

North Coast Area Committee
11 February 2016

Largs, 11 February 2016 - At a Meeting of the North Coast Area Committee at 2.00 p.m.

Present

Alex Gallagher, Alan Hill, Tom Marshall and Grace McLean.

In Attendance

Y. Holland, Project Manager, C. Forsyth, Assistant Transportation Manager, A. Cowley, Team Manager (Roads) and T. Reaney, Senior Manager, Streetscene Officer (Place); L. Kirk, Access Officer and J. Cumming, Town Centre Regeneration Officer (Economy and Communities); and M. Anderson, Committee Services Team Leader (Chief Executive's Service).

Also In Attendance

Inspector J. Conway (Police Scotland); G. Henry (Transport Scotland); J. Riddell (Fairlie Community Trust); and D. Blair (Largs Community Council).

Chair

Councillor Gallagher in the Chair.

1. Declarations of Interest

In terms of Standing Order 10 and Section 5 of the Code of Conduct for Councillors, Councillor Gallagher, as Chair of the Viking Festival, declared an indirect non-pecuniary interest in the Agenda Item 4.5 (Largs Viking Festival Village - Streetscene Costs) as it related to the erection and dismantling of the Largs Viking Festival Village.

2. Minutes

The accuracy of the Minutes of the ordinary Meeting of the Committee held on 19 November 2015 was confirmed and the Minutes signed in accordance with Paragraph 7 (1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

2.1 Largs Sea Front Car Park

The Committee Services Team Leader provided a verbal update on the proposed introduction of tiered charges at Largs Sea Front Car Park, confirming that all four local Elected Members had agreed to the implementation of Scenario 2, as set out in the revised Appendix to the report at Agenda Item 5.2, on the basis of a one-year pilot, commencing as soon as possible.

3. CPP Partners

3.1 North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership (CPP) Board: Minutes of Meeting held on 3 December 2015

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the Minutes of the meeting of the North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership (CPP) held on 3 December 2015

Noted.

3.2 Police Scotland

Inspector Joseph Conway provided a verbal update on issues of local interest for the period from 14 November 2015 to 31 January 2016, including information on the following:-

- a breakdown of local crime statistics for the periods 1 April 2015 to 31 January 2016, and the same period the previous year; and
- a serious assault on a 45 year old male in December 2015.

Members discussed the following:-

- the use of the speed camera mobile unit in the Fairlie area and the value of requesting that it be deployed in the Skelmorlie area; and
- disruption caused to local roads by heavy snowfall in January 2016.

Inspector Conway undertook to request that the mobile speed camera be deployed in the Skelmorlie area.

Noted.

3.3 Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

Submitted report by Scottish Fire and Rescue Service on incidents within the North Coast area for the period 22 November 2015 to 28 January 2016, including information on the following:-

- some 58 incidents in the local area, comprising 41 in the Largs area, 9 in Skelmorlie and 8 on Millport;
- 13 fire incidents, 17 unwanted fire alarm systems, 13 special services, and 4 other incidents; and
- community safety initiatives, including post domestic reviews, home fire safety visits, winter thematic action plan and Prevention First work.

Noted.

4. Largs Reports

4.1 20mph Speed Limit A78 Trunk Road - Discussion

In response to a request by Largs Community Council, the Committee discussed Transport Scotland's proposal to trial a 20 mph speed limit on the A78 through Largs, from the Nelson Street junction at Nardini's to the Morrison's supermarket roundabout.

The Committee received a verbal report from a representative of Transport Scotland on the rationale for the proposed 20 mph speed limit in this area, a separate proposal for a pedestrian crossing at Anderson Park in Largs, and recent consultation with Largs Community Council, which had expressed its opposition to the 20 mph speed limit. The Chair of Largs Community Council was also invited to address the meeting on the community council's concerns.

Members discussed the following:-

- the appropriateness of the area of road covered by the proposal;
- the view that a 20 mph speed limit through Fairlie might be a higher priority for the local community;
- whether the pedestrian crossing at Anderson Park in Largs element of the proposal could proceed in the event of the 20 mph speed limit being rejected;
- the extent to which recent road traffic incidents had been speed-related;
- delays which might arise as a result of the introduction of a 20 mph limit;
- the effectiveness of electronic signage used elsewhere to advise drivers of their speed;
- pedestrian, as well as driver, behaviour as a contributory factor in road traffic accidents; and
- whether the 20 mph speed limit proposal was likely to proceed in light of the community council's opposition.

Councillor Marshall, seconded by Councillor Hill, moved that the Committee express its opposition to the proposed introduction of a 20 mph speed limit on the A78 through Largs. There being no amendment, the motion was declared carried.

4.2 Stalled Spaces Fund - Nelson Street, Largs

The Town Centre Regeneration Officer provided a verbal update on the gap site at 67-73 Nelson Street, Largs.

