

Garnock Valley Area Committee  
18 November 1997

**Dalry, 18 November 1997** - At a Meeting of the Garnock Valley Area Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 10.30 a.m.

**Present**

Robert Reilly, Thomas Dickie, Thomas Morris and George Steven.

**In Attendance**

The Director of Community and Recreational Services, D. Anderson, Head of Cultural and Community Services, A. Pettigrew, Young People's Services Development Officer, J. McKinlay, Area Community Development Officer (Community and Recreational Services); J. Houston, Divisional Manager (Housing Services); W. Telford, Senior Accountant (Financial Services); C. Hamilton, Area Services Manager (Social Work); J. Ferguson, Assistant Principal Estates Officer (Legal Services); J. Bannatyne, Administration Officer and D. McCaw, Assistant Administration Officer (Chief Executive).

**Also In Attendance**

Inspector R. Pollock (Police Liaison Officer) and Inspector J. Thomson (Strathclyde Police); J. Milligan, Assistant Divisional Officer and T. Barr, Community Fire Officer (Strathclyde Fire Brigade).

**Chair**

Mr. Reilly in the Chair.

**Apologies for Absence**

James Jennings.

**1. Minutes Confirmed**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 7 October 1997, copies of which had previously been circulated, were confirmed.

**2. Monitoring Reports**

**(a) Housing Response Repairs**

Submitted report by the Director of Housing Services on service delivery in relation to Housing Response Repairs.

The Council have established 3 Response Repair priorities, each with a target maximum response time:-

emergency repairs - 24 hours,

category A repairs - 7 calendar days; and

category B repairs - 28 calendar days.

Within the Garnock Valley, the percentage repairs completed within the target response times are emergencies 99%, category A 99% and category B 97%. Throughout North Ayrshire, the average time taken to complete Response Repairs is emergencies 0.3 days (i.e. 7 out of 10

emergencies are completed on the same day), category A repairs 4.56 days and category B repairs 13.95 days. Most Response Repairs are completed therefore well within the maximum response times.

Noted.

**(b) Social Work Directorate**

Submitted report by the Director of Social Work on the provision of Social Work Services.

Child Care services detailed showed that over the period from 6 February to 12 June 1997 the Garnock Valley area had no children on the Child Protection Register.

There are currently 7 persons in the Garnock Valley area who have been assessed and approved for residential or nursing care who are unable to proceed to that provision due to lack of funding.

Lack of accommodation for office staff continues to be a problem for the Social Work Directorate with 3 members of staff not being able to be located at the Kilbirnie Office.

Noted.

**(c) Community Development Grants Scheme: Analysis of Grants Paid to 14 October 1997**

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on Community Development Grants paid to 14 October 1997 in respect of the Garnock Valley area, including details of the balance of funding remaining.

Although there are no applications for financial assistance being submitted to this meeting, the Committee was advised that a number of outstanding grant applications are currently being processed.

Noted.

**3. Dalry/Kilbirnie/Beith: Drop-In Facilities**

(Previous Minute Reference: Garnock Valley Area Committee: 7 October 1997)

Submitted report by the Director of Community and Recreational Services on the development of the Youth Drop-In Facilities in the Garnock Valley area.

A Development Group involving Strathclyde Police, the Directorates of Community and Recreational Services, Social Work and Education is investigating alternative sources of funding, including the European Social Fund and Lottery funding to support and develop the work of the Drop-In centres.

The drop-in facility in Dalry operates within the James Street Centre and attracts between 30 and 40 young people each evening.

The drop-in facility in Beith operates from the Community Centre and attracts between 70 and 80 young people each evening. Two successful fund raising discos have been held.

The drop-in facility in Kilbirnie continues to be operated from the Walker Halls. The Legal Services Manager has recently negotiated a 3 year provisional lease on a rent free basis with Knox Mills for the Mission Hall, Kilbirnie. Approaches have already been made to establish an adult support group to work with the Drop-In Committee to establish the Mission Hall as a drop-in centre should the lease be secured.

