. Ms Smith also recognised the heavy workload of the Planning Committee and agreed that it didn't suit every member. She also commented that there were other committees and that not every member was a member of a committee so there was work left undone. She cited the Recreation Committee as an example of a sub committee, which undertook a lot of activities, but was currently in difficulties.

Cllr Morrison cited the example of appointments to the committee running the Preservation Trust. Members are automatically slotted into committees. She wondered if this might be an idea for the Community Council to develop.

Mr Marks added that there were also two possible initiatives, which if they were to succeed would require commitment from some councillors, namely the Trust being considered by Ken Crichton and the Carbon Challenge Project/s.

Ms Smith acknowledged that there was a lot going on in the Community Council, but often involved only one person with occasional help from others. She thought that the matter required further serious discussion, possibly for next month as an agenda item. She asked members to give the matter serious thought.

Mr Pead suggested that the secretary should email members with a list of the sub-committees and other activities requiring members, so that members could consider which might interest them, before the next meeting. Mrs Denyer felt that past attempts to get members to sign up had met with mixed success.

Mr Fett wondered about co-opting local people who might not want to be full councillors, but might be happy to help on a committee, such as Recreation.

7. Election of Officers

7.1. Chair

Ms Smith was proposed by Mr Skelhon and seconded by Ms Rowe

There were no other candidates and Ms Smith was re-elected

7.2. Convenor

Mr Crichton was proposed by Ms Smith and seconded by Dr Goudie

He was re-elected unanimously

7.2. Vice-Chairs.

Mr Paul was nominated by Ms Smith and seconded by Mr Fett.

Dr Goudie was proposed by Mr Atkinson and seconded by Mrs Harding.

Mr Reed was proposed by Ms Rowe and seconded by Mr Fett

It was agreed to have 3 Vice Chairs.

7.3. Treasurer

Mr Pead was proposed by Mr Skelhon and seconded by Ms Smith

He was elected unanimously.

Mr Skelhon offered to deputise for Mr Pead.

7.4. Secretary

Mr Marks was re-elected having been proposed by Ms Smith and seconded by the rest of the Community Council.

Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council Provisional Minutes – May 2009

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

As AGM

2. Minutes of April 2009 Meeting

The minutes of the April meeting were accepted as correct, apart from an incorrect spelling of Cllr Morrison's Christian name.

3. Presentations

3.1. Freshers Event during Freshers Week

Mr Guest announced that Freshers Week this year is to be between 19 – 27th September. He thought that it would be a nice idea if the Community Council could put on some form of event to welcome some of the new students to St Andrews. He would be involved in co-ordinating Freshers Week events. Mrs Denyer asked what Mr Guest might have in mind in the way of an event. Mr Guest replied that he'd previously organised a food tasting in the Town Hall supper room, which local businesses attended. He reminded the meeting about Flora Selwyn's Welcome Ceilidh, which will be taking place as usual this year.

4. Fife Councillors

4.1. Frances Melville - absent

4.2. Bill Sangster

4.2.1 CC List

Cllr Sangster requested a copy of the Community Council Membership list. Mr Marks agreed to supply all members with an up to date list.

4.2.2 Bandstand Concerts

Cllr Sangster informed the meeting that he had 3 bands booked to play this summer.

4.2.3 White Lines

Cllr Sangster has requested the painting of white lines on the roads around St Andrews town centre and at junctions, as they have become very worn in many places.

4.2.4 Green Dog Walkers

A leaflet has been produced to encourage responsible dog walkers to consider taking on a role of reminding other dog walkers about appropriate disposal of dog faeces. They would also be supplied with a number of plastic bags to give out to other dog walkers as necessary. Mr Atkinson asked why free bags were no longer readily available. Cllr's Sangster and Morrison replied that it was essentially a cost matter, around £45000. There was also the problem that not all bags were used for the intended purpose. Ms Smith added that the availability of the bags hadn't actually translated to an increase in dog walkers cleaning up. Responsible dog walkers who used the bags would do so even if they weren't available, so the new scheme was a way of reducing costs and hopefully making more efficient use of the plastic bags to be given out by the Green Dog Walkers. Green Dog Walkers would be given an armband to identify them and 200 bags to give out in a year.

