

# Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

## Provisional Minutes – 27<sup>th</sup> April 2015

### 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

Penny Uprichard, Howard Greenwell, Ian Goudie, Patrick Marks, Harry Stewart, Judith Harding, Jonathan Bertulis-Fernandes.

### Students' Association Representatives

Clare Armstrong

### Co-Opted

Lindsey Adam

### Fife Councillors

None

### Apologies

Niall Scott, Ken Crichton, Dorothea Morrison, Brian Thomson, Keith McCartney, Frances Melville, Chris Wallard, Callum McLeod, Patrick Matheson, Izzy Corbin, Gordon Shepherd

## 2. Minutes of Meeting – March 27<sup>th</sup>

The minutes were accepted as a correct record with one minor amendment

## 3. Presentations

## 4. Fife Councillors

### 4.1. Frances Melville

### 4.2. Brian Thomson

### 4.3. Keith McCartney

#### 4.3.1. Street Lighting

The following streetlights, which were not working, were reported for repair

St Leonards Road – lighting column number 4

Windsor Gardens – lighting column number 11

#### 4.3.2. Station Park

Cllr McCartney reported that the stonewall forming the perimeter on the north side of the park has a large hole in it. This has been reported for repair

#### 4.3.3. Potholes

Cllr McCartney reported that potholes were reported for inspection and repair as necessary at the following locations

Forrest Street – one at junction of parking area and carriageway by lighting column number 1.

Old Guardbridge Road - one at the vehicular entrance to Station Park immediately west of Dr Bell's Pavilion and two immediately east of the main vehicular access to the Old Course Hotel.

Tom Morris Drive – one in centre of Tom Morris Drive at its junction with James Robb Avenue by manhole cover.

John Knox Road – by drain cover next to railings on the south side of John Knox Road immediately west of Morrison's roundabout.

#### **4.3.4. Graffiti**

Cllr McCartney reported that the officer responsible for retaining walls was contacted re graffiti on retaining wall on north side of the Kinness Burn immediately west of the bridge leading to Dempster Court and he reported this to the relevant officer responsible for graffiti removal. The graffiti has been removed.

#### **4.4. Dorothea Morrison**

### **5. Planning Committee**

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

Mr Stewart reported on planning matters discussed since the last CC meeting. Planning matters discussed included the development at the Western Cemetery with Miss Uprichard investigating how Fife Council had agreed the sale, which was controversial. He went on to mention the increasing concern about HMOs in the outer residential areas of the town and how decisions were being made to approve them by officials even before the CC Planning committee has had a chance to discuss. He cited an example of one application which had been decided within a week so the CC Planning hadn't been given time to register as a statutory consultee.

Mr Stewart went on to mention that there was a fresh application for the demolition of the old Police Station and building of a block of flats in its place. He commented that the new application came very soon after the Reporter had rejected the previous plans and the new application appeared to differ very little from the original one.

The committee had also discussed the issue of the West Sands road being closed during the Open. Mr Greenwell is to discuss the matter with the Links Management but there was a general feeling that the closure will go ahead despite CC representations. He added that a leaflet had been issued to residents detailing the plans for temporary restriction with the backing of Fife Council and the Police on safety grounds.

The Green Belt issue and the inability of the St Andrews CC to be a statutory consultee was also mentioned by Mr Stewart as a discussion point in the planning meetings. Mr Greenwell made the meeting aware that he'd been in email correspondence with the secretaries of Strathkinness and Cameron Community Councils. Strathkinness were going to discuss the issue at their next meeting while Cameron thought that they were looking at every planning application in the green belt in their area and asked Mr Greenwell to tell them about Green Belt applications to which they'd not responded. Mr Greenwell suggested that the Planning Committee could perhaps put together such a list, as he would be unable to do so due to a forthcoming vacation.

Miss Uprichard commented that when she'd made enquires about an application for a property in Lindsay Gardens to be an HMO she'd been told that no certificate of lawfulness was required to change the designation of a property outside the conservation area. In relation to the proposed flats at the former Police Station Miss Uprichard was surprised that Fife Council had accepted a new application so soon after the decision by the reporter and thought that good practice would leave a longer time gap of a couple of years before a fresh application was accepted. She also queried whether Fife Council might have a conflict of interest, as it is the owner of the former Police Station. Mr Greenwell commented that in

correspondence from Linda Bissett of Fife Council she had argued that Fife Council had no interest to declare in relation to the Pipeland application, “With regard to your assertion that Council staff should declare interests in relation to something, as I’m sure you will appreciate interests have to be relevant. The general test on whether not to declare an interest is if a member of the public knowing the relevant facts acting reasonably would have formed a view that the person might be influenced by that interest. In this regard I consider that I have no interest to declare”.

