

Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

Minutes 7th September 1998

Meeting in the Burgh Chambers, 7pm

Chair: Donald Macgregor

Present:

Community Councillors: Craig Barrett, Ken Crichton, Ken Fraser, Ian Goudie, Hugh Gray, Chris Lesurf, Pete Lindsay, Dennis Macdonald, Murdo Macdonald, Donald Macgregor, Lindsay Murray, Archie Strachan, Cynthia Tero, Chris Young.

Fife Councillors: Patrick Cassells, Sheila Hill, Jane Ann Liston, Frances Melville.

Merchants' Association Rep: Bill Sangster.

Students Association Reps: (none)

0. Special

Donald Macgregor drew the meeting's attention to the death of former Community Councillor David Lyle. Hugh Gray drew the meetings attention to the death of former District Councillor Dan Forrester.

1. Apologies:

Received: Dr Riddell, Mr Peterson, Mrs Cassells

2. Contributions from Members of the Public

2.2. Police Report:

Sgt Patterson answered questions

Q. Donald Macgregor asked about the effect of the Alcohol Free Zone.

Sgt Patterson said he'd only been in town about 6 months but it appeared to be satisfactory. There had been prosecutions, but overall it was quiet.

Q. Hugh Gray asked about skateboarding and cycling on pavements as a general problem. The Sgt was not aware of any particular problems at the moment.

Q. Murdo Macdonald asked whether the police in St Andrews are up to strength.

Situation is slightly worse than it was 6 months ago. Current strength is

- 2 shifts of 6
- 2 shifts of 5
- plus 3 community officers
- 6 officers on Fri/Sat nights, filled by overtime and a special constable

There is to be no recruiting in the next 12 months.

Q. Chris Lesurf asked about parking on pavements, but the Sgt had no information - he'll remind PC Cumming of our interest (first raised July) for a report in October.

Q. Ken Fraser asked if Noisy Neighbours are causing an offence.

Sgt Patterson explained that this is a complex area covered by various laws depending on the type of noise, **eg** shouting & swearing can be a breach of the peace, but there can be difficulties in obtaining a conviction.

3. Minutes of July 98 Meeting

3.1. AGM

Minutes taken as read.

3.2. Monthly:

July 2.1

Chris Lesurf points out: There are going to be two trusts: one Primary Care (ie General

Practice etc) and the other Acute (ie Kirkcaldy Hospital etc).

4. Matters Arising

4.1. Golf shuttle

(July 2.2.) Golf representative Murdo Macdonald reported the shuttle's pathway had indeed been closed for reseeding, but was now opened again.

Cllr Hill added that unfortunately it was about to close again for the Dunhill tournament, so the shuttle would again run along the tarmac pedestrian paths for a while.

4.2. Hogweed

(July 4.2.) Letter from John Stark noted: wait and see what next year brings.

Hugh Gray asked the Fife Councillors about the general policy general spraying of weeds in pavements cracks etc

Cllr Liston: general spraying has been restricted for environmental reasons - previously spraying was regarded as the best way to control any greenery - but thinks that pavement spraying a victim of 'cuts'. Where growth may affect safety or threaten damage call the Local Office (412525) to arrange inspection and treatment.

4.3 Empty Shops

(July 4.5.) Cllr Patrick Cassells on meeting with Duncan Chisolm (Assessor for Fife) - the only chance of reducing the rates burden on commercial premises (which was given as one contributory factor to the empty premises in July's discussions) in would be a general revaluation exercise. These have been carried out every 5 years or so in Scotland, but there is no sign of one at the moment because of pressure of other work on central government.

In response to questions from Murdo Macdonald, Cllr Cassells explained that the commercial rates are set by central government. Local government - Fife Council - only collect the rates. Assessment of rateable value is *not* conducted by local government. The Assessor is independent of (for example) Fife Council, though using its facilities.

The formula for assessment of rateable value is set by central government and is based on the Assessor's determination of the average reasonable rents for properties on a street. The determination discards extremes. The level of the rates, how much is charged per pound of rateable value, is fixed nationally by central government. Representations on the principles of commercial rates must be made to central government - local government has no power to change things.

Murdo Macdonald reported having received a form that appeared to be to do with rating (re-)valuation recently. Cllr Cassells was surprised by this and wondered whether the councillors had misunderstood the Assessor's comments about revaluation.

Bill Sangster gave the Merchants Association opinion on the state of the town centre - they are not particularly concerned at the moment, believe that the state of the town centre just reflects the natural business cycle.

Cynthia Tero raised the question of the appearance of some of the vacant premises: given the appearing posters in some shop windows couldn't agents get access to tidy and clean the shops. Dennis Macdonald explained that in many cases the new posers were slipped over the top of the shop doorway and hung with adhesive tape, that access wasn't obtained for this form of fly-posting.

