

Fort Seafield and Wallacetown Community Council meeting  
Wednesday 8th September 7pm  
Venue: Ayr Town Hall, Council Chambers.

In Attendance: Norman McLean, Forbes Watson, Michael Hitchon, Phil Martin, Denise Somerville, Alison Logan, Gordon Kelly, David Petrie, Sandy Crawford, Trina McNicol  
Councillor: Derek McCabe

1. Apologies from Olena Stewart, Katherine McNab, Alan Roseweir, Eric Armstrong, Iain Henderson, Chris Campbell, Siobhian Brown, Martin Dowey, Lee Lyons, Jason Peter, Chic Brodie

Also not present, Dympna Gardiner, Libby Morrison.

Norman McLean (NM) opened by welcoming attendees to first face to face meeting since lockdown.

Agenda Items: 2&3. Gordon Kelly (GK) commented on SAC assurances that no contracts had been awarded in connection with proposed town centre pool. If assurances prove less than accurate, SAC need to be held to account.

Denise Somerville (DS) had spoken to Insp. Jason Peter (JP) but was unaware if Wallacetown survey results had been correlated. Slow/no progress on matters involving SAC in Wallacetown.

NM. One trailer but no boats now on Racecourse View. One of the boats now apparently parked in Maybole.

Forbes Watson (FW) reported that dilapidated/possibly dangerous building in Fort Street was not a Toll House. Building Control have assessed exterior but owners have yet to permit access to allow a structural survey. Phil Martin (PM) commented again on proximity to school. FW to follow up.

4. No Police present to report

5. GK informed of new charitable status of Fort, Seafield & Wallacetown Community Association. South Harbour project is making progress with demonstration bed planted and positive residents'/visitor feedback being used as evidence in funding applications. Right to Occupy Bed 3 plus others, as the need arises, ongoing with SAC legal dept.

Work on the canopy scheduled to start 20th September. Temporary bridge repairs have been carried out and FSWCA now await outstanding Ayrshire Roads Alliance (ARA) report on bridge and lighting. As things stand, every light is smashed with remaining shards posing health & safety danger.

Following a visit from Community Payback team coordinator, it was agreed that work on powerwashing, painting and creation of seating bays should start early 2022. Date tbc.

Eric Armstrong (EM) as chair of FSWCA has written to Sheelagh Laing (SL) explaining as FSWCA is working with SAC to resolve infrastructure issues, the board is unable to endorse unsolicited work on The Watchful. He has yet to receive a reply.

FM asked NM if FSWCC would consider making a charitable donation to FSWCA. NM to look into it.

Funding of £250 is pledged by Brakes to FSWCA and an IKEA/NL application for approx £4.5k has been submitted with the decision being announced Sept/Oct.

GK said domain name LaunchAyr had been secured.

6.Plans to develop the Riverside site look like going ahead after building Nos 8&10 have been demolished. Proposed pavilion will be constructed by Portacabin plc. A Planning Official was in discussion with PM and opined that a use for the pavilion had yet to be decided. Following alleged opposition to the plan by SAC planning department, three senior planners have been dismissed and head planner Julie Nichols has resigned. Surprisingly this does not appear to be public knowledge.

Alison Logan (AL) expressed concern over previous workings of Ayr Renaissance.

PM and Michael Hitchon (MH) emphasised the necessity for a full archaeological assessment to take place and for artifacts to be housed and put on public display. PM suggested adopting a Malaga style approach.

MH said that PLACE should have been involved in Riverside proposals and the public consulted.

GK suggested that SAC encourage rumours to circulate as facts with the purpose being to make public believe proposals have already been adopted eg. pool was adopted as a project in schools, inviting children to illustrate what they'd like to see. Derek McCabe (DMcC) said in fact no pre-planning submission had been made and it was extremely doubtful that work would start before next year's elections.

7.It was agreed by majority that the old Ayr Grammar building would be an excellent venue for the Museum of Ayrshire. MH pointed out that the internal layout lent itself to housing large exhibits eg wing of a plane as well as smaller more intimate display areas, creche, cafe etc. For architectural reasons, the building would not easily divide into flats but needs little alterations to form a museum.. The Council voted overwhelmingly in favour of this project and agreed to convey this to the Trust with circulation to the general public.

8. DMcC said results of Parking Consultation had yet to be announced.

GK pointed out that the last three consultations concerning the Esplanade contradicted each other; Seafront recommended pedestrian priority, Active Travel proposed extending cycle routes and now Parking wants to do away with cycle lanes and charge cars for parking along the Esplanade. This requires clarification by SAC.

All these consultations present the survey taker (not necessarily a resident of Ayr) with loaded questions, leading to guided answers with no space for narrative.

DMcC will report at next meeting after report on success or otherwise of Campervan site at Blackburn Carpark. This will be released by the end Sept.

He also noted that all town centre toilets will require contactless payment.

DMcC will write strongly objecting to erection of 5G Mast on the corner of Racecourse View and Doonfoot Road.

9. Carla McEwan CEO of Ayrshire Hospice will be invited at her request to attend FSWCC October meeting to outline plans to extend.

10. PM reported that a new gym is to open in Cathcart Street and that CCTV and lights are to be installed outside County Buildings. This is in contrast with SAC's refusal to install similar equipment inside council offices which would allow public to remotely attend, and watch recordings of, SAC meetings.

From 1<sup>st</sup> September no town centre CCTV cameras will be operational.

11. No reports

12. Olena Stewart (OS) forwards correspondence as she receives it.

Ayrshire Doors Open Day(s) take place Saturday 11th and Sunday 12th September (details from [www.doorsopendays.org.uk](http://www.doorsopendays.org.uk))

13. MH reported that £800 had been received and £550 presently held in account.

14. NM encouraged those wishing to object to new pool to sign the petition being circulated (to date over 2,000 have signed). Google: Change.org Keep Ayr Citadel Leisure Centre and you should get the link.

TMcN reported on increasing problems with short term let (airbnb) properties, mainly those with shared entrances/communal areas. Flat owners are subject to ongoing problems with noise, foul language, alcohol, drugs, prostitution, litter etc making quality of life in many cases, unbearable. Fort Residents Association have met with leader Peter Henderson and SAC Planning Dept however SAC remain firm in their resolve not to take action to implement change of use legislation until it becomes mandatory in two to three years time. At least this should be dealt with under public disorder and public health legislation.

The next meeting will be held in the Town Hall, actual room to be decided, on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> October at 7.00pm.

The Meeting concluded at 9.00pm.