

Old Aberdeen Community Council

Tuesday 17th January 2017 at 7.30 pm

Old Aberdeen Townhouse

Minutes of Meeting

1. Present and apologies

Present: Gordon Mutch (Chairman), Alan Wight, Dewi Morgan, Ronald Leith, Danny McKay (P&J) , Cllr. Ramsay Milne, Cllr. Michael Hutchison, PC Daniel Baird (Police Scotland), Cllr. Jim Noble, Guy Ingerson, Emily Norton (AUSA/minutes), Ronald Leith, George Wood

Apologies: Isobel Aitken, Lorraine Grant, Cllr. Ross Grant, Lekky Shepherd

2. Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising

Minutes approved: Proposed Gordon Mutch, seconded Dewi Morgan

3. Police update

9 crimes reported

Theft of bikes ongoing at university, situation is being monitored.

Incidences of assault, threatening and abusive behaviour.

Housebreaking in the Spital area – charges are being brought.

Patrols at Seaton Park ongoing. Toilets target for vandals and this is being monitored.

Indecent exposures – no further incidents. Can't confirm if person responsible has been caught.

PC Baird was asked who enforces double yellows. DB confirms this is the city Wardens. Zig-zags enforced by police.

New inspector at Tillydrone – Mark Stephen. Email address to be forwarded and he is invited along to future meetings.

4. UoA update

Not much to add post-holidays.

The clock doctor was on site today to work on the clock in the Chapel tower. The chimes have not rung for many years but hopefully will be functioning soon.

Building refurbishments ongoing around the University

Street lighting on pavement still not working – council responsibility.

Hillhead pitches - planning application to be withdrawn and reissued (application was premature).

DM noted that the eating area in the Hub has changed around and added an extra outlet.

5. AUSA reps update

Refreshers week underway, successful fayre held on Monday 16th and 24 hour hockey match underway tonight.

Awaiting reply from Climate Challenge Fund re: Community Gardens.

Still campaigning for the university to cut the rent in student halls, and also working on a guarantor scheme for international and low-income students.

Community outreach work to be undertaken with Powis Community Centre, looking for student volunteers to help with homework clubs.

More job cuts anticipated in new term and 'Stop the Job Cuts' campaign will be responding. Continuing to work with UCU on protecting jobs and quality of education.

'We Get It' campaign launching in the coming weeks to tackle sexual harassment in the city.

Lobbying university to ensure they don't opt in to the Teaching Excellence Framework, which seeks to further marketise education and allow institutions to further increase fees for students from the rest of the UK.

Shared Planet Café will be open again from Wednesday 25th January in the Chaplaincy between 12 and 3 pm, all are welcome to come along.

6. Seaton Park update

Quiet time over winter, concentrating on Cakefest 4 on Sat March 18.

Parkfest 3 coming up on 10 Sept.

Monitoring progress of 70,000 crocuses planted – they are doing well. Looking into roping off the area to protect them.

Planting of anniversary beech and fruit trees in final planning stages.

Mr Therm coming back in near future.

Vandalism of playpark equipment brought up - Steven Shaw aware. More graffiti has also appeared in last 2-3 weeks.

7. HMO Consultation.

4th report since 2012. OACC received draft before Christmas and Community Council Forum invited to meet author. Reasonable reception on issues. The change from census output area to neighbourhoods as determining area was raised, and it was accepted that neighbourhood is an inappropriate area, and has been changed back.

Not trying to restrict – but localities where there are 40-50% HMO are overprovided. Legislation wants council to be sure that restriction will not jeopardise number of homes – not wanting to make those currently in HMOs homeless, but want to stop already overprovided areas from having more.

Not unfulfilled need for accommodation currently. Desire as opposed to need for HMOs on particular streets. No reason for young people not to live a little further away.

Aberdeen CC has submitted a written response but DM has also requested opportunity to make representations to the council committee.

Comparison to Dundee model – different percentages depending on stress of area. 10% for everywhere suggested for simplicity. Radius system preferred by some, but more work for Council Officers. COA simplest possible way, and least variation of lows and highs compared to neighbourhood. OACC are encouraging people to respond to the report.

Next step – committee meeting 24th 2pm. DM to attend representing OACC and Sunnybank CC and Community Council Forum may also submit.

RM asked if terms of report going to be changed. DM confirmed that neighbourhood as area is expected to be changed to COA.

Complaints about cost of HMO licensing led to reduction. Pot of funds from HMO licensing has gone from £100,000 to £80,000, possible further £20,000 loss. Charges to be kept same for HMOs, therefore charges will inevitably have to be raised again. Council need to ensure enough to cover service. RM states that there should not be a bank of funds, and HMO licensing should run at a balance.

