

Old Aberdeen Community Council

Minutes of the meeting held on **Tuesday 20th October 2009** at the Town House, Old Aberdeen.

1. Present

Christine Burgess (Chair), Isobel Aitken (Treasurer), Dewi Morgan, Trevor Stack, Gordon Mutch, Clive Kempe, Katja Brittain, Hilda Meers.

Also Present

Robin Parker (Students' Association), Dauna Matheson, Omran Al-Mahtot, James Dyken, Andrea Salvona, Kate Baker, Brian Bamor, Angus Donaldson (University of Aberdeen), Cllr Jim Noble, Kevin Guyan (Secretary).

Apologies

Alan Mulvie (Aberdeen City Council), Shaunagh Kirby (University of Aberdeen), Christopher Gane (University of Aberdeen), Gordon Simpson (Grampian Police), Cllr Norman Collie, Abdul Latif, Cllr Richard Robertson, David Hutchison.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

Christine Burgess informed the Council that after the recent elections OACC now has 10 members, with the future possibility of co-opting a further 2 members.

September's minutes were passed, proposed by Trevor Stack, seconded by Hilda Meers.

It was agreed that issues relating to matters arising would be discussed under the respective agenda items.

3. University Update

Angus Donaldson informed the Council that the university is currently considering plans for Luthuli House (50/52 High Street). It is likely that the philosophy department will be relocated to the building after renovation. Katja Brittain asked whether there would be any work on the exterior of the building. AD confirmed that there will be work on the windows, roof etc of the building. CB asked whether the work would involve the closure of any roads. AD did not believe this to be likely.

AD highlighted a string of thefts across campus, notably the theft of lead from pipes and roofs.

AD added that the university's application for a change of land usage at the Hillhead Centre has been rejected by ACC. The university will now reconsider plans.

Andrea Szivona asked about the university's long term plans for the King's Pavilion. AD explained that numerous ideas were being considered; these include a café, gallery space, performance area etc. The building will be retained and it is hoped the space will remain public.

KB asked about the university's plans for the Butchart gymnasium. Robin Parker explained that the centre is currently being transformed into student space, which will soon house the services of Aberdeen University Student Association. RP briefly outlined the work and services of AUSA.

Dewi Morgan highlighted potential concern over Butchart becoming a licensed premise. AS added that, contrary to a report in the student newspaper Gaudie, the possibility of applying for a license was no longer being ruled out by AUSA. AS noted the potential problems associated with the change of use of Butchart, including an increase of students in the area and the likelihood of Butchart's rear entrance becoming a thoroughfare. RP clarified that, although AUSA are unlikely to seek a licence for Butchart over the next year, he cannot rule out the possibility. RP added that the key intention is to use the building for AUSA services, with any plans for a bar, café etc. secondary.

CB asked whether there was any further word on a potential site for a nursery. AD had nothing further to report.

CB asked whether the university plans to continue land-banking their site on Don Street. AD explained that this is the case.

4. Police Update

CB informed the Council that representatives from the police had been called-out on duty and would be unable to present their report. In their absence, CB distributed the latest crime figures and information on remaining safe over the winter months. Any further questions for the police should be emailed to either CB or Kevin Guyan.

5. Elections

CB provided further information on the aftermath of the recent community council elections, explaining that members had been recently emailed asking whether they wish to stand for a position within the Council. CB was nominated for Chair, no further nominations; proposed by Gordon Mutch, seconded by Isobel Aitken. IA was nominated for Treasurer, no further nominations; DM proposed, TS seconded. No nominations for Secretary, although AS offered her assistance should help be required. Simon Barker is happy to continue as Vice Chair. DM also floated the idea of someone undertaking a fundraising role, primarily to help support the costs of publicity and the distribution of flyers and newsletters. CK agreed to head representation on the Sunnybank Key Contacts group, HM is also keen and willing to assist representation on the group. KB agreed to take over the role of monitoring planning applications from CK.

CB informed the Council of a meeting held by ACC for new Community Councillors on 25 November, further information would be distributed nearer the time.

Civic Forum – DM was happy to stand down from his role on the Civic Forum. TS also informed the Council that he will be away for the first half of 2010 and will therefore be unable to attend meetings. KB was happy to attend in place of DM and GM was happy to substitute for TS.

Community Council Forum – IA expressed her willingness to continue attending. DM will also now attend meetings of the Community Council Forum. It was suggested that members attending meetings on behalf of OACC should report back at the next meeting. **ACTION:** Civic Forum and Community Council Forum to be added to future agendas.

6. Planning Applications and CPZ Update

DM updated the Council on a meeting between members of OACC and Doug Ritchie and Ross Scaife, ACC. Please see attached minutes titled "MOM Sept 2009 – CPZ 30Sept09" for further information.

