

Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

Minutes October 1999

for approval

Meeting held 7pm 4th November 1999 in the Burgh Chambers

Chair: Frank Riddell

Present

Community Councillors: Ken Crichton, Sean Dobson, Ken Fraser, Ian Goudie, Hugh Gray, Barry Joss, Chris Lesurf, Pete Lindsay, Murdo Macdonald, Frank Riddell, Cynthia Tero

Students Association: Steve Durrant, Craig Buchanan, Dana Green

Co-opted Members: Bill Sangster, Archie Muir

Fife Councillors: Sheila Hill, Jane Ann Liston, Frances Melville, Jane Hunter-Blair

Apologies: Helen Lawrie, David Kinnen, Dennis Macdonald, Lindsay Murray, Donald Macgregor, Archie Strachan.

Frank Riddell introduced two new members of Community Council: Barry Joss as replacement for Craig Barrett and Dana Green, 3rd Students Association representative.

2. Contributions from the Public

2.1. Police Report

PC Cumming

2.1.1. South Street Problems. (September 5.3.12). The times quoted in the letter referred to last month coincided with the youth football tournament when there were more young people than usual in town. Nonetheless as part of the action plan referred to in the letter from Superintendent Thompson (Agenda 4.1) there have been increased foot patrols, when resources permit, in Greyfriars Garden, Queen's Gardens and other areas in the centre of town. Several people have been charged as a result; none of them students. With pre-sessional week and the start of term there had been a certain amount of 'revelry' by students in the streets but the people involved had calmed down when warned.

However the police cannot be everywhere. PC Cumming emphasised that people should phone them when there are problems such as loud parties or noisy & abusive neighbours or young people hanging about drinking (Woodburn Park was mentioned later as a current problem) and causing a disturbance in parks or even playing football in public places. In response to a question he did confirm that people making complaints were not required to give their name if they preferred anonymity. Cllr Sheila Hill had found that people were phoning her with general problems rather than 'bothering' the Police with specific instances.

2.1.2. Lights at Bruce Embankment car park: admitting it was probably more a matter for Fife Councillors Hugh Gray mentioned concerns of people using the car park recently as it had been unlit. PC Cumming said that Fife Council had the lights working now, probably as part of the general Dunhill preparations.

2.1.3. Dog Fouling: Frank Riddell has received a letter from a Mr Dochard on this subject and asked what the police attitude was?

PC Cumming reminded the meeting that he had looked into reports of problems on the Lade Braes last year, but all the dog owners he had found were either in the process of, or had just completed, clearing up. He said that often just a word from the police changed the ways of offending dog-owners - if the police knew about them. Again, problems have to be reported for action to be taken. Persistent offenders would be reported to the Procurator Fiscal.

Cllr Frances Melville commented that some of her colleagues had met the chief constable recently and learned that dog fouling was a major source of complaint. Hugh Gray reiterated his local licensing scheme for dog owners.

2.1.3. Parking on Pavements was raised by Chris Lesurf. PC Cumming mentioned that there was a fixed penalty system coming into force soon which would be easier to apply than the current offence of driving on(to) pavements.

2.2. Cllr Frances Melville.

2.2.1. Roads priorities.

Fife Council would like to hear from community councils what priorities they have for work on

roads. Contact Fife Councillors or the St Mary's Place Local Office.

2.2.2. Parking Charges. Murdo Macdonald expressed concern about the extension of parking charges in town, particularly on those who drive to work in the centre of town looking to park for the day. The situation would be somewhat alleviated by making the Argyle St car park free; as it is the closest free car park is Petheram Bridge which is too far to walk to the centre, he feels. Others thought that the university contributed to the problem by the increase in student numbers but not an equivalent increase in university parking. It was said students using cars to reach St Andrews were parking them in the streets for weeks without moving, making normal residential parking more difficult. Students' Association President Steve Durrant pointed out that the biggest development was in the North Haugh, where there are also the largest, newest car parks. Later Cllr Jane Ann Liston gave some figures: at the start of the 98-99 academic year 744 students (13%) brought cars with them. There were some 763 properties 'zero rated' for council tax in St Andrews, which are probably student occupied. NB - the cars figure includes students in halls of residence and living out of town as well as in the centre.

