

# Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

## Monthly Meeting 2nd March 1998

### MINUTES

#### Present

Mr Macgregor (Chairman), Mrs Carleton, Mr Crichton, Mr Fraser, Dr Goudie, Mr Lindsay, Mr D. Macdonald, Mr M. Macdonald, Mrs Mackenzie, Mr Muir, Mrs Murray, Dr Riddell, Mr Risk, Mr Sangster, Mr Stewart, Mr Strachan, Mrs Tero. Student Representative Mr Campbell and Councillors Cassells, Hill, and Liston.

### 1. Apologies

Mr Owen Greene, Mrs Cassells, Mrs Melville, and Mr Corrigan.

### 2 Submissions from members of the public

(a) **Mr Robert Murray, Chairman of the Preservation Trust** accompanied by Mrs Williams presented a report (see separate sheets) on the Green Belt issue. Dr Goudie replied detailing the Council's position at present. It was agreed that two members of the Council would accept the Trust's invitation to attend future Trust meetings on the Green Belt plan.

(b) **Mrs Laura Wilson**, a resident in Pilmour Place addressed the Council with details of the disturbance caused by those attending a Dinner Dance in Mackintosh Hall. The student representative noted the details. Mrs Wilson advised that she had had a meeting with representatives of the University and hoped that the resulting agreement would be honoured in future.

#### (c) **Mr Gordon Christie**

presented the Council with further papers of historical researches and requested that the Council seek to have the 'Meridian Stone' at present situated at Scooniehill Farm removed and placed in a permanent central site.

#### (d) **Mr J. Docherty**

congratulated the Council on the hard work of the Planning Committee which had contributed to the satisfactory conclusion of the appeal against refusal of planning permission for house building on the St Leonards Fields site. He spoke of his annoyance at the lack of consultation on the part of the Fife Council when forcing residents to accept Wheely Bins. He enquired if the Fife Council were insured against persons being injured whilst wheeling the bins to the roadside and back.

### 3. Minutes of the Council Meeting of 2nd March 1998

In item 5, line 1, the word 'omission' to be replaced with the word 'position' and item 4, line 5, after the word 'period', add the words 'on the Strategic Study'. With these amendments the Minutes of the Meeting of 2nd March were accepted.

### 4. Matters arising

(a) Mr Strachan reported that Miss Jill Webster, President of St. Andrews University Students' Voluntary Service had written to him thanking the Council for the presentation of a Commendation Certificate and wished to inform Council members that she had happily accepted the Certificate on behalf of the 300 student volunteers. Ms Liston informed the Council that she had made a provisional booking of the Town Hall for the 27th of November for the proposed BBC Any Questions programme.

(k) Loches Dr Riddell reported on further groups who are taking part in exchanges. The St Andrews – Loches Alliance is holding a Jazz Night in the Supper Room on 2nd May.

(5(a)). Fife Council is to draw up a policy on recycling.

(6(a)). It was noted that, because of the Fife council's new regulations for Community Councils, the student representatives may not, and the Merchants' Association and Youth Committee representative as co-opted members will not be allowed to vote on motions and other resolutions of the Council to be elected in May.

### 5. Correspondence

(a) **Management Plan** Passed to Recreation & Leisure Committee.

**(b) Development Control** Passed to Planning Committee.

**(c) Citizenship meeting** Meeting to take place at Rothes Halls. Glenrothes, 7pm on 17th March.

**(d) Wheeled Bin Roadshow.** Noted that the 'roadshow' will be held at Safeways carpark, the B.B. Hall, St. Mary's Place carpark and at Kilrymont School.

**(e) National Parks** Passed to Recreation & Leisure Committee.

**(f) Fife Coastwatch** Litter Survey. Passed to Health & Welfare Committee.

**(g) Visitor Attraction** Review. Passed to Recreation & Leisure Committee.

**(h) Water Charges** Passed to Health & Welfare Committee.

**(i) Rural Forum** Passed to Recreation & Leisure Committee

**(j) Kate Kennedy Procession** Mr D Macgregor will be attending. Other members are invited to do so also.

**(k) Statement of New Scheme for Community Councils** Passed to Finance & General Purposes Committee.

## 6. Matters raised by Committees

**(a) Recreation & Leisure** (See separate sheet) Re Licence&Regulation applications. Mr Lindsay is to object to the Shell Garage late take away food application. It was agreed that the Secretary write to Mr Jensen of the Fife Council requesting copies of licensing applications as in the case of planning applications.

Mr Strachan agreed to represent the Council on the committee considering applications for Seed Corn Grants

**(b) Planning** (see separate sheet). 1, 2, 3 and 5 for information.

4. This matter was raised before recording a reply. We are not happy with the terms.

6. It was proposed the Council would issue additional leaflets to those being issued by Fife Council. The Council leaflets would be delivered by volunteers on the understanding that no party political publications would be enclosed.

