

FORT, SEAFIELD & WALLACETOWN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting

Wednesday 8th July 2026, 18:30

[The Grain Exchange \(Newmarket Street entrance, 81 High Street, Ayr, KA7 1QL\)](#)

Attendees:

voting members: Carol Fisher, Michael Hitchon, Ian MacLeod (chair; minutes), Alan Roseweir, Denise Sommerville (secretary), Robert Singer, Forbes Watson.

ex-officio members: (none attended)

SAC link officer: David Porte

Speakers: Streets UK - Colette Filippi; Ayrshire Roads Alliance - David Manson; (colleagues)

public: (list lost; but approximately fifteen members of the public attended)

01 Welcome and Introductions

Chair I. MacLeod welcomed those present. He explained that video or audio recording of the meeting could take place solely to assist minute preparation, subject to the clear consent of all present (Scheme for Establishment of Community Councils 2026, section 7.5, p.10–11).

However, the Chair stated that the headline item tonight — *Item 4, “Guest Speaker: [Burns Statue Square redevelopment](#) – presentation and Q&A (SAC consultation operator – Streets UK)”* — would not be audio-recorded. No attendee objected to the other items being audio-recorded.

(Note on order of business: item 4 was taken immediately after this welcome, ahead of items 2 and 3, to accommodate the guest presenters; items 2 and 3 resumed once they had left. Numbering below follows the published agenda, not real-time order.)

The guest speaker presentation and Q&A is conceived as the opportunity for the public present to ask about the matter and for information-discussion-debate. The minute of that part will be recorded at the recurring report item 8.7.1, ‘*Burns Statue Square redevelopment – progress update*’. That will be the place for members to make decisions.

The Chair noted that most public attendees had registered Burns Statue Square as their matter of interest on the attendance register and confirmed they would be given the floor to ask questions after the presentation.

Other matters noted on the attendee register would be taken at the relevant items on the agenda: 8.6.1 Dalblair Road – second speed survey update; and 8.6.2 Blackburn Car Park.

02 Apologies

Apologies — voting members: none. Ex-officio members: David Kirkwood MSP, Cllr Bob Shields, Elaine Stewart MP, Cllr George Weir. All other ex-officio members did not submit apologies.

03 Declarations of Interest

M. Hitchon declared an interest in item 8.1.2 Ayr Arts Guild subscription and absented himself from that discussion and decision.

A. Roseweir declared a standing interest in 8.7.4 Pride in Place programme; his report at that item will be welcomed as information-sharing.

04 Guest Speaker: [Burns Statue Square redevelopment](#) – presentation and Q&A (SAC consultation operator – Streets UK)

Not recorded, per the Chair's statement at item 01. Substance of the presentation, Q&A, and any member discussion is recorded at item 8.7.1.

05 Approval of Minutes – Meeting of 10th June 2026

Minutes of 10 June circulated in advance. Approved as an accurate record. Proposed: F. Watson. Seconded: A. Roseweir.

Action: Approved minutes to be uploaded to the FSWCC website.

06 Matters Arising

Chair confirmed principal action points from June embedded in today's agenda: Charlotte Street STL, SAC STL policy consultation, Dalblair Road, Blackburn Road car park, and the Community Led Action Plan (CAP).

07 Correspondence (Secretary – D. Sommerville)

07.1 Already on agenda: Roads (item 08.6.2) – Blackburn Car Park

Numerous residents contacted FSWCC over five to six weeks regarding vehicle gatherings and anti-social behaviour at Blackburn Road car park, particularly the weekend of 12–13 June. Substantive treatment at item 08.6.2.

07.2 New: Roads – EV power charging (Barns Cres.); on-street parking (Ronaldshaw Pk.)

FSWCC was copied into correspondence regarding inadequate EV charging provision at Burns Crescent; considered below the threshold for Community Council action — no further action taken. See item 08.6.3 for discussion of correspondence received regarding Ronaldshaw Park car parking.

