

Kilwinning, Dreghorn and Springside Area Committee
16 September 1998

Springside, 16 September 1998 - At a Meeting of the Kilwinning, Dreghorn and Springside Area Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 10.30 a.m.

Present

Ian Clarkson, James Clements, Gena Seales, Jane Gorman and Irene Oldfather.

In Attendance

S Driscoll, Divisional Manager (Housing and Construction Services); G Clark, Operations Manager, Grounds Maintenance; A Weir, Landscaping and Amenities Services Manager; D Gilliland, Area Community Development Officer; M Gillies, Assistant Area Officer, Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance (Community Services); D MacRitchie, Manager (Area Services); E Watson, Senior Social Worker (Social Work); K Nicholls, Accountant (Financial Services); I Mackay, Legal Services Manager; S Paxton, Administration Officer; and Carol Graham, Assistant Administration Officer (Chief Executive).

Assistant Divisional Officer J Milligan and Community Fire Officer T Kane (Strathclyde Fire Brigade); and Inspector G McLanaghan (Strathclyde Police).

Chair

Mr Clarkson in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

Patrick Browne.

1. Minutes Confirmed

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 24 June 1998, copies of which had previously been circulated, were confirmed.

2. Monitoring Reports

Submitted Monitoring Reports on the undernoted matters:-

(a) Empty Houses in the Kilwinning, Dreghorn and Springside Area

Submitted report by the Director of Housing Services on empty council houses within the Area Committee's boundaries, including reasons for refusal of properties.

As at 24 August 1998 there were 26 empty properties in the Kilwinning area representing 1.4% of the total stock and 10 empty properties within Dreghorn and Springside, representing approximately 1.2% of stock. In Kilwinning 2 properties have now been let and void properties in Dreghorn and Springside now number 13.

In response to Members' questions the Divisional Manager advised that the recently introduced Housing Allocation Policy will, as the review of information progresses, enable all those who no longer require the services of the Directorate to be deleted from the Housing lists and should reduce the length of time properties remain vacant.

Noted.

(b) Child Protection

Submitted report by the Director of Social Work on a profile of Child Protection, one of the highest priorities for the Social Work Directorate.

Child Protection is extremely labour intensive in terms of investigations and the provision of the necessary supports for children and families in order to diminish the risk of further abuse.

In comparison to the same period in 1996/97 there has been an overall increase in cases of abuse although there was no evidence as to the reason for this. Difficulties may also arise in obtaining prosecutions in respect of abuse to young children. The Child Protection Team is endeavouring to safeguard the children currently on the 'at risk register' in the Kilwinning, Dreghorn and Springside areas.

Noted.

(c) Litter Awareness

Submitted report by the Director of Community Services on service delivery in respect of fly-tipping and the number of calls received by the Litter Hotline in relation to Kilwinning, Dreghorn and Springside.

No incidences of fly-tipping have been reported and two calls in respect of cleansing were received by the Litter Hotline in the period to 31 August.

The Committee agreed to remit to the Commercial Services Committee to further promote the Litter Hotline.

(d) Community Development Grants Scheme: Analysis of Grants Paid to 31 August 1998

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the Community Development grants paid to 31 August 1998 including details of the balance of funding remaining.

Noted.

3. Community Development Grants Scheme: Applications for Grant Aid

Submitted report by the Director of Community Services on the applications received in respect of community grants to voluntary organisations.

(a) WRVS Derby and Joan Club

The Committee agreed to award £200 to the WRVS Derby and Joan Club;

(b) Kilwinning Development Association

The Committee agreed to award £1,500 to the Kilwinning Development Association subject to the provision of appropriate insurance cover; and

(c) Corsehill Community Association

The Committee agreed to award £450 to the Corsehill Community Association.

The Committee further agreed to remit to the Chief Executive to publicise the Community Development Grants Scheme within the Kilwinning, Dreghorn and Springside areas.

4. Regeneration Programme

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the extent of Regeneration Programme activity within the boundaries of the Area Committee.

At its meeting on 24 June 1998 the Committee requested a report on the impact of the Regeneration Programme on the eligible areas within the Committee's boundaries, particularly in relation to the Social Work and Community Services Directorates.

Current Urban Programme projects, funded to target all eligible areas within North Ayrshire, were, following analysis of the last census, able to further incorporate designated areas within Kilwinning and Springside, which are now eligible for Regeneration Programme funding under the new Programme for Partnership arrangements.

In addition, the Committee's area benefits from a range of mainstream Social Work and Community Services activity promoting regeneration, social inclusion and community development.

Outline bids for funding from the remainder of the 1998/99 Regeneration Programme and for funding during 1999/2000 are invited for submission by 21 September 1998. All Directorates of the Council have been advised on the procedures to be followed and the Directorates of Community Services and Social Work are represented on the Regeneration Corporate Task Group, which has a remit to consider the bids in the first instance and consult with Elected Members.