It was noted that the East Fife Development Committee has requested that Alldays removed at least two signs from their premises in the town centre.

### Health & Welfare Committee

It was noted that the new leasing proposals for the Royal Naval Association for the use of the Victory Memorial Hall had been approved by Fife Council.

**Finance & General Purposes Committee** Jurek Putter's new engraving of St. Andrews Cathedral – Mr Putter's offer was for the Council to have the rights to distribute. A suggestion was made that such a right could become useful if the Council agreed to using the engraving on a St. Andrews Day Card, but it was agreed that the work involved in exercising distribution rights would be too onerous for volunteers in this case.

Council Elections – It was reported to the disapproval of the Community Council that the position re polling cards was still uncertain. It was agreed that if no polling cards are to be delivered to voters then the Council should advertise the election.

It was agreed that the Council should await notification of the selling price for 1 Greyfriars Garden before assessing a Council contribution towards the cost.

### Youth Committee

– is almost in a position to issue a draft questionnaire for young people in the town.

## 7. Matters raised by Fife Councillors

### Mrs Hill

advised that Fife Council have ceased advertising Councillors' Surgeries in the local press. It was agreed that the Secretary write to Fife Council indicating our concern.

### Mr Cassells

commented on the situation of the St. Leonards Fields site and was proposing having a meeting with Mrs Cathy Adamson to push forward the community's belief that this site should be used for the new hospital. Dr Goudie agreed to telephone Mrs Adamson to arrange a meeting.

**Ms Liston**

Community Council election packages should be available for Council offices by April. A first draft is being prepared for the Rail Study and she will keep us informed of progress.

**8. Other matters of public concern**

None.

**Finance & General Purposes**

Report 12/3/98

1. A meeting was called to approve the format and content of the Community Council leaflet on the Strategic Study which had been prepared by members of the Planning Committee. The costs of production are to be borne by the Community Council and distribution (by volunteers) is to be carried out towards the end of March.

2. The Chairman reported that a 'workshop' on the Strategic Study involving the Community Council, Preservation Trust with input from officials of Fife Council had been agreed among Councillor Cassells, Mr R.S. Murray and himself and was likely to be held in late April.

**Recreation & Leisure Committee**

It was noted with regret that due to ill health Mrs Stewart-Meiklejohn had resigned from the Community Council and as Convenor of this Committee.

Mr Ken Crichton was then unanimously voted by the committee to be the new Convenor.

It had been suggested by the Council that this committee consider checking licence applications made to Fife Council. After due consideration it was felt that we should only be responsible for recreational aspects. These applications being of a business nature should be dealt with by a person or committee e.g., Planning, better versed in attending to business applications.

Seed Corn Grants – The committee checked the various beneficiaries who could benefit from these bequests and would respectfully suggest the Welfare Committee would be a more suitable body to help administer these grants.

It was agreed that all future meetings should whenever possible be held at the Council Offices at St. Mary Place.

The following competitions and exhibitions are going to be run by this Committee in the coming year and a timetable was decided upon. These are – Gardens, Photographic, Library, St Andrews Week, and Odd One Out.

**REPORT**

Young St.Andrew Citizen of the Year Award and 200 Club Report and Draw – Mr A Strachan

**Planning****Report of the PLANNING COMMITTEE Meetings of 9.2.98 and 23.2.98 for the Community Council Meeting of 2 March 1998.****St Leonard's Fields.**

The Reporter has dismissed the appeal against the refusal by Fife Council to grant planning permission to the application by Cala Homes and McCarthy and Stone to build a total of 109 housing units on this site. This is an immensely important decision, which will be widely welcomed. Had this decision gone the other way, we would have lost the best site for the proposed new hospital, and the knock-on effects on the periphery of the town could have caused major environmental damage.

**2. Temporary buildings.****(i) Pilmour.**

Confirmation was obtained from Fife Council that a time limit would be included in any consent for the proposed temporary office, starter and changing accommodation.

**(ii) Cosmos Centre.**

Mrs Murray agreed to write pointing out that, as it stands, the proposal for additional teaching accommodation is in essence erecting a temporary building on a permanent basis in a conservation area. In our view, if it is not realistic to provide a permanent building, a time limit not exceeding five years should be imposed on any consent.

**(iii) Health Centre extension.** Similarly Mrs Murray agreed to write suggesting that a time limit is also appropriate in this case. As the site lies outwith the Conservation Area, we would propose a ten year limit. It is to be hoped that a new combined hospital and health centre will have been built by that time, rendering the extension and this condition redundant.

### **3. Other Planning Applications.**

**(i) Craigtoun Road Housing site.** The committee has now considered the detailed application for this site. A response will be submitted.