## **6. Matters Arising**

### **6.1. Whyte- Melville Fountain**

Mrs Adam asked Mr Greenwell if there was any update on the fountain. Mr Greenwell acknowledged that he’d not had any update, but was given to understand that Fife Council was meant to be seeking a way to pay for the functioning of the fountain. Mrs Harding asked about the costs. Mr Greenwell said that costs of about £1800 per year had been mentioned although he wasn’t completely certain of the breakdown of the costs. Mrs Adam thought that one cost might be health and safety checks of the water and Mr Greenwell thought that electricity costs might be another factor. Mr Greenwell said he’d try to ascertain the situation from Cllr Melville. Mr Roberts suggested that the Common Good Fund would have plenty of cash, though Mr Greenwell thought that it was quite difficult to get funds from that source. Mrs Adam wondered if the Common Good Fund would take on a cost, which would be ongoing. Mr Greenwell reminded the meeting that the Byre Theatre had previously been given £25000 per year so he thought that it could sustain a cost of only a couple of thousand.

### **6.2. Reports from Representatives**

#### **6.2.1. Cosmos Meeting**

Mrs Harding reported she’d attended a meeting at the Cosmos as the CC rep. She reported that the Cosmos is doing well with things such as after school clubs etc. Mr Sangster who is involved on the management committee had been to a meeting in relation to Community Emergency Planning, which discussed ways to react to emergencies happening and how to support the community. The Cosmos Committee amongst other things had decided that it could accommodate over 70 people in an emergency.

#### **6.2.2. St Andrews Community Trust**

Mr Greenwell reported he and Mrs Harding attended a reception organised by the St Andrews Community Trust at the beginning of April. At the reception there had been some presentations by groups who had benefited from a Community Trust award. He reminded the meeting that the Trust has substantial funds and encouraged local organisations to apply for grants.

## **7. Committee Reports**

### **7.1 Recreation Committee**

In the absence of Dr Shepherd, Mr Roberts reported on the Coffee Morning recently held by the CC. He reported that it had been poorly attended and he felt that there needed to be a discussion to decide if the event it was worthwhile to hold any more. He acknowledged that the event had been poorly promoted and wondered if it was worth the effort. The event had only taken £122 before deductions for expenses such as the cost of hiring the room at nearly £60. Miss Uprichard thought it was worth having partly because it was one of the CC’s ways of making the public aware of its existence, apart from any fundraising aspect. She acknowledged the problem with publicity but thought that there was no reason not to do better. She suggested a couple of ways to try and improve the publicity from handing out

leaflets to the public to getting clearer press mentions. Mr Greenwell reported that there had been 32 paying members of the public at the event. Miss Uprichard felt that thanks should go to the group of ladies who had helped out at the event, Kate Stewart, Patricia Roberts and Sheila Greenwell. Mrs Adam suggested the possibility of turning the event into more than just a Coffee Morning possibly having a mini Craft Fair. Mr Greenwell noted that on the same day as the Coffee Morning there had in fact been a Craft Fair in the main hall and stallholders had commented upon the poor public attendance at their event. Mr Greenwell concluded that it had just been the wrong day for the event for a number of reasons.

## **7.2. GP Meeting**

No meeting.

## **7.3. 200 Club**

Mrs Harding had reported a slight reduction in membership due to death of some older members, so Mr Greenwell reminded members to encourage friends, relations etc to consider joining the 200 Club.

1<sup>st</sup> Mrs Keracher 2<sup>nd</sup> Mrs Sproson 3<sup>rd</sup> Mrs Rose

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

No report.

## **7.5. Rail Sub Committee**

Nothing to report

# **8. New Business**

## **8.1. Loches Twinning Proposal**

Mr Greenwell noted that Loches as a way to further its case to twin with St Andrews had produced a booklet; a copy was provided to each of the attendees. The booklet apart from giving a background to Loches also commented upon the 18 years of contact with St Andrews and the range of cultural and sporting events and exchanges which had taken place on an annual basis, supported by members of the Loches Alliance in St Andrews. He acknowledged the quality of the booklet and the seriousness of the proposal from Loches to St Andrews. Mr Munn asked if this was the first request to twin? Mr Greenwell said that there had been a previous request over 10 years ago, which had led to the CC eventually turning down the request.

