

Old Aberdeen Community Council

Minutes of the meeting held on **Tuesday 20th April 2010** at the Old Aberdeen Town House.

1. Present

Christine Burgess (Chair), Isobel Aitken (Treasurer), Clive Kempe, Dewi Morgan, Hilda Meers.

Also Present

Cllr Jim Noble, Two representatives from Grampian Police, Angus Donaldson (University of Aberdeen), Declan Harte (Press & Journal), Robin Parker (AUSA), Daniel McCroskrie (Light Up Seaton Park Campaign), Laura Russell (City Warden), Nick Shepherd (City Warden), Abdul Latif, Kevin Guyan (Secretary).

Apologies

Simon Barker (Vice Chair), Clive Kempe, Trevor Stack, Gordon Mutch, Katja Brittain, Shaunagh Kirby (University of Aberdeen), Omran Al-Mahtot (Aberdeen Mosque), Cllr Richard Robertson, Cllr. Norman Collie, Raymond Kelly.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

Jim Noble wished to add to March's minutes that Aberdon House is yet to be granted an HMO license.

Christine Burgess explained that Bob Dorr, First Bus, has emailed her explaining that the Number 20 bus service will continue over the summer, operating a 30-minute service. CB added that – unlike previous summer services – First do not intend to operate the Number 20 on a Sunday. **ACTION:** CB to contact First Bus with OACC's concerns.

3. University Update

Angus Donaldson noted that the Word Festival would take place across campus from May 14th.

CB asked whether there has been any progress in relation to the new nursery. AD explained that they are currently trying to identify potential sites that could house around 74 children (rather than the original proposal of around 108). The land behind Crombie Johnston has been identified as the preferred site, although they have also considered land behind the Butchart Centre, 81 High Street, Sunnybank Park and the Hillhead Centre on Don Street.

CB asked if there was any further information relating to 21/23 High Street. AD noted that an unsafe gable end would be demolished and reinstated over the summer. AD added that there has been discussions relating to whether Becycle – a community bike repair scheme – could use the site once the work is finished.

CB enquired whether reports in the press noting that the university have been awarded funding to move their museum collections to a site on the High Street were correct. AD explained that the university have sourced half of the required funding to display some of their collection, previously sited at Marischal College, in the former bank. The museum would be permanent until the relationship between ACC, the university and use of Marischal College is finalised.

Robin Parker explained that Student Association elections were currently taking place. RP added that the litter created by campaign posters and flags would be cleared by the end of the week.

RP noted that a recent meeting of AUSA it was decided to support both Tillydrone Community Council and OACC in their campaign against a Third Don Crossing. The meeting also

discussed the possibility of establishing a steering committee for the Becycle group, which OACC would be welcome to get involved with.

Daniel McCroskrie introduced himself to the Council and outlined an ongoing campaign to install lighting in Seaton Park. DMc added that the group now has the support of AUSA and have had positive meetings with both the Labour and Liberal Democrat groups of ACC. JN noted that discussions relating to the lighting of Seaton Park have been ongoing for around two years, with Grampian Police expressing concern over the potential for increased crime should the park be lit.

DMc noted case studies the group have considered of parks in Edinburgh that have led to neither an increase nor decrease of crime but have improved the public's perception of the park. RP added that there is a need by students and the local community to reclaim the park and the usage of the park – with around 2000 residents at Hillhead the situation is difficult to ignore. DMc explained that the group have a facebook group with around 1400 members and a petition with around 250 signatures.

Hilda Meers asked what types of lights would the group hope to install. Dewi Morgan noted that there is a need to be cautious as certain lights would not improve the situation and that resources relating to crime reduction must also support the installation of lights. Nick Shepherd explained that ACC's current policy is not to light any of its parks.

DMc noted that the group originally considered the idea of CCTV cameras and lights, although students do not seem keen on the use of CCTV. CB reminded DM to consider the huge costs relating to a project of this size. DMc explained that they hope to source funding from a range of bodies, including the European Union, ACC and AUSA.

4. Police Update

Grampian Police distributed crime figures for the last period and noted that there has been no annoyance, youth disorder or motorcycle incidents in Old Aberdeen during this period. There has, however, been 1 theft by house breaking and 3 vandalisms. Clive Kempe observed that Bedford Road and Sunnyside, though part of Old Aberdeen area, are excluded from the beat figures considered for Old Aberdeen. CB noted that OACC must be clear on which beats represent the area covered by OACC. **ACTION:** Grampian Police to bring a map to OACC's May meeting showing how beats corresponds to the Old Aberdeen area.

It was explained that Gordon Simpson wished to note that the zebra crossing on St Machar Drive / Bedford Road has been reported to ACC for repainting. Grampian Police added that the camera ordered to monitor speeding in Old Aberdeen is currently out of operation and away for repair.

NS introduced himself and his colleague Laura Russell and explained the remit of City Wardens. NS explained that they are currently based at Fredrick Street and encouraged local residents to contact them at citywardens@aberdeencity.gov.uk, on 01224 653310 or by visiting www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/citywardens should they have any concerns.

