



Minutes of FORT, SEAFIELD & WALLACETOWN COMMUNITY COUNCIL (FSWCC) meeting

14th January 2025, 6.30pm

**Working For Wallacetown ('hub') building, 37
George Street, Ayr, KA8 0AH**

Chair: Denise Sommerville

Minutes: A.I. via Apple iPhone transcript processed by ChatGPT and edited by Ian MacLeod

Attendees/ panel:

Eric Armstrong (CC member), David Connelly (CC member), Carol Fisher (CC member), Michael Hitchon (CC member), Wullie Hogg (SAC member), Ian MacLeod (CC member), David Porte (SAC staff - link officer), Alan Roseweir (CC member), Bob Shields (SAC member), Denise Sommerville (CC member), Forbes Watson (CC member), George Weir (SAC member).

Members of Public:

Mike Clark, Gordon Kelly, Andrew Russell.

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Chair confirmed the meeting was being recorded for transparency. Members were advised that if anyone was not comfortable with recording, they should make this known – None did.

2. Apologies

Noted that member Robert Singer is not in attendance.

3. Declarations of Interest

Although not in attendance, it was suggested that member Robert Singer has an interest in traders in Ayr town centre. Additionally, Alan Roseweir declared an interest as member of Ayr Town Board that will be the management committee of UK Government initiative 'Pride In Place' funding awarded to Ayr/ South Ayrshire (council area).

4. Approval of Minutes

4.1. 12th November 2025 (quorate)

Proposed by Forbes Watson, and seconded by Alan Roseweir.

4.2. 10th December 2025 (inquorate)

Minutes were acknowledged as 'for information' - Chair stated no ratification required.

5. Matters Arising

5.1. Re: *Membership status of office-holder Jim McKay – vice-chair – was queried.*

It was established that:

- The chair and secretary have not been formally contacted by Jim;
- No SAC officer has notified FSWCC about change to Jim's status;
- Jim sent no apologies for today's meeting;
- No written complaint has been received about recent conduct about FSWCC;

Therefore, Jim's office-holding membership remains in place.

5.2. Re: *Councillor Weir to press SAC to publish their economic impact report of the most recent International Air Shows*

The Council position is that the report will be available in February. Members agreed it would be helpful to obtain a confirmed date for release.

5.3. Re: *Eric Armstrong to report on progress of inquiries into the sufficiency of the facilities operated at Ayr Bus Station.*

Eric reported he had attempted to contact relevant operators/customer services in relation to the sufficiency of facilities at the bus station, however had been unsuccessful to date. Members agreed this action should remain open and be followed up by next meeting.

5.4. Re: *Councillor George Weir to summarise from recent SAC meeting the sympathetic views about restricting STLs, so that Forbes can factor these into our objections*

George confirmed that councillor comments made previously on short-term let restrictions were noted, with the intention of ensuring elected member positions and concerns are on record. Members agreed this should be held by the Secretary as part of the Community Council file and used to support future engagement/objections where required.

5.5. Re: *Michael Hitchon undertook to liaise with SAC payments/ procurement team to ascertain the manufacturer of the beachfront plaque attributed to FSWCC*

Michael confirmed he has provided the manufacturer's name to the enquirer – Mauchline CC in East Ayrshire – and that the search for information was complex, involving multiple organisations and/ or businesses. Michael offered to send the detail to FSWCC secretary for distribution and record-keeping.

5.6. Re: *Carol Fisher to enquire to SAC as to location of physical noticeboards in our ward*

Members discussed the removal/loss of central noticeboards previously used to share Community Council information. It was noted this issue is linked to 21st century community communication, including access to digital noticeboards and ensuring community council notices can be displayed effectively. Members discussed:

- potential use of space at Cutty Sark or other prominent locations
- digital displays and whether community council items can be uploaded
- the practical problem of physical access (keys/maintenance) and reliance on specific council contacts

Action: It was agreed this should be raised further with the Council to improve community communication routes.

- 5.7. Re: *Secretary – Ian MacLeod - to write to SAC to express FSWCC’s compliments about the Remembrance Sunday event*
Ian confirmed a letter had been sent to the Council expressing compliments regarding Remembrance arrangements.
- 5.8. Re: *Jim McKay to write to SAC to state our support for option three of the Belleisle park golf development (golf pods, and merging existing buildings)*
We do not know if Jim has done this but presume that he has.

6. Reports

6.1. Treasurer

- 6.1.1. The Chair confirmed the results of the window display competition: engraved glass trophies for winner and runner-up; two “Highly Commended” certificates. This was reported publicly through local coverage.
- 6.1.2. Michael reported the current balance as £540.24. The following upcoming costs were noted: website renewal (£30); ICO registration; Zurich Municipal Insurance; Zoho email subscription (payable before year-end).
- 6.1.3. Members discussed timing issues around the annual grant and costs falling due before funds are received.
- 6.1.4. It was noted that Community Councils are permitted to spend up to £50 on local charitable/community causes, however due to financial constraints it was agreed this should be reviewed next month once remaining balances and commitments are clear.

