

Fort, Seafield and Wallacetown Community Council
Minutes
7pm, Wednesday 8th November 2023
Room RBS3, Town Hall Buildings, Ayr

Attendance

CC Members: Gordon Kelly (GK- Vice chair), Michael Hitchon (MH), Forbes Watson (FW), Kenny MacLeod (KM), Eric Armstrong (EA), Andy Seville (AS), Jim McKay (JM), Carol Fisher(CF- Secretary), Ken Ballantyne (KB).

SAC Councillors: Cllr George Weir (GW), Cllr Bob Shields (BS)

SAC Link Officer: David Porte

Ayrshire Roads Alliance (ARA) Kevin Braidwood (KB)

Police: Not present. Report provided.

Minute Secretary: AS (stand-in)

Public: Esther Clark, Rachel Borland, Ewen Campbell (EC).

1. Apologies:

- a. Denise Sommerville (DS-Chair), David Connelly (DC), Alan Roseweir (AR).
- b. Cllrs Martin Dowey and Lee Lyons were invited to the meeting but did not respond.

2. Declarations of Interest:

None.

3. Minutes of Meeting Held on 11th October 2023:

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed by vote and ratified.

Proposed: MH, **Seconded:** KM. **Carried.**

4. Matters Arising from the Meeting Held on 11th October 2023:

- a. Fiona Robertson from 'Streets' had not been invited to this meeting, but the intention was for her to be invited to a future meeting TBD. In addition it was proposed that SAC licensing Officer Chris Carroll will be invited to the December meeting. **Action DS (Chair).**
- b. Carried over from previous minutes KM has contacted Sam Platt of Cornerstone regarding the painting issue. We await a response.
- c. KM to correspond with SAC Planning regarding the prevention of chlorine odours issue. **Action KM**
- d. Bath Place change of use. KM reported we had not objected.
- e. Best Dressed Shop Competition. MH reported that trophies would be awarded to the winner and runner up. The competition would be adjudicated by a group composed of Ayr Guildery, Ayr Rotary Club, Ayr and Prestwick Lions Club and FSWCC. £20 has been released from FSWCC funds.
- f. Defibrillators. GW reported that SAC had been in contact with the Street Pastors regarding provision of defibrillators in Ayr Town Centre. Item now closed.

5. Kevin Braidwood ARA

KB had asked for questions to be submitted ahead of his attendance at the meeting.

WRT Motorhome Parking in Blackburn Drive Car Park, KB acknowledged that there were complaints from users of the site regarding disruption from Boy Racers driving through the car park in the evenings. KB confirmed that barriers

would be installed at both ends of the Car Park to prevent this and enforce payment of motorhome overnight parking fees. KB believes revenue from motorhome users would fund the installation. Discussion took place regarding provision of fresh water and waste facilities. KB stated that the motorhome parking had been on a trial basis, but now that it was to be made permanent, better facilities would be installed.

Questions had been asked WRT the proposed improvements to EV charging infrastructure across East and South Ayrshire. KB took us through the proposal and highlighted a change to a public/private partnership. Total combined funding would be £5.5 million. A new payment structure would be introduced for users consisting of 31p/KWh for destination chargers, 37p/KWh for Rapid chargers, with a 4 hour limit and a £100 overstay penalty. Discussions took place regarding this proposal. KB agreed to supply FSWCC with a copy of the Business case for the new infrastructure proposal. Issues were noted WRT the consultation process which had not been published on the SAC website. KB acknowledged this and stated that he would seek to ensure future consultations would be available there, as well as through the ARA website.

Discussions also took place regarding maintenance of street furniture, road maintenance, and fault reporting. KB stated that this should be done through the ARA website.

GK thanked Kevin for attending and noted that we would keep in touch regarding these issues.

6. Proposal for a Central File Repository.

KB shared a paper discussing the need for a repository for all FSWCC documents, including Agendas, Minutes and other relevant documents, so that they were easily accessible and available to members. A trial had been conducted using Microsoft OneDrive, which KB considered the best option. All agreed this was a success and that we should adopt the system.

Proposed. KB. Seconded GK. Carried

7. Reports

a. Police:

The Police report was circulated by the DS ahead of the meeting.

Action: DS to contact the local Senior Officer to arrange a meeting to discuss prioritisation of reported incidents.

b. SAC Elected Members - Cllrs Weir and Shields provided provide a summary of report issues as follows:

- i. Station Hotel.(See item 9)
- ii. Scrutiny Training for Councillors
- iii. STL's.
- iv. Visit to local Fire Service (specifically their excellent levels of Community Engagement)
- v. Plans for the future of Ayr Town centre to be announced on 28/11/23
- vi. Discussion regarding costs of decisions re the Riverside flats.

c. Short Term Lets (STL)

KM stated that, up to 1st October 2023, there were 420 STL licence applications to SAC. It was noted that Mike Newell (SAC Chief Executive) had not yet responded to the complaint letter sent last month. GK had been in contact with Chris Carroll who provided the list of STL applications up to 1st October 2023. FSWCC members were asked to check the operation of any STLs in their areas to confirm compliance. Chris Carroll has offered to attend the FSWCC December meeting .