**(ii) Lawhead West.**

It was agreed to object to the proposed revision in so far as it involves adding a further two properties into a development which we already see as over-intensive.

**(iii) 73, Market Street.**

The committee did not see the proposed new shop front as suitable for a conservation area. Mr Crichton has been invited to submit an objection on our behalf.

**4. John Knox Road housing site.** A letter has been received from Mr Birrell indicating that, while outline consent has not yet been formally granted for this development, this will indeed happen, assuming the terms of the draft Section 75 agreement are agreed with the developer. He reports that the restriction to building below the 50m contour will be interpreted as applying to the finished ground level rather than the roof level, as we had feared would be the case from the weakness of the wording of the committee minute, which appeared to put the matter in the hands of the developer. Mr Birrell writes "In my view, the Section 75 Agreement and the proposed planning conditions give sufficient protection to the views into and out of St Andrews ... Members have been kept up-to-date with progress on the application and it is not proposed to report further to the Area Development Committee". Our dissatisfaction with having major planning applications passed by narrow majorities on a "first reading" has been passed to Morag Wallace, Area Law and Administration Manager.

**5. 52, Argyle Street.** Revised plans have been received for this proposed development.

**6. Strategic Study.**(NOT FOR PUBLICATION) An offer has been made to Fife Council to organise door-to-door delivery of two leaflets on the Strategic Study. The first would be by Fife Council, and a copy of a draft version has now been received. The second would be a statement of our own position. It should be stressed that the Council has not yet finally committed itself to this scheme, but we are hopeful that agreement will be forthcoming, as we see this as the best way of presenting the Study to the residents of the town.

## **Preservation Trust**

### **Notes For St Andrews Community Councillors On St Andrews Preservation Trust Green Belt Proposals**

1. The Preservation Trust is very concerned that it has received no response to its Green Belt proposals from the Community Council. A copy of the proposals was sent to the Community Council in July 1997 at the same time that they were sent to Fife Council. The Trust has kept two places available on its Green Belt Forum Committee for Council representatives. We would very much like to see these taken up. We understand that the Community Council may not yet have been fully briefed on the Green Belt proposals. That is the reason for attendance of the Trust representatives at your meeting and for these notes.

2. In early 1997 the Preservation Trust viewed with considerable concern the accelerated pace of new housing development to the West of the town, and development of the St.Nicholas site and the poor design and landscaping of the new Safeway store to the South. At that time also there was little information available about the scale or direction of future development of the town. Because of this the Trust decided that to propose a Green Belt in the abstract would be of limited use. It therefore decided to take the initiative and commissioned its Green Belt Report with boundaries which would protect the landscape setting of St.Andrews.

3. The Preservation Trust Green Belt proposals therefore made two main points, as follows:

a) First St Andrews needs a Green Belt. The Community Council has supported this position in the past, and we very much hope that it will continue to do so.

b) Second a specific Green Belt is proposed with inner and outer boundaries. The details of this proposal have been drawn up by a firm of consultants who are acknowledged experts in this field. The boundaries are carefully delineated and argued, and are fully defensible. The proposals largely meet the Preservation Trust's prime objective which is to protect the landscape setting of St.Andrews from further damage. The proposals also allow for

reasonable further expansion of the town to the West which any Green Belt proposal must do.

4. The Preservation Trust fully acknowledges that it is only Fife Council which can put forward a proposal to the Secretary of State for Green Belt status.

5. The Trust appreciates that it is unlikely that its proposals will be accepted in whole by Fife Council. Other criteria and constraints may have to be taken into account. However destruction of the landscape setting of St.Andrews is a major concern of the Trust, and it is prepared to argue its case strongly. The Trust would welcome discussion on alternative proposals which seek to protect the setting of the town, but to date none have been put forward to our knowledge.

6. Recently the Fife East Area Development Committee has made public draft details of the St Andrews Strategic Study covering the period to 2011. The Preservation Trust has considered the draft in detail and believes that none of the three options proposed are acceptable. In particular Options 2 and 3 would inflict considerable further damage o the landscape setting of the town. The draft proposals contain little cohesive reasoning for any of the options put forward, and do not give confidence that all the issues involved have been properly assessed to reach a sound strategy for the future of St.Andrews. The Landscape Assessment Study which was commissioned by the predecessors to Fife Council appears to have been largely ignored. The Trust is extremely concerned about this.

7. St Andrews Preservation Trust feels strongly that there is a need for consultation on a unified response on important matters such as Green Belt and the Strategic Study in so far as this is possible. There is also considerable urgency for this now in view of consultation deadlines. The Trust would welcome representatives from the Community Council on the Green Belt Forum Committee and also discussion on the wider issues in any form acceptable to both bodies. The Trust has been working to protect St Andrews for more than 60 years, and we see a Green Belt as the next major step in continuing that work.