

Old Aberdeen Community Council

Minutes of the meeting held on **Tuesday 16th November 2010** at the Old Aberdeen Town House.

1. Present

Simon Barker (Vice Chair), Isobel Aitken (Treasurer), Hilda Meers, Trevor Stack, Clive Kempe, Dewi Morgan.

Also Present

Cllr Jim Noble, Sinclair Laing (Froghall Community Council), PC Ross Lindsay (Grampian Police), Kevin Guyan (Secretary).

Apologies

Christine Burgess (Chair), Katja Brittain, Gordon Mutch, Shaunagh Kirby (University of Aberdeen), Omran Al-Mahtot, Raymond Kelly, Abdul Latif.

2. Minute of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

Simon Barker noted that in Christine Burgess's absence, he would be chairing tonight's meeting.

October's minute was accepted with no changes.

3. University Update

No report.

4. Police Update

Ross Lindsay noted that in the last period there has been 1 annoyance and 3 youth disorder STORM incidents. There has also been 1 possession of drugs, 1 theft from a motor vehicle and 3 vandalism crime files. These figures are - as usual - very low. SB asked what is meant by "muirburn" in relation to fire raising. RL explained that this is the burning of the ground for crop improvement and is only permitted at certain times in the year.

RL explained that in discussion to dog fouling, the Inspector is aware of this problem and is currently looking into tackling the issue.

Hilda Meers asked who she should contact in relation to a fallen tree on Regent Walk. RL explained that Grampian Police should be contacted if it is an act of vandalism, otherwise ACC should be informed.

5. Community Council boundaries

Sinclair Laing introduced himself to the Council and explained his role at Chair of Froghall Community Council and involvement in Sunnybank's Key Contacts Group and the Sunnybank Park's Management Committee. SB outlined the discussion relating to community council boundaries at OACC's October meeting.

SL explained that Froghall CC see the natural boundary of the university wall as a good border for the two community councils, bringing Sunnybank Park under the control of Froghall CC. Following their most recent meeting, Froghall CC – at the very least – plan to bring Powis into their community council and would also be happy to merge with OACC, should this be possible.

HM noted that the process of merging would take around one year, with ACC running a consultation process and a series of meetings of city councillors. However, HM expressed her opinion that a merger of the three areas would be the most successful way to push forward and continue to best represent the area.

TS asked about the role of Sunnybank's Key Contacts Group. SL explained that Froghall CC and Sunnybank's Key Contacts Group generally have the same members.

SL explained that currently both community councils have enough input to cover basic tasks. If they should choose to merge, the new body would be able to take on bigger projects and not struggle for community councillors etc. DM questioned whether this new community council would be too big, adding that many other community councils in the city (Bridge of Don, Rosemount etc.) are a lot bigger.

SB questioned whether this was the right time for OACC to consider a merger. Jim Noble explained that the last time ACC looked at changing community council boundaries was around ten years ago so this opportunity should be seized.

SB added that he is unsure about where he stands. On one hand, expanding the boundaries may lessen that focus of the community council and be detrimental for the residents currently living in Old Aberdeen. On the other hand, a bigger community council would bring more people. SB concluded that he would prefer to concede the Sunnybank area to Froghall CC and continue to operate at OACC. IA mirrored SB's assessment of the issue.

DM noted that, should Froghall and Powis merge, the Sunnybank Park would fit more closely within the area of the new community council. DM added that should the Sunnybank area be conceded, OACC – as it currently stands – would lose three community councillors.

TS noted that OACC's current boundaries are tied closely to the campus of the University of Aberdeen. By expanding these boundaries, the emphasis on the university may be diluted and may, therefore, help improve relations with the university. TS asked how many people regularly attend Froghall CC meetings. SL noted that Froghall CC has eight members, with around five or six regularly attending. TS concluded by stating that he is generally in favour of a larger community council, with an increased bringing increased power.

SB explained that he would send an email to OACC members highlighting the three options:

- i) Continue the status quo.
- ii) Concede the Sunnybank area to Froghall CC / Powis.
- iii) A full merger of OACC and Froghall CC / Powis.

A simple majority will decide on OACC's position with an emergency meeting called if members are unable to agree.

7. Planning

Sunnybank Park Update – SL thanked OACC for their donation of £100.00 to the park's funds. SL noted that the park's Management Committee plan to apply for £35,000.00 from the Action Fund, £65,000.00 to improve access to the park and £20,000.00 to run an outside gym in the park.

SL explained that the planning application for allotments has been submitted and goes to committee on 25 November. He believes ACC have given the application unconditional approval. The allotments will run from the south bowling green and half the land of the former putting green.

SL noted that the Management Committee aim to run one volunteer event per month, with picnics ongoing throughout the summer. The group's first AGM is planned for July 2011 and a bulb planting event will take place on 21 November between 11 am and 1 pm. SL also encouraged those interested to join the Sunnybank Park group on Facebook.

CPZ – DM explained that ACC are now working towards the start of the procurement process, with work potentially beginning in Spring 2011.

Third Don Crossing – DM shared with the Council information on the areas that would be subject to compulsory purchase orders for the Third Don Crossing.

It was noted that the issues OACC wish Gordon Mutch to raise at his representation to ACC on 14 December should be forwarded. CK added that he intends to make a personal representation highlighting the health problems associated with the proposed road, with poor air quality a bigger threat to health than passive smoking. SB concluded by expressing his disgust that ACC seem intent on running a major road through Tillydrone, one of the city's poorest areas whose residents are unable to mount a costly legal challenge.

ACTION: Issues to be forwarded to Gordon Mutch.

College Bounds – CK suggested the future possibility of bring the road to the same level as the pavement as a traffic calming measure. This could be undertaken when ACC resurface/replace the street's cobbles, although with ACC's current financial situation it is unlikely that this will happen soon.

Local Development Plan – DM noted that responses to the Local Development Plan must be submitted by 17 December. The Plan supports the Third Don Crossing and increased housing in the local area. TS noted that although 36,000 new houses are predicted for the city he was sceptical over whether they would ever be built. TS added that suitable infrastructure must be built to support these changes.

ACTION: Response to Local Development Plan to be discussed at December meeting.

New Applications –

A property in Lord Hay's Grove applying to add a balcony. Members saw no problems with the application.

8. Reports

Nothing to report

9. Treasurer's Report

IA noted that ACC have now reissued a request for the cheque for the repainting of the train in Seaton Park. IA explained that there is currently £2472.46 in OACC's account and after deducting £1800.00 for the Seaton Park train and £100.00 donation for Sunnybank Park will stand at £572.46. OACC will still need to pay the secretarial fees for the final quarter of the year and the printing costs of a newsletter, with a predicted £350.00 remaining in the account. SB asked whether finishing the year with money in the account would have any affect on future grants. IA explained that this figure would not affect future grants.

SB asked whether it would be wise to have three signatories for the cheques rather than two. IA agreed that this would make things easier.

ACTION: IA to visit the bank to collect the relevant paperwork.

10. Correspondence

DM highlighted information on ACC's Community Christmas Fund and suggested making an application to cover the costs of purchasing two trees, decorations, lights and some snacks for OACC's community Christmas event. CK asked whether the fund could cover lights that could be used throughout the year and possibly powered by solar energy. DM noted the problem of recertifying electrical appliances and the costs this would entail.

ACTION: Kevin Guyan to forward information to SL and IA.

11. Newsletter

DM distributed a draft of the next edition of the newsletter. Members volunteered to assist with the delivery of the newsletter.

12. AOCB

No further business.

13. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

OACC will next meet on Tuesday 14th December at 7.15pm at Dunbar Hall, Dunbar Street.