Mr Greenwell reminded the meeting that in discussion at the beginning of the year it had been agreed that there should be consultation with local people before making any decision. Mr Greenwell had written an article for St Andrews in Focus to encourage responses on the subject. To date 17 email responses had been received plus a handful of written responses and all these had been in favour. He'd also had positive comments from people he knew from a range of local groups. He had not received any negative comments.

Miss Uprichard thought that St Andrews had had about 50 requests to twin over the years. She acknowledged the success of the Alliance but thought that twinning was quite different and the main benefit was the ability to apply for funding from the EU. Mr Greenwell in reply said that the main difference between the Loches request and the fifty others Miss Uprichard had mentioned was that none of them had made any effort to sustain a contact like Loches. Mrs Harding added that to her knowledge the Loches Alliance had done a lot of good things culturally for a lot of people from children to adults. She thought that twinning would merely formalise the current exchanges etc. Mr Greenwell agreed with Miss Uprichard that there would be financial benefits in twinning both for Loches and for St Andrews. He didn't see much else changing in the way the exchanges had been taking place. He thought that the

twinning would make more local people aware of the relationship and the potential benefits to the town.

Miss Uprichard asked what would be the benefits? Mr Greenwell replied that the benefits would include the funding stream, which would help foster the twinning relationships. Mr Stewart wondered if twinning would mean the need for new signs? Mr Greenwell agreed that new signs would be necessary.

Dr Goudie thought that part of the reasons for not twinning had been a concern about the potential damage to the reputation of the town exceeded the benefits of switching from cultural relationships to full twinning. Dr Goudie commented on the list of places worldwide, which would want to be twinned with St Andrews, particularly those called St Andrews. Dr Goudie suggested as well that if the CC agreed to go ahead with the twinning proposal with Loches it would have to advise other towns with association with St Andrews, such as Upper Arlington of the decision. Mr Greenwell queried the nature of the relationship between Upper Arlington and St Andrews as he'd hardly heard mention of it on his time in the CC and had no idea what that town could claim to have achieved to merit any status with St Andrews. He acknowledged that if the CC agreed to the twinning proposal with Loches it might open the door to other requests. Miss Uprichard thought that if the CC accepted the Loches request it would be difficult to refuse other requests. Mr Greenwell and Mrs Harding disagreed feeling that further requests would be taken on a case-by-case basis. Mr Greenwell suggested that if other towns wished to twin they should follow the example of Loches and see if they could build up a similar level of support from local people and actively demonstrate a commitment to the idea.

Mr Greenwell proposed a motion that in recognition of the successful 18-year alliance with the town of Loches this Community Council agrees that the Royal Burgh of St Andrews should be twinned with Loches. Mrs Harding seconded the motion. Mr Roberts asked where the proposal would go from there and Mr Greenwell replied that he wasn't certain but thought that there should be a defined relationship agreement between St Andrews and Loches. Mr Roberts thought that there was a need to know what the process was before asking the CC for a final decision. Mr Greenwell thought that based on comments by Dominique Robertson the process once started was fairly "mechanical" of signing twinning agreements, which would be recognised by the EU with regard to appropriate funding applications. Mr Roberts whilst accepting the meeting was quorate he was concerned that with so many members absent there would be criticism of a major decision being taken.

Miss Uprichard asked what duties would result to St Andrews from formal twinning? Mr Greenwell replied that at this time the town wouldn't be required to do anything. Mr Greenwell explained that most activity related to organising cultural and other exchanges and would be done on a case-by-case basis. He didn't think there was any formal requirement for the CC to do anything in relation to the operation of the twinning.

Dr Goudie still wanted to be clear that if the CC accepted this proposal what would happen in relation to all the other requests? Mr Greenwell said that it was within the rights of the CC to accept just Loches for twinning and refuse future requests or have a clear policy of just the one twinning relationship.

Mr Greenwell explained the background to the twinning idea, which was a post war idea to get communities from different cultures to talk and interact and get to understand and appreciate one another's communities. Dr Goudie seconded a proposal by Mr Roberts that it might be better to leave a decision until the next meeting when there would hopefully be a fuller turnout of members. Miss Uprichard was keen to have more information about whether there might be financial implications in such a relationship due to the need to organise events such as receptions.

