

# Old Aberdeen Community Council

7.30 pm on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2018  
in Old Aberdeen Town House

## Minutes Rev.1

### Present and apologies

Present: Gordon Mutch (chair), Isobel Aitken,  
Cllr. Michael Hutchison, Cllr. Alex McLean  
Alan Wight (UoA), PC Barclay, PC Allan,  
Ben Reid (P&J), Ronald Leith, Eric Kiltie, Resident A,  
Kristian Smith (ACC Development management)  
Shona Mutch (minutes)

Apologies: Dewi Morgan, Teresa Harwood, Cllr. Ross Grant,  
Cllr. Dell Henrickson

### Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising

Correction to apologies, Cllr Michael Hutchison had submitted his apologies, Lewis McLeod (AUSA) not Lewis MacDonald.

UoA update, a request was made to include the fact the University advised that there were 200 empty rooms at present and therefore no requirement for accommodation at Johnstone /Crombie Halls.

Minutes approved by Isobel Aitken and seconded by Gordon Mutch

### Police update

Several incidents of minor crimes in April but no major crimes had been committed. An assault within a home in May, person has been apprehended.

Traffic lights at the St Machar Drive, Tillydrone Avenue junction are causing concern. ACC have changed the road markings for cars travelling east from Great Northern Road to King Street, left hand lane is now left turn only. No prior warning for this, the final marking on the road surface has been changed. Vehicles are still continuing to drive straight ahead from left hand lane and there is a risk of a serious accident. Councillors will take this on board and discuss with the roads department.

### UoA update

*Pedestrian route from King Street to Library:*

AW gave a presentation on the University's plans for an improved pedestrian route from East to west across the university estate. Their intention is to improve access for those with mobility or vision difficulties. There will be a consistent surface, replacing the present mix of tar, concrete, flagstone and cobbles. It is proposed that to aid the crossing of the High Street that the cobbles will be lifted and re-laid to form a raised pillow. The lighting along this route will also be changed to give a

uniform light distribution; this lighting will be more efficient LED this also improves CCTV recordings.

AW asked for comments on preferred surfaces and style of lights, after discussion, AW was asked to narrow down options and bring back proposals to a future meeting. Granite setts would be an ideal edging to the surface, as it would help define the route.

#### *Science teaching hub:*

UoA are submitting a new planning application for the science building soon. After discussions within the science faculty, there is a desire to increase the width of the atrium. This is to allow students more space for group working and discussion outwith the labs. The new plans will increase the depth of the building by 3m, external view will be one extra bay. There will also be an alteration to the windows on the ground floor, they will be doubled in size, every second non-supporting pillar will be removed. The reason for this is to give the community a glimpse into the building to see science in action. The mound at the corner of St Machar Drive and Bedford Road will be removed, plans for landscaping are being developed with trees and hedging included in the ideas. Exploratory work will be carried out later this year and construction planned for 2019.

#### *91 High Street:*

UoA have bought this property and are relocating the student information hub here. They are in discussion with the owners of the property above regarding noise-reducing measures. Planning permission will be submitted soon, work due to commence as soon as possible with the hope that the building is ready for the start of the next academic year.

### **Kristian Smith – team leader, Development management; ACC**

Kristian Smith gave a talk on his role within the Development Management Team of Aberdeen City Council. KS suggested that he was the main point of contact with regards to planning applications within the OACC area. This focus sought an improved focus to the engagement, and a desire to work in partnership with the community, to obtain the best results for everyone concerned in planning matters. He would like to see more discussion between OACC, members of the community and ACC on planning applications, particularly those which were to be presented to a Committee. That would allow planning management to have more focussed discussions with the applicant, to seek to address issues raised by communities. KS highlighted that the Local Development Plan is the starting point for all applications, but stressed that legally other material considerations must be accounted for in decision making. This can, on occasion, see recommendations deviate from the written word of the plan.

Although the primary route of engagement from communities and the OACC is in writing, other means of communication may be more effective. Due to timescales and workload for case officers it is difficult to respond to all correspondence. Again it was suggested, that to keep a focus and consistency to engagement any negative comments on an application should be discussed with KS rather than individual case officer. KS would then liaise or direct any such enquiries as appropriate.

As an example of workloads, Development Management have around 20 case officers dealing with all Aberdeen planning applications. On average 1,500 applications are received each year, averaging at 75 per officer per year. It was suggested that the OACC planning officer should seek to speak to KS as soon as a potential problem is noted with an application. Also KS can attend a community council meeting if required but OACC should be minded that detailed discussion on the merits of live applications may be limited. It was suggested to KS that some applications only have a 14 day consultation period so this is not always possible. GM noted that with some planning applications it would not be the intent of the Community Council to engage positively. Freedom of information requests are extremely time consuming and costly to process. The requests are often too wide in scope and require the searching and photocopying of a large volume of documents. It is not always possible for his department to complete all the requests.

**AUSA reps:** no report

**Seaton Park:** no update

## Planning issues

15 High Street – refused

91 High street – refused

66 Tillydrone Avenue: Enforcement officer getting fence and hedge reinstated. Fence has been done but does not conform to planning application and no hedge has been planted to date. KS said the owner/ developer has changed so things should be completed according to plans. KS, Penalty for breaching planning condition is a maximum £400 fine, court cases are prohibitively expensive.

## Councillors' update

Double yellow lines on Kings Crescent and Spital are due to be repainted.

Pedestrian Barrier is being erected at Sunnybank School.

High Street traffic lights/ bus only access, traffic survey into has been done and results are being analysed. Initial indication is numbers of cars ignoring the restrictions is extremely high. The survey is to be repeated to verify figures.

Tar patching on High Street was carried out following report of injury to member of public with no consideration of the conservation area. Will ask Doug Ritchie to attend June meeting with explanation and plans for repair.

**Treasurers report:** no expenditure, waiting on ACC grant.

## Reports of other meetings attended

Tillydrone Community Development Trust, 1<sup>st</sup> May: The Trust is investigating ways to move the project forward and are looking at various funding sources.

## Local Development Plan and Main Issues Report

There was insufficient time to discuss this.

### Date and Venue for next meeting

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> June, Old Aberdeen town House, 7.30pm

### Representations from members of the public and AOB

Resident A informed the Community Council that Dame Tessa Jowell who had recently died was brought up in Old Aberdeen and attended Aberdeen University. We record with sadness her death.

St Machar's Cathedral will begin work to replace the pews and plinth on 21<sup>st</sup> May.