4.2.5. Street Furniture Obstacles

Ms Rowe commented on the continuing problem of street furniture such as A- boards, tables and chairs and bins causing a hazard and obstruction to users such as herself with partial sight. She wondered if there was any solution. She also commented upon the problem of lowered pavement areas to assist wheelchair users being difficult for the visually impaired. Cllr Sangster acknowledged the problems, commenting that bins would often be left out all day after being emptied until property owners returned home. Additionally in relation to shop/café owners who put out tables and chairs, they had a responsibility to leave a two metre area clear on the pavement for pedestrians to pass. Ms Smith noted the ongoing nature of the problem and wondered if there were any regulations, which could be enforced. Cllr Morrison replied that there were regulations. She then suggested that Ms Rowe and herself could take a walk round town, with a view to listing areas with obstructions/hazards for the partially sighted. Cllr Morrison also acknowledged the problems for the visually impaired in pavement areas adapted for wheelchair users crossing the street. Ms Rowe had also gone round with the social worker from the Fife Society for the Blind who she said had been horrified by the problems. The social worker had indicated a willingness to give a presentation to the Community Council.

Cllr Sangster commented that the responsibility for policing irresponsible placement of tables and chairs came under the remit of the Transportation Service of Fife Council. He had noted that in some other European countries there were more strictly enforced regulations, with café owners not allowed to place chairs outside an area designated by markers in the pavement, with fines being levied if the regulations were broken. Cllr Sangster also commented that when requests for external licenses came up in Regulation and Licensing, Councillors often tried to make the need to keep tables and chairs within a set area a condition. However planning consent was regulated by Transportation Services.

4.2.6. Ladyhead Pavement

Ms Rowe asked about progress in repairing the pavement in the Ladyhead area, which she'd complained about previously. Cllr Sangster acknowledged that work hadn't been done, but that it was possibly in

plans for future work. He added that Fife Council might not do a small area if they could fit it in to a larger job in the area. Ms Smith suggested that Ms Rowe should phone Fife Council directly.

4.3. Robin Waterston

4.3.1. Blue Bin at Criterion Bar

Cllr Waterston announced that the large blue bin, which had been sitting outside this Bar, had eventually been removed.

4.3.2. Lammas Fair

Cllr Waterston talked about a survey undertaken last year to gauge opinion about the Lammas Fair and whether it should stay in the town centre or move to a different location. It was eventually decided to allow the market to continue in the town centre. Negotiations with the traders to ensure that noise levels would be acceptable and that the Fair would finish at a reasonable time. Issues relating to health and safety measures, such as access for emergency vehicles have also been discussed.

4.3.3. Local Plan

Ms Uprichard asked about the Local Plan and whether it would go through a consultation process following the final acceptance of the Structure Plan etc. Cllr Waterston understood that there would be such a process of consultation in respect of the Local Plan.

4.4. Dorothea Morrison

4.4.1. Green Dog Walkers

Cllr Morrison expanded on the idea. She confirmed that Green Dog Walkers would be issued with an arm band, but hoped that they wouldn't become over zealous and accost errant dog walkers in an aggressive manner. She said that the idea had worked in Falkirk and felt that the leaflet had been put together in an amusing way.

4.4.2. Gas Mains Replacements

Cllr Morrison reminded the meeting that there would be several weeks of gas mains replacement work in three areas of St Andrews.

4.4.3. Garden at end of Greyfriars Gardens

Cllr Morrison said she'd had a number of comments about the green fence erected around the entrance to this neglected garden on the corner of Greyfriars Gardens and Market Street. The fence was erected illegally. The owner has been traced and a letter sent requesting removal of the fence.

4.4.4. Seagull Problem

Mrs Harding asked what could be done to reduce the nuisance of seagulls and their mess. Cllr Sangster informed Mrs Harding that a leaflet was available in the Local Office on the subject. Cllr Waterston acknowledged the problem as an ongoing one to which there was no complete solution. Methods used included removing eggs from roof top nest sites to using a bird of prey to scare the gulls from an area.

4.4.5. Hole in Road by Abattoir/Fire Station

Mr Skellhon mentioned a hole in the vicinity of the abattoir/ fire station on Largo Road. No agency has acknowledged responsibility for the hole, which has been there for several months. He wondered if the councillors could throw any light on the hole! Cllr Sangster wondered if it was a leftover from the Water Board work. Cllr Morrison added that in regular road reports they received on road works there were supposed to be sewer works in Largo Road.

