# FORT, SEAFIELD & WALLACETOWN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting
Wednesday 14th October 2026, 18:30
The Grain Exchange (Newmarket Street entrance), 81 High Street, Ayr, KA7 1QL

Attendees:
voting members: Margaret Anderson, Carol Fisher (secretary), Michael Hitchon, Ian MacLeod (chair; minutes), Alan Roseweir, Forbes Watson
ex-officio members: Cllr Bob Shields, Cllr George Weir
SAC representatives: David Porte (SAC Link Officer - departing), Scott Thomson (SAC Link Officer - incoming) Jill Tomlinson (SAC Thriving Communities team leader)
Police Scotland: Sgt Stewart Slaven and Inspector Allen Dodds
public: members of the public (thirteen attendees minimum)

## 01 Welcome and Introductions

Chair – I. MacLeod – explained that 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). No objection received to audio-recording the public meeting.

Then, Chair welcomed all to the meeting, including Sgt Slaven and Inspector Dodds from the local police team. Chair offered to take the Police item early but Sgt Slaven was content to wait for the usual slot. Chair noted that six voting members are present (Margaret Anderson, Carol Fisher, Michael Hitchon, Ian MacLeod, Alan Roseweir, Forbes Watson), therefore the meeting is quorate.

## 02 Apologies

Apologies received from voting members: R. Singer, D. Sommerville, C. Tosh. Elaine Stewart MP (not a voting member) also sent apologies.

## 03 Declarations of Interest

A. Roseweir declared a general interest as a director of the Pride in Place board; not on tonight's agenda. Members agreed he may continue to provide information on that matter if it arises.

At the start of item 08 the Chair invited declarations from the ex-officio members on Burns Statue Square. Cllr Shields stated this was not a declaration of interest but that, as at the last meeting, he would not comment or vote on Burns Statue Square while a complaint against him is under investigation. Members agreed he should leave the room for that item – see 08.1.

## 04 Approval of Minutes - Meeting of 9th September 2026

Draft minutes had been published on the website and Facebook page seven days before the meeting. Approved by voting members as an accurate record.

## 05 Matters Arising

Action points from September reviewed – all within items on today's agenda.

## 06 Correspondence [C. Fisher]

Secretary reported that most public correspondence had been copied-in to voting members, but that recent days' correspondence included further allegations about Midton Road car wash. As recorded at the June meeting (item 06.2), this is a matter between the individual and SAC / the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman, and FSWCC has no further role.

Secretary reported that Elaine Stewart had asked to be informed about FSWCC's discussion of cycle lanes / Accessible Ayr. Correspondence on Accessible Ayr had been placed on tonight's agenda (8.2), and relevant correspondence had been forwarded to all members.

Chair explained that public questions are taken during the relevant items and took a show of topics from the public: Burns Statue Square, Accessible Ayr / 'cycle lanes'.

## 07 Reports

### 07.1 Treasurer – Monthly statement [M. Hitchon]

Treasurer highlighted recent and ongoing purchases, including the Remembrance wreath, circulated the statement of account, and assured members that FSWCC is on track to remain in surplus at year end (March 2027).

**Action:** M. Hitchon – lay Remembrance wreath.

### 07.2 Planning [F. Watson] – Month's applications review

F. Watson had circulated his list; no applications requiring FSWCC action. M. Hitchon raised the installation of external roller shutters at a pharmacy in Wellington Square. F. Watson reasoned that this is likely not a planning matter but offered to check informally for M. Hitchon.

### 07.3 Licensing [F. Watson]

### 07.3.1 Licensing – Month's applications review

F. Watson reported applications this period, including extended hours for Fairfield House Hotel, and occasional licences for events. No objections.

### 07.3.2 Licensing – Savoy 5: planning/licensing progress [Cllrs Shields / Weir]

Chair briefly recapped the background: the premises continues to trade on consecutive temporary licences while its full licence awaits a planning decision. Despite FSWCC's monitoring and councillors themselves seeking resolution, it appears the planning process takes precedence over licensing, and neither FSWCC nor the Council can overcome that. Therefore, it is futile to continue monitoring for a change when none realistically seems likely. Item dropped from future agendas.

### 07.4 Short Term Lets [D. Sommerville / F. Watson]

### 07.4.1 Short Term Lets – Month's applications review

Chair restated the background: SAC is not obliged to notify FSWCC of short-term let applications, and FSWCC learns of them by chance. FSWCC's policy is to object only to short-term lets in residential properties with a shared entrance (e.g. flats), not to short-term lets generally. None noted this month.

### 07.4.2 Short Term Lets – Queen's Court: Regulatory Panel outcome (24 Sept)

Chair recapped: FSWCC objected on shared-entrance grounds, later found the building was mainly commercial, and refined its policy accordingly. Cllr Weir (panel member) reported the licence was not approved; the reasons were complex and not solely about that property, and the matter was considered in private.

