

Old Aberdeen Community Council

Minute of the meeting held on **Tuesday 15th November 2011** at University New Library, Old Aberdeen Meeting Room 3, floor, 7.30p.m.

1. Present

Christine Burgess (Chair), Simon Barker (Vice Chair), Dewi Morgan (Web Admin & Newsletter Editor), Isobel Aitken (Treasurer), Gordon Mutch, Katja Britten, Hilda Meers.

Also Present

Professor Albert Rodger (University Community Engagement Officer), Cllr Jim Noble, PC Viccki Stoble (Grampian Police), PC Ian Taylor, (Grampian Police), Shaun O'Rourke (President Students' Charity Association Old Aberdeen University), Irene Henderson.

Apologies

David Hutchison, Trevor Stack.

2. Welcome to Professor Albert Rodger, University of Old Aberdeen

CB extended OACC's appreciation to Chris Banks for her presentation titled 'Stronghold to Threshold' and subsequent tour of the new Library building. Following introductions, Professor Albert Rodger described his role as University Community Engagement Officer. He was thanked by SB who stressed the need for future community engagement as well as the initiative taken to link the Universities historic buildings with such an outstanding example of excellence in modern architecture. This was seconded by HM who added her appreciation for the superb acoustics in the library design. Professor Rodger continued to describe the superb library communications system, the advantage of multi-purpose soundproofed meeting rooms, plus the award of BREAM standards which the library had exceeded, particularly with regards to fire and safety issues. KB was confident further relationships would develop between the OACC and the new University Library and Professor Rodger stated he would be happy to attend OACC meetings and bring appropriate delegates with him, if given sufficient prior notice of dates and agenda.

3. Minutes of September and October Meetings and Matters Arising

The September minutes were read and approved by DW and seconded by GM.

The October minutes were read and approved by ? and seconded by ? .

Matters Arising: JN confirmed no further action had been taken regarding the dumped building materials. JN also advised CB to get in touch with the Environmental Health Department regarding air monitoring issues on King Street at the St Machar roundabout.

GM informed delegates a third lane for St Machar's Drive had been proposed for the future.

1. Seaton Park

JN emphasised the value of having a focal project for any potential 'Friends of Seaton Park'. Discussion then centred round the Housing and Environment Priority Based Options 2012 - 2013 that included all the options across the board for cost savings including the potential closure of parks, including Seaton Park. JN stressed enormous cost saving measures had already been taken and the Council were now only looking for roughly a further £3 million. CB questioned JN if this issue was for discussion in the Council's December 6th Finance and Resources Meeting but was informed it would not, as this was a Budget Proposal issue. Councillor Noble further informed the meeting that the Council was waiting for notification from Edinburgh as to their financial allocation and that talks had already taken place regarding ways to save money. GM asked if the funding formula had changed. HM added that the council seemed indifferent to this issue and suggested that the money pledged for Union Street Gardens be used elsewhere in the city. CB stressed that OACC was totally opposed to any reduction in services for Seaton Park and S'OR emphasised students would be appalled at the thought the Park was under any threat of closure or reduced services. KB queried if a friends of Seaton Park group could be formed as was the case with the Sunnyside Community Park to raise funding. CB explained it was hoped a Seaton Park community group would consist of users and possibly key stakeholders from the local community. CB asked OACC members if they objected to Seaton Park cuts and this was unanimously supported. She then raised the issue of how the matter of Seaton Park could be taken forward. DM responded by informing her that it would be featured in the December Newsletter which he would finish Friday of that current week. DM further suggested Easter be targeted for phase 2 of the Seaton Park campaign as well as a Facebook page and web page to build contacts.

5. Boundaries

It was noted that the current boundary between OACC and Tillydrone CC appeared to go through the Wallace Tower. After some discussion, it was decided that no action was necessary on this issue.

Community Council Boundary Changes: DM notified the group that OACC had submitted for approval, the area highlighted in red on the map extending south down King's Crescent to Mounthooly Way and east to King Street. CB confirmed this would match the Conservation Area. After some discussion it was agreed to leave the area bounded by Nelson Street and Mounthooly Way to the George Street CC and GM agreed this was sensible.