4.4.6. Concern about recent Fireworks Display

Ms Rowe expressed concern about a lack of notification to local residents in her area of a major fireworks display. She acknowledged that it had been within the watershed time, but was surprised that the organisers whom she had discovered was the Students Association, hadn't given clearer notification. She

reminded the meeting that a large number of elderly people live in the area by the Scores in sheltered accommodation. Ms Smith informed Ms Rowe that the display was the closing party for the "On The Rocks" Festival, which had been widely advertised. Ms Rowe replied that not everyone read the local paper so might not be aware of events taking place. Ms Rowe felt that it was common courtesy to inform local residents, particularly the elderly ones about a major planned event. Ms Smith wondered if a reminder to do this could be added into events packs issued by the Students Union as guidance to Events organisers. Ms Rowe added that she'd be happy to let neighbours know if information was sent to her. Cllr Waterston thought that this type of issue might be appropriately discussed at the Town/Gown Forum. Cllr Sangster thought that he'd run plans for a major event with fireworks past the Police and Environmental Safety for their advice/guidance. Ms Smith felt that the Students Association usually issued appropriate guidance but like all such guidance it was always worth reviewing to ensure that it was fit for purpose.

5. Planning Committee

5.1. Planning Committee Minutes

There were no comments on the minutes of the meeting in Appendix G relating to the specific plans discussed. However discussion followed on the issue of the receipt/non-receipt of hard copies of planning applications from Fife Council. Ms Rowe and Mrs Denyer have made it clear to the local planners such as Mr Chris Smith about the need to have hard copies of all plans in the conservation area of St Andrews. This has not been happening with Fife Council planning staff deciding what is relevant. This has resulted in a number of plans not being received. Fife Council officials assert that they are only required to send plans, which may have a public interest aspect and not plans with relatively minor modifications, which may not be easily visible to the public. Members of the Planning Committee have been discussing this policy with Fife Council officials, and feel that Fife Council are interpreting Scottish Government guidance incorrectly, partly because of the new emphasis on e-planning. The Planning Committee have made their concerns clear to Fife Council that this policy is not acceptable, and does not appear to match up with the intentions of the Scottish Government in introducing e-planning. There is a view that Fife Council's interpretation of Scottish Government guidelines on e-planning is too narrow, and does not recognise the difficulties of examining plans on-line, compared to looking at an actual paper plan. The problems facing Ms Rowe with her sight difficulties were highlighted.

5.2. Parking Charges for Public Holidays

Ms Uprichard reported that an objection had gone in on this matter to Fife Council

5.3. Planning Objection – Hepburn Gardens

Ms Uprichard reported that an objection had been sent in about a planning application in Hepburn Gardens.

5.4. John Knox Road Public Enquiry

Dr Goudie and Ms Uprichard reported that they had attended a pre-meeting in relation to this inquiry recently. The Public Inquiry is to take place at the end of August. Ms Uprichard and Dr Goudie commented upon the difficulty in attending constantly, particularly if an Inquiry lasted more than a couple of days. Ms Uprichard added that she'd been at several Public Inquiries in the past year. There was also concern expressed about the length of time in which papers relating to a specific planning matter were available in hard copy. Ms Uprichard objected to papers just being on the web. Ms Smith wondered if there was a route whereby objectors could get hold of paper copies prior to an inquiry. Cllr Waterston replied that interested parties could get some papers, but necessarily the original applications. Ms Uprichard thought that relevant parties should be given copies of papers, particularly statutory bodies like Community Councils. Cllr Waterston thought that one reason might be to reduce paper use for environmental reasons. Ms Uprichard was not convinced, feeling that it was an interpretation by Fife Council of Scottish Government guidance, which she felt, was incorrect. Mr Roberts wondered about applying under the Freedom of Information Act, but was advised that this would take too long with respect to time limited planning applications.

It was agreed to write to the Chief Executive of Fife Council, Mr Hinds to advise him of our concern about the present system operated by Planning with respect to deciding what might be appropriate for the Community Council to receive.

5.5. Green Belt Forum

Dr Goudie reported that he was no longer attending the Green Belt Forum. He felt that the GBF had lost their way and that they were demonstrating contradictions in relation to their espoused cause to protect the Green Belt by agreeing to aspects of possible future housing plans on the western periphery of town. This would involve a modification of the Green Belt. He added that representatives of other organisations had left. Cllr Sangster commented that the Community Council should still be in the GBF, but Ms Uprichard disagreed believing that it was not acting democratically. Overall there was considerable concern about the internal developments in the GBF and the resulting impact upon its effectiveness as a campaigning organisation on a very important matter over which Fife Council have been reluctant to make any firm commitment.

