

**Community Council
Minutes of meeting June 27th 2012**

Fittie Bar, 18 Wellington Street, Aberdeen

Present

Michael Heaney
Mike McConnell
Evan Budge (Treasurer)
Kate Bailey
Alex Gemie
Dale Arey
William Rae

Apologies

Robert Cunningham
Pat Chilton
Pauline Brown
Christopher Third

Guests

Detective Inspector John Soutar

Update on Operation Begonia

Detective Inspector Soutar started by asking if members of the committee had noticed any difference in the level of on street prostitution in the last year. Committee members noted that there seem to be less women operating on the street and when seen they are closer to town, from St Clements Bar back to the station.

Operation Begonia was formalised in September 2010, women were issued with panic alarms contacts etc. Various charities now share information on the women and each woman is 'owned' by a particular charity or social services as appropriate. Over 100 women are known and all have very different needs and require different fixes. While many are from lower socio-economic backgrounds, this is not true of all the women; likewise not all are drug dependent.

Comment [MMcC1]: A loaded word?
'solutions' may be better?

The operation has been working with the women and the traffic light system the various agencies are all using was explained.

Green- engaged with the 'Owning agency' and actively taking advice and seeking to change their lives. These women are not often seen working on the streets these days

Amber-partially engaged and work sporadically

Red- Not really engaged, often been in the business for years and many are long term drug users .

There has been considerable success with the majority of the women moving from Amber to green status but patience is required., Fewer than 10 women are currently categorised as red. With drug users the dramatic increase in the availability of methadone and methadone treatment has helped.

DI Soutar asked that if there was a problem local people report it as sometimes the women are new and naive and in some danger. There are dedicated patrols who also look out for registered sex offenders etc to protect the women. There is also a worry that in the short term until it settles in, the new benefits system means access to urgent cash is more difficult .

There was some further discussion including off street versus on street prostitution. Off street prostitution is on the increase and is mostly organised and mostly involves foreign women of all nationalities.. On street prostitution is not increasing and is almost exclusively local women who are known to Operation Begonia.

There was a short update on crime generally in the area with 19 events being recorded between May 26th and June 26th none of them serious (several attempted break ins, two car thefts, 2 break ins, 5 drug related offences, and some fire raising events)

The Committee thanked DI Soutar for his update;indicated they will do what they can to help the operation,and invited DI Soutar to give another update in Dec2012/Jan2013.

Minutes of the last meeting

Acceptance of the minutes was proposed by Evan Budge and seconded by Michael Heaney

Treasurers report

The treasurer was delighted to report that the new signatories were finally in place and cheques could be written

At the end of May there was £6879.62 in the account.

Cheques were then signed for

£4000.00 to the Fittie Play Park Charity

£96.00 to pay the accountants for the annual accounts

£25,00 to Secretary for float

£10.00 to Mike McConnell for copying of flyers

£24.00 to Sara Heaney for printing flyers in April

This leaves £2724.62 in the account.

Planters

Alex reported that despite leaving e mails and voice messages she had been unable to contact Sandy Scott about the planters. It was noted that the original planters had been planted and the promised metal planters had not been delivered. Following the discussion the committee decided it should write formally to the Council asking what was happening and noting that as the planters had not been delivered yet we were no longer in a position to plant them up as it was too late to have them ready for Britain in Bloom.

Action

Mike McConnell and Kate Bailey to write formally to Sandy Scott

Fittie Jubilee celebrations

The celebrations raised £497.01 for the Fittie Play Park Charity. The day was a success with funds being raised from Coffee morning, bric a brac sale and the Body shop fundraiser. The Committee would like to make a note of thanks the Alex for her brilliant effort.

Fittie Play Park

Dale reported on progress. The Asda charity was won by Hanover School but the Charity received a £50 cheque and around £100 in cash that had been put in the token box.

Alex reminded the committee there is a weatherproof plastic banner from the March Fundraising walk which can be used for promotion of the Play Park Charity

The money from the Community Council was gratefully received and we will try to get some press coverage.

Action

Kate to arrange a photo of the cheque being handed over in the play park and write a short note with Dale for the Press & Journal

The Charity are also working with ABCVO to put in a phase two lottery application for funds, also looking at Cash for kids, is in discussion with Aberdeen Harbour Board and Aberdeen City Council have pledged support with about £10K worth of used equipment. Dale had not heard recently from Jim Nicol from the Council but would continue to stay in touch.

The Community Council were pleased to hear of progress.

Aberdeen Council Local Development Plan and Community Empowerment consultation document

The Chair thanked William for taking on the task of reading and reporting on the document. William reported there was little new in the document that affected this area. The proposals at Broomfield and supermarket sites were noted. There was some discussion about sites for travellers –one is proposed for Deeside and one near the Don.

There is a multi-storey carpark and medical centre in the plan near Castlegate but these projects are already underway.

It was noted there was no mention of the Union Terrace Garden plans.

There followed some discussion about what constituted a community, as well as the ownership of land issue and empowering the community to purchase unclaimed land. The committee felt there wasn't much unclaimed land in Aberdeen and what there was, existed in very small pockets.

There was discussion about whether we wanted to respond. The deadline is in August and the details are on our website so committee members were encouraged to take a look and we will decide if we wish to respond at the next meeting.

Action

Members to look at the website before next meeting

Matters arising

The consultation on First Bus route change proposals was noted, as was the late notice of the notification which meant two of the consultation dates had already passed.

Robert Cunningham has submitted his resignation as he will be moving outwith the area later this year. The committee thanked him for his service. It was decided there was no immediate rush to appoint a new member but William and Chris were asked if they knew of anyone who might be interested from their areas.

Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be 25th July at 6.00pm in the Fittie Bar