6. Police Update

Constables Viccki Stoble and Ian Taylor both based at the Tillydrone Office, communicated to the group there had been 6 incidents in old Aberdeen during October including a stolen motorbike, house breaking and theft, and they had received far less calls compared to other areas despite the large number of students. GM queried the theft at St Machar's Cathedral shop amounting to approximately 300 pounds saying this shop was targeted about three times per year on a Sunday afternoon when older, more vulnerable people were in charge. The Police Officers agreed to help to monitor this by calling in to the Cathedral. Constable Ian Taylor asked if the OACC thought Old Aberdeen was a safe area and it was agreed it was.

7. Planning Applications

3rd Don: GM noted the on-going concern over the compulsory purchase orders to properties in Tillydrone and advised that the Public Enquiry regarding this matter was to be held on the 29th November at the Community Centre in Woodside and expected to last 4- 6 days. The University would not be taking part. GM confirmed OACC's main argument was that the gain to the wider community did not justify the compulsory purchase orders. He would also emphasise health and environment factors as well as the cultural assets and historic aspects of Old Aberdeen. He further stated it was difficult for the public to be engaged as the majority of people involved were professionals and noted he would query why an additional 20% was not factored into the proposal for additional transport use. S O'R questioned if students could attend the Woodside Community Centre Meeting and it was confirmed yes.

Planning Applications –DM presented the following on-going and new applications for planning:

- a) **111534:** 11, University Road replacement windows in a conservation area. TO OBJECT
- b) **111465:** 22-24 St Peter's Street. Proposal for 28 flats. OBJECTION LODGED/PENDING
- c) **111238:** 34-40 Orchard Road 2 more flats proposed. PENDING
- d) **111091:** Bus Turning Circle on Elphinstone Road. PENDING
- e) **110985:** Construction of two parking bays on Regents Walk. PENDING

8. Reports of Other Meetings

CB noted that David Jennings, Strategic Development Plan Manager, was to be presenting the Main Issues Report for the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan at the Community Council Forum Meeting on 5th December . CB stressed the importance of the Strategic Plan as it would influence planning decisions for the next 25 years. A report would be given at the December meeting.

A short discussion took place regarding the University access road from Bedford Road. GM described this as an unadopted road and so considered there was no need to approve the suggested restrictions.

9. Treasurer's Report

IA reported that OACC currently had £577.28 in its account. Bills to be paid included the next Newsletter, the copyright licence for the web, and an honorarium for the minute's compiler. IH notified the group she had volunteered to take the minutes so did not wish a stipend and CB stated this matter would be addressed later.

10. Festive Funding and December Meeting

Festive Funding: It was agreed to submit a request for festive funding to cover the cost of mince pies and soft drinks for a social gathering after the December meeting. CB to action.

11. Newsletter

DM issued a draft of the December newsletter. He advised the group he could add items to this but would require these no later than Friday of this current week.

12. Correspondence

DM reminded OACC of our concerns over the state of the cassies in the High Street. He noted the letter received from Richard Blain, Roads Operations Manager, stating he (RB) regretted the repairs would have to be in bituminous material for the reason of available budget and the repairs would not be a priority for some time. CB suggested writing to Historic Scotland informing them this type of patching up was unacceptable.

ACTION: DM to forward this email to CB who will make enquiries with Historic Scotland.

CB explained a letter had been received re Community Council Budget Meetings which were to be held in Hazlehead, Mile End and Braehead schools. However, the meeting on 5th December was being re-scheduled.

13. AOCB

Review of Polling Places: The present polling sites at St Machar Academy was considered undesirable for students due to the large numbers (2000) who would have to be transported there. SO'R explained students had requested Hillhead Halls of Residence as an additional venue.

14. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

The next meeting of Old Aberdeen Community Council will take place in the Dunbar Street Hall at 7.30p.m. on 13th December. A social gathering with mince pies and refreshments will be held after the meeting.