



FORT, SEAFIELD & WALLACETOWN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 13th September 2017 in Room RB3, 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), Peter McCall (PMcC), Liz Martin (LM), Eileen Munro (EM), Frank Ward (FW).

In Attendance

Chris Campbell (CC) Link Officer, PC Daniel Smith (PCDS), Cllr. Siobhian Brown (SB), Cllr. Derek McCabe (DMC)

Public

Catherine Hunter, Ayr Advertiser (CH), Angi Pinkerton, Wallacetown Community Builder (AP), David Connelly (DC), Robert Singer (RS), Frances Burns (FB), Alan Mackay (AM).

Minutes Secretary: Yolanda McCall (YMcC)

Welcome

Norman welcomed all to the first meeting after the summer recess. He then introduced Thomas Rees of Rathmell Archaeology. Tom presented a highly informative and captivating presentation on, "Discovering Ayr's past through archaeology: the demolition of the Riverside Block."

1. **Apologies**

Cllr. Martin Dowey, Cllr. Lee Lyons, Phil Martin (PM), Dympna Gardiner, Judith Hood

2. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

June minutes reviewed and accepted.

3. **Matters Arising and Updates since June Meeting**

- Seafield House: FMW wrote to Robin Ghosh regarding the pending planning proposal and concerns about the condition of the boundary wall. He has not received a response.
- Belleisle Golf Academy: Under his role of Chair of Friends of Belleisle, NM has challenged the proposed relocation of golf holes and put forward a different suggestion that would avoid the incursion into the Old Racecourse, keeping the Academy within the Seafield Course. He understands that this is being given some consideration, but there has been no planning application yet. The Head of Ayrshire Golf Trust, Cllr. Brian Connolly would like to meet with NM this week. FMW has already met with Councillor McGinlay of the Trust and thinks he is set firm on the original plan, with no plan B, but as the land is Common Good, it cannot be given away without going through the courts. FMW highlighted a possible conflict of interest between the role of Councillor and Head of the Golf Trust.
- Travellers Sites: NM advised that travellers occupied the land by Ayr India twice this summer. It took some time to confirm land ownership so that the travellers could be removed. SB reported that councillors consulted the legal department and signs had to be posted before they could serve notice. DMC said the council are looking at putting bollards to prevent vehicles getting onto the land.

- The Air Show was a great success despite poor weather on the Sunday. High attendance witnessed, a credit to Doug Mclean and colleagues. EM remarked that parents of younger children would have liked a static display. NM believes this may be included if the possible plan to extend the event to three days goes ahead. OS reported comments posted about litter issues, particularly at the old racecourse on the Sunday, and also drainage problems where cars were parked. PMcC witnessed the area clear on the Monday lunchtime, and tractors were aerating the grounds.

4. **Police Business**

Incidents and crimes of note compared with same period last year

Crime Type	Offences July & Aug 2017	Offences July & Aug 2016
Housebreaking	6	12
Theft of motor vehicle	12	5
Drugs offences	20	10
Assaults	24	45
Breach of peace/ Abusive behaviour	31	23
Drink/ disqualified driving	4	2

PCDS presented the following report:

- This report provides 2 months figures rather than the usual past month due to the summer break.
- Drugs offences and breaches of the peace have both increased quite significantly on the same period last year whilst assaults have reduced significantly, but the detection rate remains high with regard to these crime types.
- Housebreakings in the Ayr West ward have also reduced significantly for the same period last year. Vehicle crime has more than doubled and is an on-going issue, with 12 reported in the past 2 months, 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 increased over the same summer period last year and our officers will continue high visibility patrols for road traffic crimes.
- A request was made at some of the Community Council meetings for crime comparison with North and East Ayrshire, for specific crime levels, but it is very difficult to find similar ward or localities to meaningfully compare. In general, crime levels are lower in South Ayrshire than elsewhere.
- It is hoped that this police report will take on a new look in the coming months in order that all communities receive the same information right across Ayrshire.

NM enquired why some crime figures had significantly increased. PCDS was unsure, but advised that policing levels are the same. FMW has heard about people taking keys from a house in Alloway area and robbing high value cars. PCDS is aware of the crime, but not aware of any similar events in this ward. FW reported groups of boys (age 16-20) loitering at Craigie Park when his granddaughter is on her way to school in the mornings, and also groups with alcohol outside Craigie Stores. PCDS will feed it back. The shop staff can contact police via their radio link if people are hanging around, causing any disorder.

5. **Public Business**

AM spoke on behalf of Citadel Quay Residents Association to highlight the deterioration of the area in the last 15 years. There are some serious issues around the embankment of the slipway where the old fishing boat is sited, and the pedestrian walkway is subsiding. He fears it could collapse. SB agreed that the area has been neglected and discussions are needed regarding what to do with that area. She would like to see some historical plaques or a museum. SB has had meetings with the residency association, and council officers attended a meeting at the Citadel and walked around the area. There have been issues with skateboarding, and the surface will be changed. Chris has been engaging with the skate-boarders, and the council have been talking to residents about setting up a community group. Railings have been painted and graffiti removed. PMcC advised that after the June meeting, Mike Newell was contacted regarding litter issues along the beach. Implications for beach cleaning stem from the north beach having been categorised as 'recreational' in 2007. SB confirmed that since cost-cuttings in 2016, only the 'amenity' area, from Cromwell Road to Ayr India with public toilets and swing park, is regularly mechanically cleaned. PMcC suggested the category at the north end of the beach needs to be re-considered, population has increased in that area since 2007. SB stated that the council are aware of issues and the Citadel Quay area is under review, including a consideration of public transport. RS spoke of Wallacetown, another area that he feels has been neglected. The FreshAyr organisation has been working with Newton Primary, to get children to be pro-active in educating their parents. There will be an afternoon festival on 29th September, with an aspiration to develop a bakery at Davidson Place, which could help address issues of unemployment in the area. NM observed that there are vacancies on

