

## **Old Aberdeen Community Council**

Minute of the meeting held on **Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> February 2011** at the Old Aberdeen Town House  
(revision 1)

### **1. Present**

Christine Burgess (Chair), Simon Barker (Vice Chair), Isobel Aitken (Treasurer), Gordon Mutch, Clive Kempe, Dewi Morgan.

### **Also Present**

Cllr Jim Noble, PC Sandy Grant (Grampian Police), Philip Sim, Nick Forrest, Kevin Guyan (Secretary).

### **Apologies**

Katja Brittain, Trevor Stack, Cllr Richard Robertson, Omran Al-Mahtot, Abdul Latif, Raymond Kelly.

### **2. Minute of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising**

Clive Kempe noted that the footer on the first page should read 'Page 1 of 4' rather than 'Page of'. After changes the minute was passed. Proposed by Dewi Morgan, seconded by CK.

Christine Burgess noted that the tenders for the CPZ came within the 110% limit and therefore ACC will go ahead with the preferred tender for the project.

CB asked Jim Noble about plans discussed at OACC's meeting with John Stewart and Stewart Carruth relating to a consultation on ACC's capital budget. JN noted that the council's capital budget was passed last week. From this meeting, officers are investigating the possibility of amalgamating the Third Don Crossing, Western Peripheral Route and Haudagain Roundabout into a single project. Officers are also investigating other methods of funding the project, JN was unsure of what they would report. SB questioned the benefits of amalgamating projects, doubting the financial gains. CK highlighted the reduction of transparency that comes with larger projects.

DM noted issues relating to match funding, particularly in relation to Duthie Park that is set to benefit from ACC funding so as not to lose out on matched Lottery funding. There is no similar contribution to Seaton Park.

CB noted that the Head Gardener at Seaton Park has accepted the invitation to attend the Queen's Garden Party.

### **3. University Update**

CB explained that herself, Gordon Mutch, Katja Brittain and Isobel Aitken met with Chris Gane, University of Aberdeen, on 15 February. It was clear that the university would not be attending future OACC meetings, instead proposing to meet with all community groups on a quarterly basis. CB explained that Chris Gane was looking for a fresh start and did not want to dwell on past issues, but the University would, where reasonably possible, keep OACC informed of ongoing developments.

At the meeting, Chris Gane presented a university update. He noted that work is almost complete on the former Clydesdale Bank on the High Street to convert the space into a museum

that will house some of the collection formerly on display at Marischal College. It seems unlikely that the University will return to Marischal College, though no decision has yet been taken. Graduations have been successfully taking place in Elphinstone Hall.

Chris Gane also gave indication of early plans to develop a Museum of the North on campus, a potential location being St. Mary's Church. It was also noted that although plans for a café/bistro at 19/23 High Street have been considered, no commercial body is currently keen to take on the project.

Work on Luthuli House should be completed by October. It was also noted that Historic Scotland have kept an eye on the project and challenged plans to reduce the sizes of some rooms.

Johnston Halls of Residence were highlighted as an area for future refurbishment or redevelopment. The refectory is currently being used for music rehearsals and houses some of the Word Festival events.

It was noted that nothing is set in relation to land banking on Don Street, primarily because there is no money to take on large-scale projects.

The University Library is on schedule to be completed by September, even after two difficult winters. There have been questions from pupils at St Machar Academy on why the glass appears green: this is UV protection that will help protect the books from sunlight. CB explained that OACC would be invited to tour the building at a later date. CB added that the library would include community free access on the ground floor, meeting rooms and use of IT suites in the evening for organised community groups.

**ACTION:** remove University Update from future agendas of the monthly OACC meetings.

**ACTION:** CB to liaise with Ross Grant, Tillydrone Community Council, about potential dates to next meet with Chris Gane.

SB highlighted the need to continue to address key issues in the area and bring up concerns as and when required, rather than waiting for quarterly meetings. SB added that he believes the community was promised a greater level of community engagement during the development stages of the new library.

#### **4. Police Update**

Sandy Grant distributed figures for the last period, noting that they remain generally low.

SG noted that the vandalism mainly represents damage to cars on Don Street.

CB asked for more information on the reported fire. SG explained that this was a minor incident that took place in December.

SB asked whether it was legal to drink alcohol in outdoor public spaces. SG noted that Grampian Police issue those caught drinking in public a £40 fine. It was explained that drinking wine with a picnic in Duthie Park - for example - could be subject to a fine, though it is unlikely that Grampian Police would involve themselves.

