



FORT, SEAFIELD & WALLACETOWN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 9th May 2018 in Council Chambers, Ayr Town Hall, at 7pm

Members Present

Norman McLean (NM) Chair, Forbes Watson (FMW) Vice Chair, Michael Hitchon (MH) Treasurer, Olena Stewart (OS) Secretary, Sandy Crawford (SC), Phil Martin (PM), Eileen Munro (EM), Robert Singer (RS), Liz Martin (LM), Judith Hood Paterson (JHP), Dymna Gardiner (DG), David Petrie (DP)

In Attendance

Cllr. Siobhian Brown (SB), Chris Campbell (CC) Link Officer, PC Harding, PC Dunlop

Minutes Secretary: Yolanda McCall (YMcC)

Welcome

Norman welcomed all to the meeting.

1. **Apologies**

Peter McCall (PMcC), Frank Ward (FW), Cllr. Lee Lyons (LL), Cllr. Martin Dowey (MD), Cllr. Derek McCabe (DMcC), Angi Pinkerton (AP) AHEAD Community Builder

2. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

April minutes reviewed and accepted. Proposer: FMW; Seconder JP

3. **Matters Arising**

- i. MH, PMcC and FMW are reviewing the Ayrshire Roads' Alliance (ARA) project, looking at traffic paths for walking and cycling between the railway station the town and UWS.
- ii. Following the public business discussion regarding the Riverside Block, including particular input from Catherine Hunter and Patrick Lorimer, NM was very pleased to report that the council's proposal was rejected at today's planning meeting (9.5.18) and he offered thanks to all who supported the objection and thanks to Cllr Brown for her address to the planning committee.

4. **Police Business**

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

Crime Type	Offences April 2018	Offences April 2017
Housebreaking	10	7
Theft of motor vehicle	4	3
Drug offences	7	13
Assaults	13	24
Breach of peace/Abusive behaviour	15	12
Drink/ disqualified driving	3	0

PC Harding presented the following report:

- From the Ayr West perspective breaches of the peace have increased whilst drugs offences and assaults have both reduced on the same period last year, but the detection rate remains high with regard to these crime types.

- Housebreakings and car crime in the Ayr West ward have increased on the same period last year. 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 increased and our officers are continuing to hold both covert and high visibility patrols for road traffic crimes.

MH asked if there is any correlation between the reduction in drug crimes and the reduction in assaults. PC Harding thought this could be possible, and she also advised that a lot of plain clothes police are currently detecting crimes. Additional detecting also contributes to the increase in drink driving incidents reported, with a local campaign currently running to improve road safety.

5. **Public Business**

YMCC asked if an opportunity had been missed at April's meeting to speak to ARA about the state of the roads. NM and SB said they could be invited to a future meeting.

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

SB advised that unfortunately there have been difficulties with installation of the power supply for the old Clydesdale Bank building delaying completion to the end of June. There are no occupancy plans yet. The Heritage Trail should be complete by the end of June. Proposals for Burns Statue Square will be presented at an exhibition on Thursday 17th May, SB will forward details, it hasn't been well publicised. MH said there had been a major exhibition in the police cells recently about violence against women, but it also was not well publicised, not everyone has Facebook. RS believes an arts and cultural organisation is needed to lead and market events properly in the town and to ensure there is input from the public.

NM has been notified by Mike Newall of a meeting held at Belleisle on Friday with John Campbell and his agent discussing the idea of a boutique hotel. It is very good news, a positive move for a smaller scheme which should prove much simpler for gaining planning consent. The Friends of Belleisle are still trying to get a single portaloo near to the play park.

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

SB spoke of the recurring issue in Seafield with travellers and the requests from residents for bollards. She has met with Tom Burns (TB). He believes it is too vast an area; it would be very expensive and historically is not expected to work. She has suggested tackling one section at a time. TB is writing a report, looking at various options. NM suggested that notice should be served immediately and the process streamlined for having the travellers removed. SB advised it will always take several weeks due to the travellers' rights, which are upheld by the Scottish government.

SB continues working with the Wallacetown action group, trying to tackle anti-social behaviour and housing issues. Over 600 leaflets have been delivered, and monthly meetings have started with 20-30 people attending.

Ken Nairn and Richard Devine (from "Remembering auld Ayr" Facebook page) are starting history tours of Ayr on Sundays and Thursday nights.