the CC for Wallacetown; there have been lots of efforts to encourage representation for the area with no one coming forward. RS can be co-opted until the new elections. MH seconded this proposal. AP and LM discussed how Wallacetown residents identify with North Ayr more than with FSWCC. LM advised that PM is stepping down from his role on North Ayr Planning Committee, but she is happy to take it on. MH spoke of a serious issue for the owners of 60 mobility scooters at the high flats. They have been told not to leave scooters in the corridors, but most can't be driven inside the flats. They are big, and they need charging points for the batteries. LM added that there is a security issue with doors being left open to charge them.

Vice Chairman Forbes Watson left the meeting declaring an interest in Belleisle discussions.

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

Ayr Renaissance: SB advised that the Board for Ayr Renaissance is being increased to include two new members. Demolition of the Riverside Block is eight weeks ahead of schedule, archaeology is on-going and the master plan is not set in stone, there is scope for consideration of important archaeological finds. The Clydesdale Bank development, with offices above a market area, will hopefully be complete in December. Tamfest is happening, and the Tourist Trail is going ahead. The Station Hotel is currently structurally ok, and Robin Ghosh has a vision for it. NM enquired about plans for the vacant shops. SB said the council is developing a vision for the future; they need to create life in the town, with thought given to parking and improving street signage. Many present contributed to a discussion about town parking, parking charges, double parking along Doonfoot Road during football events at the Old Racecourse, speed issues and pedestrian crossings. SB agreed that the speed issue needs to be raised again with Ayrshire Roads Alliance (ARA), and she will feedback all comments to the council.

Belleisle Park: NM observed that the conservatory, play-park and deer park are all terrific, and planning permission has been lodged for the stable block to be developed by 2018. Unfortunately, despite extensive discussions, nothing has happened with the hotel over the summer. The owner is demanding unrealistic exclusive parking and does not accept that it is a public park. As of 15th August, as the hotel is not up and running, the council could buy it back. There have been discussions with a charity about leasing the hotel. The Friends of Belleisle support this proposal and are urging the council to be pro-active to prevent the building being allowed to deteriorate. RS suggested that a community buy out by the Friends of Belleisle though the Scottish Land Fund may be worth considering. OS provided an update on the conservatory events and distributed publicity leaflets. EM noted that visitors to the park need better signage. OS advised that new signs, funded by HLF, and improvements to the paths are underway. AM queried the security. OS and NM offered reassurance that the conservatory has toughened glass, there is CCTV, and so far there has been only one incident. Security of the site will be greatly improved when the hotel building is developed.

7. **Planning Control**

In PM's absence, NM reported one proposal of note, for the development of Strathdoon House including converting stables and inputting new build flats. He recommends allowing the planning application to run its course without any Community Council input as Racecourse Road has a mix of residential and business properties. DC queried a planning application for 74 Dalblair Road, the old Eurocopy building. The plan has been resubmitted and appears to change access to Dalblair Road. NM advised it will be subject to ARA standards. All can take a look at the plans and make individual comments online.

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

DMC had to leave the meeting at 20:35. SB provided a summary of business over the summer. Councillors were very busy with travellers issues and issues with the roads due works by Virgin Media and Scottish Water. ARA have had to change road closure plans to manage the traffic flow. If the public are not happy with the work completed they can lodge complaints with the Edinburgh Commission and request an inspector to look at the pavements. OS is aware of a complaint from a tourist, a wheelchair user, regarding the narrow pavement along Racecourse Road bordering the Hospice.

9. **Reports**

PMcC reported a meeting with Cllr. Brian McGinley to update him on St. John's Tower projects. YMcC is working with the Whithorn Trust to have St. John's Tower included as a site on the Whithorn Way, an ancient Pilgrimage route that is being revived for walkers from Glasgow Cathedral to Whithorn. MH attended two Locality Planning Group meetings over the summer. The group have conducted a social isolation survey and the strategic plan for South Ayrshire Health & Social Care Partnership is under review. He is not able to attend the next meeting and therefore seeks a volunteer to attend on 19th September. AP attends the North Ayr locality planning meetings. Leaflets are available for the Organist Entertains and the Concert Series, both at the Town Hall. LM attended a meeting for the Licensing Forum. She will provide an update at the next CC meeting.

10. **Correspondence**

A letter was received from Ayrshire CND. NM determined it was political and not for the FSWCC to comment upon. CH requested to see the document and it was passed on.

11. **Financial Report**

MH advised £549.99 is available for administration.

12. **AOCB**

Nil

13. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING:**

Wednesday 11th October at 7.00pm

Room RB3 Ayr Town Hall