

Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council

Minutes - 1st November 1999

as approved

Chair: Frank Riddell

Present:

Community Councillors: Ken Crichton, Ken Fraser, Ian Goudie, David Kinnen, Helen Lawrie, Chris Lesurf, Pete Lindsay, Dennis Macdonald, Donald Macgregor, Lindsay Murray, Joe Peterson, Archie Strachan, Cynthia Tero.

Students' Association Reps: Steve Durrant, Linda Pialek

Co-opted members: Bill Sangster, Archie Muir

Fife Councillors: Jane Liston, Frances Melville, Jane Hunter-Blair

Apologies: Murdo Macdonald, Maries Cassells, Sheila Hill, Barry Joss, James Arnold

Frank Riddell brought to council's attention that Barry Joss was now Rector's Assessor having run the successful campaign for Andrew Neil.

He also warned that as last month's meeting had overrun its time he would take business a little more formally this month in accordance with Standing Orders - limiting speakers on any issue to two contributions *etc.*

2. Contributions from the Public

2.1. Police

Sgt Morris appeared instead of instead of PC Cumming who has been injured in the course of duty, probably back next month.

Pete Lindsay to send Council's best wishes.

2.1.1. Police slot in Event

- Happy to take up a 'police corner' in Event in response to offer by Frank Riddell

2.1.2. Special Constabulary recruitment - police are looking to extend their resources by recruiting more special constables. Contact any police station for details.

2.1.3. Community Officers - There will be a second community officer available from 22nd November, when PC Brand returns to full duties.

Fife Councillors

2.2. Cllr Frances Melville

2.2.1. Harbour Trust

- as chair of the harbour trust she has had to respond to more questions from the lottery funding body, but was assisted by and grateful for the very full backing she has received from Fife Council officials.

Asked by Ken Crichton what would happen if the lottery funding fell through she said that either inferior materials would be used for partial repairs or Fife Council and the Harbour Trust would have to discuss their position.

2.2.2. Civic Amenity Site - more pressure is required on Fife Council to bring into being this much needed site. Fife Council has just been told that the Cupar site has to be staffed at all open times for safety. This will doubtless apply to any St Andrews site too and would increase the running costs.

Cynthia Tero asked if making the site a pay-to-use or voluntary donation facility would help? Cllr Melville replied that there were lots of ways to offset costs - sale of compost, recycling some materials, etc but Fife Council not very good at recycling.

Bill Sangster pointed out that the recycling centre was a long-felt need but there was a long history of difficulties over location and funding. Though both had been sorted out right at the end of the life of the old district council the plans and more importantly the money had not survived the transition to Fife Council.

2.3. Jane Hunter-Blair

2.3.1. Shops' advertising boards - Planning Service is to write to all shops to remind them of policy.

2.3.2. Argyle St Car Park

- suggestions that it should be free November through March have been rejected by Transportation Service.

2.3.3. Bow Butts

- Fife Enterprise have sent out plans of proposed developments for consultation. As FE had not seen fit to consult the Community Council she passed on her copy to Ian Goudie for the Planning Committee to comment.

2.3.4. Roads maintenance - various lighting and street maintenance reports are available but the main point is there's no money for further work.

2.3.5. Christmas Lights - Fife Council will receive a letter about this year's arrangements soon. Councillors will again be raising the issue of unequal provision of assistance across Fife.

Bill Sangster is the Merchants Association's co-ordinator for the lights this year. He gave some figures on costs and funding. Last year the lights cost £6,500. Even with £1,000 from the Common Good Fund it is increasingly difficult for the merchants to fund this level of expenditure with only 50% of the town's smaller shops as members. Not many of the non-members give.

At the questioning of Frank Riddell Cllr Hunter-Blair clarified that some parts of Fife have their lights heavily if not totally subsidised by Fife Council - West and Central areas - while this end of Fife receives what she said could not *quite* be described as nothing.

Cllrs will try to find out the per head level of spending in the various areas and settlements across Fife.

2.3.6. St Andrews Golf Hotel extension - this was refused recently at East Area Development Committee. She expressed surprise at the lack of a comment from the Community Council given the contentious nature of the proposals. For the Planning Committee Ian Goudie said that he could not recall the details, given the number of applications which go by, but he rather thought that it had been thought a matter for local residents, that planning committee members had not thought it intrusive enough to object. However without the notes of the relevant meeting he could not be sure.

Hugh Gray did not think that the EADC decision was correct, and that it was not in the interest of the economy of St Andrews. Particularly he felt it inconsistent to refuse permission on grounds of lack of parking when a hotel nearby close by had gained permission for and subsequently added a whole floor.