8. **Planning Control**

PM reported an application for Barns Street to turn a hotel and bar into four houses. There is no progress with the Station Hotel. The infill of three houses in Auchendoon Crescent has begun and there have been some conversations with one of the neighbours, monitoring whether the works are being done right. Plans for demolition and conversion into shops and a gym of the Ayr Royal Hotel have been rejected.

PM enquired about the next steps for the Riverside Block, and this prompted a discussion by all present.

NM suggested that perhaps the council offices should be put elsewhere, the old Gray's carpet factory site in McCall's Avenue would offer good access and parking. EM observed that there would be few facilities for workers there, it would be better to keep them in the town where they can access shops and banks. NM appreciates that lots of concerns need to be considered. PM noted that the vast majority of people at the consultation meeting were against the submitted plan, but were happy with the original master plan. The Ayr Renaissance vision was acceptable, it does offer a design solution. RS said he believes the architects involved in Ayr Renaissance are now investigating north Ayr. SB said she will fight to keep 350 jobs in Ayr town centre. FMW agreed this is important for M&S and other High Street shops, as even the re-location of Ayr Academy has removed footfall from the town. NM suggested that maybe the brief can be adjusted to make the master plan feasible. The discussion continued with contributions from many members expressing disappointment in the state of the town and the need for the type of investment that north Ayrshire has benefited from to re-generate the town centre and seafront. Further dialogue noted the need to create employment opportunities for young people and for those facing redundancy. More investment in the arts was suggested as a means to improve cultural tourism. MH suggested a view point from the roof of the riverside block. All members wish to make Ayr a vibrant town, an interesting destination with good

transport links. FMW noted that Ayr does offer a lot, with the parks and the beach, it could be improved, but it's not all dreary. JH observed that the Winton Building has been undergoing development, but there is no plan for how it will be used. NM and MH spoke of the need for a clear vision that is well promoted and meets the needs of the people.

9. **AGM & Chairman's Report on year 2017-18**

CC directed proceedings for the standing down of existing office bearers and election/re-election of posts for 2018-19:

Office		Proposer	Seconder
Chair	Norman McLean	FMW	OS
Vice-Chair	Forbes Watson	NM	MH
Secretary	Olena Stewart	JHP	EM
Treasurer	Michael Hitchon	FMW	SC
Planning	Phil Martin	NM	LM
Licensing	Eileen Munro	NM	MH

The Chairman's report for 2017-18 was circulated pre-meeting, and MH distributed the Treasurer's 2017-18 report. Both were approved. NM proposed that the treasurer receive a suitable honorarium gift for his tremendous systematic work year after year. All agreed.

10. **Reports**

JHP reported on a very successful visit of 52 children and 6 adults from Ayr Grammar Primary to St. John's Tower today, hosted by JHP, PMcC and YMcC. The children were enthusiastic and highly engaged despite having to walk to the tower in the rain. MH advised that next month there will be a world premier in Ayr of a piece of music written specifically for the Town Hall's organ. LM advised that Cafe Drift is now opening 2 or 3 days a week in the Ark. NM advised that Unity Grill is now open, and CC reported that donations are currently exceeding sales.

RS advised that Fresh Ayr has teamed up with the Smoking Goat to produce bread that can be eaten while having a drink in the bar, or purchased from 5pm on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. A sample loaf was shared and enjoyed by all present. The ethos of Fresh Ayr is to 'earn the dough to fund projects'. They are currently formalising their transfer from being a voluntary organisation to become a CIC, a community interest company. CC suggested that the Fresh Ayr project could be added to the agenda as a fixed item to help generate development in Wallacetown.

NM will attend a meeting on Friday about the proposed Golf Academy. He continues to seek to protect footballers and avoid encroachment of their pitches on the old racecourse. OS observed that a recent report incorrectly stated that football had relocated to Rozelle, but actually only one tournament had transitioned. The recent soccer tournament – the biggest in the UK – could not have been accommodated at Rozelle and showed that the old racecourse pitches are a much needed facility.

11. **Correspondence**

Nil

12. **Financial Report**

Annual grant for administration awaited.

13. **AOCB**

FMW advised that the Friends of Seafield House will hold their AGM on Monday 14th May. No planning application has been submitted yet.

CC alerted the Secretary to the new data protection rules that govern how information must be stored and protected from 25th May.

14. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING:**

Wednesday 13th June at 7.00pm
Ayr Town Hall