Dr Goudie suggested voting on Mr Roberts's proposal to put back a decision until the next meeting. Mr Roberts added that while he wasn't against twinning he thought that more information was needed as well as a fuller turnout of members and also the press and Councillors. Mr Roberts proposed again that the decision should be put back a month. Mr

Stewart suggested putting it to the GP Committee and delaying any decision for a couple of months. Mr Greenwell reminded the meeting that the CC had been aware of the proposal for several months and added that as he was going on holiday he'd not be around to pursue enquires this month. Mr Greenwell then asked the meeting to allow Mr Matthews of the Loches Alliance who was in the public gallery to join the meeting to discuss the matter.

Mr Matthews introduced himself as the Chair of the St Andrews- Loches alliance. He reminded the meeting that the CC already had a formal relationship with Loches in the form of a Cultural Partnership agreement signed by Fife Council, the CC, the Andrews Loches alliance, the mayor of Loches and the President of the Nouvelle Alliance in France. He said that the relationship between Loches and St Andrews over the best part of a couple of decades has given rise to innumerable exchanges cultural and others. During that time the activities have been raised mostly by the Alliance doing its own fundraising with occasional Fife Council support and support from golfing interests which have allowed young golfers from Loches to come to St Andrews for tuition.

Mr Matthews then asked the question – why twin? He acknowledged that a major incentive was the ability to access funds from the EU. He added that Loches was already proud of the informal association with St Andrews and he mentioned a sign inside the entrance to Loches mentioning St Andrews.

Mr Greenwell asked Mr Matthews what he thought was expected of the Community Council? Mr Matthews said that all that was required was a positive decision to support twinning and an email or letter to Fife Council to confirm support. Dominique Robertson would then begin to process necessary paperwork. There would be no cost to the Community Council. He added that Fife Council supported the idea but also accepted that only the local community could make the final decision on the request to twin. In the future the CC could be involved as much as it wanted but the Alliance would still work on the relationship and its activities.

Mr Roberts wondered if the support for the twinning could be retracted at a later date, given the example mentioned by Mr Greenwell of the new Mayor of Doncaster deciding the town had too many twinning arrangements? Mr Matthews admitted he had no idea. He believed that the CC had a very strong armoury to control the situation reminding the meeting of the discussion in January when the policy of the CC in relation to twinning was circulated and this demanded a long and substantive evidence of exchanges etc. To his recollection none of the other possible candidates could prove any real substantive evidence of working to make twinning a serious possibility.

Dr Goudie acknowledged that the discussion during the meeting had been very useful and had advanced the situation. However he thought that it might be an idea to write to other locations with which the CC had cultural relations to make them aware of the change of policy and suggest that if they could replicate the same scale of activity as the Loches Alliance/Nouvelle Alliance then the CC might be prepared to consider twinning. Mr Greenwell added that in his knowledge there were many towns, which had twinned with multiple other towns particularly evident in France and Germany. He didn't know of any other towns in Fife, which had a twinning relationship with more than one other town. He thought that it took energy and effort to make a twinning relationship work and acknowledged the amount of work done by the St Andrews Loches Alliance and their willingness to continue that work even after twinning was accepted. He did hope that the CC would still try to become involved in some way in helping to make such a relationship better.

Mrs Adam asked if the St Andrews Loches Alliance would look after any financial and administrative matters in relation to the twinning? Mr Matthews said that his organisation would do that as it had done in the work of the past 20 years. He didn't think that the costs of running the twinning would be significantly different to the costs of their work in the past 20 years. They would also put effort into obtaining funding from Europe.

Mr Greenwell asked the meeting what way the matter should be progressed. Dr Goudie thought that Mr Roberts's suggestion of putting back the decision by a month should be considered. Mr Greenwell wondered what more information Dr Goudie might want in order to

help him come to a decision in the coming month? Mr Roberts said that he'd be more comfortable about making a decision if there were more members etc at the meeting. Mrs Harding thought that the same arguments would just be discussed and couldn't see the benefit of repeating the discussion. Mr Stewart proposed support for the twinning decision to be made at the current meeting and Mrs Harding seconded his idea. Mr Munn wondered about the missing members and speculated that if they said no to the idea that could affect the outcome. Mr Greenwell said that he knew the views of at least 4 of the missing members and not all were against the idea. Dr Goudie thought that facts needed to be checked out and also thought that there was the potential for an almost unanimous decision to support the idea but not if the decision was made this evening. He thought that if the relationship was a non-exclusive one he could see no grounds for opposing it and suggested that the CC would be favourably inclined. Mr Greenwell replied that as far as he was aware it was non-exclusive.