Cllr Melville explained that the extension of the parking scheme was part of the transportation plan agreed about two years ago. There had been a disappointing take up of residents' permits partly due to the change in the proportions of full time and student residents in the town centre since the transportation plan was adopted.

Bill Sangster said that the Merchants Association would like parking scheme restrictions lifted for the first and last hours of business (only applying 10am-4pm) for the convenience of those *en route* to or from work.

2.3. Jane Hunter-Blair

2.3.1. Town Hall: Planning permission received for some work.

2.3.2. Zebras. Work on the new zebra crossings in the centre of town is close to starting.

Bill Sangster for the Merchants Association was concerned about various aspects of the zebra plans. He questioned the wisdom of removing the existing controlled crossing close to the post office on South Street to replace with a zebra, feeling that this would disadvantage the disabled and elderly. At the west end of South Street he was concerned - as are the police he said - at the prospect of traffic being stopped for minutes at a time when pupils were leaving/entering Madras and crossing the proposed zebra, particularly at lunchtime.

2.3.3. Advertising Boards. In response to questions from Hugh Gray and Cynthia Tero (who had raised this in June 7.3.2.) Cllr Jane Hunter-Blair reported that Planning Service is looking into the boards at Bottoms Up. Bill Sangster said that the Merchants Association had talked to Bottoms Up who took the position that while the other wine merchants did it they would too. Ken Crichton pointed out that there was a general problem with advertising boards in town - not just outside the shop/restaurant but sometimes far away at street-ends.

Cllr Hunter-Blair commented that she understood that there is something of a problem with workload in St Andrews for the planning enforcement officers.

2.3.4. Kinnessburn.

Hugh Gray passed on complaints that the burn is not being cleaned regularly and rubbish is accumulating.

2.4. Sheila Hill.

2.4.1. Ageing Trees.

There are a number of areas where trees and shrubs planted 20+ years ago are now posing a problem - for instance the trees at Crawford Gardens (Appendix F).

2.4.2. Overgrown Roses. At Cairnhill Gardens/Bogward Road an old rose bed that had been a potential safety hazard as it had been neglected and overgrown is to be tarmaced over. Ian Goudie commented that there had not been a particular visibility problem at the junction, this was unjustified.

Bill Sangster mentioned that the widespread replacement of paving flagstones by tarmac through the town was a cause of concern with the approach of winter. Tarmac is more prone to frost and ice than flags and presented a hazard particularly to the elderly and unsteady.

2.4.3. Canongate traffic calming. The public consultation originally arranged for 5th Oct in consultation with Community Council has been postponed until 1st Nov. Frank Riddell felt that being informed of this postponement at such short notice was typical of problems of communication with some departments of Fife Council. Apart from a phone call to Ian Goudie there has so far been none of the co-operation promised at the meeting Bob Mitchell of Roads

(referred to in the planning report).

2.5. Jane Ann Liston.

2.5.1. Societies Fair: again this year officers from the Local Office, joined by Cllr Liston, had staffed a stall giving out information to students at the start of term.

2.5.2. Paths, Pavements and the Burgh Police Act. This little known legislation from Town Council days covered amongst other things the cleanliness and maintenance of pavements and paths. In some instances responsibility for upkeep lies with adjacent property holders (Frontagers) not the council, which continued to be the case when the act was replaced in the 80s by the Roads (Scotland) act.

2.5.3. Pipeland Road roller-blading surface. East of Scotland Water have agreed, after a certain amount of squirming, to carry out the work they promised when the works in the park started. Cllr Liston expressed her disappointment that the work is running 6 months behind schedule - youngsters will have been without facilities for 18 months.

2.5.4. St Andrews in Bloom: gave a list of organisations who have come forward for the 'community planting' scheme. Planting will be in late October. Fife Council will provide bulbs where necessary - though some organisations (eg Soroptimists) are purchasing theirs.

2.5.5. St Andrews Week. Described a publicity stunt to draw attention to the Week by involving as many as possible of our elected representatives from MEP down to and including community council. Hugh Gray questioned whether this had the approval of St Andrews Week committee but it was pointed out that he himself had suggested to the St Andrews week committee that a gimmick was needed and had left the meeting early when it was actually being discussed.

4. Matters Arising.

4.2. July Proposals

Frank Riddell went through the points in the report (appendix C)

C1. Relations with the Press.