#### **5. Planning**

**CPZ** – Nothing further to report.

**Third Don Crossing** – GM explained that the issue would be discussed on 17 February by ACC's Development Management Subcommittee. JN noted that the agenda for the meeting is

available on ACC's website but that he is unsure of what the meeting is to discuss. CK noted concerns over ACC pre-empting the outcomes of the Public Hearing and questioned how Compulsory Purchase Orders can even be considered prior to the results being released.

**Sunnybank Park** – CB noted that the park's Management Committee have received their lease this week. DM encouraged the student journalists in attendance to investigate the project as a potential story.

**College Bounds** – CB reported that she had received an email from Ross Scaife at the Roads Department in which he explained that the solution of establishing a camera at the junction could not yet be implemented due to budgetary constraints. The interim measure of a No Entry except for buses sign and switching off the traffic lights was also now dependent on the roads element of the 2011/2012 budget, due to be set shortly. **ACTION:** CB to write to RS to keep this issue as a high priority one.

#### **Pending and Granted Applications –**

DM highlighted problems with ACC's planning website in relation to its inability to inform visitors of changes to plans. The only method of checking whether a plan has changed during the planning process is to routinely check the documentation. DM said that the response received from the ACC with regards to the OACC comments on the planning application for the proposed pharmacy at 519 King Street indicated that our concerns had effectively been ignored as they were made as comments rather than as a formal objection. This could be taken to construe that OACC should perhaps formally object to an application should we have any comments, as this is the only method of guaranteeing that planning applications are considered by more than a single officer. **ACTION:** JN to investigate whom best to address these concerns.

**519 King Street** – It was explained that Katja Brittain has since discovered that there is no need to provide disabled parking spaces at a pharmacy. CB suggested speaking to Health and Safety about OACC's concerns.

**University Lights** – The application was divided into smaller applications. The only issue of note is a change to the type of lights being used, reducing light pollution.

**50-52 College Bounds, Luthuli House** - DM emphasised the need for the access ramp of the building to be in-keeping with the area and property.

**39 High Street** – Applications for the fascia sign is still pending.

No new applications have been received.

## **6. Reports**

DM explained that the Community Council Forum had a presentation on a pilot mediation project relating to planning and the relationship between ACC and community councils. An invitation to those who wish to be involved has been circulated by email.

Civic Forum meets next week.

## **7. Treasurer's Report**

IA explained that OACC has around £130.00 remaining in the account, with a new cheque set to arrive shortly.

**ACTION:** annual budgeting to be discussed under Treasurer's Report at March meeting.

## 8. Newsletter

DM noted the need to begin to consider ideas for a spring edition of Auld Toon News. CK asked whether it would be possible to include advertising or sponsorship to help cover the costs of the newsletter. **ACTION:** CB to contact Alan Mulvie, ACC, about sponsorship and whether Shell still offers community grants.

## 9. Correspondence

- ACC Local Housing Strategy Questionnaire. CB noted that the Local Transport Strategy is set to end in 2012. **ACTION:** JN to investigate progress with the new plan.

## 10. AOCB

- DM highlighted recent observations from reading OACC's Constitution.
  - i) When local residents attend OACC meetings and are on the electoral roll they are eligible to vote. SB highlighted the potential problem of residents block voting on issues.
  - ii) The AGM must be held no later than two months after the end of the financial year.
  - iii) The Chair cannot serve more than two successive terms.
  - iv) The Central Library should be emailed copies of OACC's minutes. **ACTION:** Kevin Guyan to investigate.
  - v) All OACC meetings must be advertised at least seven days in advance.
- DM asked what would be best to display on the OACC notice board at Dunbar Hall. DM's plans were approved.
- DM informed OACC of consultation events being held by the Scottish Association of Community Councils.
- DM highlighted grants that were available to encourage swimming in the local community. SB suggested making an application to allow a free hour of swimming for local residents at the university swimming pool. CB questioned whether St Peter's Primary School offer swimming lessons. **ACTION:** JN to speak to Richard Robertson about the grants.
- JN noted that ACC's original plan to reduce Pupil Support Assistants in school has been reduced and will not be cut equally across the city. CB asked whether the English as an Additional Language unit would be closed. **ACTION:** JN to investigate.
- JN explained that SSE Telecom plan to bury a cable across Seaton Park. The company will cover the cost and be charged by ACC, it is guaranteed that this money will remain in the park.
- CB noted that the Old Aberdeen Walkabout is taking place on Thursday 24 February.

## 11. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

OACC will next meet on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> March at 7.30pm at Old Aberdeen Town House.