

Old Aberdeen Community Council

7.30 pm on Tuesday 15th September via MS Teams

Minutes of Meeting (draft 1)

1. Present and apologies
 - Present: Dewi Morgan (chair), Trevor Stack (minutes), Isobel Aitken, Gordon Mutch, David Craik, Steven Berry.
Prof. Ruth Taylor (Vice-Principal, Education, UoA) (p/t), Jenny Fernandes (director External Relations, UoA) (p/t), and Alan Wight (Deputy Director, Estates, UoA), Radeen Moncrieffe (AUSA Communities Vice-President), Andrew Machray (Police Scotland) (p/t), Cllr. Dell Henrickson, Daniel Boal (Evening Express), Elizabeth Hepburn (resident), Ronald Leith (Chair OAHS), Local Resident.
 - Apologies: Eric Kiltie, Lekky Shepherd, Teresa Harwood
2. Police update
 - Crime levels back to pre-COVID levels
 - Police are responding to rise in shoplifting in the area committed by shoplifters displaced by closure of shops in city centre
 - Engaging with new students at Hillhead.
3. University presentation on managing the new term with Covid-19 ongoing
 - Ruth Taylor
 - Researchers have been on campus in past month with no issues arising
 - Freshers Week will be almost entirely online, and all lectures will be online with on-campus teaching respecting 2-metre distance
 - Overall, UoA does not expect more than 19% of usual capacity on campus – students and staff expected to leave campus when not necessary to be there
 - Pledge has been developed for students to agree to appropriate behaviour (provided in MS Teams chat) and disciplinary measures will be in place
 - UoA intends to adhere closely to Scottish Government guidance
 - Jenny Fernandes
 - Students are likely to return gradually to campus, rather than all at the same time, especially in the case of international students
 - UoA intends to be as flexible as possible, and expects some students to participate online before considering whether to join classes on campus
 - In response to question from Gordon Mutch, AW responded that Cruickshank Gardens will be opening in next week or so
 - DM asked what consideration has been given to maintaining social distancing along narrow pavements and alleys around Campus. AW responds that, after consulting with ACC officers responsible for street restrictions in city centre, they would prefer to wait until issues arise before taking any necessary measures.
4. UoA update (AW)
 - Science Centre construction continues
 - Planning application not yet resolved for Johnston Building development – delay due to COVID in getting surveyors to site
 - Application for Kings redevelopment has also now been submitted

5. Minutes of previous meetings (July and August) and matters arising
 - Both sets of minutes approved

6. AUSA reps update
 - No face-to-face events to happen in Freshers Week, except possibly Nightline service which would entail 2 Nightline volunteers on campus
 - Looking to develop policy with UoA for handling any illegal activities by AUSA societies, e.g. for sports training

7. Seaton Park update (DM)
 - Looking for volunteers to join, Friends management team, also for weeding, bulb-planting, litter-picking
 - Looking for funding to repair path from St Machars Cathedral down to river

8. Planning issues
 - Johnston development: no issues raised
 - Erection of 20m mobile phone pole on south side of St Machar Drive (opposite existing one): no issues raised. Mast will be quite intrusive, but alternative is a greater number of smaller masts.
 - Kings redevelopment
 - DM – a major redevelopment with some 60 documents that have yet to be reviewed. However, initial observations indicate that it would not be visible from ground on High Street provided the indicated roof height is not increased, and considers that it is appropriate use of University property for their business
 - Local resident observes that proposal has only been in public domain for 2 days and too soon to make full judgement, including over visibility, although she points out that her concern is not only with loss of memorial garden but also with view of historic buildings
 - AW reiterates that if residents have concerns or queries in the days to come, they should ask him
 - Local resident insists that the building would be obvious and very different in style to what is around it – though DM observes that library stack building is also different to older building around it. AW undertook to obtain architect's view of the gap between Linklater rooms and Kings College Chapel, viewed from lawn / High Street.

9. 'Community Vision for Old Aberdeen' - progress update including:
 - a. Wayfinder maps: DM working on layout
 - b. Dog mess: no advance (DC)
 - c. Cycle routes and cycling on pavements: DM received response from ACC Roads on various cycling queries. ACC acknowledges that St Machar Drive cycle routes are not ideal. Also that while ACC has typically prioritised cars over cyclists, an ongoing consultation by Nestrans is now proposing prioritising pedestrians and cyclists over cars.

10. Other local issues
 - a. Next newsletter: to be delivered
 - b. The mysterious case of the missing litter bin (SB): now restored.
 - c. Don Street flooding: appears that mains drain is partially blocked. EK to contact ACC
 - d. Street lighting within the core conservation area: DM regrets that more traditional street lights have been replaced by modern LED lights of a particularly brutalist

design on Don Street and elsewhere – has asked Roads to retain/replace lights with lamps of a more sympathetic design on core heritage streets. Awaiting response.

11. City Councillors' update (Cllr. Henrickson)

- Issues on agenda (College Bounds bus gate etc.) not pertaining to his ward
- Council meetings slowly getting back to normal
- DM suggests that a camera on the bus gate is especially important now that students will be returning this month and pedestrians will need extra space on High Street
- DC reports that traffic lights should be reinstated on St Machar Drive since roadworks complete and temporary lights are causing delays. Otherwise, the temporary traffic lights should have timings reset as the current configuration is causing huge tail-backs on St Machar Drive.

12. Treasurer's report: GM reports that finances are healthy

13. Consultations:

- Nestrans 2040 consultation (closes 16 October): proposing more railway stations between Dyce and Aberdeen, as well as considering prioritising pedestrians and cyclists
- Low Emissions Zone consultation (closes 11 October): Proposes a zone covering the centre of Aberdeen within which polluting vehicles will be excluded. Consultation invites public to discuss extent of zone.
- DM encouraged community councillors to read through the documents. Suggested that a response from OACC would be appropriate for the Nestrans consultation, but the Low Emissions Zone consultation is more appropriate for individual responses.

14. Date for next meeting: Tuesday 20 October at 7.30 pm using MS Teams

15. Any representations from members of the public and AOB?: none.