6.2. Common Good

- 6.2.1. per agenda note, await meeting with SAC CEO by March 2026:
Action: Forbes Watson to arrange a meeting with SAC CEO.
- 6.2.2. (discussion ensued about two local landmarks – See item ‘Town Centre Regeneration and Events’)

6.3. Fundraising and Events

- 6.3.1. (no discussion)

6.4. Guest Speakers

- 6.4.1. Concern expressed by some that our scheduling of guest speaker MP Elaine Stewart for our April 2026 monthly meeting is a breach of observance of purdah regarding the Scottish parliamentary elections – Members to explore and discuss at our next monthly meeting (February 2026)

6.5. Licensing

6.5.1. Forbes Watson reported that no new alcohol licensing applications had been made recently but that ‘Savoy 5’ on corner of Racecourse Road is operating on a temporary licence until end of February 2026 and that we retain our vigilance on this matter and our recent concern about the entity’s compliance with planning consent.

6.6. Planning

6.6.1. Related to item 6.5.1., i.e. ‘Savoy 5’

Action: Forbes Watson, and councillor Shields and/ or Weir, undertook to seek clarification from SAC operations teams what monitoring and/ or action is being done.

6.6.2. Forbes mentioned various other planning applications but none were adjudged to have merited objection by FSWCC.

6.6.3. Members discussed concerns about shopfront/ hospitality traders’ signage contravening standards – illuminated fascia signs; roller shutters –indicative of apparent inconsistency of planning processes and planning enforcement.

Action: Michael Hitchon agreed to report to FSWCC in due course about his query to SAC that he has made through a different community group.

6.7. Police

Members noted the police report was general and limited in localised detail. It was agreed that more meaningful reporting would be helpful where possible, however members recognised operational limitations.

6.8. Roads

6.8.1. [Ayr Parking Strategy \(info page\): *Ayr Parking Strategy \(2025\) - report by the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Housing, Operations and Development* – SAC consideration to be continued at SAC meeting 19th Feb 2026* per \[draft minute SAC meeting 11th Dec 2025, item 9.\]\(#\)](#)

Prime concerns raised by members of public present, and FSWCC members:

- frustration that major proposals are repeatedly delayed
- the perception that scrutiny was avoided by deferral
- residents being left under continued uncertainty
- lack of clear data/evidence on current parking infractions and enforcement

Motion carried that FSWCC do not support the proposed changes and will request a status quo position until satisfactory revised proposals are provided.

Action: Duly, FSWCC to write to ward councillors and SAC Cabinet.

6.8.2. *Traffic around Ayr Grammar Primary School*

Concerns were raised regarding severe congestion and unsafe parking around the Grammar School area at peak times, including vehicles parking on pavements and unsafe passing behaviour.

Action: Councillor Weir agreed to report the matter to police and seek liaison with the school. An update will be provided next meeting.

6.9. STLs - Short Term Lets

STL applications noted:
STL at 115 High Street granted
Wellington Square STL refused

6.10. Town Centre Regeneration and Events

6.10.1. *Loudoun Hall*

A substantial discussion took place regarding Loudoun Hall and associated concerns about financial viability, ongoing maintenance, and the risk of losing a significant historic building. Key points raised:

- The building is historically significant and has major cultural/tourism potential
- The ongoing cost of maintenance and compliance (toilets, stairs, heating, accessibility)
- It is incumbent on Loudon Hall trustees to deliver a structured income plan (e.g., cultural venue, events, weddings, heritage use)
- members highlighted comparable examples in other cities where similar buildings are kept open as public heritage spaces.

Action: Members agreed that FSWCC support may be helpful and that inviting a Loudon Hall trustee/ representative to attend an FSWCC meeting could strengthen local engagement - Chair (Denise) agreed to hold informal discussion with the Loudon Hall Trustees' Chair about possible attendance.

6.10.2. *St John's Tower*

Eric Armstrong raised St John's Tower as another heritage property of concern, with questions around trusteeship, use, and public benefit.

Action: Eric to investigate the ownership/trustee position and report back.

6.10.3 *Accessible Ayr project: for decision at SAC Cabinet meeting 20th January 2026*

Councillor Shields reported that fellow SAC cabinet member has stated that cycle lanes at Alloway Street and Sandgate will be rejected and that SAC officers will be asked to bring revised plans/ proposals to April 2026 SAC cabinet meeting.

Action: FSWCC were pleased to hear the prospect that the publicised proposal will be rejected likely, but that ahead of the SAC cabinet meeting on Tuesday 20th January we will write to SAC cabinet and local media to reiterate our opposition to the proposal.

6.10.3. *Pride in Place Programme: present position of SAC per final minute SAC meeting 6th November 2025, item 10.*

Alan Roseweir reiterated his interest in this item as a member of the Ayr Town Board that will be the management committee of UK Government initiative 'Pride In Place' funding awarded to Ayr/ South Ayrshire (council area).