5. Robin Parker

RP explained that over the Easter break AUSA have moved most of their services from The Hub into the Butchart Centre. This includes AUSA office staff, Joblink, Volunteering, Info and Advice services, Gaudie, Aberdeen Student Radio, the societies room and – over the next few weeks – the second hand book shop. AUSA hope that the centre will be fully operational by September 2010, with plans to have space for dance/theatre groups, kitchen facilities and a café. RP concluded by inviting OACC to tour the centre once it is fully operational.

DM questioned whether the rehousing of AUSA would damage the vibrancy of The Hub. RP explained that he hopes AUSA will now form a stronger identity, with the university planning to rehouse several of its own services in The Hub.

CB asked whether there were any plans to apply for a drinks license. RP explained that AUSA have no plans at present to apply for a drinks license, though the arrangements with the university does allow cheese and wine style events. RP added that he hopes drinks will be permitted in the future – though this would only be tied to in-house theatre productions, reception events etc.

CK asked whether the centre was exclusively for students. RP expressed his hope that the centre will be open to the local community who will be welcome to use the café, social spaces and second hand bookshop.

6. Planning

Sunnybank Park Update – Hilda Meers explained that the steering group continue to meet and have several events planned: 24th April from 9.30 – 12.00 tours of the park and food foraging as part of the Sunnybank School Fayre; 8th May from 12.00 - 15.00 a bring and share picnic in the park. HM added that the group are applying for funding from the Climate Change Fund, Aberdeen Forward and received £500 from Cllr. John Stewart. The group have also contacted ACC's archaeology department in relation to the history of the park's well. Sunnybank Park will be discussed at an ACC committee meeting on 11th May The steering group will next meet on 26th April from 7pm at Sunnybank School.

CPZ – OACC have received a letter from David Wemyss, ACC, explaining that the CPZ will be discussed at a committee meeting on 31st May. JN explained that the meeting has been delayed as ACC are currently working through around 150 objections relating to the scheme.

Third Don Crossing – Gordon Mutch is unable to attend tonight's OACC meeting as he is attending a Civic Forum meeting relating to the Third Don Crossing. It was agreed that OACC must continue to be vigilant in relation to updates on the Third Don Crossing.

College Bounds – CB explained that ACC's Roads Department are keen to resolve the problem by creating a bus lane. NS added that this would then fall under the remit of City Wardens. JN reminded the Council that this option would require the resiting of a camera from another site within the city. AD added that the university supported the idea of bollards as a camera must be supported by resources to catch motorists illegally using the bus lane. However, the business plan attached to the proposal predicted revenue in the first year of £27,000 dropping to around £9,000 from year two, suggests a reduction in motorists using this route. CB added that ACC have explained that the bus lane would not be used by taxis but would permit some delivery vehicles. **ACTION:** NS to investigate what measures would be taken should a motorist be caught using the bus lane.

247 High Street – ACC have granted Chapter House planning permission to install skylight windows, with the intention to later apply for an HMO license. **ACTION:** DM to question the reasons behind ACC's decision.

91 High Street – Still waiting ACC's final decision on the proposed new signage for the bank. CK noted that he has no problem with the proposed signage and is keen to avoid supporting signage that looks twee or simply a pastiche of a historical area.

Lidl Supermarket – No further information.

New Applications – No new planning applications.

7. Treasurer's Report

Isobel Aitken noted that OACC have not received their grant for the year – it should arrive over the next few weeks. IA noted that OACC have spent £15 on Community Council Forum fees, £36 on data protection, £30 on book tokens for the auditor. The account previously stood at £311.50. The account now stands at £236.50.

8. Correspondence

- Two copies of the Development Plan Scheme 2 from Planning and Sustainable Development
- Two copies of the Newsletter on the Main Issues Report Consultation Responses

9. AOCB

- JN explained that SNP councillors have a free vote in relation to the Union Terrace Gardens proposal and was keen to hear OACC's view on the issue. JN added that Peacock have been granted an extension to their Arts Council funding and that the consultation showed around 55% of respondents to be against Ian Wood's proposal. CB noted recent reports of secret meetings between ACC and Ian Wood in relation to the proposal. CK highlighted the increased traffic Old Aberdeen should expect should Ian Wood's proposal be given the go ahead. CK added that the consultation process was clearly biased to support Ian Wood's proposal. CB noted that as the consultation returned a no vote in relation to the proposal, ACC couldn't now go against what the public want.

10. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

A request was made at OACC's AGM to discuss the day of the week on which OACC meetings are held. It was agreed that Tuesday seems to be satisfactory for most people and that changing the day may create more problems. DM added that local residents who are unable to attend meetings should contact the Council either by email, post, telephone or through the website. Points can be raised at OACC meetings, even if the resident is unable to attend in person.

OACC will next meet on Tuesday 18th May at 7.30pm at Old Aberdeen Town House.