08 Reports

08.1.1 Treasurer – Monthly statement (M. Hitchon)

Annual admin grant £800. Expenditure reported: website, email, ICO registration, insurance, and bank charges. Report noted; projected expenditure considered manageable.

08.1.2 Treasurer – Ayr Arts Guild subscription

Renewal request considered; annual cost £21. Members weighed the value of consolidated updates against free access via social media. Subscription of £21 approved. (M. Hitchon absented himself from this discussion and decision per his declared interest at item 03.)

Action: Treasurer to arrange payment.

08.2 Planning – Month's applications review (F. Watson)

F. Watson reported few applications of significance this period, mainly minor or listed-building works, and noted one or two items of potential community interest where no action was taken: a hut/shed and retail-to-residential change of use at 19A Carrick Street, and an office-to-residential change of use at Queen's Court. F. Watson also noted the temporary funfair at Low Green is being handled by SAC under delegated powers and is therefore not, in his understanding, subject to planning objection.

Separately, F. Watson observed few or no change-of-use applications from residential to commercial/short-term let this period. The Chair reminded members of FSWCC's previous observation that Scottish local authorities are not legally required to enforce prior planning permission as a condition of granting a short-term let licence — this only applies within a designated Control Area, of which South Ayrshire currently has none.

No objection raised to the noted applications.

08.3.1 Licensing – Month's applications review (F. Watson)

No applications this period warranted objection from FSWCC.

08.3.2 Licensing – 'Savoy 5'

F. Watson reported: an occasional licence had previously been granted; possible unauthorised works were noted, with retrospective planning permission sought but not yet determined. The licensing position remains under consideration — SAC's licensing officer has indicated an earliest determination date of 20 August 2026, meaning this is likely to be a substantive matter for FSWCC's September meeting.

Separately, and distinct from the licensing substance above, members noted condolences regarding a death formerly associated with the premises under a previous operator and business name.

08.4.1 Short Term Lets – New incidences brought to our attention (D. Sommerville / F. Watson)

FSWCC noted that SAC does not routinely notify community councils of STL applications; FSWCC has raised this in its response to the SAC STL policy consultation (see 08.4.4).

A. Roseweir reported allegations of anti-social behaviour associated with an STL-licensed residence in a block of flats; members considered that compiling evidence of such matters is for the affected residents themselves, with FSWCC's possible role limited to referencing that evidence should the licence come up for renewal — no action point arising from this strand.

Separately, C. Fisher asked D. Sommerville and F. Watson, who have volunteered to undertake STL casework, to confirm whether a reported application for a shared-entrance property on Dalblair Road is genuine, as it would meet FSWCC's criteria for objection.

Action: D. Sommerville and F. Watson to confirm the Dalblair Road application details, liaise with the correspondent, assess against FSWCC's policy, and keep members informed.

08.4.2 Short Term Lets – Queen's Court objection: progress

FSWCC's initial objection to the Queen's Court STL application was not accepted by SAC. Following further representations it has been reconsidered; officers are assessing referral to the Regulatory Panel, with no hearing date yet set.

08.4.3 Short Term Lets – Charlotte Street: progress update

D. Sommerville reported that the Charlotte Street property is understood to operate under an interim licence. Denise submitted an objection in the name of FSWCC against the shared-entrance let. Subsequently, the application has been referred to the

Regulatory Panel: FSWCC has been permitted approximately five minutes to speak in support. The Panel date is to be confirmed, subject to a minimum of 14 days' notice.

Action: D. Sommerville to notify members of the hearing date, and attend and speak at the Panel hearing, in due course.

08.4.4 Short Term Lets – SAC STL policy consultation: confirmation of FSWCC contribution

FSWCC's approved response to the SAC STL policy consultation — recommending routine notification of applications to the relevant community council — has been submitted and published on Facebook.

08.5.1 Police – Monthly Report (D. Sommerville)

Two community policing officers, C. Davison and M. Ross, introduced themselves at the start of the meeting and commended the high attendance. They advised that contact for non-urgent queries should be via the national telephone number, the national 'secure forms' section of the Police Scotland website, or email; the officers departed prior to the Burns Statue Square presentation.

