

**Fort, Seafield and Wallacetown Community Council**  
**Minutes**  
**9th February 2022 @ 7pm**  
**Room RB3 Town Hall Buildings, Ayr**

**1 Apologies:** Eric Armstrong, Alan Roseweir, Katherine McNab, Libby Cummings, Gordon Kelly, David Porte (link officer) , also David Petrie.

**Attendees:** Norman McLean, Forbes Watson, Olena Stewart, Sandy Crawford, Michael Hitchon, Phil Martin, Denise Somerville, Alison Logan, Trina McNicol

**Councillors:** Martin Dowe, Lee Lyons, Derek McCabe

**2&3 Minutes from December Meeting, Matters Arising and Election Update**

No matters arising from December minutes.

**NMcL** reminded attendees that those seeking re-election to FSWCC should submit nomination forms by 17th February.

Tracy Whiteford has expressed concern at low numbers of public coming forward due, NMcL believes, to present administration's disinterest in Community Councils.

Correspondence to Chief Executive is given low priority and passed on to be dealt with further down the chain of authority.

Some Community Councils may not have the quorum to form.

**MD** said conservatives would have a portfolio holder with responsibility for Community Councils.

**4 Police Business**

No update from police. Other Community Councils report similar lack of police presence at meetings. CC awaits result of David Porte's enquiries into reasons for non attendance.

**5 Smarter Choices Smarter Places**

**NMcL** continues to make a strong case with PAS for a pedestrian/cycle bridge connecting NAyr to SAyr. Email to ARA received no response to date and contact should be established with Colin Love (SAC)..

Alan Roseweir's Update on the FSWCA Energy Group's engagement with South Ayrshire Council and Wallacetown was circulated to members and noted with interest.

Following meeting Jamie Tate (SAC), **DS** said that a block in Wallacetown has been identified for piloting renewables proposal. With Horseshoe Bar now sold, another site has potentially been identified for the community hub.

Reporting on FSWCA **FW** said Iain McKie has submitted report to Land Commission seeking determination on breach of deeds concerning legitimacy of Airbnb 'businesses'.

**MD&LL** said lack of Scottish Government legislation meant it was unlikely the situation would change in the foreseeable future. Doubtful SAC will take steps if they consider it would have a detrimental effect on tourism.

## **6 Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations**

**MH** said Tracy Whiteford (SAC) has offered to collate ideas for 1<sup>st</sup> weekend of June celebrations. A lit beacon has been suggested and sites investigated. On 6th June an organ concert (Music for a Royal Occasion) with Bill Hutchison to be held in the Town Hall. Recompense for performers is historically very low. **MH** would like to be able to offer Scottish Youth Orchestra a meal on the night of their performance. **MD** suggested writing to the provost to ask for funds on both subjects. **MH** said budget for the concert series has been cut from £25,000 to £12,500 to zero. **MD** suggested contacting his wife Sharon Dowie MSP who sits on Creative Scotland board. Also said Conservative administration would encourage bands to use various music venues in South Ayrshire.

## **7 Councillors' Reports**

### **Roads**

**MD** many road problems arise due to lack of communication between council and ARA. A formula for repairs results in same site visited numerous times to perform remedial works on, for example potholes, judged to be in different categories of severity. SAC contributes one third to ARA budget and due to match funding, East Ayrshire contributes two thirds. East Ayrshire owns the machinery. After ARA contract ends in summer 2023, work could be outsourced. This was an option but comes with its own problems. If there's a change in administration this policy may be adopted.

### **Wallacetown**

**MD** Council needs to compulsory purchase poorer housing stock from irresponsible landlords and a programme of refurbishment drawn up with responsible landlords and owners.

Community involvement in public spaces and gardens will ensure positive changes are sustainable. Council have started clearing raised beds and are speaking to residents about planting schemes.

**PM** pointed out that all council money comes from Ayr residents. Community Council should be acting as a conduit for the people putting forward one or two good ideas at a time and following through until successfully completed. As things stand, people consider Community Councils ineffective. A notice board in school receptions announces to parents and visitors community suggestions followed by subsequent action (You said this..We've done this..). SAC and CCs should publish similar.

### **High Flats**

**MD** announced eight (out of 234) homes remain occupied. Very unlikely anything will happen prior to council elections.

**NMcL** recounted rehoused tenants' experiences of higher rate bands, higher rents and inaccessibility to shops.

**MD** said flats would be council run under conservatives, with one floor in each allocated to communal space, guest accommodation etc to provide for partial sheltered accommodation.

### **Leisure Centre**

**MD** present administration plans to use Hourstons building to front proposed leisure centre will not proceed. Planning would require to test for gas before Planning can be approved and therefore SAC cannot proceed with the purchase without Planning approval. The public will be invited to attend an open planning determination meeting in March.

**NMcL** recounted how in the 1960s when Hourstons was being built, supporting piles had to be drilled down 60ft to reach bedrock. This significant item does not appear to have been factored into the probable costs

**MD** said no contract yet signed and in the event of a conservative administration, plans for leisure centre would be cancelled.

**SC** said he'd had many reports of parking charge problems in multi storey car park. **MD** is aware of the issues and he and **LL** suggest holding onto tickets as evidence and not paying fines.

### **Darlington Church**

**FW** said he was involved with an appeal and has written on behalf of the Sikh Temple group whose offer of £35,000 was rejected by the council. To keep CC informed.

### **Seafront**

**LL** explained that as proposals form part of their unpublished manifesto, Seafront plans cannot be disclosed at present.

**DS** drew attention to lack of lighting on the Old Brig. This is not an ARA concern but that of SAC.

**MH** highlighted shortcomings in the safeguarding of common good land. As trustees, councillors, not SAC are responsible for protecting these dwindling areas of public land. A Common Good board with separate accounts and minutes should exist. **MD** will look into it further.

If elected **MD** resolved conservatives would take action with Station Hotel.

## **8 Planning Control**

**PM** said little to report other than objections have been upheld to building of two storey rear extension at 14 Springvale Road, Carnegie Library have applied for alterations to the front facade and lastly tenant of retail outlet selling football memorabilia and gifts near the old Argos unit is looking for support to block landlord application for fast food outlet. **NMcL** suggests objection on the grounds of over provision and ventilation provisions..

### **9 Report&Correspondence**

**OS** forwards correspondence to members and councillors as she receives it.

### **10 Financial Report**

**MH** £110 available for charity donations of £50,£50 and £10.

**NMcL** asked if there was a way to donate to different areas of work being carried out at Newton Primary School eg foodbank, family support. **MH** to look into.

### **11 AOCB**

**NMcL** talked about plans being discussed by a group proposing to develop Newton and linking it to Ayr central. They are resolved to bring new vision to the town of Ayr. More details to be revealed at a later date and will be extensively reported in the Ayrshire Post.

### **12 Date of Next Meeting**

8th March 2022 @ 7pm