TS shared with the Council his observations relating to the apparent problem of parking in the CPZ area. He noted streets that appear to have little issue with parking between the times covered by the scheme, 10am and 4pm, and questioned whether there will be any benefit for residents. DM added that everyone should observe the supposed problem of parking on their own streets to see whether the CPZ will be of any benefit.

CB asked when the university plan to commence their charges. AD explained that new regulations are now in place, step one of a two-step process. He added that charges would not begin until the CPZ is in place, as both schemes must work together. AS questioned whether there were any plans for the university to introduce parking barriers, perhaps enabling students travelling for further afield priority parking over local car users.

HM expressed concern over the possibility that a key criticism of the CPZ, the flat rate charges, may not be fully covered under the consultation process as this issue lies with elected members and not the roads department.

IA asked whether there were any plans to add parking spaces on the High Street. DM explained that only Don Street and Cheyne Street seem to gain a small amount of parking spaces.

CB explained that once OACC receives copies of the CPZ plan, the plan is to make the information as widely available in the local community as possible, perhaps hosting an open evening for people to study the plans.

Jim Noble clarified some points that had been raised over the course of the discussion. He explained that the times the scheme will be in operation would be able to be adjusted to best fit the situation. It is also unlikely, he added, that ACC would contribute towards a concessionary charges or a period of reduced charges, as this has not been the case with other CPZs in the city. He concluded by raising the problem of the chicanes on College Bounds, explaining that he has discovered that in order to exchange the chicanes/signage for increased parking bays, the speed limit must be 30mph or more. The current speed limit on College Bounds is currently 20mph.

7. Sunnybank

CB reported on the recent ACC meeting to discuss the future of the Outdoor Centre and noted that Alan Mulvie, ACC, is to submit a report to the next meeting on 12 November. It was reluctantly agreed at the most recent ACC meeting that the cost to repair the fire damage to the pavilion may be too much, with the pavilion most likely set to be demolished to satisfy health and safety concerns. CB added that Grampian Police also believe the building will have to be demolished.

Dauna Matheson asked whether anyone had been able to source the park's title deeds. The possibility of purchasing a copy of the deeds was discussed, although it was stated that regardless of what the title deeds say they will hold less weight after the 2004 abolition of feudal superiority. It was argued that although ACC own Sunnybank Park, it may have been granted with conditions attached. DMA noted that the local community must be the driving force behind any future proposals for the park, taking into consideration that ACC are unable to provide any further funding. **ACTION:** CK and DMA to meet to discuss action relating to the future of the park.

AD explained to the Council that, should the area be deemed surplus to requirements by ACC, the university are still keen to investigate the possibility of siting the nursery in the park.

JN clarified the situation regarding greenspace: any non-sports building on greenspace or application to switch the land usage requires an alternative space to be sourced in the surrounding area.

CK added that he believes the Mosque has also expressed an interest in using the park for recreation events etc.

8. Planning

CK notified the Council of plans to build a three-story hotel beside the Brig O' Don on King Street. However, as the date for objections has passed, any action relating to the proposal may be difficult. **ACTION:** the visibility of the hotel from the river and its proximity to the nature reserve to be investigated.

9. Treasurer's Report

IA informed the Council that there is currently £3245.97 in the OACC account. From this, £1865.00 is to be deducted for the repainting of the Seaton Park train and around £120.00 for Mackenzie Print. After these deductions, around £1080.00 remains in the OACC account.

10. **Newsletter and Website**

DM explained that he is using different software for the website, with any comments welcome.

DM added that a newsletter would be published when it is agreed that there is a significant number of issues to report.

11. **Correspondence**

- Invitation to attend a Remembrance Day event at Aberdeen Art Gallery.
- Information on the Association of Scottish Community Councils' Annual Conference.

12. **AOCB**

- DM shared ideas on adapting OACC's management of accounts. As DM did not share the proposed changes with IA prior to the meeting, it was felt that it would be best to postpone any discussion until November's meeting. **ACTION:** IA to consider DM's changes to the management of accounts.
- TS updated the Council on the progress of the Local Development Plan's Main Issue Report. There will be a meeting on the subject at the Town and County Hall on 9 November. Any comments on the subject should be forwarded to TS.
- CB asked whether there had been any progress relating to the Seaton Park Initiative. JN explained that the project was not granted funding at the Fairer Scotland meeting; however, a final decision has been deferred until the next meeting of the group.

13. **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of OACC will be on Tuesday 17 November at the Old Aberdeen Town House. After discussion, it was agreed that the December meeting would be held on 8 December at Dunbar Hall, should a booking be available.