

Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

Minutes - September 1999

for approval

Meeting held at 7pm Monday 6th September in St Andrews Town Hall Burgh Chamber

Chair: Frank Riddell

Present

Community Councillors: Pete Lindsay, Ken Fraser, Ian Goudie, Donald Macgregor, Sean Dobson, Dennis Macdonald, Archie Strachan, Ken Crichton, Cynthia Tero, Lindsay Murray

Student Representatives: Steve Durrant

Fife Councillors: Frances Melville, Sheila Hill, Jane Ann Liston

Co-opted: Bill Sangster, Archie Muir

Apologies: Joe Peterson, Jane Hunter-Blair, Craig Buchanan, Maries Cassells, Murdo Macdonald, Helen Lawrie.

2. Contributions from Members of the Public

2.1. Police Report

PC Cumming:

2.1.1. Lammas Fair no major incidents came to the attention of the Police this year.

2.1.2. St Mary's Place Taxis (July 2.1) suggestions from the discussion of this problem (parked taxis blocking access to St Mary's place car park, and potential difficulties at the junction with Bell St.) have been forwarded to the appropriate authorities.

2.1.3. Cemetery, Parking and Speeding on Strathkinness Low Road: Inspector Rennie Ritchie attended a site meeting with Cllr Frances Melville and representatives of the Roads Service. Recommendations were passed on to Fife Council (see also 7.1.1.).

2.2. New Locality Manager: Kate Hughes takes over from Peter Allen as locality manager from 11 Oct. Her attendance at the meeting to get a feel for how the community council works was warmly welcomed.

3.0 Minutes of previous meetings

3.1. July

July minutes accepted

3.2. August special meeting

Meeting agreed to make the minutes public since none of those attending had an objection.

Agreed to publication of August minutes

Amendment: A sentence "*Some wanted to get on with the business.*" was removed (p1).

August special meeting amended minutes accepted

4. Matters Arising.

4.1. University pre-sessional week (14-19 Sep)

President of the Students Association Steve Durrant gave out copies of a letter which they will be circulating to neighbours, press, and the central parts of the town concerning impact of the week and inviting discussion of any concerns.

4.2. August special meeting

Ken Fraser pointed out that the list of invitees for the special meeting was not complete for elected representatives - no 'list' MSPs for instance.

Chair Frank Riddell pled guilty to old-fashioned thinking on behalf of himself and the Secretary in omitting to invite more MSP & EPs but assured the meeting that ignorance was the cause not malice. Secretary Pete Lindsay pointed out that the Community Council had not received notification of who all the wider reps were, but admitted that this was a poor excuse.

Frank Riddell has also written directly to Catherine Taylor MEP who wrote to the Citizen about this, being herself a resident of St Andrews.

5. Reports

5.1 Chair

5.1.1. Harbour Trust

Along with Fife Councillors Melville and Coyne, Frank Riddell spoke in support of a move to restore public access to the landward end of the pier by moving the safety gate once the current phase of repairs are completed. They argued that this was a public place and the public's traditional access should be respected. Unfortunately the Harbour Trust (comprising 5 Cllrs, 3 from East area and 2 from the Centre, and 4 Fishermen Trustees) disagreed, the 3 councillors actually present being outvoted, on cited safety reasons. After discussion of this situation a unanimous motion was passed (Prop Archie Strachan, 2nd Ken Crichton) asking that the decision be reconsidered.

Secretary to write to Harbour Trust

5.1.2. Tourism Management Programme Frank Riddell was unable to attend a recent meeting. However Ian Goudie was present (see Planning Committee report item 3, circulated separately). Expanding slightly on the note he explained that the Community Council will be represented on each of the 4 sub-committees (Research, Special Events, Town Centre and Transport) being formed.

5.1.3. Opening of the Cosmos Learning Centre Again, due to other commitments, Frank Riddell was unable to attend. Bill Sangster was there due to his links to Cosmos outwith Community Council and gave a brief explanation; the Learning Centre is for adult post-school further education, an outpost of Glenrothes College. The centre was formally opened by Henry McLeish MSP, minister for Lifelong Learning and a local resident. It was attended by various supporting groups, in total about 80 people.

