

Old Aberdeen Community Council

7.30pm, Tuesday 23rd September 2008

Old Town House, Old Aberdeen

Minute of Meeting

1. Sederunt
Isobel Aitken, Helen Rushmore, Gordon Mutch, Clive Kempe, Valerie Morgan, Dewi Morgan, Simon Barker, Christine Burgess, Cllr Noble, Cllr Robertson, Angus Donaldson
2. Apologies for absence
PC Mackenzie, Cllr Collie, Duncan McKay (SA President)
3. Minute of last meeting – approval is deferred to the October meeting due to a technical printing problem.
4. Matters arising from last minute (not otherwise addressed on the agenda)
 - 4.1 Neighbourhood Community Action Plan – ongoing development noted. Final draft pending in October.
 - 4.2 Noticeboard now functioning well
 - 4.3 Dunbar Hall work now noted to be underway. Aim for 1st Nov completion.
 - 4.4 21-23 High St ‘demolition’ issue - It was noted with concern that the representations that had been made have not been received. CB will investigate this.
 - 4.5 Draft structure plan – The OACC reply has been made. It was noted that the Strategic Development Committee of the Council will consider it next, and there should be a further opportunity to make representation at the Scottish Executive level thereafter. CB reported on recent meeting at St Machar Academy and problem that Transport and Structure have been unnaturally divorced in the process to date. The recent meeting at Tillydrone concerning the 3rd Don crossing was also discussed with ongoing objection noted.
 - 4.6 It was noted with concern that the toilet block on High St have been designated ‘surplus to requirements’ without any consultation by persons unknown. This was deemed unacceptable and representation will be made by Cllr Robertson on our behalf to establish whether consultation can be engaged in on this and if not to whom representation can be made.
5. University Update (AD)
 - 5.1 It was noted that Freshers arrival had taken the University population to new heights.

- 5.2 Initial work on the Library will commence in October
- 5.3 Plans for café in old university shop noted to be progressing
- 5.4 Dunbar Hall site – noted to be no plans at present though University would be revisiting previously unpopular high density accommodation plans.
- 5.5 Private road condition (Elphinstone Rd) – AD reported progress with abandoned vehicle there. Future upgrading work to be discussed amongst respective owners.
- 5.6 Elphinstone Hall late night activities – concern raised re later (ie up to midnight) loud music of late. AD to investigate.

6. Controlled Parking Zone

There was an extensive discussion on this issue following recent City Council initial consultation document being issued. Points raised included:

- Welcoming the concept of a more structured parking arrangement.
- Failure of the proposals to address specific needs (eg St Machar Cathedral)
- Concern that the scheme addresses the University and City Council's needs rather than resident or visitor needs
- Disappointment that the scheme calls for hundreds of thousands of pounds to be spent on controlling parking rather than improving public transportation links in the area.
- Concern at the scale of fund raising the Council proposes from the University to pursue the project – what will all the money be required for?
- Failure of the CPZ to consider overall transit strategy for the area
- Deep concern that under current proposals residents are expected to pay £50 per vehicle to park.
- Concern that the loss of 120 parking spaces (out of 1600) appeared to incur a disproportionate response from the Council in this scheme – although it was also recognised that the University has been expanding over a longer period.

AD responded for the University that they were investing a very sizeable sum of money to the City Council in order to comply with the scheme – funding both capital and some running/admin costs. The University position is that they would envisage the City not charging residents to park given the level of their investment and the precedent of the Foresterhill scheme where residents were not charged.

OACC resolved to respond by letter to the consultation to include the following points:

- That the area is a Conservation area and should have no more street furniture (ie meters and signage)
- That the cost of this beaurocracy seems disproportionately high to us
- That we are concerned that the proposed model is insensitive to specific needs – such as St Machar's Cathedral

- That the funds raised from the University of Aberdeen (amounting to hundreds of thousands of pounds) would be better spent on a public transport subsidy for the area.
- That we do not accept that residents should be financially penalised in the proposed manner – and that the ‘Foresterhill model’ should prevail in Old Aberdeen as it has historically.

7. Police Report

In absentio – there have been 64 incidents including 7 priority crimes (thefts from property). There will be an increased police presence during the fresher’s period.

It was warmly received that although there will be a new police office in the new Seaton Primary School there are plans to maintain the High St office (JN).

8. Planning Report

Nil of note

9. Core Paths

It was noted that Graham has asked the Forestry Commission to survey a path from Don St to the South Bank of the Don.

Plan for path 6 upstream on the south bank of the Don is progressing.

10. Treasurer’s report

Isobel reported a healthy balance of over £5000. Projects for spending this will be considered next meeting.

11. Correspondence

- 11.1 Invitation to Remembrance Sunday Service on 9th November
- 11.2 Council Chief Executive’s Report
- 11.3 NHS Grampian Emergency Care Centre project announcement
- 11.4 TV Digital switch over information
- 11.5 3R’s project update
- 11.6 Postwatch Scotland – to be merged into ‘Consumer Focus’ with NCC & Energy Watch

12. AOCB

- 12.1 Noted that the report on Catholic school provision in Aberdeen is due shortly
- 12.2 OACC December meeting is planned to be in Dunbar Hall if ready
- 12.3 Town House Chimes – A fund has been established for their restoration. Consideration for OACC contribution to funding in October.
- 12.4 Bank of Scotland – concern was raised with respect to the long term security of this important facility given recent merger with LTSB.

13. Newsletter – distribution was agreed between Community Council members. Dewi will leave remainder in the shops and businesses of the area.

14. Date of next meeting – Tuesday 21st October, Old Town House at 7.30pm