### 07.4.3 Short Term Lets – SAC STL policy review: date update [Cllr Shields]

Cllr Shields reported his understanding that the short-term let policy paper will go to Cabinet on 28 October, and that it may give SAC / the regulatory panel grounds to refuse applications in shared-entrance properties where loss of amenity is likely.

A. Roseweir noted that SAC is at the first stage of preparing Local Development Plan 3 under National Planning Framework 4, which is part of the statutory development plan for all 32 Scottish councils. Policy 30 (Tourism), part (e), states that proposals to reuse existing buildings for short-term holiday letting will not be supported where they result in: (i) an unacceptable impact on local amenity or the character of a neighbourhood or area; or (ii) the loss of residential accommodation where that loss is not outweighed by demonstrable local economic benefits. He noted other councils, e.g. Glasgow, are aligning with it, and that it strengthens the case to be put to Cabinet.

Chair noted Cabinet papers are published a week ahead; members will consider the paper when available.

### 07.5 Police – Monthly Report

Report prepared by the local police team and circulated. Sgt Slaven explained that crimes differ from incidents (one incident can involve several crimes). Retail crime on the High Street is resourced separately – two dedicated town centre officers work with retailers, with a high detection rate – and is excluded from the beat reports FSWCC receives, so that the sub-ward figures are not skewed by retail crime that could not occur in other sub-wards. No crime patterns emerging in residential areas. F. Watson asked about break-ins in Seafield; police had seen no increase. C. Fisher asked about a link between town centre thefts and drug/alcohol issues; police confirmed a link and described joint work with the wellbeing team.

### 07.6 Roads [I. MacLeod]

### 07.6.1 Roads – Blackburn Car Park: update — [I. MacLeod] re Police; (SAC Link Officer) re Stakeholder Group (if applicable)

Police patrol and response (Sgt Slaven)
In response to members' questions put in advance, Sgt Slaven reported on offences detected at the car park over the past year (1 October 2025 to 13 October 2026). Examples of offences detected include driving without insurance (including through mass police vehicle checks at car cruise events, with roads policing support), careless and dangerous driving, vehicle defects, handheld mobile phone use, disqualified driving and no MOT. For context, the Blackburn Car Park beat recorded around 60 offences in that year, broadly similar to the neighbouring Seafield beat (around 50), against around 200 for Craigie and around 120 for Forehill, for comparison. Of around 216 hours of intervention available to the local team over the last three months, around a quarter (one in four hours) were spent at Blackburn Car Park.

Education flyers, produced with SAC's Community Safety Partnership, have been handed out to car park users (around 200 to date), and individuals warned and recorded, building an intelligence picture of drivers using car parks across the area.

Physical measures – SAC Community Safety Partnership (D. Porte)
The problem-solving group met this week. Measures reported include: the speed bump specification has been resolved and a purchase order placed for smaller bumps between the existing ones; gates will be closed at 18:30 and opened at 07:00 from Monday 26 October to end of March by a funded security company, with police supervision initially. There will be no exit after closure, with clear signage. 18:30 was chosen to suit office workers. The group will reconvene after closures start to assess the effect; FSWCC is on the invite list.

Displacement
Chair recognised the risk of displacement, but that the acute problem at Blackburn needed mitigated. Members acknowledged the police effort and SAC's funding of preventative measures.

### 07.6.2 Roads – Dalblair Road: ARA update on vehicle-activated signage (VAS)

Chair recapped: speed surveys showed speeding; paint refresh did not change speeds; ARA ordered vehicle-activated signs. Update received 13 October: manufacturer has not yet made the signs; informally expected before end of the calendar year.

**Action:** I. MacLeod – monitor ARA's installation of vehicle-activated signs.

### 07.6.3 Roads – Blackburn Road / Racecourse Road / Ronaldshaw Park junction: road safety [C. Tosh]

C. Tosh had been invited to provide information in advance; none received (Secretary confirmed). C. Tosh gave apologies. Deferred pending input from C. Tosh.

### 07.7 Elected Members' Reports

Cllr Weir had nothing additional ahead of item 08. Cllr Shields: October Cabinet to be asked to approve a taxi tariff increase of 5–8%, reflecting fuel costs, in time for Christmas trade; some owners opposed, drivers in favour.

## 08 Ayr Town Centre Regeneration

### 08.1 Burns Statue Square redevelopment: SAC decision (10 Sept)

Cllr Shields left the room (see 03).

Background
FSWCC's opposition was made clear ahead of SAC's vote on 10 September, which approved the project. Chair: the decision cannot be relitigated, but given the many attendees the meeting would hear community feeling.

