

Old Aberdeen Community Council

Tuesday 15th October 2013 at 7.30 pm
The Old Aberdeen Townhouse

Agenda

1. Present and Apologies

Present: James Martin, Isobel Aitken, Dewi Morgan, Gordon Mutch, Cllr Ross Grant, Cllr Ramsay Milne, Cllr Jim Noble, Lekky,

Apologies: Abdul Laht, C Burgess, George Wood

2. Minute of September Meeting and Matters Arising

GM – raised HMO overprovision with Councillors. Why couldn't something be done for our area? DM: Asked ACC for list on what is available HMO wise in OACC – 138 HMO in our district (Old Aberdeen) not including the student blocks themselves. 1300 spaces from university; not enough. Cllr Noble; only relevant to 3 bedroom upward. Agreement there is over provision. GM felt that, at the planning meeting, the issue was kicked into the long grass until 2015. Letters are not affecting decisions.

Neil will come to the January meeting to discuss the Town House.

Lekky; Seaton park displays are £2000 per board excluding VAT. Simply do not have that type of cash. DM we would be looking for £15,000 to £20,000 for all boards.

Minutes proposed by JM, seconded by DM.

3. Police Update

16 crimes since last meeting. 1 relates to an attack at the BP garage involving bikers.

Unrelated to this area and not a local issue of concern. Of the other 15, 13 are acquisitive crimes; thefts of laptops etc and unsecured properties. In neighbouring areas, shed thefts/garage thefts are an issue. Students have had no assaults, but

damaged properties. Theft from University properties; unsecured properties. Police are continuing to build presence on facebook, twitter etc to raise awareness. Minor vandalism. Reports of misuse of traffic lights on college bounds but monitoring of the issue raised nothing. Will repeat this monitoring later on. No questions.

4. Update(s) from Aberdeen City Council Elected Members

Asked if anything is going on in the area? Cllr RG: absence of councillors is wider across all CC's therefore In Tillydrone, similar actions to OACC in having requests for cllr attendance. Cllr RG suggests attendance to be an opportunity to quiz councillors on issues in the area. Issues raised can be fed back as a rolling issue to see action taken on concerns. RG raised third crossing and how councillors are working with residents on the upcoming work. Been working with Tom Rodgers to raise queries and concerns.

Discussed landscaping issues with local residents; to hide the road if preferred? Has also worked with locals regarding third crossing issues with noise. Encourages Tillydrone and OACC to consult and discuss their issues. GM – now it is going ahead, people are accepting of it and now just want it to go ahead. Cllr RG “we fought as hard as we could, now we need to make sure area is protected as much as possible”. Cllr RM; Closure of Bedford Road is a concern regarding lack of awareness...other CC's were not aware of closure and want out of it. IA: if Bedford Road gets closed OACC will have access issues. Cllr JN; a bus lane will be in place to ensure access to Sunnybank – the full road will not be closed entirely. Cllr RG – will ask Tom about the issues and will invite Tom to a meeting early in the new year in February. Cllr RM: preliminary work has now begun on the architectural aspects. Cllr RG offered presentation on plans for the Wallace Tower being taken forward by the development trust. This would be appreciated by the OACC and will be diarised for early next year.

Cllr RM – school estates; biggest impact on St Machars Academy as feeder schools are now changed. Another upcoming change to school estates will explore catholic schools. St Peters school extension is going well. OACC stands firm in taking St Peters forward and would oppose any negative proposals.

Cllr JN – Nothing to report as everything else covered by other Cllrs. Lots of lobbying for schools affected by changes. Still concerned about St Peters.

DM – asked about the toilet block in OACC. Advised it still belongs to council and – per Cllr JM - will be back on the market soon. Issue of planning process raised: Cllr RM – council cannot retain staff and we are pushing Scottish Government to alter plans and employee fees to combat this. Cllr JN – same issues with nursery on the Spital.

5. Bridgett Turnbull

- Informed OACC her role is to advise on planning applications.
- Significant amount of Scotland's GDP is through tourism; 47,650 listed buildings in Scotland.
- Old Aberdeen; 8% A listed, 72% B – above national average.
- Also deals with small scale changes to households.
- Conservation areas are designated by local planning authorities; not national organisations.
- Conservation areas are not only about listed buildings.
- Old Aberdeen has not been reviewed in 20 years.
- Currently going through stakeholder consultations; OACC, Heritage Society, University of Aberdeen etc.
- IA – do stakeholders know what is being said by other stakeholders? Yes, these can be known in the final papers.