Secretary to write to letting agents on the appearance of their property if someone comes up with a list of offenders and their details. Craig Barrett volunteered to collect information.

Craig Barrett collect & write

5. Correspondence

Donald Macgregor has written to Roddy Mann of Fife Council Cleansing and Waste Management about the state of the beaches, particularly Castle Sands, (litter etc) and the lack of replacements of vandalised waste bins, particularly in Queens Gardens/Terrace area.

CVS Fife

Chris Lesurf asked about this letter (on the correspondance list rather than the main agenda). Pete Lindsay explained that it appeared to be a progress report on some reorganisation of local voluntary services, but as it had no contact details at all for clarification and was apparently written for those who already knew what was going on.

Cllr Melville helped with a quick summary of CVS Fife - intended to help co-ordinate and reorganise somewhat disparate voluntary services for greater efficiency.

Chris Lesurf will ask about this at Fife Health Council Meeting.

5.1. King Street

Housing officer, Brian Wilson - Secretary to write and thank him for the offer to speak to council, not necessary if things are quiet.

Pete Lindsay to write (done)

5.2. Twinning

The meeting felt that Hazard, Kentucky did not present an outstanding enough case to reverse previous policy of declining all such offers. It was suggested that perhaps other places in Fife might be a more appropriate match in size and character.

5.3. Town Library - sponsorship

Murdo Macdonald pointed out that the Community Council *per se* had no money to sponsor activities, particularly as part of a Fife-wide initiative. Suggested that the library approach the 200 Club or better still Fife-wide bodies as this isn't a specifically St Andrews thing. Donald Macgregor suggested that the secretary write to clarify what was to be sponsored, the letter received appearing to concern a lunch - what does a lunch benefit the community.

Pete Lindsay to write

5.4. War Memorials Survey

David Kinnen volunteered

5.6. Fife Health Council

Chris Lesurf drew meeting's attention to Dr Lesley Henderson of St Andrews Health Centre receiving one of the six 1998 Fife Health Council NHS Awards in July.

Pete Lindsay to write with meeting's congratulations (done)

5.7. Orchestra

Secretary to write to suggest that Fife Council might be the better place to approach for a Fife-wide orchestra.

Pete Lindsay to write

6. Matters Raised by Committees

6.1. Leisure & Recreation

Report by Ken Crichton

6.1.1. Prize giving

for Floral Competition trophies 7pm Thurs 24 Sep Burgh Chambers

6.1.2. Spot the Odd One Out

competition - hard work by Dennis Macdonald on this competition brought in £101 (before expenses of £15 approx) - more than previous years. 45 shops were involved, only one problem (raised last month) which was resolved.

6.1.3. Beautiful Scotland in Bloom

St Andrews reached the finals, results will be announced at a reception in Aberdeen (22/9/98).

6.1.4. Best Kept Large Town in Fife

St Andrews won award. Presentation to be in Glenrothes 26th September as part of a Garden Festival. In previous years presentations were local to the winning community. Cllr Melville reported that Cllr Arbuckle, Chair of East Area Local Services committee has written to protest at centralisation.

Pete Lindsay to write too

6.1.5. Notice board

outside Boots (South Street)

Ken Crichton explained that Fife Council had asked us (KC in Donald Macgregor's absence) whether this could be removed temporarily for Lammas Fair. Agreed on condition that it was replaced and refurbished. Initial effort at refurbishment was unsatisfactory and Fife Council

have removed it again to fix. (Now back in place 12th September). Mr Crichton has a letter acknowledging that is to be done at no cost to the Community Council (copy now with Secretary). Some officers of Fife Council deny that these boards (Boots, Bus Station, Tom Morris Drive (Spar)) are Fife's though the history is that these were funded by the Hamada Trust and presented to the town in the days of the District Council, and should therefore have been inherited by Fife Council. In view of the letter agreeing to maintain the Boots board each Lammas we reluctantly accept these as 'ours' it seems.

6.1.7. Photographic Competition

Has merged with the Friends of the Crawford Centre's competition. Boots will award vouchers as prizes for the merged competition. Display of entries to be at Crawford Centre gallery. Entries to be archived at the Preservation Trust along with details of who took pictures and why, as a historical record.

Competition will be open to all not limited to residents of St Andrews. Closing date is 31/10/98, prizegiving 21/11/98.

6.1.8. Senior Citizens' Christmas Party

Has been set for 4pm 19th Dec at the Student's Union.

Donald Macgregor called for any Community Councillors who are free that day to go along and help. He also mentioned that this is the oldest surviving function of its kind in St Andrews, having continued since last century.