2.3.7. Loches Reception

- (Oct 6.1.7) Lindsay Murray asked for a progress report. She was surprised that Fife Council had been asked to help as the Loches committee was a Community Council initiative not Fife Council's. She was also surprised at the nature of last months discussion, pointing out that the Loches committee paid for much of their activities from their own pockets and that all money raised went to assist outside groups.

Cllr Hunter-Blair reported that she had made the initial contact between Fife Council officials and Mary Freeborn, who was now dealing with the matter.

Archie Strachan commented that he hoped that when the committee structure is considered next month the position of the Community Council and the Loches committee would become clearer. He felt that Community Council should take a more formal role in matters such as cultural links or twinning.

Frank Riddell's recollection was that the Community Council was approached by a resident of Loches working in this country with the idea of cultural links and had held a public meeting for interested parties which gave birth to the Loches Alliance committee with Mary Freeborn at its head as an independent entity.

2.4. Jane Ann Liston

2.4.1. Madras College refurbishment - on behalf of Cllr Sheila Hill (who was at a meeting on the Canongate traffic calming measures) she reported that there will be a meeting between Gary Westwater of Property Service and the School Board to discuss Fife Council's repair and maintenance at Madras College.

2.4.2. CARF opening hours (Citizens Advice and Rights Fife) - Fife Council's replacement for the Citizens Advice Bureau - is changing its opening hours at the local office to be the same across Fife. The Fife Councillors are to meet CARF to discuss these changes. Pete Lindsay

pointed out that the new hours made lunchtime visits for advice for those working more difficult as CARF would no longer be open over a full lunchtime any day of the week.

Donald Macgregor has not heard anything else from CARF since the Community Council affiliated early this year with him as the nominated representative. Pete Lindsay, as Secretary, could not recall any recent CARF communications.

Councillors to raise lack of communications at their meeting with CARF.

2.4.3. Kinnesburn

- Cleansing & Waste Management service were supposed to be cleaning the burn at need, but obviously not succeeding. Tom Stevenson of CWM has now instructed the contractors to check and clean the burn every Monday, and has told them he does not want to receive any further complaints about its condition.

2.4.4. St Andrews In Bloom - the community group plantings are complete - expect a good show in the spring. She emphasised how helpful the council staff had been showing the children which way up the bulbs should be planted to grow properly, etc.

2.4.5. Publicity for St Andrews Week - messages from our representatives at various levels of government will make their way from MEPs in Brussels by Eurostar train to London and the MP, by air to Edinburgh's MSPs, Scotrail train again to the Councillors in Cupar and finally by runner to our Burgh Chambers to be received by the Community Council at a reception 4pm 20th November. Getting all our politicians organised to add their messages of support for St Andrew's Week is akin to herding cats...

2.4.6. NE Fife Rail study - there will be a meeting at Glenrothes soon to discuss the report on the NE Fife Rail Study.

3. Minutes of previous meeting.

Oct 2.1.3.

Hugh Gray pointed out that his suggested local dog licensing scheme would be voluntary.

Oct 6.3.5. Steve Durrant omitted.

4. Matters Arising

4.3. Coat of Arms to Loches.

(October 6.1.8) Hugh Gray protested at aspects of the conduct of the discussion last month. He felt that some of those voting should have 'declared an interest' as members of the St Andrews-Loches Alliance and withdrawn from the vote. He expressed his concern at the expenditure the Community Council was being asked to undertake to the benefit of the Alliance.

Frank Riddell felt that the implication that members of the Alliance had behaved improperly unjustified. The fact he and three other members of the Council were committee members of the Loches Alliance was well known, he felt, and no attempt had been made to hide this, particularly his own role. The use of the term 'interest' with its usual implication in these circumstances of personal financial benefit he took particular issue with and asked Hugh Gray to withdraw his remarks, in which call others backed.

Archie Strachan reiterated that questions of the Community Council's relationship with organisations such as the Alliance needed to be clarified and regularised to avoid this sort of issue. Chris Lesurf added that she found the wider issue of relationship between the organisations involved confusing.

Frank Riddell gave an account of how the St Andrews-Loches Alliance had been established through a previous Council decision and the good offices of the Community Council in convening a public meeting. He stressed the very substantial contribution the Alliance had made for young people in St Andrews and Loches.

The somewhat acrimonious debate was brought to a close by the scheduled break in the meeting.

