

Three Towns Area Committee
26 June 1997

Ardrossan, 26 June 1997 - At a Meeting of the Three Towns Area Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 10.30 a.m.

Present

David Gallagher, Samuel Gooding, Margaret Munn and Alan Munro.

In Attendance

B. Gardner, Head of Educational Resources (Education), S. Burns, Manager Area Services (Social Work), D. Green, Senior Solicitor (Legal Services), S. McLaughlin, Area Community Development Officer (Community & Recreational Services), S. Paxton, Administration Officer and A. Little, Assistant Administration Officer (Chief Executive).

Also In Attendance

Superintendent John Young (Strathclyde Police).

Chair

David Gallagher

Apologies for Absence

David Munn.

1. Minutes Confirmed

Confirm Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 15 May 1997 (copies previously circulated).

2. Strathclyde Police: Response Times within the Three Towns Area

Superintendent Young gave a presentation on the response times within the Three Towns area.

Strathclyde Police will respond to urgent calls as quickly as is safe to do so. All calls made to the Police, with the exception of "999" calls, are routed through the Divisional Controller at Kilmarnock. The Divisional Controller prioritises calls and allocates them to officers.

Emergency calls, using the 999 system, are routed to the Glasgow Controller who has a strategic overview of resources and can direct the nearest car to an emergency call.

Discussion followed on the initiatives targeted by Operation Spotlight and the diversion procedure for dealing with 8 - 16 year olds who commit offences.

Noted.

3. Monitoring Reports

(a) Analysis of Grants to 29 May 1997

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the Community Development Grants paid to 20 May 1997.

The balance of funding remaining is £17,255.00.

Noted; and

(b) Schools within the Three Towns: Statistical Information

Submitted report by the Director of Education detailing statistical information on schools within the Three Towns area in relation to attendance and absence, budgeted school running costs and school leaver destinations.

The Head of Educational Resources outlined a number of issues relating to the delivery of the school education service in the Three Towns and addressed Members' questions in relation to the deployment of Attendance Officers and school gates which have rusted or seized open.

After discussion the Committee, in noting the report, agreed (i) to receive annual reports on attendance, running costs and leaver destinations in relation to schools serving pupils from within the Committee's area; and (ii) that the Director of Education report on the matters arising from the discussion.

4. Requests for Financial Assistance

Submitted report by the Director of Community and Recreational Services on the undernoted requests for financial assistance:-

(a) Ardrossan Homing Society

The Committee agreed to grant £500.00 to Ardrossan Homing Society;

(b) Hayocks Women's Group

The Committee agreed to grant £315.00 to Hayocks Women's Group;

(c) Ardrossan Highland Games

The Committee agreed to grant £600.00 to Ardrossan Highland Games;

(d) 1st Stevenston Boys' Brigade

The Committee agreed to grant £600.00 to the 1st Stevenston Boys' Brigade;

(e) Park Church Autumn Club

The Committee agreed to defer this application until the disbursement of equipment from Dykesmains School IFE Wing has been determined;

(f) Saltcoats Youth Action Group

The Committee agreed to grant £300.00 to Saltcoats Youth Action Group;

(g) Caley Management Group

The Committee agreed to grant £320.00 to Caley Management Group; and

h) Stevenston Elderly Forum

The Committee agreed to defer the application for a report on running costs of the three Elderly Forums in the Three Towns.

5. Stevenston Common Good Fund

Submitted reports by the Chief Executive on the undernoted requests for financial assistance:-

(a) Ardeer Parish Church

On 20 June 1996 the Three Towns Area Committee agreed to provide Ardeer Parish Church with a letter of intent stipulating that their request for £5,000 from the Stevenston Common Good Fund would be met when the £40,000 balance of costs for repairs had been secured. On 20 February 1997 the Committee was advised that the Ardrossan Presbytery had not yet approved the stonework repairs and that accordingly Ardeer Parish Church would not require the £5,000 grant in the financial year 1996/97.

Approval has now been given for the stonework repairs up to the value of £25,000 (plus VAT and professional fees) and Ardeer Parish Church has therefore resubmitted its application.

The Committee agreed to grant £5,000 to Ardeer Parish Church towards the costs of repairs to the Church; and

(b) Ardeer Thistle Football Club

Ardeer Thistle Football Club have requested financial assistance towards the cost of purchasing 2 match balls, 10 training balls, 1 set of training bibs and 1 set of training cones.

Previous financial assistance was provided to the Club in September 1995 and October 1996.

The Committee agreed to grant £223 to Ardeer Thistle Football Club.

6. Saltcoats Common Good Fund

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on a request for financial assistance from Ms. Elizabeth Cobb.

Ms. Cobb has requested £200 towards the cost of working with the charity 'Tear Fund' for 2 months in the Dominican Republic.

The Committee agreed to grant the application subject to the approval of the Saltcoats Members.