Hugh Gray reported that he approached, on behalf of the Publicity Committee, The Citizen about a regular column for Community Council about a year ago which had been rejected. There were various suggestions as to how to approach writing a column if anyone could be persuaded to run it - but no one would step forward to write it. One suggestion was to approach a third party who could be co-opted/paid, possibly a student to write a town/gown column.

C2. Dissemination and compiling views. Ian Goudie emphasised that community councillors' value lies in their being part of the community. Formal consultation exercises are not necessary, and possibly inappropriate for community councillors to know how their community feels.

Frank Riddell explained that in the face of the criticism that community council does not consult/represent widely enough pursuing involvement with wider consultation exercises seems the 'whiter than white' approach.

Hugh Gray suggested an annual public meeting be held.

5. New Business

5.1. Young Citizen

Chris Lesurf pointed out inconsistency in the age ranges quoted in the two posters circulated.

attention Archie Strachan

5.2. Proposal for a formal break in the monthly meeting

Proposed amendment to meeting procedure in Standing Orders. Proposed Chris Lesurf, 2nd Sean Dobson, For 6, Against 4, Abstain 3.

Agreed a 10 min break at 8pm

5.3. Millennium Projects Competition.

Chris Lesurf spoke to expand her ideas presented in the draft letter circulated. After some discussion it was agreed to pass this idea to the Millennium Committee, co-opting Chris Lesurf.

6. Reports.

6.1. Chair

6.1.1. Complimentary tickets to the Dunhill - distributed after the meeting to those interested.

6.1.2. Community Council History (etc) Web pages - old pages lost on the reorganisation of the Tourist Board web site. We have been offered free hosting on the <http://www.saint-andrews.co.uk/> site run by Ken Cochran, a former student at the university (contemporary of Pete Lindsay) whose parents live in the area. He is also offering free space to other local organisations.

Move agreed

6.1.3. Harbour Trust - public access to the pier. Trustees didn't feel it productive to press the issue at the last meeting. The Students' Association will be consulted about public access. Before the pier is reopened a safety report will be necessary.

The Trust thanked Lindsay Murray for the money she raised in the recent marathon.

6.1.4. St Andrews Pilgrim Foundation - this is the trust founded by Patrick Cassells. Progress is steady though not quite as fast as wished. Currently looking for suitable Patrons - preferably people of international reputation with some St Andrews connections. Suggestions to Frances Melville, Maries Cassells or Frank Riddell.

It is likely that the foundation will run a raffle of some kind at the 2000 Open.

6.1.5. Joint letter to the Citizen with Steve Durrant and David Corner was as a result of decision taken at July meeting (July 5.1.2).

6.1.6. Absence. Frank Riddell gave notice that he is likely to be in Australia for 3 months from January 2000. So that there is Community Council representation on organisations that specify the Chair as our representative it will be necessary to specifically appoint a Vice-Chair to act in his stead for the duration. Once the study leave is confirmed a suitable motion will be put before the Community Council.

6.1.7. Reception for Loches representatives. Request from the St Andrews-Loches Alliance: The civic authorities in Loches have on a number of occasions entertained representatives from St Andrews. Would the Community Council consider reciprocating?

In a lengthy discussion some doubted that the Community Council should be involved at all, feeling it was up to the Loches Alliance. However the Alliance has no funds as such, members claimed, to which it was pointed out that the Community Council had little more. Nonetheless Loches' local authorities have held a civic reception for Madras pupils on exchange visits there, not just visiting members of the Alliance, and some felt we should reciprocate. As the Loches authorities are a full local government and we are not it was eventually agreed that Jane Hunter-Blair would investigate involvement of Fife Council as a more direct equivalent local authority.

Jane Hunter-Blair to approach Fife Council

6.1.8. Presentation of Arms: The St Andrews-Loches Alliance is anxious to present Loches with something comparable to the large stone "Blazon" that decorates the interior of the Town Hall at the supper room street entrance. They have found a firm who have made wooden replicas of the coat of arms before in wood. They could make five 18" high embossed and coloured versions of our Coat of Arms suitable for exterior usage for £300. If we were to go for this the Alliance would immediately buy one from us for £60 to send to Loches, leaving us with 4 for £240. It would undoubtedly be possible to find places to put these items. Our permission is of course needed for any use of our arms by the Alliance.

