



FORT, SEAFIELD & WALLACETOWN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 11th April 2018 in Council Chambers, Ayr Town Hall, at 7pm

Members Present

Norman McLean (NM) Chair, Forbes Watson (FMW) Vice Chair, Michael Hitchon (MH) Treasurer, Sandy Crawford (SC), Phil Martin (PM), Eileen Munro (EM), Peter McCall (PMcC), Robert Singer (RS), Liz Martin (LM), Judith Hood Paterson (JP), Dympna Gardiner (DG), David Petrie (DP)

In Attendance

PC A McGregor (PCAMcG), Cllr. Lee Lyons (LL), Cllr. Martin Dowey (MD), Chris Campbell (CC) Link Officer,

Public

Catherine Hunter (CH) Ayr Advertiser, Pat Lorimer (PL) CSKCC, Kirsty Darwent (KD), Andrew Russell (AR) A&DCC, Alexander Paton (AP) A&DCC, Norman Clark (NC), Esther Clark (EC), Callum Crawford (CC), Kevin Braidwood (KB) Operations Manager ARA, Graeme Senior (GS) ARA, Colin Weir (CW) Dougall Baillie Associates, Stuart Harrow (SH) Dougall Baillie Associates. Minutes Secretary: Yolanda McCall (YMcC)

Welcome

Norman welcomed all to the meeting and advised there would be a change to the published agenda with the inclusion of a presentation from Ayrshire Roads Alliance (ARA) after Police Business.

1. **Apologies**

Olena Stewart (OS) Secretary, Frank Ward (FW), Cllr. Siobhian Brown (SB), Cllr. Derek McCabe (DMcC), Angi Pinkerton (AP) AHEAD Community Builder

2. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

March minutes reviewed. Item 10 amended to include: SC spoke in support of DC's request. FMW requested that members remain at the end of the meeting to privately discuss the procedural nature of this issue.

3. **Matters Arising**

Amended March minutes to be reissued.

4. **Police Business**

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

Crime Type	Offences March 2018	Offences March 2017
Housebreaking	9	5
Theft of motor vehicle	4	4
Drug offences	5	17
Assaults	14	23
Breach of peace/Abusive behaviour	23	18
Drink/ disqualified driving	2	1

PCAMcG presented the following report:

- From the Ayr West perspective breaches of the peace have increased whilst drugs offences and assaults have both reduced significantly on the same period last year, but the detection rate remains high with regard to these crime types. The numbers are low in your beat areas.
- Housebreakings in the Ayr West ward have increased significantly on the same period last year, doubling from 5 to 9. Car crime has remained static. Residents should be highly vigilant regarding home security and leaving items visible in their cars and ensuring central locking systems are engaged correctly. The detections rates for these crimes remain quite low and anyone seen acting suspiciously should be reported to police immediately.
- Drink driving has decreased however our officers are continuing to have high visibility patrols for road traffic crimes, with an action plan running over the coming weeks to improve road safety.

NM enquired about the increase in housebreaking. PCAMcG said the crimes were predominantly to shops. Unique has suffered once or twice, there have been break-ins to empty shops and also attempts to steal alcohol. NM asked for an update on the speeding problem in Dalblair Road which has been raised several times. The constable had no update, but he believes the action plan should help to address the issue and he will raise it with the inspector. KB will add Dalblair Road concerns to ARA's agenda.

5. **Ayrshire Roads Alliance**

KB and GS provided an overview of a project looking at access improvements to and from the railway station. The project is focusing on the suitability of routes and facilities available for access by foot and by bicycle. A bid has been submitted to Sustrans for funding. SH and CW of Dougall Baillie Associates are identifying problems and considering opportunities and constraints for three main routes to the station, from the Craigie Educational Campus, the town centre and from the beach. They would like FS&WCC to provide comments over the next 4-6 weeks. The wider public community will also be able to comment. CH sought clarity on the process for comments. SH advised that at this stage, comments should be routed through this and other CC's. GD advised that a consultation tab will be available on their website later. Post meeting, a sub-committee of NM, FMW and PMcC was formed for this project.

6. **Public Business**

Address: Riverside Block by Catherine Hunter (Ayr Advertiser)

CH spoke passionately about the importance of Ayr's Riverside Block. She had attended the CC meeting in September when Thomas Rees (TR) spoke about Ayr's history and the potential for archaeological finds on the riverside site. The area was the medieval heart of the town. Finds had already been made at that point, including the courtyard of the old Kings Arms Hotel. The digging has now stopped and CH is leading a campaign to keep digging. It was launched in March and is backed by Ayr Advertiser's editor, her colleagues and many readers and historians. They want the dig to continue to see if archaeologists can find something interesting to celebrate Ayr's heritage, give residents a sense of pride and bring tourism back to the town. Ayrshire has died a slow death and retail is not the way to go. Glass floor panels should be built into any development to display Ayr's history. There is an online petition available at change.org which already has the backing of nearly 500 people. MD advised that Ayr Renaissance meetings have not mentioned the archaeology of the riverside site, they are pursuing the heritage trail, but more needs to be done to sell all Ayr's history, including Burns, Cromwell, Robert the Bruce, the old harbour. Ayr needs to find a niche and develop a market for it, now is the time to dig. PMcC commended CH for what Ayr Advertiser is trying to do. FS&WCC are fully supportive of finding ways to promote the town. FMW and EM agreed that an update on the dig is needed. PL explained that without a developer there are possibly no funds available to continue the dig. A dig will be a requirement of building consent. KD advised that Ayr Renaissance had money for 6 months of digging. If something really significant had been found, an order would have been put on it. A plan would be needed for continuing, as digging itself destroys history which could instead be left for exploring in future years. There may be something interesting, but not of national importance. CH believes that TR was very keen to dig further and then preserve and display.

