

Old Aberdeen Community Council

Tuesday 15th April 2014 @ 7.15 p.m.
Old Aberdeen Townhouse

MINUTES

- Present:** - Isobel Aitken (Chair), Gordon Mutch, George Wood, Dewi Morgan, Christine Burgess, Cllr. Ramsey Milne, Cllr. Jim Noble, Inspector Darren Bruce, Helen Leith, Ronald Leith.

Apologies: - Trevor Stack, Lekky Shepherd, Cllr. Ross Grant, Professor Rodger, Abdul Latiff, Jacinta Birchley.
- Previous Minutes:** - Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 18th March 2014 were reviewed and various amendments were made. The Minute was then proposed by Gordon Mutch and seconded by Christine Burgess and approved.
- Seaton Park** – Cllr Noble commented that Stephen Shaw was exploring funding bodies to support drainage works and that the drainage issue should be considered separate from other funding and projects related to Seaton Park.

Friends of Seaton Park – DM noted that the recent Friends “Cakefest” had been a success and that £900 had been raised for the Friends funds. It had been suggested that the event should be held monthly, but it was felt that an annual event would be more appropriate.

The Friends immediate aim is the erection of signs, interpretation boards and display boards of “What’s On” within Seaton Park and the funds raised at the Cakefest will be targeted at this.

Currently information is being pulled together on the information to be displayed and the format for the artwork is being considered. When a prototype is formatted, prices will be sought and sponsors approached.

The Friends also wish to see additional toilet facilities and upgrading of the paths and roads to remove dangerous potholes.

CB commented that the lifebelts along the Don still required maintenance.
- H.M.O.s** – Cllr. Milne stated that he had not yet received the answers to OACCs request for information regarding HMOs within Old Aberdeen from the relevant officer, only city-wide figures. He was hoping to receive the report within the next few days and that the officer would attend the June OACC meeting if this requested.

It was requested that the report be circulated to OACC in draft form as soon as it became available.

Cllr. Milne is to circulate the date of the next committee meeting as this was not immediately available at the meeting.

GW commented that at a recent Civic Forum meeting the Chair of George Street Community Council had suggested that ACC should start letting properties on an HMO basis and requested comment on this. Both Councillors stated that this was not a possibility.
- Police:** - Inspector Bruce reported that the crime figures had dropped to 8 reported crimes, including 2 positive stop and search drug possessions, a theft from the BP filling station and that 20 tickets had been issued for traffic violations on the High Street, mostly on football match days.

There is an ongoing City wide traffic crack-down and the traffic unit had been operating in the area with positive results.

Police Scotland had discussed the HMO issue with Aberdeen City Council and a protocol for co-operation would be agreed. Where such action is warranted, the police can take action independent of ACC and make a report to the Procurator Fiscal with a view to prosecution.
- Presentation by Cllr. Grant:** - Cllr. Grant was unable to attend the meeting and the report will be presented at a later date.

7. **Councillors' reports:** - Cllr. Noble commented on attending the presentation on the student accommodation proposed for Powis Place. It was noted that Unite, the developer, had a policy of not allowing tenants who owned cars. In the tenancy agreement this is stated and a breach gives rise to a warning with a second breach resulting in eviction. He noted that the planning application had yet to be approved and that a lack of parking on site would require review. The property Sub-Committee will shortly be re-advertising for sale the former High Street toilet block and the nursery in the Spital.
8. **Planning:** - Current list previously circulated.
 140523 Tree order for a very large tree in a back garden.
 140480 54 Spital. Use of residential property for tutoring. Still no papers on website.
 140531 148 Spital Change of use, Class 4 to Class 1. No papers on website.
 140509 34-36 St. Peter Street. Ground floor layout change to provide secure cycle storage. No papers on website.
 140113 11 Cheyne Road, Demolition and rebuild. After discussion it was agreed that it was still possible, to lodge a formal objection on the basis of proximity to the conservation area and historic buildings, over development of the site and the precedent for demolition of housing stock.
9. **Treasurer's report:** - There has been no expenditure this month and the current balance is £602.83. The grant will be received within the next few days and this will be £847.25.
10. **Other meetings:** - **GW** attended the Civic Forum, report already circulated.
IA Attended the Community Council Forum which was addressed by Cllr. Young and a representative from "Aberdeen Inspired".
11. **Old Aberdeen Conservation Area Appraisal:** - Attention was drawn to the 1993 Old Aberdeen Conservation Area Report.
 There is a drop-in session on the draft at the Dunbar Hall (side entrance) from 15.00 to 19.00 on Wednesday 16th April.
DM Has already circulated his draft comments on the Draft Appraisal Report on behalf of OACC and commented that there were flaws in the report beyond the spelling and other mistakes. There is no mention of HMOs, or of the granite sets which are subject to ACC's policy of repair by replacement by tarmac, even in heritage areas.
CB commented that the report had no "feeling" for Old Aberdeen, there were no conclusions or recommendations and that the document was not suitable a source for quotes when commenting on developments. **There is no design guidance.**
HL commented that this report should be a benchmark for future development and that it fell far short of this. She requested support for the Heritage Society points.
 1. There are no policies on what should, or should not, be allowed.
 2. That alterations to existing areas are illogical and undesirable.
 This gave rise to discussion on the use of "Campus", as opposed to the previous "Zone" used in the 1993 report.
 Character areas proposed for inclusion in the Campus set precedent, that in any future planning applications, those areas may be developed as they would have been designated as part of the University's teaching area.
 Policies are required to protect Old Aberdeen and to provide cohesive support to the character of the area.
 It was resolved that **DM** would review his comments and circulate the revision to all members who should add comments as they think fit and return.
GM to co-ordinate the final response.
12. **Newsletter**
DM requested material suggestions for the next issue. Seaton Park and HMOs having been covered in the last issue.
Suggestions: -
 Conservation Area Appraisal Report.
 Failures and lessons to be learned. St. Peter Street.
 University Museum and collections.
 First Bus report.

Aberdeen pollution issues, especially King Street.
Wallace Tower.
Self-seeding sycamores
Opening of the Aquatic Centre and the closure of King's pool.

13. Correspondence

The "Big Lunch". 1st June. Too late for this year, thoughts for next year.

Wild Dolphin sponsorship. No action.

Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan. Approved by Scottish Ministers.

RM commented that Strategic Transport Charges had been removed. This is the funding levied on developers to fund "greater" area transport needs, not just those immediate to their development. Developers will now try to recover monies.

14. A.O.C.B.

GM requested that the Councillors comment on indiscriminate camping and littering by the Traveller community.

RM commented that ACC wanted a bye-law to keep them off Council property.

Sheriffs will only allow court hearings on civil actions, the only current sanction, one day every week, so the travellers move on and it takes week to move them from their new camp.

JM commented that a bye-law would only mean that they stayed off council land and they would move onto private ground and that additional stopping sites were needed.

15. Next meeting: - Tuesday 20th May 2014 @ 7.30 p.m. in The Old Aberdeen Town House.

16. The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.30 p.m.