

Old Aberdeen Community Council

Tuesday 20th March 2018

Minutes

1. *Present*

Gordon Mutch; Dewi Morgan; Lekky Shepherd; Isobel Aitken; Teresa Harwood; Cllr. Michael Hutchison; Cllr. Jim Noble; David Adam (First Bus); a local resident; Mark Stephen (Police Scotland)

Apologies

Trevor Stack; Alan Wight; Ross Grant; Alex McLellan

2. *Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising*

Accepted and approved with minor alteration.

Proposed: IA; seconded: DM

3. *Police update*

Mark Stephen (Police Scotland) reported that crime statistics for Old Aberdeen area* continue low; four bikes and a laptop stolen within the university; a few Seaton Park incidents (drug-related).

*It was noted that these stats do not cover the Spital /King's Crescent end of the CC area. Here greater police activity had recently been noted.

Police are working with the university Head of Security aiming at crime prevention, with assistance on security advice and guidance to students.

Some discussion of procedure for reporting of minor crimes; calling 101 or sending to the Tillydrone inbox address (Kittybrewster for King's Crescent and Spital)

4. *FirstBus update*

David Adams reported on problems likely to occur during the strike. Problems with frequency due to shortage of drivers; problems of getting details of available buses displayed at stops; on days of strike nothing after 6.00 pm

Changes to 20 route:- no longer going up to Hillhead. Hillhead now to be served by 1A – a university to university (Hillhead to RGU) service via King St.

There was concern about this change, particularly from the representative of local residents: students leaving the Univ Library late at night will now have to walk right through the university and down on to King Street to catch a bus to Hillhead. A feeling that not enough consultation had taken place before this decision had been made.

Broad St due to open again May/June aiding traffic flow and reducing delays.

5. *UoA update*

No rep present but report sent by email; a number of matters listed form part of planning issues (Section 8 below)

Taylor Building and Bedford Road Yard

Wireless Access Points (WAPs) corner of Taylor D Block/High Street elevation and central heating station. These primarily required to fill a wi-fi coverage blackspots on campus to allow the Safe Zone app to work everywhere for students and staff. SafeZone is a free app for students and staff that connects you to the University security team if you ever need urgent help, first aid or if you have an emergency while on campus. The system allows you to call for help by activating the app on your smartphone to alert security team members to your situation and location, so they can respond quickly. It also allows the University to send you important information on campus closures, helping you avoid unnecessary journeys in the event of a building or full campus closure.*

The WAPS will also offer improved access for the public to the Aberdeen City Connect

MacRobert Memorial Garden/Dunbar Street

Installation of handrails to the steps leading to and from the gardens following report of a slip/trip/fall. These handrails will also improve the accessibility of the garden to the disabled. Also lowering the section of wall adjacent to the Falcon Building to improve the safety of this route increasing the sightlines for pedestrians/drivers of pedestrians emerging from the Memorial Garden immediately onto Dunbar Street.

Regent Building

Installation of handrails to steps at the rear of the building to assist a disabled member of staff moving between Regent Building and University Office by shortest route.

King's College (South Wing)

Application being considered for listed building consent to remodel and refurbish 4 lecture theatres. Works may also include installation of a lift to provide full accessibility.

Old Aberdeen East–West Route

This route to make a single smooth route for wheel-chair users etc.

Preferred route identified and surveyed. A drawing attached showed the route and noted the variety of different surfaces. Options for how to form road crossings, rationalise finishes and make the route more distinctive are being considered and will be presented in due course.

High Street Toilet Block

Estates and facilities contacted Aberdeen City Council building control the day after the last Community Council meeting to report the concerns with the unsafe nature of the site. Building Control contacted the owner/developer and improvements to the segregation of the site were made. No sign of real progress on completing the works?

6. *AUSA reps update*

No rep present

7. *Seaton Park update*

The committee was reminded of the fifth FoSP Cakefest this Saturday 24th March at Dunbar Hall from 10-12 noon

Last year's 70th anniversary crocus carpet above the fountain is looking stunning.

Plans for Seaton Community arts project to paint a mural on the west (river) side of the gardeners' bothy are advanced.

8. *Planning issues*

Ongoing

180142DPP 49 University Road – Replacement front door; presently UPVC, proposing wood. Awaiting decision (OACC did not comment)

180027DPP University – Erection of science teaching hub

171457LBC/171445DPP 91 High Street – former Bank of Scotland OACC has objected to side door to glass panel proposal. Awaiting decision.