6. Matters Arising

6.0. Election of Community Councillors

This item was discussed after the Councillors reports and before the Planning Committee reports. Ms Smith reminded the meeting that there were four vacancies on the Community Council due mainly to members who were University students leaving. There would also be a fifth vacancy when Mr Atkinson left after the June meeting. Ms Smith mentioned that there was at least one prospective member in attendance at the meeting, Mrs Jill Hardie. She asked if any of the other members of the public in attendance were interested in becoming Community Councillors. A Mrs Helen Sorley and Mrs Carolyn Miller agreed they were interested and after a vote were invited to join the main body of Community Councillors. Unfortunately, Mrs Sorley changed her mind and at the end of the meeting decided to not to continue her membership. Mrs Carolyn Miller it was later discovered was not eligible as she lived just outside the catchment area for the Community Council, despite having a business in the town. The secretary emailed her to inform her of the situation and to advise her that she couldn't remain as a full Community Council member as a result. Ms Uprichard was also elected as a Community Councillor.

6.1. Arms Convenor Update

Mr Pead gave an update on the current stage of the attempt to resolve the situation. Mr Pead and Ms Smith with the Community Council legal representative had a meeting with Mr White and his legal representative in Kinross. At the meeting Mr White outlined his position presenting a list of the goods/services, which he would like to sell/promote under the banner of St Andrews Ltd. This list, which was much more extensive than the original list as agreed by the Community Council was rejected by Mr Pead and Ms Smith. Ms Smith and Mr Pead made it clear that the Community Council would only sanction items from the original list. Following this meeting an amended list was sent by Mr White, which was still unacceptable.

6.2. Climate Challenge Fund Update

Mr Marks gave a brief update. At the present time there has been no real progress and a meeting is to take place soon to try and continue the process. Mr Marks did however express his concerns about the lack of progress, which is partly due to the lack of bodies on the committee. He reminded members of the urgency of the situation and the considerable degree of responsibility involved in setting up and running any project. There would also need to be more community involvement if any application for funding was to succeed.

6.3. Reports from Representatives

6.3.1. Stunning St Andrews

Ms Smith reported on progress with this group. She asked Jill Hardie to expand on plans for new planters in St Andrews. Mrs Hardie explained that they were planning to replace the wooden planters in the centre with larger, specially made planters at strategic points in the town. These planters would be much larger

than the present tubs and were being made to a specific design, which could incorporate a logo of a sponsoring organisation. She asked if the Community Council might want to sponsor any of the planters. After some further discussion the idea was put to a vote with Mr Fett proposing the sponsorship of two planters for a cost of £850, with Mrs Ashworth seconding the proposal. There was a unanimous vote to support this sponsorship.

7. Committee Reports

7.1 Recreation

No meeting has taken place since the last Community Council Meeting. The need to elect a new convenor was discussed and a proposal was made to elect Mr Reed as Convenor by Mr Pead with Mrs Denyer seconding the proposal. Mr Reed accepted the nomination and was unanimously elected.

7.2. General Purposes

No meeting has taken place since the last Community Council meeting.

7.3. 200 Club

7.3.1. 200 Club Draw

April – 1st Prize –P Marks, 2nd W Rutherford, 3rd G.S. Seaton

May – 1st K Lindsay 2nd Marysia Denyer 3rd Carol Ashworth

7.4. Health, Education and Welfare Committee

No meeting has taken place since the last Community Council Meeting. The need for a Convenor was mentioned by Ms Smith.

8. New Business

8.1. Gumley Trophy

For information. Interested members to contact Fife Council to register interest.

8.2. Market Street Design Forum Meetings

For information. Interested parties had informed the secretary by the date of this meeting.

8.3. Fife Constabulary Policing Plan 2009/10

For information only.

8.4. Recommended Local Holidays Report

This was briefly discussed and noted.

8.5. Scottish Government Model Scheme for Community Councils

This was noted and briefly discussed. When Fife Council finalised their own version it may be worth comparing the two versions.

8.6. Gas Mains Replacement Works

For information only. This will cause major disruption in and around the areas designated.

8.7. School Closure (Scotland) Bill

Information received by secretary – not considered relevant to St Andrews at this time.

8.8. ASCC National Development Officer

For information only.

8.9. Seminar – Instilling Civic Pride in your Community through Environmental Improvements

This event is taking place at Falkland Community Hall – 21/05/09. Members interested to speak to the secretary to put their names forward.

8.10. Invitation to St Andrews Partnership Meeting – 15/05/09 – Rusacks Hotel

Interested parties to contact Patrick Loughlin to confirm attendance.

8.11. New Planning Bill – Presentation Offer

Bill Lindsay, Team Leader (Local & Community Policy), offering to give a short presentation on the secondary and important legislation to the New Planning Bill.

9. Reports from Office Bearers

9.1. Chair

No report

9.2. Treasurer

No report

9.3 Secretary

See Correspondence list.

10. Any Other Competent Business