5.1.4. General Purposes Cttee - Proposals of July 4.2. Attendance was poor to the extent that the meeting did not have a quorum (Archie Strachan apologised for his failure to attend - he'd arrived late after another engagement and been unable to get in...). It was agreed to try again Mon 20th Sep instead of the scheduled Publicity meeting.

5.2. Treasurer

5.2.1. Expenses: to help planning Archie Strachan asked that he be notified of any major expenses (eg the noticeboard, Chair's Medallion of office) likely to come up as soon as possible.

5.2.2. Raising Money from the Arms: Archie Strachan noted that monies from the Arms had gone into the Trust Fund some years ago - whilst looking into this the original Trust documents had turned up. (see Secretary 5.3.2.)

Archie Muir, having been co-opted at the July meeting to deal with the Arms continued:

The Arms are in disuse as a fund-raiser at the moment. Selling ties and colour copies of the matriculation certificate has brought in around £3,000 total, some years back.

'Millennium' Ties have been suggested as a possible follow up to the previous success, and the original certificate is in St Andrews Museum.

There has been an approach by Patterson Scotland a golf memorabilia company interested in licensing the Arms. Previously we have asked for 2.5% of the wholesale value.

There was then same debate as to the best way of making money from licensing the Arms. Points raised were about quality of product - previously we had right to approve or reject individual lines using the Arms; Policing the deal - how do we know that we are actually getting what is due to us? It was suggested that a fixed fee rather than a percentage would be easier to manage. Pirating or counterfeiting was also seen as a possible problem, though we'd be unable to do much it would be in the interests of a licensee to act against abuses. Archie Strachan was particularly concerned that the work involved in the Arms business was really more than one person should have to handle, and that as Archie Muir was co-opted for a limited period others should gain familiarity with these matters, ready to play their part/take over in due course.

It was agreed therefore to set up an Arms Committee: initial members: Bill Sangster, Archie Strachan, Archie Muir, Dennis Macdonald, Cynthia Tero, Ken Crichton.

The meeting agreed also that any start up funds (£500 was mentioned for Ties) should come from the Community Council Trust Fund if the Trustees were agreeable, as that was started at least in part from Arms proceeds.

5.3. Secretary

5.3.1. Resignation of Craig Barrett: Barry Joss to be invited to take the vacant place.

Secretary to contact Barry Joss

5.3.2. Community Council Trust Fund: meeting to be arranged for hand-over of trustee-ships and necessary documentation etc.

Secretary to arrange

5.3.3. Revised Constitution Pete Lindsay went over the reasons for the changes (Fife Council's Scheme for CC and as a side issue some minor changes to wording to appease Entrust sufficiently to fund the bandstand repairs. Adoption proposed Pete Lindsay, 2nd Archie Strachan. No opposition.

Revised Constitution adopted

5.3.4. Standing Orders

There was some discussion over the suggested move of Fife Councillors' reports to earlier in the meeting. Some Community councillors were worried that if Fife councillors finished their business early they'd go early and Community Council would lose the benefits of their collected wisdom. Fife councillors pointed out, quite politely, that they knew they are present to consult and advise and that it was rather untrusting to put their business at the end of the meeting to make sure they stayed. It also didn't do much for the quality of the consulting and advising when the four of them have to get through their business in 10 minutes at the end of an evening before the meeting closed.

It was pointed out that Standing Orders could be changed by vote at any time, unlike the constitution's 21 days notice and consultation, if any aspect proved unsatisfactory in performance.

Cynthia Tero proposed (2nd Archie Strachan) acceptance of the revised Standing Orders. Meeting agreed.

Standing Orders take effect in October

5.3.6. West Port Flag

there was lively debate of the correct shade of blue on the St Andrews Cross. Opinions varied but on balance the meeting, while pleased that there was a flag at the West Port. would have preferred the lighter 'sky' blue to the present navy and that the flag should be fully hoisted rather than flying a half mast - visitors might think the town is in distress.

Secretary to write to Historic Scotland

Discussion then moved on to the state of the Town Hall flagpole. Concern was expressed that this has not carried a flag over the peak holiday season, since late June/early July when the rope snapped.