Alan reported that the board's membership includes leaders from a range of prominent local services such as Ayrshire College, and South Ayrshire Council elected members; and businesses such as Ayr United football club and town traders Renaldo's and Narture. Alan suggested that the involvement of a Narture stakeholder means that Robert Singer likely will declare an interest in this matter. Alan said that the programme is in its infancy and that he will report to FSWCC when progress is made.

6.11. Wallacetown Community Energy Project

Alan provided an update on the Wallacetown Community Energy Project:

- solar panels installed across local school buildings (operational from August)
- project presented at UK Parliament committee level and at a national conference
- a project video has been produced (to be released around launch)

A formal launch event is scheduled for 25 February at Riverside Church Hall, with invited pupils/headteachers and key funders/partners. The Cabinet Secretary is expected to attend. A Community Benefit Fund model was outlined, with funding intended to be reinvested into community projects with clear accountability and impact reporting.

6.12. Place Planning – Ayr South/West

David Connelly and Carol Fisher confirmed work had been completed to submit local priorities and future ambitions. No further update had yet been received from Council.

6.13. SAC Elected Members Report

6.13.1. *Fees and charges*

Councillor Weir said SAC proposal for 2026-2027 postponed but will come by March 2026.

6.13.2. *Belleisle Park Golf Development*

Councillor Weir thinks the proposal – 'option 3' - is the least objectionable of the various options considered in recent years.

7. Review of Scheme for Establishment for Community Councils

Members discussed the revised draft Scheme of Establishment and minor procedural changes. The consultation deadline was noted as 18 January. Members agreed to submit any final comments before the deadline.

8. Adding Ayr North ward area Wallacetown North to FSWCC

Members discussed the proposal to extend the Community Council boundary to incorporate Wallacetown North (currently underrepresented). Members supported the proposal in principle.

Action: It was agreed that practical details including representation, funding allocation, and membership should be clarified with the Council.

9. 2026 Community Council Elections

Members and public were reminded to complete election paperwork.

10. Date of Next Meeting

18:30, Wednesday 11th February 2026 at Working For Wallacetown ('hub'), 37 George Street, Ayr, KA8 0AH.

[Actions summary: overleaf]

Actions

Agenda No.	ID	Agenda Name	Action	Owner	Deadline
5	5.01	Matters Arising	Seek confirmed February date for publication of the Air Show economic impact report	Councillor Weir	11/02/2026
5	5.03	Matters Arising	Send engraving supplier detail to Ian for records	Michael Hitchon	11/02/2026
5	5.05	Matters Arising	Investigate access/options for Community Council notices (digital boards + locations such as Cutty Sark) and report back	Carol Fisher	11/02/2026
6	5.04	Matters Arising	Continue follow-up with bus station operator/customer services regarding facilities; provide update	Eric Armstrong	11/02/2026
6	6.01.1	Reports - Finance	Review finances next meeting and decide whether any permitted community donation is possible	Michael Hitchon	11/02/2026
6	6.02.1	Reports - Common Good	Seek/ arrange discussions with SAC CEO about transforming SAC policy	Forbes Watson	11/02/2026
6	6.06.3	Reports - Planning	Seek clarification from SAC operations teams what monitoring and/ or action is being done about Savoy 5.	F.Watson/ Cllrs S & W	11/02/2026
6	6.06.3	Reports - Planning	Follow up on town centre signage/shopfront enforcement approach with Council and report back	Michael Hitchon	11/02/2026
6	6.06.4	Reports - Guest Speakers	Regarding purdah for Scottish Parliament election 2026, assess if we are compliant in our scheduling of MP E. Stewart as guest speaker	all members	11/02/2026
6	6.08.1	Reports - Roads	Draft and send Community Council objection letter on Parking Strategy (retain status quo) to Council leadership + Ayr West members	all members	11/02/2026
6	6.08.2	Reports - Roads	Report Grammar school congestion issue to Police and seek school liaison; report back	Councillor Weir	11/02/2026
6	6.10.1	Reports - Town Centre Regeneration	Informal discussion with Trustees Chair re attendance at Community Council meeting (Loudoun Hall)	Denise Somerville	11/02/2026
6	6.10.2	Reports - Town Centre Regeneration	Research St John's Tower trustees/ownership and any plans; report back	Eric Armstrong	11/02/2026
6	6.10.4	Reports - Town Centre Regeneration	write to SAC cabinet and local media to reiterate our opposition to Accessible Ayr proposal.	Ian MacLeod/ Denise Somerville	19/01/2026
7	7.01	Scheme /f Establishment f/ Community Councils	Submit final comments on Scheme of Establishment by consultation deadline	all members	18/01/2026
8	8.01	Adding Wallacetown North to FSWCC	Boundary extension proposal (Wallacetown North): practical details including representation, funding allocation, and membership should be clarified with the Council	Denise Somerville	15/01/2026