Conversion into HMO

- We objected to kitchen size and noise transmission
- We commented on inadequacy of perceived sound attenuation measures that were submitted after closing date

Awaiting decision

171368DPP 66 Tillydrone Avenue (HMO licenced) Replacement of front door(retrospective). Was unusual twin door, now a boring plywood door. Withdrawn by applicant!

171197DPP Restoration and reprofiling of river bank - Seaton Park
Approved

170710DPP/170709LBC 15 High St – change of use to public house
Awaiting decision

It was noted that 15 High St has lain unoccupied for 19 years. Throughout these years there was a shortage of student & teaching accommodation. Such a waste of money by a public funded organization such as the University.

New

180362 DPP/ 180360/ DPP 180286/ DPP 180284 DPP. Applications for Installation of Wireless Access Point (WAPs) and handrails noted in University report above.

Of the WAP installation points the mountings vary in length. Examination of the location of these has thrown up ongoing problems of some existing CCTV points – had asked to be painted beige in the past and this not always taken place.

Request that WAPs likewise be made as unobtrusive as possible.

Handrail insertions plus lowering of wall Don St end - acceptable

180269 DPP/180270 LBC Re-cladding and reroofing of existing conservatory; lowering of window openings to form doorways to rear and internal alterations; Brig House, Don St .Consultation dates; 28th March 30th March

9. City Councillors' updates

Cllr Hutchison

Reported on:

Illicit gate off Kings Crescent - owner being told again to remove; matter referred back to committee (though uncertain which committee)

Street lighting being addressed; the local resident present noted all lights working in King's Crescent; DM noted that elsewhere only partially dealt with.

Continuing to address problems of bins crowding pavements; aim to reduce number of bins, combining bins between households a possible solution.

Referred again to ongoing re-structuring within council; uncertain until September just which committees are being allocated - will confirm his committee(s) once known.

Cllr Noble

Referred to 'Restructuring' at council – would say rather 'upheaval' – councillors uncertain who to approach at the moment – which committee, dept etc. Committees and sub-committees have been reduced in size making it harder to raise issues.

Cllr Grant had sent an update re the College Bounds bus gate

Data has been gathered and is being assessed.

11. Treasurer's report

£135.08 paid out (on web access/ admin fees)

£317.54 remaining

12. Reports of other meetings attended & forthcoming meetings

Aberdeen incinerator meeting 24 Feb. DM attended.

Many issues had been raised. Concerns with possibility that the levels of pollution engendered by incineration might prove worse than that from traffic. Efficiency of incinerator requires it to be kept operating meaning when refuse supplies are low it must be 'fed' with other fuel defeating main object.

Lots of interest and recognition that it is a balancing act.

Licensing Policy Workshop 8 March. A local resident attended

There were representatives from the NHS, police, various health and social care partnerships, and a woman working with overview of Aberdeen night-life; but the majority of the delegates were members of the publican trade. It was noted that no Community Council reps were in attendance but the timing, 9.30-4pm on a week day, precluded most working people's attendance. 100 people were there but these were not representative of the wider Aberdeen population.

Little was addressed in terms of tightening up on drinking, smoking etc in outside areas. The outside noise was noted and emphasis was placed on publicans considering effect of noise etc on surrounding residents.

Licensing Board consultation launched today (20.03.18) goes on to May

Introduction to the next Local Development Plan 13 March

Community Council Forum Planning Group 19th March

DM attended both

3-tier structure of development planning: Scotland – National Planning framework; Aberdeenshire/Aberdeen – Strategic Development Plan; Aberdeen – Local Development Plan.

Our influence as Community Council needs to be on Local Development plan tier 3 with a consultation 19 March – 08 May 2018.

Concentrating on what our area needs and how this can be addressed?

Issues of balance between short and long-term residence, in particular HMOs, and need for some form of tourism strategy. Need to focus on putting Old Aberdeen (literally) on the map.

Score your feelings about the area on line [Dewi - link?].

13. *Date and venue for next meeting: 17 April Old Aberdeen Townhouse*

14. *Representations from members of the public and AOB*

A member of the public raised the issue of the problems of parking in the lane to the west of the High Street. The University has put up signs saying this is University land and is using a private firm to enforce fines on anyone parking without a permit.

However, ownership of the lane is disputed – it is very probably common land. Status of the land and legality of the parking fines to be confirmed.