

Fort, Seafield and Wallacetown Community Council
Minutes
6.30pm, Wednesday 13th March 2024
Memorial Hall, Ayr Grammar Primary School, Ayr

Attendance

CC Members: Denise Sommerville (DS -Chair), Michael Hitchon (MH), Forbes Watson (FW), Andy Seville (AS), Jim McKay (JM), Carol Fisher(CF- Secretary), Alan Roseweir (AR), David Connelly (DC), Jim McKay (JM), Eric Armstrong (EA), Robert Singer (RS), Rachel Borland (RB)

SAC Councillors: None present

SAC Link Officer: David Porte

SAC Community Asset Transfer Team Leader: Colin Love

Police: Not present.

Minute Secretary: AS (stand-in)

Member of the Public: Michael Clarke

The meeting opened with a presentation by Colin Love, Team Leader, Community Asset Transfer. Colin explained how the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 gave local communities the opportunity to acquire public assets including those from Local authorities, and other Public bodies such as Police Scotland. A list of available SAC assets are listed on the SAC website. To date there have been 6 Community Asset Transfers requests in South Ayrshire, with only 1 of those being refused. A number of questions were asked by members of the CC.

The Chair thanked Colin for his informative presentation. The Formal FSWCC meeting started at 7PM

1. **Apologies:** Gordon Kelly (GK), Kenny McLeod (KM), Ken Ballantyne (KB). Cllrs Bob Shields, George Weir, Martin Dowey,

2. **Declarations of Interest:** None

3. **Minutes of Meeting Held on 14th February 2024:**

Amendments were proposed regarding Common Good, Newton Tower, Rozelle House and the Lorne arcade. These were incorporated and the minutes of the previous meeting were agreed by vote and ratified.

Proposed: AR, **Seconded:** DC. **Carried.**

4. **Matters Arising:**

a. Ken Ballantyne has informed the Chair that he was unfortunately resigning from the CC. DS thanked Ken for his contribution, especially the running of the website and the setting up of the Zoho mail system, which Ken has kindly agreed to continue running. The CC wishes Ken well for the future. There will now be a CC vacancy for the Seafield area.

b. Common Good: FW stated that Borders Council has set up a Sub Group which included CC's to provide oversight of Common Good issues. FW has arranged to meet with the Chair of this group to discuss how it works with a view to trying to copy this model in South Ayrshire.

5. Public Business:

Ayr Town Centre Car Parking Consultation. Michael Clark explained how he had met with elected members of SAC. The meeting had been very positive, with a number of Elected members stating on the record that they would object to the proposals. Michael believes that the proposals will be rejected at the meeting of SAC cabinet on 9th April 2024. The petition he raised now has over 400 signatures, and members of the CC recommended he enter this as evidence of public opposition for consideration at the Cabinet meeting.

6. Reports

a. Police:

No Police report was again received. Discussion took place regarding a number of burglaries in the area. DP noted that Police Scotland had requested siting mobile CCTV cameras in the Murdoch's Loan area of Alloway which had become a hotspot.

b. SAC Elected Members:

No elected members were present. However GW had sent a note stating that he was still awaiting feedback from an accountant regarding Common Good Fund accounts. This was proving challenging. DS and CF had met with Martin Dowey in which MD offered a heartfelt apology for his previous comments. Other items discussed were the Station hotel, Social Care Hub, the Town centre consultation and the demolition of the remaining High flats tower block. Further dates have been pencilled in for future meetings with MD.

c. Planning

KM was not present at the meeting but had sent out various papers to the CC for consideration. There were no objections noted.

d. Licencing

- (i) License application received for the Belleisle clubhouse. No Objections noted
- (ii) License application received for the annual Orange walk. There were 2 objections from members of the CC. The application was approved by a majority.

e. Treasurer's Report

MH provided the financial update as of 13th March 2024. He reported a current balance of £309.68. MH asked members for suggestions for donations to good causes around the community. DC suggested Newton Primary School who were looking to purchase rugby balls. £100 was agreed to be donated.

f. STL's

AR reminded the committee that at the 8th March 2023 meeting the CC unanimously agreed to object to any planning application for a STL which had a shared entrance. Since then SAC has made the decision not to make Planning permission a requirement for licencing currently existing lets. The Fort Seafield Wallacetown Community Association, (FSWCA) has raised a complaint to the Ombudsman in relation to this and has provided AR with a copy which was circulated to members. AR made the CC aware that Lynn Carlton and Iain McKie from the FSWCA had attended a Licencing Regulatory Board hearing on 15th February 2024 where an application for a STL licence for 42, Churchill Tower was considered. Following the hearing the

Community Association made a formal complaint about some of the processes involved in the hearing. Details of this complaint were circulated to CC members by AR. AR shared policy examples for STL's in other Local Authorities. He made specific reference to Glasgow City Council's policy which shows Community Councils being official consultees in relation to all STL licensing applications.

AR proposal - That SAC adopt the same policy as City of Glasgow Council to recognise FSWCC as one of the consultees for STL Licence applications. Seconded by FW. Motion carried unanimously.

Proposed: AR. Seconded: FW

7. AOCB:

a. Events Working Group.

AS reported that Mike Newell had presented the final costing for the AyrShow to a meeting of SAC on 6th March 2024. The show cost SAC £469,336 (excluding staff costs) whilst the revenue was £264,814. This provides a net loss of £204,000. AS stated that, whilst we support the Ayrshow, we recognise that it comes with significant disruption to the local community. As such there needs to be a significant financial benefit to the community through the promotion and use of our many excellent local small businesses. Unfortunately this wasn't the case for the 2023 event, where local F&B outlets were excluded. The Events Working Group will continue to press for as many local businesses to be involved in the 2024 show as possible to ensure any profits are kept within our community. The financial situation is not sustainable, and whilst we support the 2024 Air Show, we will need to reassess this should losses continue.

b. Breach of Code of Conduct for CC members

Concerns were expressed that a member of the CC had spoken to the local media with regard to the Lorne Arcade Planning proposal, and that in doing so had breached the Code of Conduct for Community Councillors. Specifically P17, para 8.4 regarding Declaration of Interests and Para 6 "Openness" of the Code of Conduct. It was felt that the member had not been clear in his comments to the media that they were members of FSWCC, but were not commenting as a member, but rather as a private individual, and indeed that the comments were in conflict with the agreed view of FSWCC. DS agreed to contact the member by email to discuss the situation, and to request an apology. The outcome will be discussed at the next meeting.

c. Minute Secretary

There is still no formal Minute Secretary and this is causing issues for the CC. A number of options were proposed. DP will investigate whether the Newton and Heathfield CC minute secretary would be available after the folding of that CC. AR has spoken to Ayr College to investigate whether a business student might be willing to step in. hopefully a resolution will be found soon.

d. Place Planning

4 members of the CC will attend a Zoom meeting with Audrey Gatt on 20th March 2024

e. Energy Project

AR updated the CC on developments with regard to funding applications.

f. Esplanade bus service

EA raised the issue of the new esplanade bus service, which appeared to have no timetable or formal bus stops. It is hoped the opening of the new esplanade care home will increase use of the bus service.

8. Date of next meeting:

The Chair (DS) closed the meeting at 20.50 hrs and confirmed the next CC meeting for Wednesday 10th April 2024 at 7pm, Memorial Hall, Ayr Grammar Primary School

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