

Old Aberdeen Community Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 18th November 2008 at Old Aberdeen Town House.

1. Present

Christine Burgess (Chair), Isobel Aitken (Treasurer), Graham Abraham, Hilda Meers, Katja Brittain, Trevor Stacke, Clive Kempe, Dewi Morgan.

Also Present

Duncan McKay (AUSA), Hamish Mackay, Keith Paterson (ACC), Cllr Norman Collie, Angus Donaldson (Aberdeen University), John Macfarlane, Cllr Jim Noble, Cllr Richard Robertson, Kevin Guyan (Secretary), Cllr Norman Collie.

Apologies

Simon Barker (Vice Chair), Chris Gane (Aberdeen University), David Hutchison.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

Kevin Guyan noted that Helen Rushmore had submitted her apologies prior to October's minutes and should have been included under apologies. The minutes were then approved.

Work is now complete on Dunbar Hall. However, a tile has fallen through the ceiling creating a health and safety issue. The hall will now be unable to open until 2009.

Richard Robertson explained that the funding of the toilets on the High Street would be raised at a meeting of Central Committee on Wednesday 19th November. It was agreed that there is a need for this facility but due to Aberdeen City Council (ACC)'s funding situation, the toilets may have to wait until opening.

Duncan McKay highlighted that Aberdeen University Student Association (AUSA) are looking at updating the student safety pack before the fresh intake of new students in January. This will remind students of the dangers associated with Seaton Park.

Norman Collie updated the Council on progress with Wallace Tower, with a report going to the Resources Management Committee in January suggesting pupil support services are moved to the Tower after renovation.

The planned changes in Community Council boundaries may affect work currently planned for the Sunnybank area. Keith Paterson suggested contacting someone from the area's key contacts group. **ACTION:** Christine Burgess/KG to contact a representative from the group to discuss this issue further.

The costs of the proposed heritage walk has been cut to £10,000, deciding instead to focus on the repair of the path between Don Street and the south side of the River Don. **ACTION:** path repairs to be added to December's agenda.

Dewi Morgan explained that he would circulate a draft of his planned submission for OACC's data protection policy. **ACTION:** KG to circulate by email the draft submission to member's unable to attend the meeting.

Simon Barker and Hamish Mackay have met to discuss the funding proposal for a report on Seaton Park. The application has now been sent, with the outcome hopefully available for December's meeting. RR noted that the Friends of Duthie Park have experience writing funding proposals and may be willing to help with any future applications.

3. University Update

Angus Donaldson had nothing to report.

CB asked whether there was anything specifically to report on Don Street or the former Dunbar Hall site. AD noted no further developments.

Isobel Aitken asked whether there were any plans to transform the grass quad outside Elphinstone Hall into a garden. AD was unaware of any formal plans to change the area.

AD also explained that the people behind Kilau Coffee on Little Belmont Street had taken the lease of the new coffee shop on the High Street. **ACTION:** KG to invite someone from Kilau to December's meeting.

Katja Brittain asked who was responsible for the trimming of the greenery across from the Mosque. AD explained this was the University's responsibility and would be addressed. It has since been discovered this land is owned by ACC, information has been forwarded to the relevant person.

AD also mentioned the Christmas tree outside Elphinstone Hall, which would be going ahead as planned and should be erected around the final week in November.

KP asked for an update on the proposed library. AD hoped that tenders would be returned to the University by February 2009, allowing building work to commence in May 2009.

4. Police Update

Grampian Police were unable to attend.

5. Planning Update

CK noted that an application has been submitted for an illuminated sign for the pub at 739 King Street, adjacent to the Lidl's. DM added that an application has also been received asking to cut the bushes at this location. **ACTION:** CB to look closer at the proposal.

DM reminded the Council that planning applications are included on the OACC website.

6. Controlled Parking Zone

CB explained that she has received a response from Doug Ritchie, ACC, concerning OACC's previous letter. It was also explained that the Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) would be discussed at a Council meeting on Wednesday 19th November.

IA questioned whether the meeting would consider the scheme generally or look at the specifics of the CPZ. RR explained the meeting would consider the scheme generally.

CB added that after attending a Civic Forum meeting it is clear that ACC are considering a number of options over the amount that will be charged, it may not be a flat £50 rate.

HMe asked whether there would be further consultations on this issue. JN explained that the current stage is an informal consultation.

RR noted that Old Aberdeen is a unique example in the city as this is one of only three areas that have been excused from paying for their CPZ in the past. The costs of Foresterhill and Garthdee sites also may change in the future.

CK questioned whether any revenue could be made from charging people to park in Old Aberdeen during football games at Pittodrie. KB added that the influx of cars during prayer time at the Mosque could also be considered.

7. Neighbourhood Community Action Plan

CB and KP have created a draft Neighbourhood Community Action Plan, which was shared with the Council.

Some points from the discussion include:

- A need for St Peter's RC school to be "fit for purpose".
- The possibility of the new High Street café featuring music and art.
- The need to mention the importance of the Mosque to the local community.
- Establish prioritisation of air pollution monitoring at the King St/St Machar Drive roundabout.
- The speed of buses travelling through Old Aberdeen.
- The need for street architecture to promote safety.
- Questions over how the Council could promote "responsible alcohol use".
- Need to promote cleanliness in the area.
- Include "appropriate signage" to avoid excessive signs.
- Promote diversity and community cohesion.

ACTION: TS to email Alan Spence, organiser of the Word festival, to discuss the possibility of including the Muslim community in 2009's event.

ACTION: CB/KG to forward necessary amendments to KP.

8. Treasurer's Report

OACC currently has £5580.44 with very little likely to be spent in the near future. RR explained that he had spoken with someone who raised the possibility of restoring the chimes in the Old Aberdeen Town House. It is highly unlikely ACC would offer funding; however a donations box could be installed in the Town House to help raise funds. **ACTION:** small item funding to be included in December's agenda.

9. Correspondence

- (a) Letter from ACC asking for Council's opinion on proposals to make savings from Community Council funding. **ACTION:** OACC to respond by 8th December.
- (b) Licensing requests from shops and public houses in the local area.
- (c) Information on Neighbourhood Retail Centres. **ACTION:** OACC to provide feedback by 24th December.
- (d) Quarterly report from ACC's Chief Executive.

- (e) Report on terms of inspection of children's services from the Inspectorate of Education.
- (f) Letter from Ross Scafe regarding the CPZ.
- (g) Letter from RR regarding the cost of restoring the Old Town House's chimes.
- (h) Letter from ACC providing an update on heritage/culture savings.

10. AOCB

DM informed the Council of a scheme allowing people to borrow bicycles currently run by a student from Gray's School of Art. DMc noted that he has been contacted by Environmental health over the safety of the scheme, which – because of the health and safety risk – is likely to be abandoned shortly.

11. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at 7.30pm on Tuesday 9th December 2008 at the Chaplaincy Centre on the High Street. Please enter the building through the door off the rear car park.