The monthly report was circulated; community officers indicated an intent to attend meetings more regularly. For the period 1–27 June, approximately 82 crimes were recorded, with no significant patterns. Members considered the report with the caveat that it does not capture all town-centre/shoplifting offences, which would otherwise skew the picture for wards that are typically residential in character rather than the town-centre shopping amenity.

A member of the public — a retired police officer — described his past involvement in a nearby county's centralised, intelligence-led crime detection ('engine room').

Action: F. Watson to request updates on reported housebreakings.

08.5.2 Police – Seasonal speeding surveillance: three local roads

Police invited FSWCC to nominate three local roads for seasonal speed monitoring. Following discussion of a third nomination between Doonfoot Road and Seafield Road, members agreed one road per ward: Dalblair Road (Fort); Seafield Road/Racecourse View (Seafield); King Street/Whitletts Road (Wallacetown). Evening monitoring on Seafield Road was flagged as particularly relevant.

Action: Secretary (D. Sommerville) to submit the nominations, with timing comments, to police.

08.6.1 Roads – Dalblair Road: second speed survey update (I. MacLeod)

The second ARA speed survey has been completed; monitoring tubes were observed in place and results are awaited. Residents reiterated concerns about speed, pedestrian safety, and the absence of a safe crossing. Whether vehicle-reactive signage will be considered depends on the second survey's 85th-percentile average speed result, if found to be excessively above the speed limit.

Action: FSWCC to obtain the results and continue pressing ARA for measures.

08.6.2 Roads – Blackburn Car Park

Numerous residents contacted FSWCC about vehicle gatherings and anti-social behaviour over the weekend of 12–13 June. June's minutes recorded this as a scheduled informal gathering of car enthusiasts, for which Link Officer D. Porte had

reported that the Blackburn Car Park partnership working group had undertaken to lock the south gate to prevent congregation.

Residents and other sources reported that the gates were not locked, that anti-social behaviour occurred and has recurred on subsequent dates, and that the south gate barrier has not been deployed.

D. Porte reported that the late-June stakeholder meeting was cancelled for lack of progress, but that a senior officer meeting was convened the following morning involving SAC, ARA, and police, who considered the familiar options — robust barriers, routine closures, pedestrianisation or access restriction, enhanced enforcement, redesign, and a formal alternative venue for enthusiasts. No decisions or substantive progress were reported.

Members decided that the community's frustration with the long-running failure to deliver or schedule physical counter-measures must be escalated by FSWCC for local authority action. Evidence from the stakeholder group and wider community correspondence was considered sufficient to determine this as a community view to be expressed to South Ayrshire Council.

Action: Chair (I. MacLeod) to write to SAC requesting a timeline for provision of robust physical barriers at the south gate, referencing the coastal parking strategy SAC instructed ARA to devise from May 2026 onwards. SAC Link Officer (D. Porte) to convey this and request an action plan with timescales at relevant senior officer meetings.

08.6.3 Roads – Other matters (I. MacLeod): Ronaldshaw Park parking

Correspondence was received about parking pressure near Ayrshire Hospice, especially on Ronaldshaw Park, linked to the extended footprint of Ayrshire Hospice's recent expansion, likely resulting in more staff, contractor and visitor vehicles. FSWCC recognised the frustration this causes residents but noted that established routes for redress and reporting already allow residents to engage directly with the authorities holding the relevant powers, and on that basis a formal information-gathering or consultation exercise by the Community Council was not considered warranted.

08.7.1 Ayr Town Centre Regeneration – Burns Statue Square redevelopment: progress update (I. MacLeod)

Consideration by way of recap of the guest speaker presentation at item 04.