- Conservation areas are not static and need to adapt to change.
 - Questions:
 - DM: when will a public consultation be open? A - For our feedback, we want OACC response drafted by Christmas.
 - GM: our industrial heritage seems to have been destroyed over the years; don't think it has been looked for or fought for over the years. DM: That is the larger picture of our thinking, over the years the city council has diluted their involvement in controlling conservation areas. Any objections are just omitted. DM feels there is no interest to hold onto what is in the conservation area ie. Spread of plastic windows. Answer: we revised advice notes earlier this year; we do set out our position clearly. Sometimes it isn't an issue on which to speak on the design of a specific aspect. DM/GM; no need to write in anymore as letters are not effective. Lekky: and so what is the point of the conservation area if it does not have any strength? So what is it we are preserving? Answer: conservation areas are much better covered in Scotland and applications need to be submitted for changes/windows. DM: planning applications do not consider the merits of conservation or the materials proposed (UPVC). Answer: on that aspect ,we work with Design and Conservation team and we are held accountable. DM – doesn't feel like objections are being read; feeling of cynicism. GM – we are asking our councillors to have a closer look at what is going on in our area. Lekky: the traffic lights mar the area of the High Street; they don't work and the street furniture is such an important part of the environment. Answer:

would find it very helpful if OACC could give a list of things you want to see addressed in the area. Lecky: any opportunity for a grade A “core” that *must* be protected?. IA – issue of misleading furniture at Meston Walk due to volume of furniture in this area. Simplify it; too much stuff!

- OACC will put together a list of potential items that we would like looked at.

6. OACC representation at Remembrance Sunday

We were asked if we want to attend. GM will attend as our official representative at this year.

7. Newsletter and Survey

- Bridgett Turnbull has kindly agreed to contribute to our newsletter.
- Offered opportunity to the Councillors to contribute
- Deadline of end of next week – 24/25 October
 - HMO issues will be included
 - Latest planning issues within 6 months will be included
 - JM will get article from the Waste Services
 - Heritage issue re conservation. Is there anything we can put together to contribute to Bridgetts article? GM: unsure of this. DM: need for resident feedback; need to consult with residents.
 - Lekky: article from Neil Curtis about change of use of TownHouse to a museum? DM/IA confirmed this is to happen.
 - DM and JM to discuss opportunity to survey residents.

8. Planning Matters

- UPVC windowns in Cottown of Balgownie.
- Seaton Park; awaiting feedback from SEPA re conversion of toilets
- Duncan Rice Library: two sculptures. Dates extended as council planning did not follow procedures. So have had to re-apply. DM has re-written to clarify our stance re the lights.
- Window replacement on Don Street.
- Spital conversion to HMO. We objected and this was approved unconditionally.
- St peter Street development. Refused. Appeal taken to Scottish Government.
Expect a response by end of the month

9. Treasurer's Report

Nothing to report. Nothing in. Nothing out.

10. Reports of Other Meetings

JM and IA updated OACC on the CCF meeting and extraordinary meeting. Queries raised on the impartiality of Council Officers in their interpretation of information to councillors re travellers at Bridge of Don. Cllr RM: Sheriffs advised they will only go in on Fridays on traveller issues. DM: what has happened to plans to develop a by-law? Cllr RM; awaiting response from Scottish Government. JM: understand need for better partnership with Shire/Govt but what is ACC doing? Cllr RM: we don't have any powers! Consultation is still on-going. Cllr JN: Looking like of four sites, only one may be possible and just isn't enough. The by-law would not apply to private sites like the Union Square issue.

Lekky: Friends of Seaton Park meeting; nothing new to report on.

11. Correspondence

Nothing

12. Date and Venue for November meeting

19th November 2013 in Townhouse. 7.30pm

13. AOCB

- Cllr JN: Mosque on Nelson Street...been passed as a community hall but is same use class so can be used as a mosque. Envisage a premise for about 1000 people and plans do not accommodate this due to insufficient fire escapes etc. Organisers are to hold a fund raiser for next month. Cllr RM: design on website is promising but they will need to make amendments.
- Cllr RM; hoping to move forward with Aberdeen Heat and Power. New energy centre in Tillydrone. Very early days. Will get bigger in the future to cover the 7 multi's.
- IA – Angus has said he would like to come to our meeting but for various reasons has not yet made it. Professor Rodgers is out of the Country. Shaunagh Kirby unavailable.

Meeting formally closed at 9.20