



FORT, SEAFIELD & WALLACETOWN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 13th June 2018 in RB3, Ayr Town Hall, at 7pm

Members Present

Norman McLean (NM) Chair, Forbes Watson (FMW) Vice Chair, Michael Hitchon (MH) Treasurer, Olena Stewart (OS) Secretary, Peter McCall (PMcC), Frank Ward (FW), Eileen Munro (EM), Robert Singer (RS), Judith Hood Paterson (JHP), David Petrie (DP)

In Attendance

Chris Campbell (CC) Link Officer, Cllr. Lee Lyons (LL), Cllr. Martin Dowey (MD), Cllr. Derek McCabe (DMcC), PC Dunlop (PCD)

Public

Angi Pinkerton (AP) AHEAD Community Builder, Sarah Hilley (SH) Ayrshire Post, Michael Allan (MA) Fort, Denise Thomson (DT) Wallacetown.

Minutes Secretary: Yolanda McCall (YMcC)

Welcome

Norman welcomed all to the last meeting prior to the summer recess.

1. **Apologies**

Cllr. Siobhian Brown (SB), Sandy Crawford (SC), Dympna Gardiner (DG), Phil Martin (PM), Liz Martin (LM)

2. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

May minutes reviewed and accepted. Proposer: MH; Seconder: FMW

3. **Matters Arising**

FMW attended the AGM of the Friends of Seafield House. The owner had been invited, but did not attend. A planning application is expected in June for 28 houses, double the 14 originally proposed. In theory, repairs should be made to Seafield House prior to any homes being built, but the developers may have different ideas. NM advised that PM and himself will look out for the application on the planning list.

4. **Police Business**

Incidents and Crimes of note compared with same period last year:

Crime Type	Offences May 2018	Offences May 2017
Housebreaking	6	3
Theft of motor vehicle	3	4
Drug offences	8	6
Assaults	21	15
Breach of peace/Abusive behaviour	13	13
Drink/ disqualified driving	2	1

PC Dunlop presented the following report:

- From the Ayr West perspective breaches of the peace have remained static whilst drugs offences and assaults have both increased on the same period last year, but the detection rate remains high with regard to these crime types.
- Housebreakings in the Ayr West ward have increased on the same period last year, car crime has decreased in Ayr West. Residents should be highly 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 have improved recently, but anyone seen acting suspiciously should be reported to police immediately.
- Drink driving detection increased slightly and our officers are continuing to hold both covert and high visibility patrols for road traffic crimes.
- The Safershores multi-agency initiative is up and running and will continue throughout the summer. The beaches have been busy with visitors, but Ayr has not witnessed the levels of youth antisocial behaviour which Troon beach has seen. The plan ensures that weather, intelligence and travel patterns are monitored and shared to try to prepare for any issues.

PCD advised that although crime figures have increased, hopefully detection rates are higher. The good weather could be a factor. NM enquired whether the police are involved in implementing the court order for the travelling people at Seafield. PCD knows that the police have been to speak to the people and the only comment she heard is that they seem to be keeping the place tidy. The police drive past and monitor their activity, they speak to them, but the travellers tend not to divulge their plans. RS asked about perceived specific problems for Wallacetown. PCD has only been in this area for 3 months, but drug offences seem to be the most common issue. NM asked if there is an issue with young people being used to push drugs. PCD is not aware of it, or at least not on the scale that has recently been circulated via social media. Officers work closely with the housing department, social workers and shops, tracking who is living in specific properties to identify who may be getting involved in 'bad' company. A plain clothes presence has proved useful for stumbling across occasional issues. RS requested an appointment to speak with Inspector Hendrie regarding Wallacetown and the Fresh Ayr project. PCD will arrange.

5. **Public Business**

AP introduced DT, a proactive member of the Wallacetown Community who is trying to make improvements through action groups and activities with St. John's and Newton primary schools. DMcC was very impressed with the recent Junior Community Builder Lego Project. RS expressed a need for the various projects in Wallacetown to communicate with each other better; he feels they are working in silos. AP believes positive progress is being made. The next Wallacetown Action Group meeting will be held at Newton Primary on 19th June, 6-8pm. NM invited DT to join the community council. DT agreed and will be co-opted until the next elections in April, bringing the group to full complement.

6. **Ayr Town Centre Renaissance and Belleisle Hotel**

MD reported that there will be no action taken before August regarding plans for the riverside block. The planned building has been rejected and the council has no plan B at present. There have been some discussions about whether SAC staff should be relocated to outlying towns with the site being grassed over, but his opinion is that there should be a building in Ayr to replace Burns House. NM has twice requested meetings with the chief exec, but hasn't as yet been able to secure an appointment. RS would like to see the riverside site used for arts and culture. FW noted that all members supported the original master plan. YMcC agreed and suggested that the CC members need to confirm their preference for the riverside block and reach a consensus for NM to take forward - whether the Masterplan with offices, an arts centre or open space. NM will conduct email discussions and informal meetings over the summer recess.

