

Garnock Valley Area Committee  
13 May 1997

**Dalry, 13 May 1997** - At a Meeting of the Garnock Valley Area Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 10.30 a.m.

**Present**

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

**In Attendance**

C Hamilton, Area Services Manager; K MacGregor, Senior Community Worker; (Social Work); J McHarg, Community Services Development Officer; A Pettigrew, Young People's Services Development Officer; L Forsyth, Children's Services Development Officer; J McKinlay, Area Community Development Officer (Community and Recreational Services); J Hair, Principal Officer (Financial Services); J Bannatyne, Administration Officer; and C Graham, Assistant Administration Officer (Chief Executive).

**Also In Attendance**

Inspector R Pollock, Strathclyde Police; and P Rice and S Chisholm Three Towns Unemployed Workers Centre.

**Chair**

Mr Reilly in the Chair.

**1. Minutes Confirmed**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 1 April 1997, copies of which had previously been circulated, were confirmed.

**2. Garnock Valley: Survey: Three Towns Unemployed Workers Centre**

(Previous Minute Reference: Garnock Valley Area Committee 1 April 1997.)

Submitted report by the Director of Social Work on the findings of a survey carried out by the Unemployed Workers' Centre in the Garnock Valley area.

The Centre received a grant of £1,500 from the Area Committee in October 1996 to carry out a survey to determine unmet needs within the Garnock Valley in relation to welfare rights, benefits advice etc. The study was carried out during February and March of this year and comprised three basic methods, namely a Survey/Questionnaire, Benefit Assessments and Anecdotal Information. Monitoring reports have been provided to the Area Committee on a regular basis and a copy of the final Survey Report had previously been circulated to the members of the Committee.

The report concluded that a number of issues require further investigation and clarification by the Director of Social Work.

After discussion and in response to members' questions, the Committee agreed that the Director of Social Work further clarify the findings of the Survey and report to the next meeting.

### **3. *Glengarnock: Longbar: Vacant Properties***

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

On 7 January 1997, the Committee considered a report by the Director of Housing Services on the Longbar housing estate Glengarnock and agreed that a further report be submitted upon completion of a detailed Estate option appraisal by Housing Services. A report by the Director of Housing Services on the initial findings of the option appraisal was submitted to the Housing Services Committee on 24 April 1997. The recommendations in the report, which suggested that (a) the Director of Housing Services, in conjunction with the Director of Community and Recreational Services and the Longbar Community Association, conduct a household survey to ascertain the views of the local community; (b) appoint consultants at a cost of £10,000 to prepare a report on the future options for the Longbar Estate; and (c) following receipt of the consultants' report, establish a steering group, including local members and community representatives to formulate a long-term strategy and implementation plan for Longbar; were approved.

During discussion, reference was made to the fact that the public telephone facility at Longbar had been removed as a result of past vandalism and it was suggested that clarification be sought on its possible restoration in the future.

The Committee agreed (i) that the Director of Housing Services report on the progress made in the implementation of the recommendations to the next meeting of the Area Committee; and (ii) that in the meantime, clarification be sought on the future possible restoration of the public telephone box at Longbar.

### **4. *Dalry/Kilbirnie/Beith: Drop-in Facilities***

(Previous Minute Reference: Garnock Valley Area Committee 1 April 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.

The Drop-Ins continue to be popular with the young people with Dalry and Kilbirnie attracting on average 35 persons per session and Beith in excess of 70. To assist with supervision problems, alternative facilities to the Walker Hall, Kilbirnie are currently being sought in the short-term while efforts are being made to identify and secure more appropriate long-term provision. While the Beith facility continues to develop, it has become difficult to cater for the large numbers of people attending.

The three drop-ins are continuing to develop their Grizzly Challenge projects and details were provided as to how they will improve the local environment.

Noted.

### **5. *Garnock Valley: Playschemes 1997***

(Previous Minute Reference: Garnock Valley Area Committee 1 April 1997.)

The Community Services Development Officer advised on the historical perspective of playschemes, including awards made to the Garnock Valley area and the criteria for assessment of playscheme applications both past and present.

The Committee was further advised that 15 May is the closing date for applications for the remainder of 1997, and that playscheme activity will be increased in the Garnock Valley to include schemes in the Walker Hall, Dalry Public Hall, Longbar Community Centre (subject to approval of accommodation by Pre-5 Services) and Valley Arc. Requests for Special Needs Playschemes have also increased across North Ayrshire and covering the boundaries of more than one Area

Committee.

