

North Queensferry Community Council
Draft Minutes of meeting held on
Thursday 14th September 2006, 7.30pm

Present: Peter Dean (Chair)
Christina Mackenzie (Treasurer)
Ian Mitchell (Vice Chair)
Karen Trotter (Secretary)
David Greig
Anne Monteith
Dave Dempsey

Cllr Jim Philp

Apologies: Cath Ewen, Freda Bastianelli, Jenny Robertson

In Attendance: 2 residents.

Minute of Previous Meeting of 13th July

The minutes of the previous meeting were presented. The date on the draft minutes was wrong, reading 'June' where it should have read 'July'.

The minutes were duly amended and adopted unanimously.

Police Report

Crime Reports

PC Craig Davis reported that there had been 48 calls from North Queensferry during the previous month. 8 of these calls had been to report crimes. 2 crimes of theft from cars in Carlingnose had been detected and suspects apprehended. 2 Mountain bikes had been stolen from gardens and front yards.

PC Davis reported that a team would be out in North Queensferry on Friday 15th Sept and Saturday 16th Sept with the aim of cracking down on vandalism and anti social behaviour.

Outdoors Drinking

There was some discussion of the problem of alcohol being drunk in public areas in North Queensferry and the resulting nuisance to residents. PC Davis reported that North Queensferry, almost uniquely in our part of Fife, did not subscribe to the by-law banning alcohol in public. This was leading to youths from other areas congregating in North Queensferry where they could drink in the open.

Cllr Philp reported that previous NQCC's had voted against a ban on outdoors drinking. Other communities like Rosyth, Aberdour and Dalgety Bay had imposed bans. Introducing a ban under this by-law would not affect The Gala or people drinking in designated outdoor areas of pubs in the village.

PC David said police had discretion on the issue and would not generally act against people except in cases where the outdoors drinking was causing a nuisance.

KT to investigate whether NQCC can adopt the by law preventing outdoors drinking.

The Albert Pub

CM asked about the recent raid on The Albert pub for after hours drinking. PC David explained why the raid had taken place and outlined police procedures for numbers and methods on such raids.

Cllr Philp's Report

New Buses On Brock St.

Cllr Philp had spoken to Stagecoach regarding the use of new, bigger, buses on the North Queensferry route and villager's concerns that these buses will strike cars or the railway bridge when in operation. Stagecoach had told him that there was only a problem between 3pm and 6pm when Brock Street congestions was at its worst. They will discuss with Fife Council how to deal with the problem.

NQCC will await FC's response.

Bin on The Brae

The bin on the brae is now installed.

Ship To Ship Oil Transfers

This is going ahead despite objections from Fife Council, NQCC and other community councils in Fife.

Chairman's Report

Pierhead Buildings

PD had met with Mr Taylor and a representative from Fife Council regarding the 'Keep Clear' sign on the roadway. He had reached an agreement to reduce the size of the sign. This would now be put to residents of Pierhead Buildings and, if they agreed, PD would write to Fife Council asking them to alter the sign.

Parking on Brock Street

Fife Council will conduct a survey of Brock Street residents in order to find out whether there is support for making the grassy play area in the square into a parking area.

Cllr Philp confirmed that it is not possible to make the square into a 'residents only' parking area without the introduction of a full-blown scheme throughout the village with car stickers and enforcement. This was unlikely to happen given current conditions in North Queensferry.

Vice Chairman's Report

Coat of Arms

IM reported that The Lord Lyon had granted North Queensferry a coat of arms and that he was seeking ideas for the design of the arms.

Forth Bridges Memorial Trust

The FBMT has now been officially launched and had received some press and TV coverage recently to announce the start of the project.

Railway Station

The project to develop the railway station as a visitor centre is progressing well, with good support from Scotrail and Network Rail.

Community Radio Station for North and South Queensferry

IM said that an acquaintance of his had applied for a community radio license to cover North and South Queensferry. He will keep NQCC abreast of developments.

