



FORT, SEAFIELD & WALLACETOWN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 8th November 2017 in Room RB3, Ayr Town Hall, at 7pm

Members Present

Norman McLean (NM) Chair, Michael Hitchon (MH) Treasurer, Olena Stewart (OS) Secretary, Judith Hood (JH), Dymrna Gardiner (DG), Eileen Munro (EM), Phil Martin (PM), Frank Ward (FW)

In Attendance

Cllr. Lee Lyons (LL), Chris Campbell (CC) Link Officer, PC John Connor (PCJC)

Public

David Connelly (DC), Frances Brown (FB), Angi Pinkerton (AP) AHEAD, David Young (DY), Linda Robinson, Claymore Young

Minutes Secretary: Yolanda McCall (YMcC)

Welcome

NM welcomed all to the meeting. He advised that the agenda had been rearranged with public businesses moved to the end of the meeting in order to allow for questions about topics discussed during the evening.

1. **Apologies**

Forbes Watson (FMW) Vice Chair, Peter McCall (PMcC), Sandy Crawford (SC), Robert Singer (RS), Liz Martin (LM), Cllr. Martin Dowey (MD), Cllr. Derek McCabe (DM), Cllr. Siobhian Brown (SB),

2. **Minutes of Last Meeting**

October minutes reviewed, proposed (JH) and accepted (PM).

3. **Matters Arising and New Members**

Nil

4. **Police Business**

PCJC provided Ayr West's October 2016 & 2017 crime figures for comparison purposes. The numbers in brackets relate to offences reported within the West Ayr Ward beats, but these cannot be captured exactly due to beat boundary issues:

Crime Type	Offences October 2017	Offences October 2016
Housebreaking	7 (1)	3 (0)
Theft of motor vehicle	6 (0)	1 (0)
Drugs offences	8 (1)	8 (1)
Assaults	20 (2)	12 (2)
Breach of peace	19 (1)	16 (1)
Drink/ disqualified driving	0 (0)	2 (0)

PCJC presented the following report:

- From the Ayr West perspective breaches of the peace and assault have both increased on the same period last year, whilst drugs offences have remained static, but the detection rate remains high with regard to these crime types.
- Housebreakings and vehicle crime in the Ayr West ward have both increased significantly for the same period last year. Residents should remain vigilant regarding home security and leaving items visible in their cars and ensuring central locking systems are engaged correctly. The detection rates for these crimes remain quite low and anyone seen acting suspiciously should be reported to police immediately.
- Drink driving decreased over the same period last year but our officers will continue high visibility patrols for road traffic crimes.
- Currently additional patrols have been organised for Halloween and Fireworks nights and the lead up to darker evening and the various festive events.

NM observed this is the second month with an increase in crime statistics compared to last year. PCJC said there could be numerous factors such as who's in, or not in, jail. It can also be due to different detection. He encouraged 999 calls to be made for any suspicious behaviour seen in the streets, and avoid leaving anything visible in cars, not even loose change. NM asked whether known sources of crime are followed up. PCJC advised that Intelligence Officers monitor personnel and crime types. OS enquired about an incident a week ago in Racecourse View in the morning, with a patrol car and two policemen in attendance. The constable was not aware of the incident. He can feed a request for details back to the sergeant, but would need exact date and time, and data protection may prevent information being released.

5. Ayr Town Centre Renaissance and Belleisle

With regard to Ayr Renaissance, in SB's absence she had provided NM with a report. Design work has been approved to upgrade the old Ayr Academy and to move the Grammar into the refurbished building. The project includes a new archives and family history section. Funding has been approved to continue work on clearing the Afflecks site and options to regenerate the top of the town. NM referred to Burns House and the Station Hotel. He has heard that contact has been made with the owners of the Station Hotel and the council are looking at ways of getting them to fulfil their obligations with regard to repairs. LL will obtain an update from Robin Ghosh prior to the January CC meeting.

NM reported that at Belleisle, everything apart from the hotel is going very well indeed. Tenders are out for the visitors centre in the old stables area, due for construction by December 2018. There has been a meeting between council officials and Historic Lottery Fund, assessing finances. It would appear that an under spend on many items means there is a real possibility that a public convenience could be provided between the conservatory and the children's play area. They are actively looking at possibilities, along the lines of that provided at Prestwick Cross, with no attendant and minimal maintenance. With regard to Belleisle House, the council are moving along with a view to buying it back and letting it for a children's respite home, who would be responsible for fitting out and restoring the house internally and externally and also the grounds. DG asked if the plan is for the Malcolm Sargent charity. NM confirmed, yes. A valuation is being sought from the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors. The owner has not moved his position, but the council are very active and hopeful for a resolution.

MH said he was pleased to hear confirmation from SB's report of the planned heritage centre, which he feels is long overdue for a county town. That morning he had visited Ayr Club, established 1870, and now sadly closing. They have artefacts that should go to a local museum. Many people have interesting memorabilia that they could donate. YMcC advised that the club are also trying to find a home for a Victorian snooker table. MH confirmed it is in beautiful condition. OS publicised grand draw tickets and upcoming events at Belleisle conservatory, every weekend between 25th November and Christmas. Most events are free, but a membership is available and encouraged for local residents. Numerous leaflets have been printed and will be distributed to local establishments. Tourist Information is sadly shutting in April. OS advised there is a new South Ayrshire Life information service in Newmarket Street.