After discussion, the Committee agreed (a) that a further report on playschemes be submitted to the next meeting; and (b) to note the position meantime.

## **6. Kilbirnie Loch Management Group**

(Previous Minute Reference: Garnock Valley Area Committee 1 April 1997.)

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the outcome of the Kilbirnie Loch Management Group meeting held on 6 May 1997.

The Kilbirnie Loch Management Group have agreed that action will require to be taken in respect of the Blue/Green Algae problems and maintenance of the boardwalk at Kilbirnie Loch. The Country Parks Manager has been requested to investigate these matters and submit proposals indicating costings to Councillors Reilly and Steven who have been authorised by the Group to approve the action which is to be taken

The Committee agreed (a) that a progress report on these matters be submitted to the next meeting; and (b) to note the Minutes of the Meeting of the Kilbirnie Loch Management Group as detailed at Appendix 1 to the report.

## **7. Dog Fouling**

(Previous Minute Reference: Garnock Valley Area Committee 18 February 1997.)

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on progress in establishing the five pilot project areas selected to combat dog fouling, the circulation of posters and the distribution of dog tidy bags.

Since the last cycle of Area Committee Meetings, further progress has been made in pursuing the decisions taken by the Area Committees to address the problems of dog fouling and as part of the Environment Wee, activities additional posters and dog tidy bags have been circulated to all libraries and local offices throughout North Ayrshire.

Budgetary provision for dog fouling measures in 1997/98 remains at £18,000. Given the need for disposal arrangements at an annual cost of £10,000 the sum of £1,600 per Area Committee will be available. Recommendations on the use of that budget during the current year require to be held over until the pilot projects are completed and assessed. However, given the current problems in schools, the Committee was requested to consider authorising relevant officers, in consultation with the Chair, to purchase signs for display in playgrounds.

Special arrangements were made during Environment Week for a Police Officer to accompany the Dog Warden on visits to the five pilot scheme areas selected for the installation of dog bins to distribute dog tidy bags, posters, Responsible Dog Owner leaflets and to highlight the problems of dog fouling. Inspector Pollock suggested that he would wish these arrangements to continue, possibly on a monthly basis in the Garnock Valley. The Clerk confirmed that the arrangements, if continued, would require to be applied to North Ayrshire as a whole.

After discussion, the Committee agreed (a) to authorise officers, in consultation with the Chair, to purchase signs for display in playgrounds; (b) that the Director of Commercial Services be requested to investigate the lack of dog bins in Dalry Public Park; (c) to seek consensus from the five Area Committees into the suggestion raised by Inspector Pollock and report; (d) that consideration be given to the wider circulation of posters, including at the gates of Dalry Public Park; and (e) otherwise to note the progress.

## **8. Monitoring Reports**

Submit Monitoring Reports on the undernoted matters:-

**(a) Review of Monitoring Reports 1996/97**

Submit report by the Chief Executive on issues arising from a review of the 1996/97 Monitoring Reports giving details of proposals for their improvement.

The processes for identifying, preparing, submitting and presenting Monitoring Reports were considered at a Special Meeting of the five Chairs of the Area Committees on 15 April 1997.

It had been agreed that identifying appropriate Monitoring Reports should continue to be officer-led in the short-term with members being encouraged to gradually take on this role, based on their experience of local issues of interest. Officers should develop reporting formats which will encourage the use of appropriate benchmarking information (e.g. service targets/plans/standards agreed by Directorates, etc.) and be further encouraged to highlight and comment on only those performance measures which are significantly different from the benchmark measurements.

The Committee agreed to approve the proposals for the development of relevant and concise Monitoring Reports.

**(b) Community Development Grants Scheme: Analysis of Grants Paid to 1 May 1997**

Submitted report by the Chief Executive detailing the grants paid to 1 May 1997

Noted.

**9. Community Development Grants Scheme: Requests for Financial Assistance**

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the undernoted applications for grants to voluntary organisations.

**(a) Beith Drop-In (Steering Committee)**

The Committee agreed to award the Beith Drop-In Steering Committee £1,000.

**10. Community Safety**

**(a) Strathclyde Police: Crime Statistics**

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

Overall serious crime for the year 1 April 1996 to 31 March 1997 fell by 20%, with a total of 1,460 crimes being reported. More minor offences increased by 22% with 1,159 being reported.

Noted.

The meeting ended at 11.45 a.m.