



The Royal Burgh of
Pittenweem and District
Community Council

Website: www.fifedirect.org.uk/royalburghofpittenweem

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**Chair: M. Wardlaw, Vice Chair: A. Butters, Treasurer: A. Butters,
Contact Secretary: J. Taylor.
Committee: S. Wilkinson, L. Lauder, M. Butters, P. Mills, P Ward, and G McClure.**

Minutes of the Royal Burgh of Pittenweem Community Council Meeting

held Thursday 11th April 2019 in the New Town Hall at 7pm.

Present: Margaret Wardlaw, Jim Taylor, Peter Mills, Susan Wilkinson, Martin Butters, Anne Butters, Linda Lauder, Gary McClure, Cllr Linda Holt, Cllr John Docherty.

Apologies: Cllr Bill Porteous, J. Johnston (minutes) and P ward

Visitors: Gillian Duncan, East Neuk Community Emergency Planning Team
Janice Laird, Community Manager (North East Fife), Fife Council
Sam Wade, Pittenweem Community Library and Information Centre.

MW welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the visitors for attending.

Gillian Duncan

GD provided information concerning the formation of ENCEPT and its remit of helping to manage local disasters (snow, flooding, storm damage, power cuts, harbour problems) in the East Neuk. They will be supported by the First Responders, RNLI and local farmers. More information will be made available shortly. It is planned to site a further defibrillator in the harbour area possibly on the fish market northeast corner.

Janice Laird

JL had input to a number of agenda items, but addressed two in particular:

1. Common Good

Common good funds are historic assets originally held by each Burgh in Scotland. These assets were transferred from the Royal Burgh of Pittenweem in 1975 to the District Council and then in 1996 to Fife Council, who currently own the assets. In Pittenweem the assets consist of investments, heritable property and revenue balances. It was said that surely Fife Council do not own those assets, does FC not just hold and manage them on behalf of each burgh.

JL replied saying that that was a common misconception, FC **do** technically own the fund and assets.

An Income Statement is kept that records income generated from investments, bank interest, rentals and any sale of assets.

An Expenditure Statement records costs incurred in relation to the Common Good fund, such as repairs and maintenance of property, depreciation and grants given out for projects.

The balance of the two gives a sum available for expenditure in the community in the following year. Over the years this yearly balance (average £7K or less) had been used for grants in the community but since 2017 it has been decided that preference is to be given to expenditure on the maintenance of common good properties. In Pittenweem this means the Tolbooth Steeple (Clock Tower), the Old Town Hall (both category A listed buildings) and some other properties around the Burgh mentioned in the Register of Common Good Assets. This was last recorded in 2014 and is currently being updated.

A separate reserve balance is held so that the investments, roughly £200K, should never need to be dipped into when larger expenditures are made or grants approved. The interest on those investments is what produces the majority of the annual income available for grants.

In January 2019, following a correction when monies that had been used to pay for scaffolding were paid back, the common good fund showed that £7,601 should have been available for grant expenditure in 2018/19. (It should be noted that two projects had been turned down because of that error. Had they been given the amounts asked, the balance to carry into 2019/20 would have been negative.)

There was significant discussion concerning the failure of Fife Council to maintain the two historic common good properties in Pittenweem. The Clock Tower is currently facing costs in excess of £100K for repair of the spire and £48K has already been wasted on providing scaffolding to ensure public safety. It was suggested that FC should purchase the scaffolding at cost from the contractors to cut down on costs.

The Old Town Hall has fallen badly into disrepair and requires attention to the roof, gutters, drains, toilets, windows, window arches, pointing and rising damp. Sam Wade indicated that estimates for all these immediate repairs probably exceed £40K. The windows are currently in danger of falling out.

Questions were asked about how Council Property Services had allowed both of these buildings to deteriorate so badly with no ongoing maintenance to prevent serious and expensive damage. Requests were made for copies of annual engineers' reports on the buildings to be made available. It was suggested that the

Council should immediately undertake a review of these buildings and determine what work should be undertaken.

JL indicated that FC does not have funds readily available to maintain council properties. However, in the current situation funds are being sought to address the immediate needs. It was suggested that the community might wish to consider fund raising to help maintain these buildings in the longer term. It was pointed out that those tenants with short-term leases were not eligible to apply for funding for repair of property from many charities.

2. Pittenweem Arts Festival

MW reported that we had been expecting some contact from PAF by now regarding a planning meeting. In past years the meetings went ahead without us being informed, despite the fact that it had been agreed we would be included. JL said that these spring meetings will no longer take place, giving reasons for the decision, and continued on to say that the PCC *had* been invited to the meeting last year, but chose not attend.

