

Old Aberdeen Community Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 9th December 2008 at the Chaplaincy Centre, 25 High Street, Old Aberdeen.

1. Present

Christine Burgess (Chair), Isobel Aitken (Treasurer), Graham Abraham, Katja Brittain, Trevor Stack, Clive Kempe, Dewi Morgan.

Also Present

Shaunagh Kirby (Aberdeen University), Hamish Mackay, Craig Adam (Kilau Coffee), Eion Henderson (Kilau Coffee), PC Steven McKenzie (Grampian Police), Cllr Jim Noble, Kevin Guyan (Secretary).

Apologies

Simon Barker (Vice Chair), Chris Gane (Aberdeen University), David Hutchison, Duncan McKay (AUSA), Cllr Richard Robertson, Cllr Norman Collie, Gordon Mutch, Morag Paterson, Angus Donaldson (Aberdeen University, Keith Paterson (ACC).

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

November's minutes were passed.

Christine Burgess introduced Eion Henderson and Craig Adam, Kilau Coffee, to the Council and added that their proposed coffee shop will be a welcome addition to the High Street.

Hamish Mackay updated the Council on the application to the Fairer Scotland Fund for money to undertake a report of Seaton Park. The application has been unsuccessful, with the fund viewing the proposal as not a priority. HM added that OACC should consider adopting the "friends" model followed by Duthie Park and resubmit an application for the next round of funding. **ACTION:** HM to resubmit application.

Jim Noble highlighted that the toilets situated on the High Street were discussed at the most recent ACC Central Committee meeting. ACC now plan to sell-off the toilets.

3. Police Report

Steve McKenzie reported that over the 6-week period there has been a rise in attempted break-ins to motor vehicles. This is possibly due to the high value of goods being left in vehicles over the festive period. He

added that there is a need to remind drivers to keep cars parked in well-lit areas and to not keep Christmas gifts in vehicles overnight.

Isobel Aitken raised the issue of vandalism to cars, particularly on roads between the city centre and student accommodation. The vandalism is most likely caused by people walking home from the city centre late at night.

SM explained to the Council that he is moving to Stonehaven and that this will be his final meeting with OACC. He added that he has always felt welcome at meeting and expressed thanks for support over the past few years. CB expressed thanks on behalf of OACC for SM's work and wished him good luck in his new position.

ACTION: CB/KG email Ed, Grampian Police, to see whom best to contact for future OACC meetings.

4. University Update

Shaunagh Kirby highlighted that preliminary work is expected to begin on the construction of the new library at the end of January 2009. This will include the construction of access roads and destruction of a section of the Queen Mother Library. Construction of the library should begin in the spring. SK also explained that a small number of parking spaces would be lost to the work in January.

CB asked for further clarification on the relationship between the construction of the library and the Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ).

ACTION: SK to email Angus Donaldson asking for the latest information.

ACTION: JN to investigate the situation between ACC and Aberdeen University regarding the CPZ.

The Word Festival is set for 15th-17th May 2009.

Aberdeen University were recently involved with the launch of the book *The Lost City*, focussing on the history of Old Aberdeen.

After a substantial amount of work improving Elphinstone Hall, graduations have taken place in the building for the first time in over 100 years.

IA asked whether any information was available on the creation of a garden in the grounds in front of Elphinstone Hall, expressing the need for OACC to be notified/involved of the process from the very beginning. OACC may be concerned over the potential loss of trees in the area and the aesthetics of the design. JN added that the creation of a baroque garden was mentioned at the book launch of *Lost City*.

ADDENDUM - Angus Donaldson clarified the following points by telephone on Monday 15th December:

CPZ - It is the "enabling" work on the library project that is to start soon, i.e. the slip road to the Hub, and the demolition of the single storey extension to the QML. A handful of parking spaces will be lost and the contractor is still to be appointed. The main work will begin in April. With regard to the on-going talks with the City on the Section 75 agreement, it's still stalemate.

Gardens - There are two projects under consideration, neither with funding as yet.

The "baroque" garden would be at the back of 50 - 52 College Bounds, the former SRC building. The Estates Section does have a scheme for that one. There is potential to open up and access the garden down the north side of Luthuli House.

The project Charles Jenck has been linked with is indeed one for King's Lawn. Professor Booth, with his remit on art, is the University contact. The lawn is apparently seen as rather dull and a new vision is being developed. Angus has not seen anything for this scheme.

5. High Street Coffee Shop

Eion Henderson and Craig Adam introduced themselves and explained that their company has secured the lease for the shop adjacent to the bakers on the High Street. They both currently run Kilau Coffee Shop on Little Belmont Street and updated the Council on their plans:

- The shop will have two floors and a garden, with the ground floor focussing on take-away food.
- The shop will hopefully be open from 8am to 8/9pm. This will all depend on the level of custom. It is also planned that the shop will remain open at the weekend and outwith term-time.
- There is currently a lot of building work to be completed, with it hoped that the ground floor of the shop will be open by March 2009.