The public Q&A session at item 04 proceeded on the basis of four key concepts (the “Four R's”), with the following points noted:

- **Rationale for the redevelopment** — The consultation operators acknowledged there is no cost-benefit analysis or business case for the proposal, and that procedurally it has progressed so far on councillors voting for the design and consultation steps. Relevant contributors from the audience stated that the high street and broader town centre vitality ought to have been prioritised over Burns Statue Square. In conclusion, there was broad scepticism that the redevelopment is beneficial.
- **Roads affected** — The audience sensed that the reconfiguration of the roads was a by-product of accommodating the pedestrian plaza, that the proposed layout is of no discernible benefit compared to the current layout, and that car access to the area's shops will be more difficult.
- **Rabbie Burns theme** — Contributors generally spoke favourably about the theme, but the same contributors and others questioned the purpose of the form of the proposal, as noted under Rationale above. Concern was expressed about maintenance of the features.

- Retailers — Three separate day-time retailers on Burns Statue Square attended and stated that they do not see the argument, or any figures, for how the redevelopment will boost footfall, dwell-time, and spending in due course. They further stated they fear catastrophic loss of trade during the construction phase, and were shocked to hear there is no planned compensation for retailers if the redevelopment proceeds to construction. The audience concurred with the retailers' analysis and concerns.

The consultation operator, Streets UK, invited FSWCC to submit a view within approximately one to two weeks. Members agreed not to formulate a response immediately, but that Chair I. MacLeod would coordinate a survey of members' considerations of the matters, likely in the same survey format that ran for the public for three weeks in June.

Action: Chair (I. MacLeod) to circulate a response template, aggregate the views, and submit an FSWCC response to Streets UK within approximately one to two weeks.

08.7.2 Ayr Town Centre Regeneration – Scottish Affairs Committee's High Streets Inquiry: Ayr, 25th June (I. MacLeod)

Further to the possibility previously reported that the Scottish Affairs Committee's 'Future of High Streets' inquiry would hold a public 'town hall' in Ayr, Chair I. MacLeod attended. He reported that three parliamentarians each chaired a table of delegates, eliciting views on what town centres/high streets need today. The event was interesting but not evidently consequential — the committee's report remains some way off.

Another attendee at that event, present tonight, asked FSWCC to consider his views on Ayr town centre's future design and purpose as an architect and local resident. He presented a 3D model from his master's research, making the case for a long-term vision combining increased residential density with improved liveability of existing accommodation to deliver a prosperous town centre/adjacent population to potentially sustain shops and services.

Members welcomed the contribution as the start of a wider discussion, but noted the view expressed was personal and not FSWCC's.

08.7.3 Ayr Town Centre Regeneration – Shop-Fronts' compliance progress (M. Hitchon)

As noted for many months now, a number of deteriorated or non-compliant shopfronts have been reported to SAC by a community group; enforcement has acknowledged this, but a substantive response has not been made to the community group.

08.7.4 Ayr Town Centre Regeneration – Pride in Place programme (A. Roseweir)

No substantive update — the relevant body is in recess.

08.8 Elected Members' Reports

No Elected Members were present. A written contribution from one elected member (B. Shields) on an itemised matter is recorded separately at item 10 (Sand Ingress).

09 Wallacetown Sheltered Housing (D. Sommerville)

Per the proposal from member D. Sommerville sent to FSWCC members in advance, Denise gave a brief exposition of resident concerns, covering matters such as accommodation access, communal-area condition, and coordinated Council support.

Members considered the competency of the matter as per the briefing member I. MacLeod had distributed to members in advance — including the community test, expediency, and practicability — and there was not a majority in favour of FSWCC taking it forward as proposed:

- Established redress routes already exist for the private residential elements raised.
- Where a public-space element arises (e.g. bins, pedestrian safety), members felt this would sit better with elected-member casework and operational nudges to officers, rather than formal FSWCC representation.

D. Sommerville agreed to withdraw the proposal in its current form, to reappraise the matters and determine whether a competent, community-wide interest could be established for the specific elements. D. Sommerville remains at liberty to bring a proposal to a future meeting, potentially August 2026.

