



## FORT, SEAFIELD & WALLACETOWN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

**Minutes** of the meeting held on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2017 in Room RB3, Ayr Town Hall, at 7pm

### **Members Present**

Norman McLean (NM) Chair, Forbes Watson (FMW) Vice Chair, Michael Hitchon (MH) Treasurer, Sandy Crawford (SC), Peter McCall (PMcC), Liz Martin (LM), Phil Martin (PM), Eileen Munro (EM), Frank Ward (FW), Judith Hood (JH), Robert Singer (RS) co-opted.

### **In Attendance**

Chris Campbell (CC) Link Officer, PC Young (PCY), PC Harding (PCH), Cllr. Siobhian Brown (SB), Cllr. Martin Dowey (MD), Cllr. Lee Lyons (LL).

### **Public**

Sarah Hilley, Ayrshire Post (SH), Alan Mackay (AM), Robert Caldow (RC), Michelle Sommerville (MS), David Connelly (DC), Frances Brown (FB).

Minutes Secretary: Yolanda McCall (YMcC)

### **Welcome**

NM welcomed all to the meeting. Due to the large number of attendees at recent meetings, and in order to keep proceedings focused and within an acceptable timescale, NM introduced a procedural change whereby members of the public would be invited to speak only during 'Public Business' (section 4) of the agenda. The remainder of the meeting would be for Community Council Members, Councillors and the Link Officer.

### 1. **Apologies**

Olena Stewart (OS) Secretary, Dympna Gardiner (DG), Derek McCabe (DMC), Catherine Hunter, Ayr Advertiser (CH), Angi Pinkerton, Wallacetown Community Builder (AP).

### 2. **Minutes of Last Meeting**

October minutes reviewed, proposed (MH) and accepted (PMcC), with a correction to Frances Brown's surname (not Burns). NM advised he will be meeting with Brian Connolly next Wednesday to further discuss proposals for the Golf Academy.

### 3. **Matters Arising and New Members**

- FMW attended a public exhibition at the town hall on 5<sup>th</sup> October, ahead of the pending planning application for Seafield House. FMW had previously written to Robin Ghosh with concerns about the condition of the building and the boundary wall. Unfortunately Mr Ghosh was not available during FMW's visit, however one of his staff said she believes the boundary wall is listed and is within the curtilage of Seafield House. The development model shows an increase in the proposed number of new-build houses from 14 to 27, in addition to 10 apartments in the main building. The increase is said to be necessary to make the retention of the former hospital a viable proposition. FMW visited the site recently and was dismayed at the dreadful condition of the building. Nothing has been done for the last 5 years. PMcC viewed the display and was surprised at the number of houses planned within the walled area. NM advised that photos of the simulated model are available in the Ayrshire Post. PM suggested that the increase in house space taken up could result in some parking and traffic issues, but we need to wait for detailed plans expected in the next few weeks.

- NM advised that Robert Singer has offered to come forward as a new member for Wallacetown. With two current vacancies, he could be co-opted until the next elections in May. MH proposed and LM seconded. CC will arrange the required paperwork.

#### 4. **Public Business**

- Robert Caldwell introduced himself as the owner of Seafield's Creggan Bahn Care Home, and he introduced the home's manager, Michelle Sommerville. RC wanted to advise the community council that the care home will be seeking planning permission for developing the facility further.
- Frances Brown declared a continued interest in addressing the speeding issues along Dalblair Road. The constables in attendance advised there will be a traffic initiative next week, and they will feed back a request to focus in the Dalblair Road area.
- Alan Mackay raised similar concerns along South Harbour Street and requested an update from the councillors regarding regeneration of Citadel Quay. SB advised that meetings have taken place with the residents' association, and a group is being formed to consult on the future of the boat area. New surfaces are expected in November to deter skate boarders. MD believes the boat is falling apart. A survey has been carried out and he expects it will be removed for safety.

#### 5. **Police Business**

Incidents and crimes of note compared with same period last year

<b>Crime Type</b>	<b>Offences September 2017</b>	<b>Offences September 2016</b>
Housebreaking	10	5
Theft of motor vehicle	5	4
Drugs offences	10	4
Assaults	21	18
Breach of peace/ Abusive behaviour	11	26
Drink/ disqualified driving	1	4

PC Young presented the following report:

- Drugs offences and assaults have both increased on the same period last year, whilst breaches of the peace have reduced significantly, but the detection rate remains high with regard to these crime types.
- Housebreakings in the Ayr West ward have also increased significantly for the same period last year. Vehicle crime has increased slightly and is an on-going issue, residents should remain vigilant regarding 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 summer period last year but our officers will continue high visibility patrols for road traffic crimes.
- A multi-agency action plan is currently underway in respect of bogus workmen and additional patrols by trading standards, community safety officers and road policing units are concentrating their efforts in your area. Any suspicious activity at elderly or vulnerable neighbours should be reported to us.

NM enquired why some crime figures had significantly increased. PCH was unsure, but advised that policing levels are the same, housebreaking is not in any specific area, and detection rate for drugs is high. JH enquired whether cancellation of the horse racing affected the crime rates. The PCs were unable to offer any knowledge.