The Council is also in the process of applying for further funding from the Government's Social Inclusion Partnership Programme.

After discussion, the Committee agreed (a) to remit the report to the Directors of Social Work and Community Services to be considered in the preparation of their bids for Regeneration Programme funding; and (b) to remit to the Chief Executive to assess the criteria in relation to the inclusion of works in Kilwinning Town Centre in the bids for Regeneration Funding.

5. Dog Fouling

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on (a) the progress to date on the current initiatives to combat dog fouling in North Ayrshire; and (b) proposals for future action based on the current budget allocation for 1998/99 amounting to approximately £18,000.

The Officers Working Group on dog fouling have framed a programme for 1998/99 which recommends:-

Cleaning of bins	Continue cleaning and emptying
Bin replacement/maintenance	Maintain and repair
Provision of new bins	Provide 5 new bins per Area Committee
Signs	A global sum of £500 be allocated to provide signs identified high profile areas.
Dog Tidy Bags	No further provision of bags, encourage the practice using supermarket carrier bags.
Leaflets/Posters	No further provision be made at this time.

Partnership with Strathclyde Police	Continue to support partnership.
Prosecutions	Co-operate with Strathclyde Police, write to the Scottish Office urging extended Police powers to impose fixed penalties and write to COSLA to support this action and write to the Scottish Office in similar terms.
Publicity	Promote responsible dog ownership in relation to fouling exhibitions etc. and secure publicity which "outlaws" dog fouling offences and publicise successful prosecutions.

After discussion the Committee agreed (i) to endorse the proposals in the report; and (ii) to remit to the Chair, in consultation with appropriate officers, the sites for location of the five new dog bins in the Kilwinning, Dreghorn and Springside areas.

6. Dreghorn: Greenwood Academy: Community Consultation

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the issues raised by the pupils of Greenwood Academy, Dreghorn on Wednesday 24 June 1998 and the actions taken by the Council and Strathclyde Police to address those issues.

Having considered the issues raised and the responses received from the various Directorates of the Council and Strathclyde Police in pursuance of relevant solutions, the Committee agreed (a) to approve the actions taken to date and to advise the staff and pupils of Greenwood Academy accordingly; (b) to instruct the Chief Executive to pursue the outstanding issues in respect of (i) Irvine: Lane at Howat Crescent/Allan Square; and (ii) Drybridge: Bus Provision and report; and (c) that arrangements be made to hold a Community Consultation Meeting with the pupils of Kilwinning Academy in October 1998.

7. Kilwinning: Stevenston Road: Bus Services

At its meeting on 24 June 1998, the Committee, following consultations between Strathclyde Passenger Transport and the two local bus service operators in respect of bus services along Stevenston Road in Kilwinning, agreed to remit to the Council's representatives on the Strathclyde Passenger Transport Authority to raise the matter at the earliest opportunity.

The Clerk reported that following further discussion, it is not the intention of the operators to increase any services on Stevenston Road, Kilwinning, that the current service meets SPT's minimum service levels and accordingly there would be no provision of additional services on a subsidised basis.

The Committee, in noting the position, expressed disappointment at this outcome.

8. Kilwinning: Pedestrian Precinct

On 13 May 1998 the Committee had instructed the Director of Planning, Roads and Environment, along with other appropriate Directors to carry out the relevant works to reinstate the Precinct to a satisfactory standard, at the same time or on completion of British Gas Transco's reinstatement works.

Although a few minor areas of paving had been re-laid to a satisfactory condition, a large number of broken and cut blocks still required to be replaced. While it was anticipated that sourcing the replacement blocks could be problematic, the Head of Roads was instructed to continue to pursue with British Transco's contractors the reinstatement of Kilwinning Pedestrian Precinct as a matter of urgency.

Work has been carried out by the Community Services Directorate to replace dead and

vandalised trees, repair tree grilles and repair the seating. The wooden bins in Main Street were replaced with Gladstone bins and the graffiti on Council owned shops in the Precinct had been removed by the Architectural Services Section of the Housing and Construction Services Directorate.

Due to a delay in delivery of the paving blocks and the recent inclement weather, approximately one-quarter of the paving has been carried out, with approximately six weeks work remaining.

The Committee, in noting the current position, agreed that the Head of Roads continue to pursue the reinstatement of Kilwinning Town Centre to an early and satisfactory conclusion.

9. Springside: Station Drive

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on the current position in regard to the demolished houses at Station Drive, Springside.

The properties formerly known as 15-40 Station Drive were the subject of a series of notices under Section 13 of the Building (Scotland) Act 1995 requiring the owner initially to secure the buildings and latterly, by agreement, to demolish the buildings, demolition being completed by the owner's representative.

The subjects are owned by Mr Wasik Mahmood who was the original purchaser from the former Cunninghame District Council and who granted a Power of Attorney in favour of Dr Chaudhary. The whereabouts of both persons are unknown.