6.1.9. St Andrews Week

Art exhibition in the Victory Memorial Hall will be "*Images of Fife*". Closing date for entries 31st Oct. Details from Ken Crichton.

6.1.10. St Andrews Floral Trophy Competition

Presentation of trophies will be 24/9/98 at 7.30pm in the Burgh Chambers.

6.1.11. Bandstand

Archie Strachan reported that the Bandstand Concert series had completed for this year then pointed out that the state of the bandstand is deteriorating seriously, to the extent of bits falling off - a roof access trapdoor in particular.

Archie Strachan to write to Fife to find out when bandstand to be refurbished.

Archie Strachan to write

Cllr Melville will write also emphasising the Health & Safety aspects of bits falling off.

Cllr Melville

Cllr Liston reported that Common Good Fund (CGF) had allocated £2000 to repairs and that Lottery funding was being sought for a full restoration. Dennis Macdonald asked if this was a wise use of CGF money in view of reduced income, but Cllr Liston pointed out that this amount had been agreed with the Community Council's CGF representatives.

A side debate then spun off into the discussion of the Lammas Fair arrangements this year. Pitch rentals from the stallholders provided CG fund about £12,000 last year but only £3,000 after various changes to the licensing of traders and the auction process this year. Cllr Melville, Chair of Regulation committee, explained that there were teething troubles with the changes, that several had been applied at once without fully appreciating their interaction. She hoped that lessons learned would be applied next year and things go smoother.

Donald Macgregor said that such things as Lammas Fair should be administered locally not by Fife Council. Cllrs Liston & Melville pointed out that licensing changes, introduced at the insistence of the Chief Constable, reduced the number of 'dodgy traders'. Due to a bureaucratic mix up had excluded valid traders on the day. Cllr Liston asked if anyone thought the CGF should rely on income from faked or stolen good that dodgy traders sold? There was no dissent.

Cllr Melville suggested that the Chief Constable might be better able to explain his insistence on pre-licencing than she. Agreed to invite him to attend CC meeting

Pete Lindsay to invite

The debate was rounded off with Cllr Cassells assurance that members of the CGF committee were very aware of the constraints on them this year and would act accordingly.

6.1.12. Youth Committee

Archie Strachan to arrange replacements for those that had left school and were now

ineligible. Involvement of other Community Councillors welcome, he pointed out.

6.1.13. 200 Club Draw

August: £50 Mrs Scott, £30 Prof Blake, £20 Mrs Drysdale, £15 Mrs Clarkson.

September: £50 Mr Smart, £30 Cllr Cassells, £20 Mr Muir, £15 Mr Christie.

6.2. Planning

Minutes circulated

6.2.1. Green Belt Forum

To produce a mutually agreeable statement of position

6.2.2. Strategic Study:

Cllr Melville reported that the Draft Final Report would be circulated by the end of the week, responses by 7th Oct.

6.2.3. Kingask Golf Development

This triggered a long and sometimes contentious debate.

The propriety of Fife Council's involvement with the promotion of the Kingask scheme was questioned by several members of the Community Council. Fife Councillors pointed out Council's role in inward investment, and the necessity for Kingask to complete due planning process.

There was some discussion as to whether such golfing development contributed to 'green belt'. Lindsay Murray pointed out the number of timeshare, chalets and hotels that came along with the golf course, (eg proposed development at Craigtoun). She also pointed out that Kingask's associated hotel/clubhouse was to have view of St Andrews, which means of course that St Andrews will have a view of it.

Dennis Macdonald welcomed necessary road improvements this development should bring and the 300 associated jobs.

Dr Goudie pointed out that Kingask is outwith our formal area of coverage for planning matters but that with its proposed size and location it will certainly affect St Andrews, so we have a legitimate interest. It was agreed that we should contact neighbouring CCs to discuss approaches to this and other rumoured golfing schemes.

Pete Lindsay to contact (doing)

6.2.4. Lawhead North

Cllr Frances Melville was congratulated for her decision on East Area Planning to reject the over-intensive development (18 houses on a site previously zoned for 10) despite a favourable, though strongly criticised by this Community Council for apparent errors, report from a public enquiry. This is now to be decided centrally (Fife Council Strategic Development committee). Cllr Melville not optimistic that centre will be sensitive to the principles involved or the flaws in the Public Enquiry report.

6.2.5. West Port - carpet shop

Ken Fraser raised the temporary banner sign outside this new shop. Ken Crichton will contact the Enforcement Officers of the Planning Dept on this matter.

Dennis Macdonald appealed for tolerance in these early days of the shop as they need to attract attention. Ken Fraser replied that they had...