Cllr Weir's report
The proposal was approved at full Council, not unanimously; he raised concerns. Phased works are due to start early next year, with measures to minimise impact on traders. On engagement, Ayrshire Roads Alliance (ARA) said 69 businesses were 'approached', but few business questionnaires were completed. Cllr Weir invited traders to report if they had or had not been approached. Compensation for affected businesses is beyond ARA's remit, but the SAC Chief Financial Officer will look at the possibility.

Matters raised by members of the public
Several members of the public raised concerns, which are recorded here as their views. These included: whether the spend is a priority given, in their view, the condition of the station and wider town centre; emergency service access; their understanding that traffic routing has changed since approval; whether bus operators were consulted, and the impact on bus users, including disabled, elderly and young people; whether cost-benefit and risk analysis was carried out; and traders' concerns about their viability during the works.

Planning
F. Watson noted the formal planning consultation is open for members of the public to comment, and that he will convey in general terms the concerns FSWCC already pressed in its consultation response.

**Action:** F. Watson – convey FSWCC's previously stated concerns to the planning consultation.

### 08.2 Accessible Ayr cycle paths: proposals resurfaced

ARA letter to Elaine Stewart MP (read by Chair)
Elaine Stewart MP had written to Ayrshire Roads Alliance (ARA) and received a reply from David Manson, project officer. The letter stated:

- ARA progressed Accessible Ayr to Royal Institute of British Architects Stage 4 (detailed design), concluding in early 2026;
- a paper went to SAC Cabinet but was deferred, with no formal decision on next steps;
- no further design work has been carried out since, and the proposals remain unchanged;
- Cabinet on 22 September 2026 agreed ARA's recommendation to carry out further consultation in late October / early November 2026, to inform design, particularly where businesses and residents had raised concerns.

Cllr Shields: January deferral and Cabinet's stated view

- In January 2026 councillors did not support cycle lanes on Alloway Street and Sandgate, but the paper was deferred without a motion specifying changes, so the proposals returned in their original form.
- Cabinet's stated view is now that those cycle lanes will not be in the final proposals. ARA has been asked to explore removing them while retaining the funding, which is Scottish Government money. The lanes may still appear in the consultation.
- Cllrs Shields and Weir have encouraged Alloway Street traders to respond.

No discernible active travel proposal remains. seemingly
The Chair made the point that surely no active travel proposal is left for the further consultation to address:

- the cycle lanes on Alloway Street and Sandgate, the core of Accessible Ayr, were not supported by councillors in January 2026, and Cabinet's stated view is that they will not be in the final proposals;
- Burns Statue Square, approved on 10 September 2026, has no active travel component and requires no Scottish Government active travel money;
- FSWCC and the public were already consulted in late 2025 to inform the January 2026 decision, so the further consultation arises from a deferral, not from any new proposal.

Asked what active travel proposal therefore remains, Cllr Weir pointed only to the funding (Scottish Government) and to ARA exploring design changes. No alternative active travel proposal was identified.

Consultation must be robust
A. Roseweir said the consultation must be appropriate, open, transparent and fully reported, so the evidence behind any decision is clear.

Station bridge cycle lane
A member of the public noted that the Burns Statue Square plans still route a cycle lane over the station bridge, with a bus stop opposite the cinema.

FSWCC response
Agreed – If consultation opens before next meeting, FSWCC to submit a community response consistent with its previous position (community not in favour of cycle lanes on those streets), agreed by email, and report to the next meeting.

**Action:** All members – agree FSWCC's consultation response by email when consultation opens.

## 09 FSWCC Admin

### 09.1 Community Led Action Plan (CAP): next step / sign-off [C. Fisher]

Taken in private business at C. Fisher's suggestion (see separate private minute). In public, C. Fisher noted the action plan is in its final stages, nearly ready to launch, and she needs numbers for printing and distribution.

## 10 Questions from the Public

Questions from the public were taken throughout the meeting as they arose (see 06, 07.2, 07.6.1, 08.1, 08.2, 11), rather than reserved to this item. None further raised.

## 11 Any Other Competent Business

A member of the public noted the seaward side of the new bandstand is a blank wall and suggested a mural, which might also deter graffiti. Chair: not a community council decision; FSWCC has not been approached; members of the public can suggest it to SAC. A member of the public asked how community council funding is set; it depends on population/electors under the Scheme of Establishment, and they will be put in touch with a member for details.

## 12 Date of Next Meeting

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

Wednesday 11th November 2026, 18:30

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

## Summary of Action Points

| Ref | Category | Action | Owner |
|---|---|---|---|
| 07.1 | Treasurer | Lay Remembrance wreath. | M. Hitchon |
| 07.6.2 | Roads | Monitor ARA's installation of Dalblair Road vehicle-activated signs. | I. MacLeod |
| 08.1 | Town Centre BSS | Convey FSWCC's previously stated concerns to the planning consultation. | F. Watson |
| 08.2 | Town Centre Accessible Ayr | Agree FSWCC's consultation response by email when consultation opens. | All members |