5. New Business

(was for information only)

6. Officers Reports

6.1. Chair

6.1.1. Debate - took part in a town/gown debate on the motion *This House would open a McDonalds in St Andrews*. The motion was defeated by 81:15 (10 abstained), an unusually large margin.

6.1.2. The Simpsons

- the Simpson family of Nelson, New Zealand, are holding a family reunion/celebration on 15 January 2000 to mark the 150th anniversary of Robert and Mary Simpson arriving in Nelson from St Andrews. Meeting agreed Chair to send greetings *etc* and a copy of the Coat of Arms matriculation certificate as a souvenir.

Frank Riddell to act

6.2. Treasurer

Report circulated.

6.5.3. Coat of Arms sub-committee - Archie Strachan made it clear that without someone to take over responsibility for the use of the Coat of Arms for fund raising from Archie Muir, who was co-opted specifically to hand it over, there was no point in continuing.

Bill Sangster volunteered and was co-opted to the post (Proposed Frank Riddell, 2nd Archie Strachan, none against.)

Bill Sangster take over Arms

6.2.6. St Andrews in Bloom - Archie Strachan noted that it was the usual practice of the community council to give £250 to the St Andrews in Bloom campaign each year. He asked for permission to continue this year. No objections.

£250 to St Andrews in Bloom agreed.

6.3. Secretary

6.3.1. Fife 2010 Community Plan response - a draft response prepared by General Purposes committee was circulated to the meeting. In discussion some doubt was expressed at the commitment of the bodies involved to the consultation and also to whether the outline points in the discussion paper from the Fife Partnership were in any way meaningful. Without priorities over such as Jobs v Environment the document is just a collection of platitudes to be discarded as convenient.

While acknowledging that this was a distinct possibility it was decided that a response should be made just in case something worthwhile should come of the process. Frank Riddell to agree some minor wording changes with interested parties after the meeting and submit the response soonest.

6.3.2. Planning Seminar

for Community Councils - time should have been given as 9.30am not pm! Possible delegates: Pete Lindsay, Ken Crichton, Chris Lesurf

6.3.3. Replacement for Sean Dobson - due to the resignation of Mr Dobson, John Landon to be invited as the last remaining unsuccessful candidate from this session's elections.

Pete Lindsay to write.

6.3.4. Ross Bequest

- Bill Sangster asked how the Ross Bequest was being administered? Cllr Frances Melville responded that it would be handled in much the same way as the Common Good Fund. However the money is not yet available.

6.3.5. Home Safety Committee - Cllr Frances Melville gave the date of the first evening meeting as 7.30pm 8th May 00. Bill Sangster already attends as chair of the St Andrews Safety Committee and will take on Community Council remit too in the absence of any other volunteer.

6.3.6. Scenic Map

- passed to the Planning Committee to consider suitable sites from the options proposed by Mr Rattray.

6.3.7. Fife Health Board consultations - some dissatisfaction was expressed with the lack of a session in St Andrews given the interest in when and where the new hospital is to be built (the closest was Cupar, before our November meeting). Chris Lesurf commented that these consultations are an attempt of the Health Board to bypass the role of the Fife Health Council which is the official route for public consultation on the health service. The news of the cancellation of all the remaining meetings after problems at Dunfermline overrode the

discussion and it was agreed to contact Cathy Adamson of Fife Primary Healthcare Trust to speak to us.

Pete Lindsay to contact CA.

6.3.9. New Zebras

- Bill Sangster attacked the intended change of the South Street Pelican to a Zebra crossing claiming it would be dangerous for the blind, deaf and elderly. Pete Lindsay disagreed, pointing out that zebras give all pedestrians priority on the crossing at all times rather than just when the crossing so signals.

Several people commented on the state of congestion during the construction of the zebras, claiming things will be very much worse in the busy summer months and when the traffic generated by Kingask arrives (taking Fife Council and the developer's figures, let alone realistic expectations). 'Pedestrianisation by the back door' was claimed.

Cllr Jane Ann Liston pointed out that the crossings in Bell St had long been recognised as necessary in view of the difficulty crossing it - it had once been described as the 'canyon of death'. Joe Peterson thought that anything improving pedestrian safety should be welcomed. For instance the crossing outside Madras College on South Street is badly needed because of the mixture of buses and schoolchildren. He welcomed improvements.

Ian Goudie summarised the overall problem as being one of inconsistency by Fife Council. The reduction of traffic in the town centre was a goal of the transportation plan, as agreed two years ago. However when Kingask came along this seemed not to matter any more. Now the new crossings are acknowledged to by Fife Council officials to be intended to reduce traffic in St Andrews. Extra traffic from Kingask is not compatible with extra restrictions on traffic in town.

