

# Old Aberdeen Community Council

*Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2013 at 7.30 pm*

## Minutes

### 1. Present and Apologies

1. Present: James Martin, Dewi Morgan, Christine Burgess, George Wood, Professor Rodgers, Isobel Aitken, Resident,
2. Apologies: Lekky, Simon Barker, Gordon Mutch (treasurer), Cllr Ross grant, Cllr Ramsay Milne, Sergeant Billy Thom.

### 2. Minutes of November Meeting and Matters Arising

1. Contact FirstBus if no response for next meeting regarding data promised.
2. Minutes proposed: GW. Seconded: CB

### 3. Police Update

Sergeant Billy Thom has joined us to replace Sergeant Tracy Middler and he will now take ownership of all things Old Aberdeen in terms of Policing. Tracy has moved to the City Centre Unit. Billy is aware of the local issues and will continue to give regular attention to the ongoing traffic issues in the High Street area. Hopefully he will be able to attend one of your meetings in the New Year. Sgt Thom is on duty this evening but I understand he has an existing commitment.

By way of update for the meeting tonight crime figures between, and including, 19th November to 9th December -

14 crimes reported. The obvious issue is that 11 of these crimes relate to theft, or attempted theft, either in and around the University or from students living nearby. As in previous months electronic devices and bikes remain the favoured items. Yesterday we have identified a male attempting to steal bikes and in possession of bolt cutters however he remains to be traced. There is a lot of work going into this issue across the city and I'm hopeful this identification may result in his apprehension shortly.

I see at the last meeting the issue of unregistered HMO's was raised and Sgt Masson undertook to respond tonight in some way. I'm not familiar with Police having any role in this other than supporting the ACC in dealing with issues where necessary. I understand ACC are the lead on this issue and further information can be found here -

[http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/housing/private\\_housing/hmo/hoa\\_multipleoccupancy.asp](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/housing/private_housing/hmo/hoa_multipleoccupancy.asp)

If anything does arise tonight please contact us via the email above and we can seek to reply promptly.

Thanks again and please wish all a safe and happy festive period.

4. Update(s) from Aberdeen City Council Elected Members

Nobody in attendance

5. University: Professor Albert Rodgers

- Retrospective comment that in a minute from a previous meeting, that Confucius was not mentioned by Prof.R. Prof.R stated that he did not tell us as he simply did not know about the Confucius institute at the time. A change of staff led to the message not reaching Prof.R. Once notified, actioned the museum to be moved to Old Townhouse. UoA is engaged in an Estates Strategy with Angus Donald (coming in Jan). Has been looking at the UoA estates in depth. Old townhouse is part of heritage trail and part of the campus. CB: It is a community, not a campus, high street is a community. Prof.R: aware of this, simply speaking about university estate. Involvement of community is very important. Aware this is a community – my responsibility is linked to the campus. Campus quietens around 5-6pm but want to see more happening in terms of public engagement and cultural events. Pavilion: flagged before. Keen that is a hub for cultural events with a social space – a vibrant building; should be a centre-piece building as a centre for performances. ACTION: to contact Angus about meeting in Library in Jan. Prof.R: draft form just now but hopefully be provided a final version in January. Cultural programme is strongest yet; curating two major exhibitions in Kings Museum and other museums, public lectures with elphinstone institute, Egyptology Scotland, Scotland archaeology month etc. strong museums programme for young people with free gallery exhibitions. Public lectures with at least 1500 participants and working closely with schools.
- Prof.R: May festival; 2013 report; 7500 visitors. Programming for both this May 2014 and May 2015. Very strong programme; popular poets booked but too early to name. Zoology building will be used and Friends of Garden, WW1 remembrance events. Aberdeen Sports Village developing sports programme in line with the commonwealth games with big names. Big names regarding the bake off and healthy eating. Music; concerts, WW1 event, major Gaelic events, produce markets. Schools programme shaping up very well indeed. Set to be better than last year. To Prof.R it has been about public engagement and research. We put out a call for ideas across academic staff with 45 proposals put forward this year. Almost accepted them all with over 45 public engagement events for research across the schools. Leopard is changing hands and university took up responsibility for this. OACC can do a feature about OACC in The Leopard. Pointed out points of interest in The Leopard.
- IA – Would the extra space for the museum be in the Old TownHouse or nearby areas? Prof.R: we are looking for things in this area; it is nearby. Proposition would be at St Mary's with a theme about the north. Creates a nice heritage zone in that area that is complementary to the city.

- CB – delighted about engagement programme and to enlighten the evenings as currently a 9-5 area. 23 High Street has lain vacant and is deteriorating now. For years, we have asked if this can be utilised...bistro or something...that location brings together both sides of the campus. Prof.R: that area is covered in the strategy. Have a look at what we're doing at the pavilion with catering space. CB: the area is deteriorating. Prof.R: addressed in the plan. Put this to Angus. CB: done this several times. Prof.R: as you'll see in the strategy, we have a number of things to do in the strategy and I hope you'll find the strategy to show a suitable use for the buildings/changes. Agree 100% we need good catering outputs. We need good quality social space. DM: pavilion is a bit inward whilst 21 is on the roadside, publically noticeable, not down an alley etc. Prof.R: accept that and if people are going to a performance, people would likely eat in the same building as their performance. DM: need to get out of the term time cycle; full during term, closed when holidays. Prof.R: suggest we park this until we see the strategy. CB: draft will be finalised when we see this – so our input will not be incorporated. Prof.R: we would still need to go through planning/ full consultation programme. We cannot move forward without consultation and permissions to do things so plenty of opportunity to engage in future. OACC aims / objectives are same as UoA and hope we have a solution at the end of the day. OACC will be the first group with access to the document. CB: so many consultations and nothing has happened, need to know we'll be listened to. Prof.R: Confucius issue shows that we do listen and delivered a solution that worked. That's how I work and intend to continue working. If you are concerned, get me involved. Will certainly do the best to achieve an outcome that satisfies all. Difficulty with a university is to ensure we don't only convince OACC but academic community – who have yet to hear of the plans so giving you a look in, and we will listen to you.
  