MW replied that it was not as simple as that, the PCC were invited to a March meeting and then received a second mail that seemed to indicate that the meeting was postponed until April. Since we had missed the March meeting because of a badly worded mail, a special meeting was set up by a councillor so that PAF and PCC representatives could discuss various subjects prior to that April meeting, but no PAF committee member attended. Following failed attempts to make further contact with PAF two members, who normally attended the PAF meetings, made a decision that no CC member should attend the April meeting. We were last in discussion with PAF in October but that meeting did not go well. JL explained that there were changes proposed for approving events this year that would tighten up procedures and maybe go some way to help with some of the problems. Changes requested at the wash up meeting, for instance, "that local people should be employed in Festival posts whenever possible", are down to be acted on.

Cllr LH agreed that such a promise was made, and asked "but are local people to be given paid work as opposed to voluntary positions? Cllr JD confirmed that paid positions *was* what had been asked for.

Cllr LH continued by asking if it would mean there should be more consultation with the people of Pittenweem since it seems PAF have no wish to engage with local groups in any way in the planning of the Festival.

It was said the event should no longer be called a Festival since it is now clearly run as a Trade Fair.

This brought about a discussion on what the summer event used to be like before being hijacked. Many of the events, such as the torchlight parade, evening

entertainment, and even the fireworks are missed.

MW pointed out that the powered bollards in the market square were installed, not just for tree lights for Christmas events, but as a power source for any event that might be held in the square, and that included anything held in the Festival week.

AB mentioned events that used to be run for young ones that were fun and greatly enjoyed, but it became impossible to find somewhere to hold them as more places were taken over as art venues and levies had to be paid.

SW said many local people would like to see new possibilities created, but the lack of opportunity to participate in the planning made this impossible.

JL commented that PAF reported they had heard nothing from PCC. Cllr LH said that worked two ways, PAF could have got in touch with PCC as suggested at the wash up meeting.

MW said that PAF think the PCC want to stop the Festival, but that is not the case. We only put forward the comments of the residents, and all they want is to be included in decisions.

It should maybe be noted that this is a new CC and new members are voicing the same concerns as the previous CC.

JL asked "What would you like to see done that would help?"

SW informed us that she was part of a group that started the Festival as something to replace the Fisher Lassie Gala event, effectively stopped by health and safety. Part of the thinking was to show some of the skills that Pittenweem had to offer, but it was set up from the beginning to be a fun thing for the people, and to include all ages.

JL asked if that could not be done again.

AW and LL made the point between them that bringing back some of the discussed events would probably be impossible because people have been sickened by the disruption, and in any case as already stated, all possible venues and free space have already been commandeered. JL said the New Town Hall could have been a suitable site if it had not already been let out as an art venue. It was suggested by Cllr LH that the CC or residents could organise their own events and there was no reason why the community could not tell Fife Council they want an area to hold those community events in. There may be a problem in that it has been decided that a fair rent must now be levied.

JL indicated that she supported some views put forward and that she will explore them with the Festival Office for the next season, since it is too late for this year. Cllr LH said that if local groups *were* thinking of getting involved, it would need to get started just after the Festival and certainly before the autumn so that there would be plenty of time to work with PAF and Fife Council.

Adoption of March 2019 minutes – Proposer S. Wilkinson, seconder L. Lauder_

Matters Arising

Play Parks: The secretary was to question Alan Bisset on the different amounts of monies available for "repair/replacements" being quoted by different FC officials. Alan wrote confirming that £10K has been allocated for various small improvements in New Grange Park, but that Janet Laird would explain funding and strategies at this meeting.

Janet reported that there are currently 113 play parks in NEF and the plan is to reduce that number. The New Grange and West Braes parks are currently supported as core parks for within Pittenweem.

Further improvements would probably require local fund raising and the Fife Environment Trust is a suitable source. Concerns over maintenance and public liability insurance costs for any community additions to parks were raised.

JL indicated that these should be covered by FC providing the improvements were approved.

Abbey Wall Road: Cllr LH reported on the meeting with Murray Scott and raised a question about the need for planting and garden maintenance along the top of the lower wall. **JL** reported that the locality response team would be able to help with awkward quarters maintenance and that she would arrange for this to happen.

West Braes Pool Project: No contact since last meeting.

Road leading to West Braes Car Park: Cllr JD - no development.