Mr Greenwell asked members if they wanted to vote tonight. The majority of members were in favour by seven votes to three. He then went on to discuss the motion, which had been put on the table and seconded by Mrs Harding. The motion was as follows: "In recognition of the successful 18 year alliance with the town of Loches, France, this Community Council agrees that the Royal Burgh of St Andrews should be twinned with Loches". Seven members voted in favour and none voted against. Three members abstained.

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

### **9.1. Chair**

Mr Greenwell reported that Mr Wallard had written to Linda Bissett and Bill Welch about the interpretation of the Code of Conduct. Having received a copy of this correspondence, Mr Greenwell wrote his own letter to Linda Bissett. She responded very quickly to inform him that Mr Wallard had written in his capacity as a member of the Community Council and she had responded as she had done in the past and would continue to do so when a Community Councillor sought information and advice. Mr Greenwell interpreted this as an indication that any CC member could approach her about any procedural matter relating to the CC. In relation to the matters of declaration of interest she advised Mr Wallard that she had previously given him the same advice when he had made his complaint against the CC. She said she was content to stand by the additional clarification in relation to those two questions. In her final paragraph she commented on Mr Greenwell's assertion that Council staff should declare an interest in Pipeland if she thought the interest should be relevant. As far as she was concerned her position in Fife Council was not relevant. Mr Greenwell concluded that basically it was up to any Community Councillor to decide if any outside interest, which they participated in, was relevant to the particular matter. Linda Bissett concluded that she was not aware when she provided her advice to Mr Wallard he intended to suggest that it should be part of the official welcome pack for Community Councillors. She confirmed that there were no plans to redraft the Code of Conduct.

More recently Fife Council sent out two couple of hard copies of a new Welcome Pack for Community Councillors. According to Mrs Bissett, the Chair and Secretary should each hold a copy, and provide guidance to other Community Councillors as necessary. Mr Greenwell said that he believed that every Community Councillor should have an electronic copy of the Pack. He had noted inconsistencies in the Model Standing Orders in the binder received and the information of Fife Council's website. He also noted that four other documents in the hard copy posted were missing from Fife Council's website so he asked Linda Bissett if the missing information could be supplied. Mr Greenwell also noted that the Code of Conduct about which there has been so much controversy is missing from both the hard copy and the website. Mr Greenwell indicated that he had received an acknowledgement but is still waiting for a full response to his request.

Miss Uprichard commented that in Linda Bissett's reply to Mr Wallard she had stated, "Anyone who has contributed to or is supportive of - should declare an interest". Miss Uprichard didn't think that Linda Bissett was correct legally as most people contributed or

took part in a range of events, which might have connections to a specific issue or event. Miss Uprichard added that Linda Bissett hadn't answered the question about what weight she had given to these two paragraphs, which were not part of the Code of Conduct. Miss Uprichard thought that Linda Bissett was simply giving her opinion to Mr Wallard and wondered if the CC was expected to assume that the two paragraphs were official as adjuncts to the Code of Conduct? Mr Greenwell agreed that the two paragraphs did not count as part of the Code of Conduct as they were not Fife Council policy and were not part of the CC Information Pack. Mr Greenwell pointed out to the meeting that everyone used the Community Hospital and were therefore all going to be held up in traffic jams, have parking issues, drive longer to get there and as far as he was concerned everyone had a financial interest in Pipeland. Because of this he didn't think that it would impact upon any CC member from stating their views on the Pipeland development.

Mr Greenwell in conclusion said that when he had all the bits of the Information Pack from Fife Council in digital form he'd send the data out to members.

Dr Goudie reminded the meeting about the CC Constitution and the Standing Orders. The former had last been revised in 1999 and was out of date and didn't conform to the Scheme. He also thought that there might be a case for updating that document. There were also Standing Orders from 2006/7, which might need updated. Mr Greenwell said he'd look at the Constitution and Standing Orders when he had a chance to check on the contents of the Information Pack.

## **9.2. Treasurer**

Reported in AGM section of meeting.

## **9.3 Secretary**

### **9.3.1. Correspondence**

Mr Marks commented upon the emails detailed in the appendix and correspondence received in hard copy.

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