6.3. Publicity Committee

Report of initial meeting noted

6.3.7. Other Business

Chris Lesurf reported that other pressures prevent her taking forward her ideas for EFFORT.

She also reported that fears that CARF (Citizens Advice and Rights Fife) might not be registered by the national CAB (Citizen's Advice Bureau) are unfounded.

Discussion of reported shortcoming of CARF compared with old local CAB regarding legal advice, and rumours that CARF might be reluctant to give advice on matters to do with Fife Council itself, possibly due to situation in Local Office building. Several Community Councillors supported the idea of a move to a separate drop-in or community centre.

Pete Lindsay to write to CARF for info about AGM

6.4. General Purposes Committee

Donald Macgregor apologised for missing a GP meeting he was to host...

6.5. Other Committees

6.5.1. Welfare

Chris Lesurf to arrange a meeting

6.5.2. Millennium

to be discussed at next GP meeting (8pm 14 Sep).

6.5.3. Finance

to be scheduled soon now David Kinnen is a) recovered and b) back in St Andrews.

7. Matters Raised by Fife Councillors

7.1. Cllr Melville

7.1.1. Footpath to Craigtoun Park

disappointed with Fife Council's refusal to undertake this extension, for lack of funding. Murdo Macdonald suggested that developer at Craigtoun should be required to fund this as a 'planning gain'.

7.1.2. Grounds Maintenance

after reports in the Citizen and other complaints Cllr Melville has had a meeting with Grounds Maintenance section. There seems to be a problem with the DLO (Direct Labour Organisation) carrying out the work as precisely as *specified* by Community Services Dept, not what was actually *wanted* by Community Services.

7.1.3. Speed limit at Strathcarron

No success in getting this extended, yet.

7.1.4. West Sands road

Concern has been expressed at the state of this road with major golf tournaments and Millennium coming up. Community Services' order went to the DLO in March, but no action scheduled yet.

7.1.5. Reported comment

Received on the state of gardens to flats about town occupied by 'students'.

7.1.6. Craigtoun Traffic

Bill Sangster asked if the traffic survey on the Craigtoun road which reported that traffic had fallen had been taken at the right place as the common perception was that it had risen.

7.1.7. Weak Bridges:

Hugh Gray asked about the proliferation of temporary traffic lights at 'weak' bridges throughout Fife and how long they would remain.

Cllr Melville replied that there was no money at present to bring all bridges up to the new standards for large lorries (44 ton?).

Chris Lesurf commented that at least in the case of the bridge over the Kinnessburn at Abbey Walk it made crossing on the western side where there is no footpath, going to or from the hospital for instance, far safer.

7.2. Cllr Cassells

7.2.1. Wire Rubbish Baskets

A programme has been drawn up for their collection now the wheelie bin scheme in place.

7.2.2. Wheelie Bin introduction

There is to be a survey on the impact of the introduction of the bins on level of service.

7.2.3. Kerachers' Shop Façade

Contrary to popular belief this was not protected as a listed building. An emergency

programme of classification and listing of the remaining traditional shop fronts in St Andrews is being undertaken.

7.2.4. Garden Waste

Lindsay Murray asked about possibility of skips for excess garden waste over the summer to save phone calls for special collections - Cllr Hill is pursuing this (& see below).

7.2.5. Business Refuse

Cynthia Tero asked why business collection refuse bags are now smaller? Cllr Cassells pointed out that as businesses are charged per bag this will increase revenue.

7.3. Cllr Hill

7.3.1. Garden Refuse

(and any special uplift) needs two full working days notice ie phone early Friday for the Tuesday special uplift. The number is 412724.

7.3.2. Balone Park

Play area maintenance - still being investigated, disagreement with developer over responsibilities.

7.3.3. Overgrown footpath

To Craigtoun (reported in local press recently) - council will cut back overgrowing hedges.

7.4 Cllr Liston

7.4.1. Wheelie Bin complaints

Reports to go to Regulation Committee, previously no committee was getting information on this.

7.4.2. Tenants & Residents Associations

to be re-established (the District had these) in various parts of St Andrews (and E Fife), for example Roundhill Road.

7.4.3. Town Bell

Was rung before the meeting, but need a change of switch for the mechanism so Jock Ballantyne, the hall keeper, doesn't have to stand with his finger on it to keep it ringing.

8. Other Matters of Public Concern

8.1. Flag over Town Hall

discussion established that last renewal had been paid for by Fife Council. They are to be asked to deal with this directly

Pete Lindsay to write (done)

8.3. Alcohol Free Zone

Under review by Fife Council - comments by 25th. Secretary to write expressing CC's views established last year.

Pete Lindsay to write