The owner of Belleisle Hotel has fenced off an area in front of the hotel. He did inform the council, but with insufficient notice for them to address the issue. LL advised that the space is rightfully Mr Campbell's, however the action wasn't expected and therefore caused some traffic disruption in the park.

NM/DP/LL/EM discussed possible alternative access routes. The legal department are ensuring that rights of way are available for people to walk around the hotel. CC noted that after 10 years, a regular access route becomes a right of way. DM said that the councillors will try to speak to the owner.

OS spoke of upcoming free tours of Belleisle's Stables development – contact SAC to book places. Two successful weddings were held recently at Belleisle Conservatory and OS provided details of upcoming events: a members evening, Friday 15th June, strawberries, cream, sparkly and chat, a 'thank you' for patrons and volunteers; Sunday 17th June, 2-4pm Sunday Sessions in the Conservatory will be presenting music; Thursday 21st June, 2pm, UK Make Music Day, Ayr Choral invite all to celebrate the longest day of the year as part of a global festival of music; Sunday 24th June, 2-4pm, Sunday Sessions in the Conservatory will be presenting Sound Chasers - jazz duo of Colin Mackay (sax) and Tom O'Leary (guitar); Sunday 8th July, 12-4pm Day of the Honey Bee, educational information on the importance of honey bees; Thursday 12th July, 7pm, AGM, all welcome; Sunday 15th July, 2-4pm, Sunday Sessions in the

Conservatory will be presenting joint session; Saturday 21st July, 11am-4pm, Parklife, Belleisle Conservatory will be taking part in SAC's annual event. Events are free but donations are most gratefully received, visit www.belleisleconservatory.com for more information.

7. **Councillors' Business and Matters Arising. Travellers**

MD spoke on three matters: travellers, beach cleaning and Newmarket Street. The travellers have returned to Seafield, frustrating local residents. MD advised that bollards have been signed off for installation and will be erected ASAP along both sides of the grass areas at Ayr India. Papers should be served for the current travellers to be evicted within a couple of days. Some of the bollards will be removable to allow access for parking when desired, for example, during the air show.

A petition with 70-90 signatories was presented to the leadership panel, requesting regular mechanical cleaning of the beach between Cromwell Road and the pier. The request was rejected, and cleaning will continue as present with occasional cleaning only. PMcC noted that the beach used to be fully cleaned, but the duty now rests with an army of volunteers, whose job is becoming more difficult as litter collects in the Maram grass which has been allowed to grow at the north end of the beach.

The Ayrshire Post has reported on the possibility of allowing smoking at tables outside cafes in Newmarket Street (currently banned under a Scottish government ruling, due to the land being council owned). Labour will submit a motion that 50% of the tables will be available for smokers. The existing ban is thought to be detrimental to revenue for local businesses, and there is general cross-party agreement to support the motion. CC members presented no opposing views. FMW will draft a letter of support.

NM advised that the Station Hotel has apparently been sold to another Malaysian, believed to be an owner of a hotel chain. It is not yet known if there will be any positive progress, but possible options are a renovated hotel, offices, student accommodation or a pub.

8. **Planning Control**

NM advised that there is currently nothing of any consequence for Ayr West ward, but confirmed he will watch out for any submission regarding Seafield House.

9. **Reports**

RS advised that Fresh Ayr will be meeting next week with SAC Housing, and their architects will present a rough sketch of the proposal for the underground car park in the Wallacetown area. The Fresh Ayr group is also in discussions regarding a possible rent-free period for a private enterprise at No.14 Sandgate, using the space for an arts based bakery. Meanwhile they will be selling bread and encouraging arts based exhibitions in cafe Nova in the Lorne Arcade. RS expressed disappointment that the council do not appear to be giving credit to Fresh Ayr for their ideas. He feels the project could provide phenomenal publicity and generate jobs for Ayr and two other local towns.

EM advised of a licensing request for an extension of hours at the Fox & Willow (the old Carrick Lodge), 46 Carrick Road, a residential area. NM and FMW do not perceive any issues.

OS confirmed that with DT co-opted, this community council is at full complement, however 2018 is the year of young people, so if anyone knows of a young person who may be interested in getting involved, they could be included as a special interest co-optee.

10. **Correspondence**

OS distributed some flyers and advised of an invite to a meeting of SW Scotland Railway Commission on 24th June. LL will be attending and offered to report back to the group.

11. **Financial Report**

MH advised that we are currently £165 in the red, awaiting top-up money. CC offered to chase this up.

12. **AOCB**

MH distributed leaflets for, "The Organist Entertains," and he highlighted the upcoming international month in July, and particularly the concert on Monday 9th July which features two World Premieres commissioned for the town hall's Lewis Organ to mark the 10th anniversary of the series.

13. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING:**

NM offered apologies in advance of the next meeting.

Wednesday 12th September at 7.00pm

Ayr Town Hall