#### 6. **Councillors' Business and Matters Arising**

MD advised that the new local development plan has kept councillors busy since the summer recess. There is a £17 million black hole to be found in the budget. MD and SB agreed there are difficult decisions ahead in making plans for the next 5 years while trying to avoid redundancies. MD and SB debated pros and cons of developing Loans and Dalmilling golf course sites for housing, with input from LL, JH, EM and PM. It was confirmed that any proposals will go to public consultation. FMW summarised that there is likely to be a large shortfall to achieve a plan within budget, however it is important that the community council focuses on issues within its area of jurisdiction. FMW asked for clarification of the Grammar's move into the old Ayr Academy building. LL advised there are plans for a lot of work to be carried out; he will provide an update of the planned transfer date. FMW and RS asked if there have been any discussions about uses for the old BHS store. SB said she was not aware of any plans yet. PMcC enquired about the Kyle Centre plans for a cinema. MD confirmed there are some ideas along this vein, but they have not advanced. SB reported a meeting of Fire Safety and Housing representatives with the River Ayr Tenants Association for Wallacetown, to discuss safety aspects in high rise blocks and offer assurance in light of recent fire events. She also informed that there will be no fees paid for celebrities to

switch on the Christmas lights. This year it will be about children, with Ayrshire's 'Little Stars' performing the duty, and there will be events throughout the town centre.

NM asked the councillors for an update about the Station Hotel. MD understands that the owner has been tracked down in Malaysia and he is willing to sell. There are fears for the safety of the station. SB has contacted NetworkRail and they are not interested. LM enquired about the Scottish Land fund that RS proposed at previous meeting. RS and MD discussed possibilities for renovating this iconic building, and also the option of 'matched funding;' however there has to be a defined purpose and future costs have to be addressed. EM asked about the interest previously shown in using it for student accommodation. MD advised that the university is not interested; they have onsite accommodation and Cree Lodge.

MH reported a rumour about the former Darlington Place Church (and subsequently Borderline Theatre) being the subject of a Community Asset Transfer. SB thinks that three groups were interested and they were rejected. However one person is trying to get the groups together to see if they can take it over with a long-term business plan, including local musician, Jamie McGeechan.

MH and NM will meet with Alex Christie on the 19<sup>th</sup> October to discuss his ideas on the Darlington Church

7. **Ayr Town Centre Renaissance and Belleisle**

**Ayr Town Centre:** SB reported that demolition of the riverside block is continuing ahead of schedule.

Work at the old Clydesdale building is running late, but will hopefully be completed by year end.

Volunteers are requested for the Tamfest at the end of the month, leaflets are available in the foyer.

FMW departed at 19:45, ahead of the Belleisle discussion.

**Belleisle:** NM advised that there has been no progress from the developer, Mr Campbell. The council are very concerned and are looking closely at the buy-back clause in the contract with plans to return Belleisle Hotel to Council ownership within the estate, to save the building from dereliction and possibly let it to a suitable tenant. They had hoped it would be a viable commercial operation, but sadly after five years the hotel hasn't gone ahead. MD stated a preference for the Council to buy it back. Funds would come from a separate budget to the 'black hole', so in this case, money is not the issue, but they need a plan for continued maintenance and use thereafter. NM advised that the Friends of Belleisle are giving full support to the Council to buy it back. He also stressed a locational requirement for public conveniences between the children's play park and the conservatory.

8. **Planning Control**

PM had nothing of note for the community council. LM mentioned the plans for Auchincruive Estate, although outwith FSWCC area it may be of interest because it is a large scale development. Galbraith has signs up for almost 500 houses in the next development phase. The agricultural institution was a great asset that has shrunk considerably, although NM observed that there are some other businesses within the Estate, and MH advised about the relocation of various college departments.

9. **Reports**

CC advised that the next round of locality planning group applications is likely to have an increased budget available. South Carrick has £60,000 with some groups allowed to apply for up to £10,000.

MH reported that 1200 listeners have attended the Monday lunchtime organ concerts. There are seven more concerts in the programme, each starts at 12 noon.

The BBC Symphony Orchestra's concert in Ayr Town Hall on 6<sup>th</sup> October was recorded. Ideas are needed to encourage children to attend the concerts (price is only £3 per head).

10. **Correspondence**

EM received a letter notifying a licensing request for 2 Beresford Terrace. Any comments or objections should be lodged by 2<sup>nd</sup> November, but it is not clear how to view the request online. LL offered to help.

11. **Financial Report**

MH advised £494.99 is available for administration.

12. **AOCB**

MH is aware of a spate of applications for cable TV transmitter cabinets of eg: height 1.2m. A planning official told him there are 77 such applications. The proposed siting of units is problematic, and pavements are becoming awful. NM commented that there is an obligation on the service provider to restore pavements. Representation can be made to Virgin Media.

13. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING:**

**Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> November at 7.00pm**

Room RB3 Ayr Town Hall; however NM will continue to attempt to get a bigger room.