- GW: Marischal...a dead area...any plans? Prof.R: no solutions yet. It does need work and upgrading. Anticipating a way forward in the next 12 months. Hopefully it will be a shared facility with another partner. Need to make more of this facility but for now, still looking for a partner. GW: AIYW; will areas be used to draw young people into the area? Prof.R: absolutely. Im on the board of the AIYF and will talk about the next step; absolutely committed. GW: if we can get more in Old Aberdeen for non-term time, it would be great. Prof.R: absolutely. GW – seem to be at loggerheads regarding planning applications. Can we have better interaction before we get to the planning application stage? Prof.R: some issues may be what UoA may consider minor issues. Best to get estates manager to come along? IA: we have tried every month. Prof.R: can give a commitment that angus will be here January or a deputy in his place. Been brought to my attention ie yellow lines at library. IA; yes very dangerous. Prof.R: retrospective diagnostics is also important which should be brought up with Angus. Will do my best to bring these matters to you.
  
- CB – Marks and Spencer's is this taken forward? Prof.R: one was Starbucks, other was M&S. Both were approved by UoA. Starbucks created wide discussion but have not heard about M&S since and will investigate this. Suspect if no progress, it may be a M&S decision. DM: it would give 365 days

use of the area. Prof.R: would bring in visitors to the area. DM: brings a community feeling to the area. Prof.R: yes, area is quiet in the evening.

- IA – will all facilities be closed for Christmas fortnight? Prof.R: essentially yes, not all buildings but likely to be most. IA – could you ever bring the visitor centre at Kings? Prof.R: we had a nice little shop there. IA whole of Aberdeen liked that. Prof.R: sorry to have seen that going, but there are discussions to open the tea room. IA: it was open Saturday and Sunday which was wonderful; Prof.R yes, but it made a significant loss sadly. We are having potential discussions about that which can be discussed with Angus in January.
- CB – what of the tennis courts; Prof.R: raise it with Angus in January. IA; we've been asked by residents about that and we tried getting answers from Angus. Prof.R: Angus will tell you more in January; I'll be keen to hear what you think. I think it is positive and exciting. You'll get a full fly-through of our plans and programme for the next ten years.
- Resident: only university news is sometimes bad news; parking, about noise etc. university can be an absent neighbour...no leaflets...no advertising...can the university do more to involve the community. DM: how do you communicate with your neighbour? Prof.R: I've been looking at new ways of doing business...and so have given invites to May festival and launch of Aberdeen International Youth Festival. Asking that we are invited to local events. I can get you invites, programmes etc. in advance – hopefully not too much going through your letterbox and I'll take that to the team responsible for publicity. Would appreciate your feedback in about 6 months to see if we have improved. Resident; nice to hear back to feel valued. Prof.R: we could also sit on a Public Engagement Committee maybe twice a year. All agree this is a very good idea. Prof.R: can be a new interface and is easy to do, meaning we can meet key people. I'll leave that one with you. May be best to have a resident? Can offer tours of buildings and new things we are doing. Put your suggestions to me and we'll see what we can do. In six months we'll see how successful we've been.
- GW: full page ad in the newsletter. All: agreed. GW: programme can go into the newsletter. Resident: yes, not all residents come to community council so that can bring the university to the community. GW: next one would be well timed for May festival.
- Prof.R: I encourage you to get in touch when matters arise. We've had successes and some cases where it has not worked out. The more Prof.R is involved the more we can get a solution as shown with Confucius.
- IA: could you take something back; Kings College clock – can we get the chimes back? Prof.R: you are not alone on this; watch this space. There is a number of celebrations planned for Bishop Elphinstone. IA: we were once willing to help financially. Prof.R: Angus will know about that. CB: when are the celebrations? Planned celebrations for 2015

- These points discussed are **confidential**.
  - **JM: should minutes not go on website? Prof.R: please let me see a first draft. All: approved.**
  -
6. HMO Update.  
OACC will invite HMO lobby, ACC HMO staff, local councillors and other community councils for an extraordinary meeting.
  7. Planning Matters  
Retrospective for old police station.  
34-36 St Peter Street – likely to be approved by Scottish Government.
  8. Treasurer’s Report  
No treasurer present
  9. Reports of Other Meetings
    - Community Council Forum – strategic development city and shire. Meetings in Jan and consultation events beginning in January.
  10. Correspondence  
No correspondence
  11. Date and Venue for December meeting: Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2014, Old Townhouse
  12. Consultations
    1. Conservation Area consultation: process is delayed. So next year before delay
    2. Community Empowerment & Renewal Bill consultation (24<sup>th</sup> Jan) – JM to do this.
  13. AOCB
    1. Constitution – IA to ask Trevor if this is finalised
    2. Scottish Civic Trust “My Place Awards” Nominations by 31 Jan
    3. Latest on Marischal Square / office block – 12-14<sup>th</sup> Dec in Art Gallery.
    4. community council short life working report; training is available.
    5. cash in your pocket; plans for a one-stop shop for multiple services i.e. SCARF heating, benefits support, homelessness, city council etc.
    14. closed 9.30pm