The property is not owned by the Council; no contact has been received by any Council Department from either Mr Mahmood or Mr Chaudhary since 1996; and the Council is not in a position to deal with the land other than in terms of their statutory powers. These are (a) the service of a Wasteland Notice; (b) the service of a notice as the waste collection authority in terms of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to take reasonable steps to eliminate or reduce the consequences of depositing of waste; (c) to treat the land as being a nuisance in terms of the Environmental Protection Act and serve notice requiring the owner to abate the nuisance; and (d) to serve a Compulsory Purchase Order seeking to acquire the subjects in question.

In terms of serving a Wasteland Notice the Legal Services Manager advised that the land would not appear to have reached the stage where a Wasteland Notice would be effective and that as Mr Mahmood cannot be traced the Notice is unserveable. This would also be the case in respect of items (b) and (c) above. In respect of serving a Compulsory Purchase Order, there may be difficulties in persuading the Secretary of State to allow the Compulsory Purchase Order to proceed as it would be necessary to state the purpose to which the Council intended to put the land and explain why having sold the land in the first instance, they were now seeking to re-purchase it. There are no current plans for any development in respect of this site, and pursuance of the aforementioned steps open to the Council could incur substantial costs. In the meantime the Council, again at cost, could continue to clear the area as and when required.

The Committee agreed (i) to remit the report to the Directors of Housing and Construction Services and Planning, Roads and Environment to consider appropriate developments of the land at 15-40 Station Drive, Springside and report; and (ii) that the Chair and Councillor Gorman meet with the Legal Services Manager to discuss the current position.

10. Kilwinning: Town Centre: Provision of Christmas Decorations

Submitted report by the Director of Community Services on the outcome of the meetings held with Kilwinning Main Street traders, business groups and other interested bodies in the pursuance of the provision of Christmas Decorations for the Main Street.

At the Area Committee meeting on 24 June 1998 the then Parks and Horticultural Services Manager advised that, following previous discussions on Main Street, Kilwinning, a meeting had

been arranged to take place in July with shopkeepers, business groups and other interested parties to discuss the provision of Christmas decorations. The Local Members had also been invited to attend.

To date, three meetings have taken place; the Kilwinning Development Association has been formed and constituted; and plans are underway to purchase decorations in time for Christmas 1998 and discussions are taking place in respect of the purchase of appropriate display equipment.

The Committee welcomed this initiative and agreed (a) to recommend that the Council provide the necessary support to the group; and (b) that a report on progress be submitted by the Landscaping and Amenities Services Manager in due course.

11. Community Safety

(a) North Ayrshire Community Safety Forum and its links with the Area Committees

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on developments in the promotion of community safety within North Ayrshire and the role of the Area Committees in that regard.

The Committee was advised of the ongoing co-ordinating work of the Forum in promoting community safety through a range of measures including Steering Groups at an Area Committee level; community safety as a standard item on Area Committee agendas; a Community Safety Challenge Budget which invites bids through Area Committees; and themed community safety initiatives such as the Community Safety Fun Weekend held on 5 and 6 September 1998 and the Women's Safety Seminar held on 8 September 1998.

The Committee agreed (i) to recognise the continuing role of the Area Committees to promote community safety at a local level in liaison with the Forum; and (ii) to consider requests for financial assistance from the Community Safety Challenge Budget to promote Community Safety within the Area Committee boundaries.

(b) Community Safety Challenge Budget 1998/99: Application for Funding

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on a request for funding from the Community Safety Challenge Budget for 1998/99 on behalf of Strathclyde Fire Brigade in respect of the production of posters, advertising materials, promotional materials, computer programmes and general running costs for the "Phoenix" Community Safety Partnership.

The Partnership will be based at Kilwinning Fire Station and the local population will be encouraged to visit the station and participate in the Initiative.

The Committee agreed to award £850 from the Community Safety Challenge Budget to the "Phoenix" Community Safety Partnership.

(c) Strathclyde Fire Brigade: Fire Statistics for the period 1 to 30 June and 1 to 31 July 1998

Submitted report by Strathclyde Fire Brigade on fire statistics within the Kilwinning, Dreghorn and Springside areas.

Noted.

(d) Strathclyde Police: Crime Statistics

Submitted report by Strathclyde Police "UA" Division regarding the level of recorded crime within the Area Committee's boundaries.

Inspector McLanaghan advised that while car crime and housebreaking are decreasing,

serious crime has increased and drug offences are also on the increase

After discussion, the Committee agreed to note the current position.

12. Exclusion of Public

The Committee resolved, in terms of Section 50A (4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, to exclude from the Meeting the press and the public for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 6 of Part I of Schedule 7A of the Act.

13. Woodgreen Mortification Trust

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on an application for financial assistance from the Trust.

The Committee, having considered the full circumstances surrounding the application, agreed to award up to a maximum of £1,000 from the Trust, subject to purchases being undertaken by the Social Work Directorate's Family Support Unit.

The meeting ended at 12.05 p.m.