Multi Use Path: PCC had written to the Anstruther Cycle Group indicating concern about the current planned termination of the MUP at the bottom of Milton Road. This concern was based on the danger of terminating at such a busy section of the A917, which would create congestion and prohibit children from using the path. It would also not allow ongoing migration westward toward St Monans as passage through the narrow one-way streets in Pittenweem would not be feasible. An opportunity to select the core path 246 to provide linking to the top of Milton Road or New Grange Crescent would seem preferable. The response received did not address our concerns and an urgent meeting is to be arranged.

St Andrews OOHS: The secretary emailed a letter of support to Peter Lomas of Balmullo **CC** who had asked for other CCs to join them in objecting to overnight closures. PM brought the committee up to date with developments.

The FHSCP had changed their plans and now hoped to keep the St Andrews Community Hospital open for OOHS care. A workshop had looked at various options which were all more limited than the current PCES provided by local GPs.

There is concern that the service is being redesignated as for minor illness only, will largely be staffed by non-medical emergency staff and only open for restricted hours. The proposed hours are from 19.00 – 22.00 on weekdays and 10.00 – 16.00 or 18.00 at weekends.

PM has written to the St Andrews OOHS group about these concerns. Cllr LH reported that she attended a meeting yesterday at which Michael Kellett and Dr Les Bisset indicated that they would need to provide a much more robust service to be adequate.

Refuse Bins: The recycling centre at David Street is being abused at times with landfill waste being dumped at the site. The closure of the Pittenweem Recycling Centre on Monday and Wednesday may be a factor in the misuse of the facility. MW suggested a councillor should discuss this with the refuse service.

Road repairs (including un-adopted): No repairs have been carried out to Session Street or David Street as yet. Neither appears on the repair schedule.

Cemetery Gates: MB has kindly undertaken to paint the cemetery gates if the work is not scheduled for this summer.

Police Report: No report has been received. Secretary will need to invite the new officers to come and meet with the PCC.

Councillors' reports

Cllr. John Docherty: John has arranged a walk about with Stewart Goodfellow from FC to look at needs for road sign improvements in Pittenweem. This will occur at 11.30am on Wednesday May 1st and will meet at the New Town Hall.

Visit East Neuk (formerly ENLTA) is a tourist organisation which is also very interested in improving tourist signs.

Cllr. Linda Holt: Linda said all her concerns had already been discussed.

Secretary's Report

1. A fair number of communications from FC were received and forwarded to members, those we had to consider were: **ADULT PROTECTION, CC TRAINING, and a PROVISIONAL PREMISES LICENCE APPLICATION for the PITTENWEEM INN, 42 CHARLES ST.**

2. A number of updates were received from the St Andrews OOHS contact.

3. The tennis club has been in contact to request help with renovations to its facility. There were no details of what was required.

4. We have been informed that the Pittenweem Provost's gold chain of office is held by FC in Glenrothes. Appointments have to be made to view it.

Neil Murray, who had asked us to find out where the Common Good artefacts were stored, has been informed.

Treasurer's Report: AB reported that the PCC funds were currently £530.92. Some maintenance funding money has been transferred to the fund raising account.

Planning Report: 14 new applications had been received in month of which 3 were new, 5 approved and 2 updates.

There was no new information on the planning application for 16A High Street. Some members of the PCC would like to consider training in what the CC role is in the planning service.

PCFRC: The Festive lights on the trees around Market Place require removal for repair and volunteers are ready to undertake this work before the trees come into leaf. Funds are available for replacements. MW has contacted Fife Council to see if they would provide a cherry picker to help in the removal / replacing of the lights.

A.O.C.B

No further items. The meeting finished at 9.50pm.

Next meeting Thursday 9th May 6.45pm

Abbreviations: **MW-** Margaret Wardlaw, **SW-**Susan Wilkinson, **LL-** Linda Lauder, **AB-**Anne Butters, **MB-**Martin Butters, **PM-** Peter Mills, **JT-** Jim Taylor, **GM-**Gary McClure, **JJ –** Jackie Johnson.

Cllr JD-Cllr John Docherty, **Cllr LH-** Cllr Linda Holt, **Cllr BP-**Cllr Bill Porteous, **FC-** Fife Council, **CC-** Community Council, **PCCFRC-** Pittenweem Community Council Fund Raising Committee. **PNTH-**Pittenweem New Town Hall.

ENF – East Neuk Forum, **OOHS –** Hospital Out of hours.

NT-Nicola Thomson, **WBP-** West Braes Project.