NM had a meeting with Cllr. Connelly regarding the golfing academy. The golfing academy trust have revised their plans, and NM is persevering in showing them how the plan can be further improved by adapting Seafield Course so that it is not necessary to use any of the football pitches or open space of the old racecourse. With regard to proposals for the driving range, the site on Heathfield Road behind M&S is not feasible because the airport needs that ground.

6. Councillors' Business and Matters Arising

From SB's report, NM read that SB had spoken with ARA. Initially they were satisfied with signage for Dalblair Road speed limit, however she stressed that there was a lot of concern about speeding in the area from Dalblair Way up to Alloway Street. ARA agreed to paint 20 mph signs on this section of the road. SB had put out an appeal for the South Harbour community and residents to get together to try to

regenerate the area and decide the fate of the boat. Several people want to keep the boat to mark the significant history of fishing in Ayr. There will now be a community project, headed up by SB. LL advised that the Scottish government has given 'council clusters' additional funding for schools. Douglas Hutchison will oversee the spending for the three Ayrshires and Dumfries & Galloway. The Ayrshire Growth Deal is also seeking funding by combining the three Ayrshires to meet the criteria for money from the government for various projects beneficial to the community, possibly transport and infrastructure. There will be three councillors leading this for each of the three Ayrshires. Brian McGinley, Martin Dowe and Douglas Campbell are the leads for South Ayrshire. LL reported that with regard to Belleisle, NM's report was correct; however yesterday he attended a mediated meeting between another community council and the hotel's owner. The owner provided a presentation with a 3D model of his plans for the hotel and spa, and that community council bought into his vision and there was huge optimism in the room. They now plan to meet with Mike Newell to support the owner's plans. NM feels that after 2 years, the community and the council cannot be expected to wait any longer while the building deteriorates.

7. **Planning Control**

PM had nothing of note to report for the community council on the last planning list, 27th October. He confirmed the ongoing application to start taking down the newer buildings at the back of the old Ayr Academy. The Auchendoon Crescent gap-fill site is up for offer, £325K, for land to build three houses. He was at a meeting last night where the issue of rising tide levels in the Clyde was discussed. The group are writing to SEPA to ask if their website will be updated with regard to flood risk areas in light of new projections. This could, for example, impact future development plans for Cunning Park, currently graded as one third flood risk, two thirds grassland. If areas are re-categorised, it could also affect insurance. NM referred to an enquiry that SB received, regarding the regular digging up of sewage at the Carwinshoch View end of the beach. SB investigated and was able to confirm that the digger was removing sea mineral residue (not sewage) that was blocking drainage pipes that were installed by a land owner in the 1800s. NM confirmed that the community council had previously dealt with this issue several years ago. If the area around the pipes is not regularly cleared, local residents get flooded basements. EM offered concerns over the hazardous nature of the area for children - there are steep banks of sand and the digger leaves sharp debris - it should be fenced off. NM stated that the red colour in the water is iron and has been tested by SEPA, it is non-toxic, but he will have another look at the area.

8. **Reports**

OS has forwarded an email to all members that she received from Gamika Liyanapathirana of UWS. His new post in sustainability will seek to have the community working with the students and the students working with the community. MH enquired whether Gamika is aware of South Ayrshire Sustainability Partnership. OS had not discussed that, but she has requested that the campus president, currently Heather Armstrong, should come to our meetings. The university is not in our area, but it is important to get the students' views on the town centre.

MH reported on three locality planning group meetings he attended since last CC meeting:

- (i) 24th October, Joyce Campbell spoke of contracts and commissioning for South Ayrshire Health and Social Care partnership.
- (ii) 30th October, a sub-group meeting to consider the distribution of £60K to organisations in Ayr South and Coylton within this financial year. There will be two opportunities for small groups to bid for grants, by participatory budgeting: 20th January at Belmont and 17th February at Coylton.
- (iii) 7th November, focused on reports from several of 20 groups and projects who had received awards in October 2016. MH gave examples of various success stories.

EM attended the Licensing Forum, 8th November. Catriona Andrew, the licensing standards officer, would be happy to provide a briefing at a CC meeting. Some of their policies may need updating to help policing in the town centre with regard to changing drinking habits, and she would be keen to hear the group's views. PM reported attending the locality planning group meetings for Ayr North, where good work is being done. Brian McQuillan could feedback on their initiatives. NM will co-ordinate these possible speakers for January/February meetings.

MH reported that the organ recitals have been well attended. The Ayr Concert Series also produced a good audience at the first event. MH promoted upcoming events, including a concert on 20th November when a \$12 million cello will be played at Ayr Town Hall. Reduced price tickets can be made available for young or needy people, contact MH.

9. **Correspondence**

OS distributed the Ayr Arts Guild calendar of events and other leaflets. NM puts notices on the Seafield notice board. MH raised issues with the Wallace Tower notice boards following refurbishment. The space on the board in Mill Street has been taken up by an A3 poster dating to September 2016, and the CC agenda is now only shown on a board deep inside the building. LL will follow this up.

10. **Financial Report**

MH advised £439.99 is available for administration.

11. **Public Business**

FB was interested to hear the comments from the ARA regarding signage for Dalblair Road. She has not noticed any of the offered police initiative in the area. NM will follow this up. DY stated concerns regarding the development of the old racecourse. NM committed the community council's support in protecting this common good land and ensuring all are consulted about any developments.

12. **AOCB**

Nil

13. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday 10th January 2018 at 7.00pm

Room RB3 Ayr Town Hall

December meeting will be a social evening, date and venue to be confirmed.