Treasurer's Report

It was reported that the funds held in the bank on 12 September were £2,915.34, however, £2,657 are set aside (£650 environment, £800 coat of arms, £243 floral & £934 youths), leaving unrestricted funds of £258.23.

Trees Chopped Down on The Brae

Councillors discussed the area on the brae where some diseased trees had been chopped down. The area looked untidy now. Councillors proposed asking the Heritage Trust if they would consider exploring how it could be improved and then take the scheme forward. (as a charity they could apply for the grants that Jim Philp might source. Cllr

Philp offered to look into FC Grants for such projects.

Secretary's Report

Rules For Community Councils

An updated scheme for running CC's has been sent to us by Fife Council.

Improvements to Running of NQCC

Apropos of the new scheme KT noted that it states 'CC's may wish to employ a minute secretary'. She felt a minute secretary could be a benefit to councillors. There was some concern from councillors at the potential cost of a minute secretary. It is unclear from the new scheme whether Fife Council are offering to pay for such a post.

KT also noted that NQCC would greatly benefit from having an office in the village because this would function as a place to keep all NQCC records and correspondence which are currently passed between secretaries and stored in their own homes. KT to investigate if there is funding for such things from FC.

Abolition of Forth Bridge Tolls

Helen Eadie MP wrote asking NQCC to support her campaign to abolish tolls on the Forth Road Bridge and Tay Bridge.

NQCC voted on the matter. The vote was 5 in favour of abolition, 1 against abolition and 1 abstention.

KT will write to Helen Eadie expressing support for abolition.

Ship To Ship Oil Transfer

Alyn Smith MEP (SNP, Fife) has written to say that he and colleagues have identified a European Directive protecting Birds which may provide a means to block Ship To Ship oil transfers in the Forth. He has written to NQCC asking for any information on bird life in the Forth which may help his campaign. KT will respond with relevant statistics where available.

Signage and Rights of Way

Fife Council have written to say they will take down signs indicating public access to the beach from The Black Cat Inn. FC no longer feel this is a reasonable right of way. This is because: The old King's Way was blocked in 1852. The route is in close proximity to gardens and houses. The route is not a short cut or through route from anywhere in the

village to anywhere in the village. Access to the beach is available at Willie's Well. FC add that they expect villagers will continue to be tolerant of and respect the reasonable access of other villagers to the area.

IM expressed deep concern that FC appeared to be unilaterally declaring the route not to be a right of way. This is not, he suggested, within their powers. There is a definitive map of rights of way and – whilst FC may or may not signpost such routes – it is not in their power to abolish them.

PD said he thought FC's letter re: removal of signs was a happy compromise on what had been a controversial issue.

DG asked whether it was in the purview of NQCC to enforce rights of way and perhaps it would be good to ask village residents of their opinion as to whether they wanted The King's Way to be recognized as a right of way.

PD agreed to write a letter to FC seeking clarification on the matter.

AOCB

Village Mediation Scheme

CM reported that the mediator had come but that the complaining party in the dispute had not wanted to be involved in mediation and so nothing further could be done.

North Queensferry Community Council Survey

DD presented the results of the NQCC survey which had gone out with Ferry News. He also read out the various comments which had come in regarding Cross Forth Transport and public perception of NQCC.

The results of the survey will be posted in Ferry News.

The majority of people surveyed support improvements to Cross Forth Transport including ferries, improved railways and other public transport, and tunnels.

A majority of people surveyed support the building of a second bridge.

NQCC thanked DD for his work on the survey and felt that it was a very valuable exercise in understanding the views of the village on various controversial matters. It is an exercise that we may, therefore, wish to repeat.

Notice boards

PD reported with some weariness that his attempt to procure new notice boards for the village had been met with failure after the body who had agreed to produce the boards

had gone out of business. He asked that someone else take on the role of trying to procure new boards. No one was forthcoming on this matter.

The board at the station and the board at the Albert are both working now.

Planning Applications

Post Office Lane

An application for an extension in Post Office Lane was discussed. NQCC had no objections to the plans.