



Minutes of FORT, SEAFIELD & WALLACETOWN COMMUNITY COUNCIL (FSWCC) meeting
8th October 2025, 6.30 pm in
Ayr Grammar Primary School,
Fort Street, Ayr, KA7 1HU

Minutes prepared by: Otter AI, Chat GPT , and Secretary's notes.

Chair: Denise Sommerville

Secretary: Ian MacLeod

Attendees:

Eric Armstrong (CC member), David Connelly (CC member), Audrey Gatt (SAC officer), Michael Hitchon (CC treasurer), Ian MacLeod (CC secretary), Jim McKay (CC vice chair), Alan Roseweir (CC member), Robert Singer (CC member), Denise Sommerville (CC chair), George Weir (SAC member).

Members of Public:

(various – records lost, regretfully)

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Chair, Denise Sommerville, opened the meeting at 6.30 pm and welcomed all attendees.

Introductions were made around the room to identify members and guests.

Members of the public, Andy and Elspeth, were also present, demonstrating the community's active involvement in the council's affairs.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from members Forbes Watson and Carol Fisher.

3. Declarations of Interest

All members were asked, no declarations of interest were stated.

4. Approval of Minutes – 10th September 2025

Jim Mackay highlighted minor spelling and name errors in the September minutes. Members approved the minutes, subject to correction.

Proposed: David Connelly. Seconded: Alan Roseweir.

Action: Secretary to amend and reissue.

5. Matters Arising

The Chair, Denise Sommerville, recognising the significance of the Glenpark Hotel public issue, prioritised it for early discussion due to the presence of concerned local residents, Andy and Elspeth. See discussion at item '7. Reports – Planning'.

6. SAC Elected Members Report

Cllr. George Weir reported on several ongoing Council matters:

- **Accessible Ayr / Alloway Street:** SWECO and Ayrshire Roads Alliance leading works with Scottish Government funding. The designs for Stage 3 (Alloway Street) and Stage 4 (Sandgate/High Street) are in development. Cabinet briefing set for 11 Nov; paper due Dec 2025. See discussion at item '7. Reports – Town Centre Regeneration and Events'.
- **Council Transformation & Budget:** Council operations accelerated under Audit Scotland scrutiny to address the budget gap anticipated for 2026–27.
- **Ayr Air Show 2024:** Consultant report claimed £17m benefit. Cllr. Weir questioned methodology—attendance extrapolated from limited surveys; only 17% of vendors are local. Members debated environmental and fiscal impacts, suggesting ticketing or smaller-scale town-centre events.

Action: Cllr. Weir to request formal publication of the whole income/expenditure report.

7. Reports

a. **Treasurer (Michael Hitchon):**

Treasurer issued paper statement of financial account, to date.

b. **Common Good (Cllr. Forbes Watson):**

No report (apologies submitted).

c. **Fundraising and Grants (Denise Sommerville):**

Awaiting Community-Led Action Plan outcomes before identifying grant applications.

d. **Guest Speakers (Secretary):** Confirmed attendance of SAC's Place Planning (see Item 8).

e. **Licensing (Forbes Watson):** No new updates beyond STL applications.

f. **Planning (Forbes Watson):**

- **Glenpark Hotel:** Local residents Andy and Elspeth raised concern about possible non-compliant features: rear extension; a large flue installation; PVC windows on a listed building; and a possible conversion to takeaway/student use. Members agreed concerns about non-compliant work should be reported to South Ayrshire Council (SAC).

- Action: Cllr. Weir to escalate to SAC Planning Enforcement/ Building Standards, and report back.

g. **Police (Denise Sommerville):**

- As standard, community police's local report had been sent to members ahead of this meeting.
- member Ian MacLeod reported key insights from the meeting that he and members Denise Somerville and Jim McKay had with community police officer Stewart Slaven on 24th September 2025:

- Crime reporting is by 'offence' rather than 'incidence', therefore one incidence of crime can comprise multiple offences.
- Generally, acquisitive crime is shoplifting.
- Localised speeding concerns rarely meet the threshold for speeding, or for speed limit enforcement or prosecution.

h. ****Roads (David Connolly):****

Dalblair Road safety concerns addressed by member David Connolly, and emphasised by member of the public John Monaghan.

Action: David Connolly to liaise with our ward councillors to contact Ayrshire Roads Alliance for explanation about measures to calm speeds of vehicles and enhance pedestrian safety.

i. ****STLs – Short Term Lets (Forbes Watson):****

- Forbes Watson apologies.

- Member of public Alan McKay spoke as local resident – not as an STL applicant – and detailed his experience and views about the process and outcomes of STL applications made within his locale.

- Member Ian MacLeod reported that he has submitted an objection on behalf of FSWCC regarding application by 11 Fairfield Park. (*postscript: objection was not accepted by SAC because objection was not made within 28 days of licence application*). On behalf of FSWCC, Denise Somerville offered concerned local residents that FSWCC would represent them at the Regulatory Panel meeting (30th October) for this STL licence application. Community Council objection submitted. Hearing set for 30 Oct 2025, County Buildings. Local residents to contact FSWCC if they wish us to represent them.