HM asked whether the café would be licensed. EH explained there are currently no plans to license the café.

Clive Kempe asked whether the café would run art exhibitions and music performances, similar to Kilau Coffee. EH hoped that this would be possible as they plan to follow the same model as Kilau.

OACC explained that there is currently a shortage of facilities for visitors to the area, with plans for the proposed café sounding ideal. OACC members wished EH and CA good luck with their venture.

6. Planning Update

CK highlighted plans to remove trees in Cruickshank Gardens and at Tillydrone House. This follows the advice of experts so seems wise.

CK also highlighted an application from Graham Abraham to construct a twin garage on his land at Netherdon. GA explained that the garage will be used to house two vehicles and residents have until 22nd December to consider the plans.

b) Path repairs

GA explained that someone is set to visit soon regarding the matter. The process is ongoing.

7. Controlled Parking Zone

JN noted that the informal consultation process has been approved, with the CPZ now entering a formal consultation process. Questions were raised over the bus parking bays at St Machar Cathedral and the operation of the CPZ between 10am and 4pm only. Although the operation times can later be reviewed, JN felt that facilities in Old Aberdeen are also used outwith these times (ie. the library).

CB explained to the Council that the formal consultation process concludes on 16th December. Katja Brittain added that local residents are yet to be informed of the formal consultation.

JN also updated the Council on the CPZ report, with 49% of local residents against the proposal and 47% for the proposal. This represents a turnout of 16%, surprisingly high for consultation. Dewi Morgan expressed annoyance that the report omits written comments from local residents.

ACTION: CB to write a letter to ACC expressing OACC's views on the CPZ, including questions on who the stakeholders are, the little amount of time to comment on the formal consultation, the omission of written comments from the report, the operation times of the CPZ and possibility of widening times to include sporting and religious events.

CB asked whether the new sporting facilities at Seaton have adequate parking spaces. HM explained that 236 spaces have been created, considered adequate for users but possibly too little to accommodate spectators.

8. Neighbourhood Community Action Plan

Keith Patterson, ACC, and CB plan to meet in January to finalise the Action Plan. The Council also agreed that Old Aberdeen's future intention to apply for UNESCO World Heritage status should be included in the Action Plan. Although a very long and complex process, it was felt that this is something the area should aim to achieve. **ACTION:** World Heritage Status to be included in January's agenda.

9. Treasurer's Report

OACC's accounts currently stand at £5584.80, with a need to distribute some of this money to local projects.

- The industrial dishwasher has been purchased for Dunbar Street Hall. The purchase and installation costs £1770. IA noted that this is the second gift awarded to the Hall.
- David Robertson has approached OACC for a donation to help restart the Old Town House chimes. This contribution was deferred to January's meeting. **ACTION:** add Old Town House to chimes to January agenda.
- DM submitted an invoice for £159.26, covering the cost of the newsletter and website.
- Trevor Stack asked whether any play equipment in Seaton Park required repair or upgrading. CB also suggested the play area near Bedford Road. **ACTION:** KG to contact Alexander Mess, Sunnybank Neighbourhood Network Services, to gather more information.

CB also proposed to support ACC's plan of pushing-back the payments of the Small Improvement Grants to April 2009 and a reduction in the annual amount of £3000. These moves should assist ACC with efficiency saving. **ACTION:** KG to convey decision to Dave Valentine, ACC.

10. Correspondence

- (a) Consultation document for CPZ.
- (b) Information on Christmas recycling arrangements for Old Aberdeen.
- (c) Consultation on Seaton Park primary traffic management proposals.
- (d) Information on bus stop infrastructure upgrades on King Street and School Road.
- (e) Letter on options for Aberdeen City local development plan.

- (f) Email from Charlie Gordon MSP opening his Regulation of Bus Services Bill to consultation.
- (g) Aberdeen University Student Association 2007-2008 annual review.
- (h) Invitation to Planning Aid Scotland event in February 2009.
- (i) NESTRAN's Regional Transport Strategy.
- (j) Notes on meeting of CC representatives and budget proposals for Culture, Heritage and Communities services.

11. AOCB

TS has agreed to be co-opted onto the Council. The decision was proposed by DM and seconded by IA. The motion passed.

JN updated the Council on the bushes across from the Mosque: they are owned by ACC and will be trimmed over the winter.

DM showed the Council a copy of the Culter Courier, a 32-page community newsletter with a substantial amount of advertisements. DM expressed the need for contributors for the next edition of Auld Toon News. Kevin Guyan asked how often the OACC newsletter is published. DM explained that it is currently printed once a year.

GA showed the council a copy of the Old Aberdeen Conservation report. DM highlighted that the report is available on the ACC website.

12. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at 7.30pm on Tuesday 20th January 2009 at the Old Aberdeen Town House.