10 Ayr South Beach Sand Ingress

10.1 SAC plan for servicing recreation zone (Cllrs Shields and Weir)

A written update was received from Cllr Bob Shields on sand accumulation on the southern 'recreational' section of the beach/esplanade ('The Pavilion' north to the pier), encroaching onto paths, roads, and possibly private property, with vegetation growing through the deposited sand. Neighbourhood Services' clearance vehicle is no longer suitable; manual clearance is expected, with indicative completion around September. Members expressed dissatisfaction at the absence of a strategic plan and a prior response.

Action: Elected members (Cllrs Shields and/or Weir) to provide further update at the next meeting.

11 FSWCC Admin

11.1 Community Led Action Plan (CAP) 2026-2030 (I. MacLeod)

The Chair updated members following discussion with Audrey Gatt (SAC). The CAP is a three-to-four year delivery period spanning the 2027 local government elections, and 'key performance indicators' are to be scheduled in the document so that SAC can report progress to us annually at least, so that SAC prove the CAP is a 'living document'. Accordingly, A. Gatt is seeking an officer or service to monitor progress against indicators as her post expires in spring 2027. The proposed approach and timescale were supported by members.

Action: Invite Audrey Gatt back in approximately six months (indicatively spring 2027) for a progress update.

11.2 Noticeboard access: Cutty Sark – progress (C. Fisher)

SAC do not permit FSWCC notices at Wallace Tower. The Cutty Sark noticeboard remains available, subject to FSWCC accepting maintenance responsibility. Discussion covered cleaning/maintenance responsibility given the risk of damage or vandalism. D. Porte offered to obtain clarification as to what liabilities FSWCC would incur or if such concerns would be covered by SAC budget/operations.

Action: C. Fisher to seek written clarification from SAC on maintenance obligations, with a view to making a decision in due course.

12 Any Other Competent Business

The Chair thanked outgoing Link Officer David for his contribution. David is transferring to another locality and will no longer be FSWCC's Link Officer; a replacement is expected by September. He plans to attend the August meeting to assist the transition.

Action: SAC Link Officer (D. Porte) to confirm the replacement Link Officer and transition arrangements.

Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of Fort, Seafield & Wallacetown Community Council will be held on:

Wednesday 12th August 2026, 18:30

The Grain Exchange (Newmarket Street entrance, 81 High Street, Ayr, KA7 1QL)

Summary of Action Points

Ref	Category	Action	Owner
08.4.1	STLs	Confirm Dalblair Road STL application details, liaise with correspondent, assess against FSWCC policy, keep members informed.	D. Sommerville / F. Watson
08.4.3	STLs	Notify members of hearing date; attend and speak at Charlotte Street Panel hearing, in due course.	D. Sommerville
08.5.1	Police	Request updates on reported housebreakings.	F. Watson
08.5.2	Roads	Submit road nominations, with timing comments, to police.	Secretary (D. Sommerville)
08.6.1	Roads	Obtain second speed survey results for Dalblair Road; continue pressing ARA for measures.	I. MacLeod
08.6.2	Roads	Write to SAC requesting timeline for robust physical barriers at south gate (ref. coastal parking strategy); convey and request action plan with timescales at senior officer meetings.	Chair (I. MacLeod) / SAC Link Officer (D. Porte)
08.7.1	Town Centre Regeneration	Circulate response template, aggregate views, submit FSWCC response to Streets UK within ~1–2 weeks.	Chair (I. MacLeod)
10.1	Other – Ayr Beach Sand Ingress	Provide further update on Sand Ingress at next meeting.	Cllrs Shields / Weir
11.1	Other – CAP	Invite Audrey Gatt back (~spring 2027) for CAP progress update.	I. MacLeod
11.2	Other – Physical Noticeboard	Seek written clarification from SAC on Cutty Sark noticeboard maintenance obligations.	C. Fisher
12 (AOCB)	Other – Link Officer	Confirm replacement Link Officer and transition arrangements.	SAC Link Officer (D. Porte)