- Member Jim McKay stated the contact details for the SAC officer regarding STLs: Amy McMillan, STL Compliance Officer – amy.mcmillan@south-ayrshire.gov.uk.

j. ****Town Centre Regeneration and Events (Robert Singer):****

- Member Robert Singer Robert stated a preference for smaller recurring events to boost local trade but feels his position as a local business owner means he might be viewed as having a conflict of interest were he to lead/ participate in this sub-group. Therefore he will not lead sub-group mooted previously. The prospect of 'place planning' by SAC is a potential opportunity for action to enhance the vitality of the town centre and will be discussed at item '8. Guest Speaker – SAC's Place Planning team leader Audrey Gatt'. Town Centre Regeneration and Events sub-group will not be convened nor progress for the foreseeable future.

- Consideration was given to the 'Accessible Ayr' project's significant recent developments: 'Stage 3' designs proposed for Alloway Street; and the 'project update event' – held at Ayr's Cutty Sark centre (High Street) on 7th October - for 'Stage 4' designs proposed for High Street, The Sandgate, and neighbouring streets such as Fort Street.

- Cllr Weir acknowledged a significant number of Alloway Street traders have publicly stated their opposition to the 'Stage 3' plan proposed for the street.

- Members who attended the project update public event on 7th October regarding the 'Stage 4' proposals reported general sense of opposition amongst those who attended. Our mailbox has received intimations of opposition too.

- Robert Singer reported that he and other traders on Newmarket Street are meeting to discuss the proposal.

- Member Ian MacLeod asked that FSWCC determine a position on the 'stage 4' proposals because they are the ones subject to SAC imminent decision-making. i.e. 'Sandgate' and 'High Street'. Duly, members agreed FSWCC opposition to the Stage 4 proposals.

Action: Chair (Denise Somerville) to issue press release stating FSWCC opposition to the Accessible Ayr Stage 4 proposals.

j. ****Wallacetown Community Energy Project (Alan Roseweir):****

- Member Alan Roseweir reminded the meeting that the scheme is now producing energy and that pupils seem to be highly engaged in the purpose of the scheme. Alan mentioned that efforts are on-going to ensure revenue from the project is as tax-efficient as possible.

8. Guest Speaker – Place Planning: SAC’s Place Planning Team Leader, Audrey Gatt

Audrey Gatt presented and answered questions about SAC’s Community-Led Action Plan (CAP) for the localities within our community council bounds: Ayr North; and Ayr South.

- Engagement: chronologically, Audrey’s work has heard from some members of the public at an information-gathering/ prioritisation session in 2023; obtained 72 responses from a survey that year and into 2024; run survey completion sessions with Ayr Grammar Primary School pupils which yielded 174 pupil responses in 2025.

- Audrey seeks to build on those responses by co-opting members of FSWCC to be lead participants in generation of a community led action plan (CAP) for Ayr South. The CAP for Ayr North is to be progressed by leadership from SAC given that no community councils have been able to form and/ or sustain themselves in that area. Duly, some members from each of our sub-wards within FSW were nominated to represent their area and/ or to contribute across the sub-wards.

- Given this incidence of geographic boundaries of community councils and various public schemes not matching, Audrey presented some suggestions for the interface of Ayr North and Ayr South at John Street underpasses and riverside. Key Themes:

 - Underpass Enhancement (Ayr North)

 - Creative lighting/sound proposals – Members for Wallacetown (Robert Singer and Denise Somerville) were wary of suggestions to continue the use of underpasses.

 - River Ayr Pathways

 - Potential signage, wildlife plaques, benches, and walking loops (1 km & 3.5 km) mooted.

Action: Secretary to liaise with Audrey Gatt to convene first meeting of the Ayr South CAP.

9. Other Public Business

(None further to matters raised/ addressed already)

10. Any Other Competent Business

Member Eric Armstrong expressed discontent at the amenities and operation of Ayr Bus Station. Eric was tasked with contacting the suspected operator (Stagecoach) to find out their position and plans for the facility.

Action: Eric Armstrong to report on progress to next FSWCC meeting.

11. Date of Next Meeting

18:30, Wednesday 12th November 2025 at Working For Wallacetown ('hub'), 37 George Street, Ayr, KA8 0AH.

Meeting closed: 9:00 pm.

Action Items

- Secretary (Ian MacLeod) to correct minutes of FSWCC September 2025 meeting before issuing the ratified version.
- Councillor Weir to press SAC to publish their economic impact report of the most recent International Air Shows.
- Cllr. Weir to escalate to SAC Planning Enforcement and Building Standards our concerns about the development on the site of the former Glen Park Hotel.
- David Connelly to liaise with our ward councillors to contact Ayrshire Roads Alliance for explanation about measures to calm speeds of vehicles and enhance pedestrian safety on Dalblair Road.
- Chair (Denise Somerville) to issue press release stating FSWCC opposition to the Accessible Ayr Stage 4 proposals.
- Secretary (Ian MacLeod) to liaise with Audrey Gatt to convene first meeting of the Ayr South CAP
- Eric Armstrong to report on progress of inquiries into the sufficiency of the facilities operated at Ayr Bus Station.