

Kilwinning Area Committee
20 January 2011

KILWINNING, 20 January 2011 - At a Meeting of the Kilwinning Area Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m.

Present

John Ferguson, Andrew Chamberlain, Margaret McDougall and Ryan Oldfather.

In Attendance

D. Wilson, Streetscene Manager, Environment and Related Services (Finance and Infrastructure) and M. Anderson, Committee Services Officer (Chief Executive's).

Also In Attendance

Inspector J. Conway (Strathclyde Police) and Station Commander M. Gallacher (Strathclyde Fire and Rescue).

Chair

Councillor Ferguson in the Chair.

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest by Elected Members in terms of Standing Order 16.

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the previous meeting of the Kilwinning Area Committee held on 30 November 2010 were signed in accordance with paragraph 7(1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

3. Strathclyde Police

Inspector Conway provided the Committee with an overview of crimes within Beat 5 (Blacklands/Kilwinning Centre) and 6 (Eglinton/South Kilwinning) during the months of November and December 2010. A summary of crime statistics for the periods in question, including comparative figures from 2009, was circulated at the meeting.

Inspector Conway highlighted:-

- two separate incidents in November 2010, one of attempted murder in a dwellinghouse, which had resulted in two arrests, and the second an alleged robbery in Kilwinning town centre;
- a reduction in serious crime across the Committee's area;
- several incidents of disorder within the town centre and the intention to direct Police resources towards addressing this issue;
- a recent change in personnel, with PC Claire Smith having taken over from PC Cameron Wilson at the beginning of January 2011;
- the operating pattern of the total of 10 Community Police Officers serving the area in 5 teams of 2 officers; and
- an invitation for Members to meet with Chief Inspector Gary Ritchie, the new Area Commander.

Members sought and received clarified on the composition of the Community Policing team, and passed on to Inspector Conway complaints about drivers failing to adhere to the new traffic regulations within Kilwinning town centre.

The Streetscene Manager (Environment and Related Services) then took the opportunity to update Members on the positive partnership working between officers of the Council and the 4 Police Officers designated to help tackle environmental crimes (litter and dog-fouling) across North Ayrshire.

Members asked questions on the balance between education and enforcement in terms of the imposition of fines for litter and dog-fouling, and received information on the fines which can be imposed and on measures to encourage and educate in the first instance.

Noted.

4. Strathclyde Fire and Rescue

Submitted report by Strathclyde Fire and Rescue on activity within the Committee's area in the period 5 November 2010 to 10 January 2011.

The Committee was advised of two minor typographical errors within the report, noting that "Auchenkist Farm" should read "Auchenkist Place" and that the number of casualties for the period in question was 1 and not 4 as stated in the report.

Station Commander Gallacher then referred to:-

- recent domestic house fire fatalities which have occurred elsewhere in North Ayrshire and also to the two accidental dwelling fires within the Committee's own area, reminding Members of the importance of promoting smoke detectors and advising of efforts to raise awareness of the availability of Home Fire Safety Visits, including a campaign on West Sound, promotion in the press and posters within licensed premises;
- the special services work carried out by the fire service in the last two months, firstly in relation to issues arising from the extreme temperatures experienced and then in response to flooding issues following the thaw;
- the forthcoming Fire Reach course being held at St Matthew's Academy, which Members are welcome to attend;
- a planned educational visit to James Watt nursery;
- refurbishment work to Kilwinning Fire Station, phase 1 of which will include the formation of a community safety centre with multi-media provision and training facilities (such as a hazard room and simulated fire within a darkened room), an enhanced road traffic collision centre with a community education suite and training facilities for the fire service itself, and the refurbishment of the station's tower and appliance bays, followed by refurbishment work to the station itself; and
- an invitation for Members to visit the Station and view the plans for its refurbishment.

Members asked questions, and received clarification, on:-

- the shift in emphasis from reacting to fires towards preventative and educational work with the public;
- the factors which commonly contribute to domestic dwelling fires, such as overloaded plug points and extension cables, the use of incorrect fuses and damaged electrical appliance cables; and
- the role of the fire service in responding to calls from members of the public about flooding from burst pipes, particularly in cases of an associated risk of electrical fire.

Noted.

5. Kilwinning: Whitehirst Park: Wetland Area

The Streetscene Manager (Environment and Related Services) provided a verbal update to the Committee on the wetland area at the entrance to Whitehirst Park, Kilwinning.

At its meeting on 25 August 2010, the Streetscene Manager updated the Committee on contact with Amey Highways on the siting of gulley pots on the adjacent road, which appear to discharge waste water to the wetland area, and on additional planting which had been carried out to enhance the wetland area.

The Streetscene Manager advised that two representatives of Amey Highways have visited the site and appear to accept that, whilst not all of the water within the wetland area emanates from the adjacent carriageway, the drains in question do discharge water onto that area. He advised that Amey Highways would undertake an investigation of the problem and seek Transport Scotland funding to assist in addressing it.

Members asked questions, and received clarification, on the next steps in terms of seeking to resolve the matter.

The Committee agreed to note (a) that the Head of Infrastructure and Design Services would write to Amey Highways (i) to confirm the company's intention to seek funding to address the issue of water from the carriageway discharging onto the area in question and (ii) to emphasise the risk posed by the excess water to the nearby stand of mature beech trees; and (b) that the installation of a wetland information board would be postponed pending further feedback from Amey Highways on a possible resolution of the problem of excess water.

6. Future Agenda Items

The Committee agreed to note that (a) a presentation would be made at its next meeting on Community Payback Orders; and (b) any additional items for consideration at the next meeting should be submitted to M. Anderson or C. Graham.

7. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Area Committee is scheduled for 2.00 p.m. on Thursday 3 March 2011.

8. Urgent Item

The Chair agreed to consider the undernoted item as a matter of urgency to allow Members to receive updated information.

8.1 Kilwinning Streetscape Maintenance Manual

The Streetscene Manager (Environment and Related Services) provided a verbal update to the Committee on the production by Land Engineering of a Kilwinning Streetscape Maintenance Manual and on minor damage to street furniture within the town centre which has been identified by officers.

Members asked questions, and received clarification, on:-

- measures to keep street furniture and paved surfaces free of discarded chewing gum; and
- the benefits of the use of brine to prevent ice forming on footways during the recent cold weather.

Noted.

The Meeting ended at 2.50 p.m.