Secretary to enquire of Fife Council when this will be fixed

Moving from the top of the Town Hall to the bottom (nearly) the state of the carpet on the Burgh Chamber stairs was raised. This is reportedly shedding fibres to the extent of threatening to block the vacuum cleaner. Such a rate of loss of carpet indicates that the damage to it in the flood some months ago was more serious than perhaps was appreciated. The meeting also heard that a carpet fitter arrived to replace the carpet on the intermediate landing where the flood has caused some potentially dangerous shrinkage, bearing the cheapest imaginable roll of carpet, but was prevented from laying it by the caretaker.

Secretary to seek clarification from Fife Council

5.3.9. Meeting on collection of rubbish from student flats

Donald Macgregor to attend

5.3.10. Red Cross survey - suggested that Secretary contact Chris Lesurf/Chris Young as this seems to fall into their area of interest.

5.3.11. Coastal Communities Grants - draw to attention of the Fife Ranger Service for possible funding of Coastal Path repairs.

5.3.12. Disturbances on South St: received copy of a letter to the Chief Constable concerning noise, vandalism etc in west end of South St.

Secretary to write to Police asking for further information

5.3.13. Tay/Eden estuary RAMSAR site - this had gone via Planning to Lindsay Murray to prepare a response - anyone with interest/relevant knowledge please contact her.

6. Committees

6.4. Millennium

6.4.1. Millennium Ceilidh: adding to the written report Ken Fraser noted that a letter received from David Somerville blames delays to decisions on hall hires for New Year events on the negotiations over employees pay, now completed, but then fails to give any useful information to enable plans to go forward. Though tickets are printed they can't be sold as there was no information on cost of the hall hire.

Cllr Jane Ann Liston said that it had definitely been agreed that halls would be available for community events, though they would all have to finish rather early at 1am. The next Community Services committee meeting would be 17 Sep; if the cost of hires etc was not on the agenda she would certainly raise the subject.

A correction was noted to the written report - due to some typing errors the first paragraph had become garbled, in particular the Common Good fund had agreed to underwrite the Millennium Ceilidh for £1500 not £15 and the word guarantee abbreviated to just a 'g'.

6.4.3. Whyte-Melville Fountain Bill Sangster, for the Merchant's Association, asked about the results of the excavation of the White-Melville fountain in Market Street. Could it be restored? Cllr Jane Ann Liston explained that the independent examination had been carried out on behalf of the Fife Business Group who should be contacted for the results.

6.4.4. Group Photographs: support for a photo archive of town organisations. Meeting agreed that it might be of interest to the future and agreed to support such a project - providing it does not cost us anything.

Agreed support in principal

6.4.5. Christmas Lights 2000: A second question from Bill Sangster was whether the Millennium Committee would consider putting money to the Christmas lights for 2000? Unfortunately they have no money of their own being dependant on selling tickets to break even on the ceilidh.

6.5. Planning

Ian Goudy circulated the Planning Committee report then opened by thanking Ken Crichton for taking the meeting of 23rd Aug in his place when many of the regular planning were also unavailable.

6.5.4. Planning Committee is to meet with Bob Mitchell from Roads Service next Monday (13th Sep) to discuss consultation on traffic calming measures by Canongate Primary School.

6.6. Publicity

Report of the July meeting (none in August) mislaid allegedly in the Secretary's filing system. Only substantial item was the suggestion that Event should expand to an A3 sheet, to give room to carry articles and community council news. This will approximately double the monthly cost of Event from something over £10 per month to something over £20.

Meeting approved the increase

6.7. Recreation

6.7.1. Best Kept Town

- Cupar! Ken Crichton read out the judges notes from the Best Kept Town competition - St Andrews came second this year, losing the title:

"Generally tidy but centre of town, particularly in west end of Market St, in need of decoration to buildings - paint work etc.

Bandstand - and hanging baskets a real plus but not always seen to advantage.

Some very good *individual* contributions with baskets, tubs. Could do with some more in centre of town and East Sands area.

Poor roses etc near Safeway. Poor paint work in Scooniehill.

Poor standard of landscaping at new site in Scooniehill.

Some private gardens with high hedges not making a real contribution to townscape.

West Cemetery - *dull dead* trees in North Street a *serious* detraction."