Eventually it was decided to wait and see what the final effect is once all construction work has been completed and people are more used to the new road conditions before formally commenting.

6.3.15. Remembrance Sunday - Frank Riddell and Donald Macgregor gave details of the arrangements for those wishing to take part 14/11.

7. Matters Raised by Committees

7.3. Golf

7.3.1. Dunhill Cup

- Bill Sangster reported that the Dunhill Cup will continue in St Andrews in October for the next 5 years. This was warmly welcomed.

7.3.2. Consultations

- Cllr Jane Ann Liston expressed her concern that the full allocation of five places for Community Council representatives at the Links Trust consultations had not been taken up. She felt this damages the community council's credibility as a consultee.

Dennis Macdonald was disappointed by the cessation of the open public meetings on the links, to be replaced by the surgery style consultations held this year. Frances Melville, a member of the Links Trust, explained that this is a trial in response to the drop in attendance at the open meetings over recent years, a point backed by Hugh Gray and Donald Macgregor.

7.4. Millennium

7.4.1. Ceilidh

- Archie Strachan reported that all the tickets had been sold. Ken Fraser expanded on this: all save 3 had been sold in the period 2-4pm on the Saturday, and extended thanks to Murdo Macdonald for hosting the sale in his Bell Street office, and Cynthia Tero, Ken Crichton, Archie Strachan and Ian Lawrie for helping. There is now the money to cover costs and he was still awaiting the outcome of the grant application from Fife Council.

7.4.3. Projects

- Chris Lesurf has discussed her project suggestions with Steve Durrant who will join the Millennium Committee.

Archie Strachan asked where the suggested £2,000 prize money was coming from. That is to be arranged by the committee in the new year, once it has got the ceilidh out of the way was the reply.

7.5. Planning

minute circulated.

7.6. Publicity

7.6.1. Police *Event* column - Police to be offered 200 words/month in *Event* as a community policing news column - dealt with in 2.1.

7.6.2. Notice board -

Fife Council Roads won't allow a board in our preferred location (wall of the car park outside the St Mary's Place Fife Council office). In view of this Frank Riddell will pursue the possibility of a place in Logies Lane/Church Square outside the Town Library. Joe Peterson suggested that if the ground in Greyfriars Garden is purchased the wall there would be suitable and close to the preferred location, however it was pointed out that it may be some time, if ever, before the garden becomes available and the intention is to get the board this financial year.

Meeting agreed to Church Square approach.

7.7. Recreation

Report circulated. Ken Crichton drew attention to the lists circulating for stewards at the St Andrews Week Art Exhibition, and the need for helpers at the Senior Citizen's Christmas Tea - 4pm 21/12.

[NB date subsequently changed to 14/12]

7.8. Youth

Archie Strachan reported that he's had a further meeting with Madras. Different teachers are involved than last year which has something to do with the slow start but the school is still interested in the idea.

8. Any Other Competent Business

8.1. Students

Steve Durrant informed the meeting that the Union had recently received a licence until 1am on Thursdays, but were delaying implementing it until 11th November to allow time for consultation on arrangements with neighbours. He also gave the date for Raisin Sunday - 21st November. This year the university will be taking a rather more active approach to the problems of 'high spirits' at this time of year by opening the Younger Hall and holding various ticketed events.

8.2. Kingask Review.

While appreciating that the Community Council had made its decision on the matter of a Judicial Review of the Kingask decision in August, Ian Goudie informed the meeting that the appeal to raise the funds required to take the case to court had raised well over £40,000.

Frank Riddell added that as those who were present for the whole of the special meeting in August would be aware the reported comments of the developer in *The Citizen* concerning who might be liable for whose costs were wrong, and an attempt to scare off backers for the review.

8.3. Potholes

Cllr Jane Ann Liston reported that Roads Service would like feedback from the community on priority areas for repairs - potholes, uneven pavements *etc.* She suggested that a regular '*Pothole Watch*' be initiated by Community Council.

Meeting agreed to a regular sheet to be circulated at our meetings and forwarded to Fife Council with details of potholes, bad pavements and the like.

Cllr Liston to circulate & collect

8.4. *The Citizen* - letters on Council Tax and student flats

Cllr Liston noted that there were several errors in the recent *Citizen* correspondence. In particular the properties rented to students *are* liable to council tax over the summer when not occupied by students and that the council does not lose income when they are occupied as increased government funding at least covers the 'lost' revenue.