

# Old Aberdeen Community Council

Tuesday 21st May 2013 at 7.30 pm

Old Aberdeen Town House

## Minutes

### 1. Present and Apologies

- Present: Isobel Aitken (chair), Trevor Stack (minutes), George Wood, Gordon Mutch, James Martin, Lekky Shepherd, Simon Barker, Dewi Morgan, Jacinta Birchley, Hazel Christie, Cllr Ramsay Milne, Cllr Jim Noble, Alan Mason (Police), Tom Rogers (ACC), Lidia Revello (Evening Express)
- Apologies: Ross Grant, Christine Burgess

### 2. Minute of April Meeting and Matters Arising

- Minutes approved and seconded
- Arising:
  - George Wood has sent note on HMO Consultation.
  - Cllr. Noble reports that Planning Officers are willing to speak to OACC.

### 3. Introduction of new *Evening Express* correspondent, Lidia Revello

- Welcomed to OACC meeting; will introduce herself in next meeting.

### 4. Police Update (Alan Mason)

- Only minor crimes to report
- Two operations
  - Operation Trinity ongoing to target anti-social motorcycle driving
  - Operation Ruby ongoing to target vehicle theft
- Travellers
  - evicted from Lidl, Grandholm and now in Science and Technology Park - needs to be somewhere adequate in long term
  - there was fly-tipping at Lidl but as usual proves impossible to prosecute
  - Cllr Milne notes that Council unit has done well to get eviction orders quickly, but courts get clogged up quickly
  - police have considered potential site once evicted from Science and Technology Park and will take measures on day of eviction, but Travellers will have identified alternative sites
  - Cllr Noble reports that 4 potential permanent halting sites have been identified; Cllr Milne explains that Council could only obtain criminal actions e.g. for trespass if these halting sites have been provided, and
  - that sites would need to go through Planning process

5. Third Don Crossing status update (Tom Rogers, Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure, ACC)

- Explains route of Third Don Crossing and answers questions about traffic in Old Aberdeen area
  - Bedford Road to be open for through traffic only to pedestrians, cyclists and buses, reducing traffic at top of Powis
  - Berryden dual carriageway will be built in phases over 3-4 years due to high cost, up to roundabout on Great Northern Road
  - expected that traffic on St Machar Drive toward King Street will improve due to drivers turning left at Tillydrone roundabout; there will also be dedicated right turn onto Elphinstone Road
  - School Road still likely to suffer from HGVs crossing King Street bridge on way to harbour
- Tillydrone will have greater noise and pollution but expected to be within acceptable limits (while King Street will improve) though will be monitored
- City aims to encourage alternative modes of transport include buses and cycles
  - buses
    - new bus route will go to and from Bridge of Don through Tillydrone to top end of George Street
    - bus reliability expected to improve, e.g. no. 19, with TDC
  - cycle lanes
    - dedicated cycle lane will run from Parkway to Tillydrone, though shared with pedestrians across bridge due to cost of wider bridge
    - evaluating proposal to put cycle lane up to hospital area and centre city, using bridge over railway near Bedford Road
- Construction likely to start between November 2013 and January 2014; finish date is autumn 2015
- Payment in process for those subject to Compulsory Purchase Orders

6. Signage and traffic flow in Old Aberdeen (Dewi Morgan)

- Doug Ritchie (Roads) replied to OACC letter about new one-way signs, arguing that they were required by Traffic Regulations. DM has checked Regulations and it seems not strictly required but is only advisable. Will reply to Doug Ritchie.

7. Old Aberdeen Town House change of use (Angus Donaldson, University of Aberdeen)

- AD
  - regrets that OACC had not been informed of change of use
  - explains that aware that not everyone agrees with relationship with China, which reflects University's strategy of Internationalisation in changing world
  - Confucius Institute will be part of University and not independent of it; will be led by Prof Barbara Fennell, who could be invited to future meeting
  - will be using part of Townhouse as well as other parts of University – building will not just be enclave

- Townhouse has not worked as University had hoped
- proposed use of building
  - upper room: use will not change and will still be bookable; expected that during day will be used increasingly for international students
  - first floor: will be classroom where Institute will give classes although other classes may be given there
  - ground floor: will include Confucius Institute office but display area on ground floor will remain and be used for community exhibitions
- Gordon Mutch
  - Prof Rodger should have informed at previous meeting - AD agrees that poorly handled
  - this building was once seat of local government and seems should have used alternative building for Confucius Institute
  - public money invested in building – though AD notes that larger share of money put in by University, which made possible bringing building back to life, since previously decrepit
- Simon Barker
  - disagrees with use of building for this purpose
  - although only 1 year left to run of legal commitment to public access, feels that breach of trust to change use so abruptly, and with no community engagement
- Dewi Morgan
  - notes that debates over political agenda of Confucius Institute, which is funded by Chinese State
- Isobel Aitken
  - asks whether Confucius Institute likely to expand into upper room; AD replies that upper room will continue to be available for booking – if CI expands, it will be into other classrooms in University

8. Neighbourhood Watch update: postponed to June meeting

9. Friends of Seaton Park update (Dewi Morgan): postponed to June meeting

10. Can we be a Zero Landfill City? (James Martin): postponed to June meeting

11. OACC response to Main Issues Consultation (George Wood)

- GW asks anyone who has comments to get in contact before 1 June.

12. Planning Matters (George Wood)

- 34-36 St Peter Street: Council decided against development on grounds that overdevelopment of site and insufficient parking on nearby streets
  - Jacinta Birchley notes again that procedural issues, which to be addressed with Planning officers

13. Treasurer's Reports

14. Reports of Other Meetings: none

15. Correspondence

- Agreed to send letter objecting to change of use of Old Aberdeen Townhouse to Prof Rodger.
- Trevor Stack received letter complaining about British National Party leaflet being delivered together with OACC newsletter
  - TS, who delivered newsletter to that address, went to enquire with homeowner but no answer at the door
  - Cllr Noble had informed BNP leaflets were delivered to houses on the same dates, so presumably unfortunate coincidence

16. Date and Venue for June meeting

7.30 pm on 18<sup>th</sup> June in Old Aberdeen Townhouse

17. AOCB