7. Playscheme Applications 1997

Submitted report by the Director of Community and Recreational Services on the undernoted applications:-

(a) Hayocks Family Education School Break Club

The Committee agreed to grant £444.00 to Hayocks Family Education School Break Club;

(b) Ardeer After School Care Summer Playscheme

The Committee agreed to grant £810.00 to Ardeer After School Care Summer Playscheme;

(c) James McFarlane School Respite Playscheme

The Committee noted that James McFarlane School Respite Playscheme had been granted £3,500.00 by the Corporate Strategy Committee on 27 May 1997;

(d) Woman's Aid Three Towns

The Committee agreed to grant £747.00 to Woman's Aid Three Towns;

(e) Saltcoats After School Care

The Committee agreed to grant £810.00 to Saltcoats After School Care;

(f) Women's Aid Ardrossan

The Committee agreed to grant £745.00 to Women's Aid Ardrossan; and

(g) Ardrossan After School Care Summer Playscheme

The Committee agreed to grant £810.00 to Ardrossan After School Care Summer Playscheme.

The Committee also noted that the Director of Community and Recreational Services is to undertake a review of the formula used in determining playscheme grants and will report in due course.

8. Community Safety Challenge Budget 1997/98

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the Community Safety activities which were funded during 1996/97 under the Community Safety Challenge Budget and to invite proposals for the use of this Budget.

Area Committees are invited to discuss suitable initiatives with interested local groups and relevant organisations and submit proposals to the Corporate Strategy Committee for consideration on 21 October 1997 under the 1997/98 budget.

The Committee noted the success of the Community Safety Challenge Budget in 1996/97 and agreed to invite local organisations to submit proposals for Community Safety Initiatives against the Challenge Budget of £12,000 for 1997/98.

9. Stevenston Beach: Erosion of Sand Dunes

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on the problem of three and four wheeled vehicles using Stevenston beach and the erosion of the sand dunes.

The report confirms that it is possible in terms of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982, to enact either byelaws or management rules over Council owned property but that either option would be difficult to enforce in relation to this particular problem.

A management plan is however being prepared at present by the Director of Community and Recreational Services which includes reference to this issue.

The Committee recognised that there were difficulties in identifying, apprehending and obtaining witnesses to incidents of three and four wheeled vehicles being driven over the sand dunes. The Committee also acknowledged citizens' rights to use the beach for recreational purposes below the high water mark and the requirement for access to be provided to the beach through the Council's land. In addition the Senior Solicitor advised that although local authorities could utilise the provisions of the Coastal Protection Act 1949 to protect the coastline, this could be extremely expensive.

The Committee noted (a) the legal position regarding the prohibition of three and four wheeled vehicles using Stevenston beach; and (b) that the Director of Community and Recreational Services is to submit a report on a management plan for Stevenston beach to the next meeting of the Area Committee.

10. Community Service Scheme: Removal of Graffiti

Submitted report by the Director of Social Work on the involvement of the Social Work Community Service Order Scheme in the removal of graffiti in the Three Towns.

Under the Community Service Order Scheme (CSOS), which is used by the Courts as an alternative to custody, offenders are required to work for specified hours on various projects which are of benefit to the wider community. Offenders have, in the past, removed graffiti from the wall adjacent to Ardrossan Cemetery. Unfortunately the wall has again been defaced.

As part of the "Spotlight" Initiative, the Social Work Directorate met with Senior Officers from Strathclyde Police to explore the possibility of involving offenders through the CSO Scheme in a graffiti removal project. While it was appropriate for offenders to undertake graffiti removal it would be necessary to work in conjunction with existing graffiti-removal initiatives undertaken by the Commercial Services Directorate.

The Committee agreed that the Directors of Social Work and Commercial Services (a) establish the limits for the operation of the Community Service Order Scheme; and (b) meet with Strathclyde Police to establish an appropriate liaison structure and report.

11. Dog Fouling: Update on Strathclyde Police/Dog Warden Initiative

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the progress of the Strathclyde Police/Dog Warden Initiative.

The Corporate Strategy Committee on 27 May 1997 agreed to accept a request from Strathclyde Police to extend the initiative with priority being given in the pilot areas. As from 16 June 1997 the Dog Warden will work with Police Officers on 2 half days per week for a period of up to six months initially with a review being undertaken at that time or earlier if either party so requests.

The supply of dog owners advice leaflets, distributed during Environment Week, has now been exhausted but requests for copies continue to be received and it has been suggested that every household within North Ayrshire should be targeted. The printing of this leaflet will cost approximately £2,000.

The Committee agreed (a) to authorise expenditure in the region of £2,000 for the production of dog owner advice leaflets for distribution to every household in North Ayrshire; and (b) noted the ongoing arrangements with Strathclyde Police in combating dog fouling.

12. "No Ball Games" Signs

Submitted report by the Director of Community and Recreational Services on the current position in respect of the provision of signs prohibiting the use of balls in public open spaces given the problems which this can cause to residents.

The Committee noted that the matter is to be referred to the Community and Recreational Services Committee to consider a policy relating to open space.

13. Urgent Items

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

14. Stevenston: New Street Cemetery: Vandalism

Councillor Munro reported on the vandalism at the Old Cemetery, New Street, Stevenston.

The Committee agreed that the Director of Commercial Services investigate, in conjunction

with Strathclyde Police, ways and means of enhancing security at the cemetery.

The meeting ended at 12.10 p.m.