Discussion covered whether this was a good deal for the community council and how to use the 'spare' shields. Also featured was whether members of community council who also belonged to the Loches Alliance had a conflict of interest, but they did not consider so.

Hugh Gray proposed that Community Council should **not** purchase the shields. Seconded Sean Dobson. For the motion: 5, against: 5. Chair then used his casting vote against the motion

Motion Failed

Passed to Arms Committee to consider

6.2. Treasurer

No report

6.2.1. Town/Gown Debate: Steve Durrant asked if the Community Council would consider supporting a proposed open debate with funding and endorsement such as the use of the

arms or a speaker. The motion of the debate would be something like "This House would open a McDonalds in St Andrews".

In response to questions he agreed that the money would be mainly symbolic of Town support as the Students' Association and the Debating Society have much larger funds than community council. It was suggested that perhaps the 200 Club could be approached. It seems that the use of the Arms might be problematic as it might contradict the rules from the Lord Lyon.

From the chair Frank Riddell summarised the position as support in principle, but not in funds.

6.3. Secretary

6.3.1. Fife Partnership consultation meetings. No one was prepared to attend even the St Andrews meeting to represent the Community Council. Pete Lindsay reluctantly offered to try and make one of the other meetings if his workload permitted.

6.3.2. Election to ASCC. Decided not to cast a vote as no significant knowledge of the candidates.

6.3.3. NEF Volunteer Bureau AGM.

Chris Lesurf to attend

6.3.4. Trees at Crawford Gardens. No problems with suggested course of action.

Pete Lindsay to contact Community Services

6.3.5. Links Trust information meetings

Frank Riddell, Golf Committee to attend

7. Matters raised by Committees

7.1. Coat of Arms

Expanding on Appendix A:

a4 - St Andrews Heritage Co no longer exists.

a9 - Ken Crichton suggests that if no-one on community council has time and expertise to take on marketing of the Arms that consideration be given to co-opting someone onto council to do the job.

7.2. General Purposes

See 4.2.

7.3. Golf

no meeting

7.4. Millennium

7.4.1. Ceilidh Cllr Jane Ann Liston confirmed that the Common Good Fund *is* willing to guarantee £1500.

Ken Fraser recounted a tale of bureaucratic nightmare - forms supplied for applications but not to be used for Millennium-related matters, then a form arrived for outdoor events, but the Ceilidh is indoor... He has now written to ask how he should apply for millennium-related grants and how much the Town Hall will cost to hire, so he can judge how much grant to apply for. Murdo Macdonald added some detail on how various moves had been driven by Fife Council who were now leaving the Ceilidh dangling with a potential £1200 cancellation fee for the band.

Cllr Jane Ann Liston will bring this current uncomfortable position to the attention of the head of Community Services, David Somerville.

Pete Lindsay to write if no movement

7.4.2. Greyfriars Garden Some discussion of what to do now that the offer of £5000 based on the District Valuer's valuation has been rejected. Options discussed included public subscription, other sources of funding or offering to lease the garden. A vote was taken to decide between seeking other funding (due to the limitations on use of public money) and leasing, proposed Murdo McDonald, 2nd Cynthia Tero.

Seek other funding: for 5, against 2

7.5 Planning

7.5.1. East of Scotland Water's control/monitor box in Woodburn Park will be about 7' high. We have asked for appropriate screening to be planted, but EoSW have a poor record of meeting such requirements.

7.5.2. Canongate Traffic Calming - there is to be a public meeting, at the meeting between Bob Mitchell of Roads Service and the Planning committee further, wider consultation was strongly suggested and we also asked for the opportunity to comment on a proposed leaflet.

7.5.3. Availability of Plans. Frank Riddell to respond to letter from Nick Brian of the Planning Service limiting what he will send out for consultation, despite our position as statutory consultees. Previously Jim Birrell, East Area Planning Manager, had agreed that we could see all plans in the conservation area as a matter of course.

Cllr Jane Ann Liston mentioned that at a recent meeting Cllr Peter Douglas, Chair of East Area Development, believed that the matter had been sorted out, after Cllr Elizabeth Riches had brought the concerns of community councils in her area to his attention. If there is still a problem he should be informed.

Planning report accepted.

7.6. Publicity

no report

7.7. Recreation.

Report accepted