

Old Aberdeen Community Council

Monthly bulletin – March 2020

Due to the Covid-19 outbreak, the Old Aberdeen Community Council has been forced to cancel their monthly meetings, starting with the 17th March meeting. In their place, we propose to issue a monthly bulletin to all the people who normally receive our meeting agendas and minutes of meeting. The bulletin will approximately follow our usual agenda structure.

We always welcome input, either in response to items in this bulletin, or on anything else of concern or interest to the local community that can be included in the next update.

OACC AGM for year ending 31st December 2019

AGM was cancelled due to Covid-19 pandemic.

The Chair's summary report for the year 2019 is available.

During our AGM we have normally reviewed the OACC Office Bearers positions and supporting roles. The following is the current structure. Volunteers to fill the gaps are desired, particularly for Planning.

Chair	Dewi Morgan
Vice Chair.....	Isobel Aitken
Treasurer	Erik Roslyayev
Secretary.....	Trevor Stack
Planning Officer	<i>Vacant</i>
Community Council Forum.....	Dewi Morgan & Isobel Aitken
CCF Planning and Transport sub-group.....	<i>Vacant</i>
Civic Forum	<i>Vacant</i>
Licencing Committee	<i>Vacant</i>
Aberdeen Health & Social Care Partnership	<i>Vacant</i>

Our community council presently comprises nine members. There is opportunity for another three members to be co-opted.

OACC Monthly Meeting; March, 2020

Meeting was cancelled due to Covid-19 pandemic.

Police update

No update available

UoA update

No update available

AUSA reps update

No update available

Seaton Park update

No update available

Planning issues

The following table summarises the extant planning applications at 17th March.

Red text denotes changes since our February meeting.

NO.	SUMMARY	CONSULTATION EXPIRY DATE	OACC COMMENTS
200022/DPP	Erection of single storey extension and demolition of outhouse to rear. 75 University Road	13 Feb Pending	No comment
00034/DPP	Installation of replacement of front door. 6 The Orchard, Spital Walk	24 Feb Pending	'Neutral' comment submitted
200052/DPP	Installation of transmitter pole on the roof of existing building with associated works. Zoology Building, Tillydrone Avenue	Approved	No comment
200072/LBC	Internal and external alterations including removal of doors and installation of timber louvre; re-slating of pitched roofs; etc. - St Machar's Cathedral	24 Feb Pending	No comment
200074/DPP	Formation of ramped access, erection of gates and bin storage area. - Botanic Gardens University Of Aberdeen	12 Feb Pending	No comment
200163/LBC	Demolition of a freestanding timber garage. UoA Humanity Manse, 19 College Bounds	6 March Pending	No comment
200269/DPP	Installation of roof-top radio apparatus and alterations to existing telecommunications installations with ancillary works. Macrobert Building (roof-top) - University Of Aberdeen	18 March	No comment
200273/DPP	Installation of replacement window (retrospective) The Studios, Nether Don	01 April	No comment proposed

'Community Vision for Old Aberdeen' - progress update

Enhancement of Tourism

An informal steering group comprising representatives from Old Aberdeen Community Council, University of Old Aberdeen, The Cathedral Church of St Machar and the Old Aberdeen Heritage Society.

- Wayfinder maps and public benches
Received feedback on contents of the draft wayfinder map and agreed to add Crombie Halls and Powis Gates. Circulated for comment then issue to ACC planning pre-applications for:
 - Wayfinder boards around Old Aberdeen
 - Public benches around Old Aberdeen.
- Cycling issues
This is focused on two issues; cyclists on pavements, and the poor quality of the design of the existing cycle routes. Having discussed the issues at length with Aberdeen Cycle Forum and University of Aberdeen's Campus Cycling Officer, a number of issues were raised with ACC in October. A response was received on 20th March. The contents of the ACC reply will be considered and responded to in due course.
- Dog mess on the pavements.
This issue is awaiting resources to develop and submit a proposal to ACC for temporary signage.

Due to the Covid-19, our monthly meeting have been cancelled – communication will probably be limited to emails over the next few months.

Other Community Vision for Old Aberdeen Issues

Community Vision for Old Aberdeen issues not yet commenced:

- Identify streets with major problems with bins left on pavements
- Assemble team to develop a conservation area leaflet – OAHS, ACC, OACC.

Other local issues

1. Chanonry road surface and possibility of adoption by ACC.
Issue sitting with owners of the frontage properties. OACC providing support as required.