Cllr Sheila Hill said that she would bring some of the criticisms to Jim Hooton's (Community Services) attention; if Community Services can keep up Cupar so it wins they should be able to keep St Andrews to a similar standard. She pointed out that some of the blame, on rose beds, attached to part of the Safeways ground. There will be a series of site visits to the identified problem areas with responsible officers to identify how to correct the problems over the next few weeks. Cllr Jane Ann Liston drew attention to the comments on the west end of

Market Street, mainly properties over shops which are, she suspects, rented out by absentee landlords to students and tourists, with very little care for upkeep being taken by the landlords - or their agents. She felt it was possible that they could be identified and perhaps persuaded to do something about the flaking paint and weeds growing from gutters etc. On the matter of hanging baskets she and Archie Muir had already met Alistair Drummond (Roads) and Alistair Barnard (Community Services) to look at places where road signs and the baskets obscure each other with a view to moving one or other to best mutual advantage.

6.7.2. Floral Competition:

Prizegiving and reception for participants will be 7pm Thursday 23rd September.

6.7.3. Spot the odd one out competition: Organised by Dennis Macdonald again this year, 41 shops took part but receipts were down slightly - only £84.50 was raised.

6.8. Youth Committee

Archie Strachan said that the school term having only just started the Youth Committee hadn't yet formed but would be holding a meeting during September.

7. Fife Councillors

7.1. Frances Melville

7.1.1. Strathkinness Low Road/Cemetery: Reported on a site meeting with Inspector Rennie Ritchie, acting locality at the Cemetery to discuss the concerns about parking and the speeding on the Strathkinness Low Road. It seems that something might be possible to provide off-road parking within the cemetery, at the price of part of some rose beds. Road signs will also be looked at again.

7.1.2. Pier repairs: As Chair of the Harbour Trust she had a meeting with officials of the Lottery funding body, looking into the application for funding for the Pier. They were, she said, very thorough and probing in their questions to her and other Harbour Trust and Fife Council representatives, over, among other matters, why a rich place like St Andrews needed lottery funding, but she seemed optimistic nonetheless.

7.1.3. Lammas Fair

brought in much more money this year than last, to the benefit of the Common Good Fund, now that the changes in licensing (to exclude rogue/criminal traders) etc have settled in.

7.1.4. Parking scheme

Various changes were mentioned - the increase in the number of residents permits balanced by and extension of the area controlled.

7.1.5. West Sands Road: work will be in two phases, ready for the Open next year. It is likely that once the road is up to standard it will become the responsibility of the Roads Service rather than Community Services as at present.

7.1.6. Kingask: it seems possible that the 'benefits' to the roads of St Andrews claimed for the Kingask decision may be few. Though the impression had been given by Fife Council officials that Kingask was to pay for improvements to bridges and junctions about the town Fife Council now says it has not the money to complete the all proposed work, as the developer was merely contributing £126,000 rather than paying in total for completion of the works.

7.4. Jane Ann Liston

7.4.1. St Andrews in Bloom Committee is arranging for community groups to plant those flowerbeds that Fife Council have to leave bare in the spring for lack of funds. So far the Soroptimists, the University, various schools and the Guides have come forward, but there are still opportunities for others she said.

7.4.2. Town Hall/Burg Chambers: Tom Bain of Community Services has been asked by Fife Councillors to look at a rolling program of refurbishment/improvement to the Town Hall as the money will not be available for major work.

7.4.3. Youth Café

The official opening of the new facility at the Victory Memorial Hall will be just before the Dunhill competition in October - there are hopes of getting a Name to the opening.

7.4.4. StARLink

- the St Andrews Rail Link Campaign started 10 years ago this month in this chamber with the support of the Community Council. The North Fife Rail Study, which includes the StARLink proposal to reconnect St Andrews to the main rail line, goes to Strategic Development Committee in November.

7.5. Questions

Ken Crichton had a general question to Fife Councillors: the St Andrews Horticultural Assoc had recently approached the Fife Council Local Office in St Mary's Place over possible use of a meeting room and were told that they would be charged. Is this policy likely to be extended to the Community Council who make frequent use of those meeting rooms and are not charged presently?

Fife Councillors to check