Action:- KM to investigate possible STL fraud WRT Council Tax Rebates. GK to invite Chris Carroll to December meeting.

d. Planning

KM brought to the attention of the CC the following:

- i. The Scottish Government intends to provide training to Elected Councillors who sit on planning committees and panels.
- ii. The claim of a £50 million boost to the local economy was still being used to justify STL approvals. GK and Cllr GW were investigating. GW had contacted SAC's Destination South Ayrshire, who had revisited information provided by Global Tourism Solutions (GTS), from which the original claim had been interpreted. On clarification, GTS stated that the £50 million was not limited to STLs but included the entire tourism sector. KM noted that STL applications should be considered on their own merits, and that generic factors such as the £50 million should not be quoted as justification for planning or licensing decisions. GK asked GW and BS to continue pressing the issue.

e. Licencing

FW – no applications for our area of responsibility.

f. Common Good

- i. FW reported that he was still waiting on a response from his FOI request to SAC. It has now been 30 days since the application, and a response should have been received within 20 days.
- ii. Proposed development of Belleisle Golf Course does not affect Common Good land.
- iii. FW confirmed the MV Watchful was a Common Good asset.
- iv. 2 Cathcart Street was for sale. FW to confirm whether or not this is a Common Good asset.

Action:- FW to make an official complaint to the Scottish Information Officer re FOI request

g. Treasurer,s Report

MH provided the financial update. He reported a current balance of £558.18. This would be reduced by £20 for the Best dressed Shop competition prize.

Proposed: MH. Seconded: FW. Carried

8. Community Engagement Ideas

DW had contacted Laura Kerr from Destination South Ayrshire to investigate the process for booking a stall at the Cutty Sark Centre at the monthly Farmers' Market. Laura had offered to ask the individual responsible for this to contact DW.

9. Station Hotel

- a. Cllr Shields updated the CC regarding issues with the south gable end, which needs to be made safe to allow reopening of the road bridge which was a priority. He stated it was planned to reopen Platform 4 for rail services to Glasgow, but that work needs to be done before this was possible, and that it would only allow 3 carriage trains. This would hopefully happen by mid December. GK asked what SAC's envisaged end-state is. BS opined it might be possible to salvage the Turret, and that the present owner may give up ownership in return for writing off his debt to SAC. Ultimately, a Transport Hub would be proposed for Trains/Buses / Taxis. It was hoped a CPO would not be needed for SAC to acquire the site, as there was no funding available for this. Cllr

- b. GK asked if it was necessary to demolish all or any of the building to ensure public safety or if demolition would place SAC in legal jeopardy and cause a protracted and costly situation for the town, as we could be left with a derelict site that still belonged to the private owner and could not be used. Cllr Weir opined that this was still being looked into but it may be the case that not only the site, but also any rubble removed from the building may have to be secured and protected as it still belongs to the private owner. GK urged Cllrs Weir and Shields to feed back to SAC the need for accurate and timely information to be provided to the general public through their social media channels to avoid the spread of rumours and misinformation in the community.

10. Public Business:

- a. Rachel Borland has requested to join FSWCC. GK noted that there was a vacancy in the Seafield area, but that the post had to be advertised.

Action:- GK to arrange for Seafield vacancy to be advertised. Proposed: EA. Seconded:- FW. Carried

- b. Discussion took place regarding MV Watchful. Members noted that this is a memorial to fishermen lost at sea, and this needs to be honoured by whatever replaces the MV Watchful. The CC considered recent comments by Cllr Dowey in the Ayrshire Post were inappropriate.

11. AOCB:

- a. **Events Working Group.** This group has been meeting to develop a paper offering feedback to SAC on issues regarding the 2023 Ayrshow. EC attended an SAC information evening held on 8th November 2023 on behalf of the group. A further meeting was scheduled for 14th November 2023 and all members of the group hoped to attend. It was hoped that a separate meeting between this group and Laura Kerr, Destination South Ayrshire, would be arranged ASAP to discuss proposals in detail.

- b. With Armistice Day approaching, it was noted that there would be a Police presence at all war memorials in South Ayrshire

- c. MH noted that there was a Community Notice board at Morrisons which could be used to publicise CC issues.

- d. The Accessible Ayr Plan has been announced, and displays would be at Ayr Central Shopping Centre on Thursday 9th and Saturday 11th November 2023

12. Date of next meeting:

The Vice Chair concluded the meeting at 21:20 hrs and confirmed the next CC meeting for Wednesday 13th December 2023 at 7pm, Ayr Town Hall. (Subsequent meetings are planned to be held in Ayr Grammar Primary School)

