

Old Aberdeen Community Council

7.30 pm on Tuesday 18th February in Old Aberdeen Townhouse

Minutes

1. Present and apologies
Present: Dewi Morgan (chair), Trevor Stack (minutes), Isobel Aitken, David Craik, Lekky Shepherd, Steven Berry, Elizabeth Hepburn, Local Resident, Ian Leask, Louise Henrard (AUSA), Alan Wight (UoA), Daniel Boal (P&J)
Apologies: Gordon Mutch, Eric Kiltie, Teresa Harwood, Daniel Warren, Cllr. Dell Henrickson and Cllr. Michael Hutchison
2. Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising
3. UoA update (Alan Wight)
 - a. Proposed Johnston Halls redevelopment (for completion by Sep 2022, assuming planning permission): relocation of Business School into a single site home, including
 - demolition of Johnston Central Block (where previously Refectory) to make way for new 2-storey Business Pavilion, and remodelling courtyard, though conserving green space where possible (only 2 trees to be replaced) as well as granite setts
 - creation of 215 offices in 6 existing Johnstone towers (previously student accommodation), making use of sound physical structure and updating to make it energy-efficient, following ACC indications on exterior materials (in shades of grey), with existing brick finish in interior
 - adding 'bridge' between central block and 6 towers, and opening access between blocks along corridors where mainly offices, with breakout spaces
 - b. Proposed accessible route for wheelchair users across campus (work to start in summer 2020, assuming planning permission)
 - route along Regent Walk, around corner by Taylor A Building, behind New King's alongside Old Brewery, across High Street and along Douglas Lane, crossing Elphinstone Road (alternatives routes were considered but ruled out, e.g. ACC deemed pavement along Meston Road to be too narrow)
 - proposed material is tinted concrete – designed to be visible to users - with stone inserts
 - with regard to Douglas Lane
 - Local Resident notes that UoA is proposing to smooth granite setts across High Street, and asks whether might be possible to smooth setts along Douglas Lane, retaining character of early modern road, rather than inserting flagstones taken from elsewhere on campus, as currently proposed (similar to Clark's Lane)
 - LS replies that smoothed setts would look modern (like Belmont Street) and also unlikely to suit wheelchairs, thus flagstones are reasonable compromise
 - c. Aberdeen 2040 Strategy (for next 20 years): booklet was distributed
4. AUSA reps update (if available)
 - a. UCU will be on strike during next month
 - b. Sabbatical Officers elections – AUSA has advised students not to post on High Street
 - c. Granite City Challenge coming up on 15 March, with activities on campus

5. Seaton Park update (LS)
 - Cakefest is coming up, box in ornamental area is being replaced, and Himalayan Birch tree has been planted to commemorate Christine Burgess, late OACC member
6. Planning issues (DM)
 - Request for volunteer to take over the Planning Officer role
 - Proposal to replace front door of 6 The Orchard, Spital Walk with different colour and style: OACC agrees to object on grounds that, although built in 1990s, all the other front doors on the block are the same, and that allowing this one would lead to others being changed, losing uniformity
7. 'Community Vision for Old Aberdeen' (DM)
 - Progress made in
 - designing wayfinder maps, and considering where to place them (DM proposes to send the map to Planning to get feedback, prior to seeking permission)
 - considering placing of public benches and bike racks, for example on each side of entrance to Town House, and in open space outside St Mary's
8. City Councillors' update, including:
 - Update on missing College Bounds bus gate camera (AMcL): AMcL has not responded
 - Repair of Town House clock (mis-striking and light out): pending
9. Treasurer's report: no issues
10. Reports of other meetings attended & forthcoming meetings, opportunities etc.
 - City's Health & Social Care Partnership - new Locality Empowerment Groups: Community Councils being invited
11. Date and venue for next meeting: 7.30 pm on 17th March in Old Aberdeen Townhouse
12. Any representations from members of the public and AOB
 - DC reports an increase in double-decker buses along High Street, though First Aberdeen had previously said they would not use them
 - IL asks why street lights around Mounthooly Roundabout are being replaced, since causing congestion
 - Local Resident notes that term-time no. 20 bus timetable starts in September in first week of teaching, rather than Freshers' Week, when many new students will be needing more regular service