All of the drop-in facilities in the Garnock Valley provide a Youth Information Point and Drugs and Alcohol Workshops also feature in their programmes. The success of the Drop-In facilities has resulted in a reduction in vandalism and car thefts in the Garnock Valley area. The young people are also being encouraged to act responsibly when leaving the Centres to minimise complaints of noise etc.

Noted.

#### **4. Community Safety**

##### **(a) Crime Statistics**

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on crime statistics within the Garnock Valley at October 1997, provided by Strathclyde Police.

The detection rate on crime for the year is currently 35%. Instances of car crime and vandalism are down by half and weapon related crimes are down by 70%

Throughout the year the crimes of housebreaking have been a major concern and figures show that they are up by 12% on the year to date although there was a reduction in October. Drug related crimes remain at the same levels as last year.

During October officers from the Garnock Valley participated in a Spotlight "Making 'U' Safer" which focused on road traffic enforcement in an attempt to reduce the numbers of people injured on the roads. 30 persons were reported for traffic related offences and 20 conditional offers were issued to minor offenders.

Noted.

##### **(b) Strategy**

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the development of a Community Safety Strategy for North Ayrshire.

On 21 October 1997, the Corporate Strategy Committee agreed to approve and adopt the Community Safety Strategy and to have it implemented. The Corporate Strategy Committee also agreed to a formal request from Strathclyde Fire Brigade for one of their officers to attend all future meetings of the 5 Area Committees, to enable general advice and assistance to be given and provide statistical information. The Community Safety Strategy will be used as a framework for improving community safety within North Ayrshire. It proposes a way forward for the Council within the overall Scottish context of community safety and indicates ways in which the Council may drive the issue forward in conjunction with other Agencies and through the Area Committees. The Strategy includes the proposed establishment of a Joint Agency Community Safety Steering Group.

Noted.

##### **(c) Litter Problems**

The Committee expressed concern over continuing litter problems in the Garnock Academy area, caused by pupils from the school. Strathclyde Police will liaise with the Headmaster of the School to highlight the problem and an enforcement programme will run throughout the month of December.

Noted.

## **5. Community and Recreational Services Directorate Strategy 1998-2003: Presentation to Area Committees**

Submitted report by the Director of Community and Recreational Services on the Community and Recreation Strategy 1998-2003 consultation document.

On 12 August 1997, the Community and Recreational Services Committee approved the consultation document and agreed to support the proposed consultation programme, including consultation with Area Committees. The document sets out the Directorate's strategic aims and objectives in a "Framework for Action" with priorities and action plans. All proposals will be considered and interpreted in specific service plans which will be prepared within the Directorate between October and December 1997. "Partnership" and "Community" are fundamental elements within the Strategy and it is intended to ensure that meaningful and effective consultation takes place which reflects the range of service provision and users. The Consultation Programme will therefore include national organisations, local organisations, North Ayrshire Council Directorates, Community and Recreational Services staff, Trade Unions and members of the public.

The Committee expressed concern about the condition of play areas throughout the Garnock Valley and was advised that funding of £200,000 per year for the whole Council area for a 5 year rolling programme will be considered in the next Capital Programme. It is estimated that provision amounting to £400,000 in the first year of the programme will provide 5 new playgrounds and allow for repairs to others. Reference was also made to the need for schools to be consulted on problems relating to vandalism.

The Committee agreed (a) to approve the consultation document; and (b) to support the programme of consultation.

## **6. Urgent Items**

The Chair agreed that the following item be considered as a matter of urgency.

## **7. Glengarnock: Former Steelworks Site: Lochshore**

Reference was made to a recent article published in 'The Herald' newspaper in October alleging that the Scottish Greenbelt Company planned to carry out works at the site of the former Glengarnock Steelworks. The proposed works involved the disposal of appropriately treated sewage waste, the introduction of earthworms and the planting of a fuel crop in an effort to repair and review damaged or contaminated land. An assurance was given that the newspaper article was totally misleading and the no application had been made to the Council for any such works to be undertaken. The site is owned by Scottish Enterprise who are also unaware of any such proposals.

The Committee agreed that arrangements be made to issue a press statement to this effect to clarify the position to members of the public.

The meeting ended at 11.45 a.m.