With new HMOs coming in, previously officers spent time going round, bringing up HMO standard and did not have time to police suspected illegal HMOs, and check renewals. Extra officers previously required funding.

8. Planning issues

Granite factory – approved with controls – lane is publicly owned, and would be inappropriate for this to be shut off.

6 Cheyne road – Pending.

113 High Street – Replacement of 3 attic windows and addition of rooflight – no longer extra window.

Hillhead playing fields.

St Peters nursery – Happy with development brief, but desire for affordable housing or council housing.

BT Engineering Froghall terrace location – large HMO building rejected – OACC had commented on overprovision. Appeal – site inspection of appeal area on 10 March at 10.30.

Reporter – Robert Huntly

Froghall, Powis and Sunnybank CC volunteered for site visit.

St Peter's school – additional meeting of Education committee arranged during February – date TBC. Recommendation to be made due to urgency of issue.

Document to be released shortly.

Consultation – if there is one new school then it will be an imperfect solution for at least one of the schools and probably both. One solution for the present overcrowding problems of St Peter's and the future capacity problems at Riverbank is not a good one. Financially for the city council it is desirable for a one school solution but this premise (from the start) has made the consultation a farce.

9. City Councillors' update

JN – Fairly quiet due to Christmas period, next week's housing meeting – consultation not delivered, but HMO report, education meeting – St Peter's/Riverbank issue, nothing unusual anticipated. Council elections 2017. Extra councillor in George St/Harbour ward and Cove/Kincorth.

RM – Many students not registered to vote, and therefore underrepresentation in area. Buses changing and out for consultation. Broad St to be closed sometime in February until summer, therefore buses may take longer. New service 16 from Guild Street – Dyce. 17/17a – now to go through Donside/Mugiemoss Road, so will be serving new communities. Airport service 27 being withdrawn, 117 to take over. 8/9 now to pass Tesco. Generally positive changes.

MH – Kings Crescent Lane, email forwarded to Stephen Booth, waiting on response. Bus gate report moved back to next CHNI meeting. GM asked if anything is likely to arise. MH states that no draft papers seen yet. Sunnybank School – Zig-zag lines repainted, issues with stopping outside school. Barriers hopefully to put in to stop children running into road.

10. Treasurer's report

No money spent over last month.

£100.08 invoice for web hosting– Feb 2016 & £16.78 for domain renewal to be paid to DM.

£443.88 remaining but £327.02 after paying these two invoices.

11. Reports of other meetings attended & forthcoming meetings.

Attended:

Planning subgroup on HMO.

DM attended planning aid workshop 14th – useful for new starts.

CC planning subgroup – Spoke about HMO consultation and local development plan.

Forthcoming:

HMO report at CH&I committee 24 Jan

Meeting re: AWPR 30 Jan

Community Council forum 6 Feb

Local history conference 4 March

Planning appeal – BT depot Froghall Terrace 10 March

12. Date and venue for next meeting

Tuesday 21st February

13. AOCB

Don St exit onto King Street – when many cars trying to get onto King Street, traffic lights don't change long enough. DM wrote to council Roads Dept to suggest double lanes, but lack of funds prevents this. With Seaton events continuing, this will need to be addressed. Police can attend events such as Parkfest for assistance if given notice.

Resident points out that there is regularly 3.5 minute wait no matter what kind of traffic.

Scottish Govt planning consultation – Follows on from earlier document. Closes 4 April.

Supplementary guidance – Format different from before and changes made, making reading documents difficult. Minor differences hard to spot. For example, section on windows and doors no longer makes reference to conservation areas, changing focus.

Local development plan – due to be accepted on 30th, open to objections. Main issues report to come out November. Opportunity to flag up issues such as areas to be protected from building houses.

GM asked if downturn in business in Aberdeen affected these plans and if a change from 5 year plan to 10 year plan may make more sense although notes that 5 years allows councillors to have impact on area.

RM points out there would be a loss of officer experience for 10 year length. Unit specialties. City plan had not been renewed for 19 years and this is unacceptable. Centralisation of local plans.

Discussion on advantages of 5 vs 10 year plans – incremental changes not as part of plan. RM to comment.

Community planning – RM gives St Ives as example – not able to build second homes, community trusts.

Questions raised about whether HMOs will come under this, and whether community management group to run parallel to CCs or integrated with them.

20 bus route – disrupted again due to Schoolhill closure.

Business rates being reassessed in city.