2. Proposed Local Development Plan.

This document, the next stage of the process of compiling the future Local Development Plan which is expected to come into operation in 2022, was approved by the full council on 2nd March with a few minor changes mainly around a number of areas identified for development, including a few which will require re-zoning from green belt to residential, which is somewhat disappointing, considering how much business land is now out of use. However, none of these new sites are within Old Aberdeen.

The brownfield sites within our boundary are:

- OP92 - Former St Peter's Nursery site on Spital
- OP82 - Former Dunbar Halls site off Don Street
- OP69 - Former UoA OTC base on Don Street / King Street

One further tweak to the PLDP was agreed at Council and this relates to HMOs. More on this below.

Policies introduced in this PLDP that may be of interest to Old Aberdeen residents include;

- Policy H7 – Student Accommodation Developments – includes a requirement that the proposed development should not impose ‘a significant adverse impact to the amenity of the surrounding area’.
- Policy H8 – Houses in Multiple Occupation and Overprovision. While this proposes setting a limit on overprovision (hooray!) the Council has accepted officer's recommendations that this should be based on ‘Small Data Zones’. The limit was also set at 15%, though the council meeting voted to reduce this to 12% in line with other towns. The PLDP also clarifies that planning permission will be required where 3 or more unrelated people share a flat.

This PLDP will shortly be available for review and comment and OACC will certainly review the document in detail at that time.

The HMO issue

A quick explanation of Old Aberdeen CC's concerns

- A Small Data zone in Old Aberdeen holds on average 357 dwellings.
A 12% limit on HMOs therefore amounts to 43 properties
- An Output Area zone in Old Aberdeen holds on average 57 dwellings.
A 12% limit on HMOs therefore amounts to 7 properties

- Many HMOs are likely to be in the same locality due to proximity to university, or suitability of property for conversion

The issue, as it always has been, is localised density of HMOs. For an individual family, that means the houses immediately above, below, beside and behind them. It's the proportion of HMOs to family homes immediately around one's home that is critical, not how many are in the next street, or the street beyond that. If Small Data Zones are selected, then HMOs can become clustered and that causes the problems from the clash of life styles. If Output Areas are selected, though still imperfect, this does at least reduce concentration to (mostly) single figures per area.

City Councillors' update

Present priority for the Council and Councillors is the Corvid-19 epidemic and its huge impact upon the city residents, so no Councillor update presently available.

The following items remain in the 'pending' basket.

- Update on missing College Bounds bus gate camera.
Bus gate with registration identification camera was to be provided and promised by July 2019. Still outstanding. Cllr. AMcL to clarify status and resolution.
- Repair of Town House clock - miss-striking and light out.
Apparent fund shortage prevents execution of the work until new financial year (April?). Cllr. AMcL to progress.
- Police have been contacted regarding possible speeding on Spital. However main feedback from residents regarding speeding has been regarding Don Street on the stretch Seaton Park entrance to Hillhead.

Treasurer's report

Unavailable. Treasurer believed to have returned home due to Corvid-19 outbreak.

Reports of meetings, opportunities etc.

Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership

DM attended a preliminary meeting of the City's Health & Social Care Partnership which introduced the three new Locality Empowerment Groups. The previous incarnation of the Local Empowerment Groups did not, apparently, interact with the communities well enough – they certainly did not interact with our community council. This time we were invited to attend a series of open meetings; I attended the Tillydrone meeting at which nearly everyone was in the business of social care, there was only one other community councillor present (B of D) present.

Lots of talk about process and outcomes, but not so much about speaking with the communities.

My stance was (and is) that our community council would be pleased to help disseminate information, but we are not in a position to speak authoritatively for the community.

Civic Forum and Community Council Forum meetings, along with their sub-committees are all cancelled until further notice.

Open consultations

The following consultations are open and are suitable for individual submission:

- Bookbug Session Evaluation Closes 10 April 2020
Relevant if you have used this service

- Sexual Entertainment Venue Licensing (SEV) Closes 10 April 2020

There is currently no direct licensing or regulation of this activity in Scotland. Premises are classed as an SEV where sexual entertainment is provided before a live audience for the direct or indirect financial benefit of the organiser. Sexual entertainment is any live performance or live display of nudity provided for the sole or principal purpose of sexual stimulation of members of the audience. However, premises where sexual entertainment is provided on no more than 4 occasions in a twelve month period are not to be treated as SEV.

Community councillors are encouraged to respond – just go to:

<https://consultation.aberdeencity.gov.uk/>

Representations from members of the public and AOB

Extensive graffiti on wall of 24 Spital. Police have been informed.

Report by Dewi Morgan, OACC Chair 24 March 2020