NM introduced Patrick Lorimer, a conservation accredited architect. PL spoke of his deep excitement for the riverside block, which offers great opportunity to develop the site between the two brigs. The people of Ayr must insist that a fantastic building is put on it. The proposed building would be suitable for a general office complex, but not for this site. He agrees that an office building will bring footfall to the town centre, but he objects to the actual building proposed and believes there are flaws in the council's current argument regarding consent for planning. PL continued that this site should be celebrated and put out to limited or open competition, just as the Town Hall design came from a competition. AR observed that the company currently contracted builds offices for the outskirts of towns. PL confirmed that the building may be nice and functional inside, but the outside is not appropriate for the riverside site. NM stated that possibly there was not a sufficient brief provided by the council, issues have arisen because the council is asking too much of this site. KD suggested that the practicalities of delivering office space for a large number of people has been given priority over architectural design and regeneration of the town. NM agreed, and determined that it now requires going back to the drawing boards, and accepting that the plan

is wrong. The site is too important for a mediocre building, and only the force of the community's voices can stop it from happening, but the council needs to listen. PM observed that there was no book for comments at the recent exhibition, and no notes were being taken. PL agreed that only post-it notes were available for comments and these were quickly removed. NM stated that the online objections include some very substantial comments. The riverside development requires to be re-started with an architectural competition to produce a meaningful building based on a revised, practical brief. KD offered practical advice. The key thing is speaking to and influencing councillors to change their views. There are lots of good ideas in the comments, but councillors will be instructed to ignore anything not relevant to planning conditions. A campaign of letters and emails is needed across the county to get all councillors on board as this building has the potential to be either positive or negative for all of Ayrshire. Other CCs also need to be engaged. PM suggested getting the chairs of the CCs together to deliver a combined view. NM has contacted Prestwick, Troon and Ayr CCs and put information on facebook. He believes the community is getting angry and there should be a strong response for the public meeting on 18th April at Ayr Town Hall. NM then opened the debate to the floor. AR/EM/CH/AP/LM/YMcC/MH and others present all expressed disappointment with the proposed building and contributed to the discussion of how best to take action. NM and PL summed up that councillors need to be lobbied and there needs to be animated discussion at the meeting on the 18th. There will be a presentation from the platform followed by Q&A's and a vote on actions will be taken at the end of the meeting.

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

RS asked if there is any progress on the Winton building. MD advised, not yet. Regarding Belleisle, NM said that there is no progress with the hotel, however the Visitors' Centre is under construction. Free guided tours are available, but must be pre-booked. OS has distributed an email with more details.

8. **Councillors' Business and Matters Arising**

MD advised that a mid-management re-structure is currently in progress. The Clean up Streets campaign is continuing, and councillors recently visited fishermen in Troon and Girvan to offer reassurances about Brexit issues. Upcoming issues include a review of the Health & Social Care budget, and the introduction of musical instrument fees in schools. MD advised all present to email their councillor with their views on the riverside block.

9. **Planning Control**

PM reported that there was nothing of concern for Ayr West ward. He drew attention to the exhibition/consultation on Ayr Grammar, including proposals for museums and archives on the Ayr Academy site, taking place on 19th April, 2-8pm. NM noted that some development for Strathdoon, on Racecourse Road, has been turned down.

10. **Reports**

OS has distributed by email AP's report on the 'Making Places' consultation that was held on 19th March. This is a community led design project for Ayr North looking at the design of green space linked to the new housing at Whitletts, and a wider mapping of all green space in Ayr North, while identifying potential uses for play, sport, growing food, and small scale social enterprise use.

11. **Correspondence**

Nil

12. **Financial Report**

MH reported a balance of nil while awaiting the SAC grant for the new financial year. OS may have received communication from SAC on this matter. The previously owed £40.01 has now been received.

13. **AOCB**

JH reported that a big mess with piles of concrete from the plot 9 building site has been left in the car park at Cromwell Road, just opposite the Horizon Hotel. CC will look into this and JH will send him photos. JH offered good news about two DofE students from Belmont School, Amy McCubdin and Rowan Smith, who have raised £355.10 for Belleisle Conservatory. NM suggested that an acknowledgment letter should be sent to the school (action for OS).

EM spoke of parking problems at Belleisle, even at 8.45am in March. NM believes more parking spaces will be available when building works are completed, and other ideas may need to be considered.

RS requested advice about the work getting done on the roof of the Wallacetown underground car park, and he also reported an issue with blocked drains. DP confirmed that 5 rainwater drains run into each other, and the pathway has become a waterfall. MD/LL offered to visit.

PM has completed perimeter checks for the deer at Belleisle and reported that all is okay. He also noted that Cunning Park is now home to 5 deer and possibly some badgers.

14. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING:**

Wednesday 9th May at 7.00pm
Ayr Town Hall