The Officer advised that the Council's Planning Service had been in contact with the owner of the site, who had arranged for debris to be removed from it and had expressed an intention to submit a planning application in due course for development of the site. The Committee was also advised of discussions which had taken place in respect of the feasibility of using funding from the Stalled Spaces Fund, which supports the temporary use of such gap sites. The Town Centre Regeneration Officer intimated that Fairlie Growers had expressed an interest in developing a 'pop up' garden on the site and that this was currently being explored.

Members asked questions, and received further information, on the following:-

- the position of Largs Allotment Group, which is interested in identifying land available in the longer term;
- the feasibility of making use of other potential sites in the area, including space at the Gogo Burn; and
- the conditions associated with applications to the Stalled Spaces Fund, including the town centre location of sites, the need for groups to be properly constituted, and the timescale for using funding.

Noted.

4.3 Largs Seafront Illumination Festoons

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Place) on the condition of the current illumination installation and the proposed use of further funding from the Largs Seafront Car Park Fund to replace it with a more robust, energy efficient alternative.

The report advised that the current illumination system is deteriorating to an extent that, without action, it will be rendered unsafe and require to be removed. The cost of replacing the existing system is estimated at £23,000. Extending the installation to the Mackerston putting green area would cost a further £4,500. The report proposed that the installation, once replaced, should be subject to statutory electrical maintenance inspection, routine planned maintenance cleaning with lamp replacement as required, and statutory energy accounting and reporting of running costs. The annual running cost was estimated at £3,400 in terms of maintenance and £1,600 for energy at current prices and operational hours, rising to £6,400 annual in energy costs if the system were operational to be throughout the year.

Members discussed the following:-

- the deterioration of the current installation, which was purchased in 2013 and was intended to be suitable for this exposed coastal location;
- previous and proposed maintenance arrangements;
- the role of the former Illuminations Committee and previous funding arrangements; and
- the appropriateness of further expenditure on illumination festoons in light of the current financial climate.

Councillor Marshall, seconded by Councillor McLean, moved that the Committee agree to (a) note the maintenance difficulties associated with the condition of the current installation; (b) approve the funding from the Largs Seafront Car Park revenues to replace the current installation; (c) approve funding from the Car Park revenues to extend the installation to Mackerston putting green; and (d) extend the operation life of the installation throughout the calendar year. There being no amendment, the motion was declared carried.

4.4 Place Update - Largs

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Place) on the Largs Campus development. The Committee also viewed three video clips, which showed animated illustrations of St. Mary's Primary School classrooms, breakout spaces and shared dining area, the three levels in the combined primary school, and elements of the secondary school, including the dining plaza, PE department and music areas.

The various building elements of the project are currently being tendered and the tender rates will inform the Stage 2 submission to the Scottish Futures Trust in February 2016. Detailed design development workshops on classrooms, breakout spaces, P.E. areas, toilets, externals, dining and shared teaching spaces have been held with both pupils and staff from the respective schools at the end of October 2015 and feedback, in the form 'you said we did', will be provided to staff and pupils in February 2016.

The planning application is currently subject to the statutory consultation process and will be considered by the Council on 24 February 2016. Subject to approval of the planning application, it is anticipated that works will commence on site in April/May 2016 with a targeted completion date of December 2017.

Members asked questions, and received further information, on the following:-

- whether the consultation had included external areas and traffic considerations;
- the feasibility of the planned timescale for completion of the project;
- the availability of lifts for disabled use; and
- the number of English classrooms in the secondary school building.

Noted.

4.5 Largs Viking Festival Village - Streetscene Costs

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Place) on the costs chargeable by Streetscene for erecting the dismantling the Viking Festival Village.

At the meeting on 13 August 2015, the Committee requested that the Streetscene Officer submit a report with a detailed breakdown of the costs associated with erecting the Viking Festival Village, to allow Members to assess if the costs might be reduced and whether to consider alternatives to erecting the village on a year on year basis.

The cost of work to erect and dismantle the Viking Festival Village is recharged to the Largs Car Park Fund based on Streetscene's historical set of hourly rates for its services at such events. A standard hourly rate is applied to recover the average cost of the operatives deployed, uplifted where appropriate to recognise work that requires to be undertaken out of hours. Work undertaken includes the erection of fencing, transporting the village to the site, building the village, collecting and transport greenery, dismantling the village and clean up costs. Work is now underway to review the chargeout rates currently applied to all North Ayrshire events to ensure that value for money is being achieved and Streetscene continues to offer a high quality service to local organisations. The outcome of this review will inform the charges to be applied to the Viking Festival in 2016 and other similar events.

Members asked questions, and received further information, on the following:-

- the cost of servicing fire extinguishers for the event;
- the feasibility of reducing the costs associated with the event, either through efficiencies in terms of the erection and dismantling process, or through the erection of a more permanent display village; and
- the background to the plain time and overtime charge applied to the different stages of erecting and dismantling the village.

The Committee agreed (a) to request that the Senior Manager (Streetscene) explore options for greater efficiency and reduced costs in terms of erecting and dismantling the Viking Festival Village; and (b) that, in the event of external advice being required in this regard, the Committee's approval should be sought to incur expenditure from the Largs Car Park Fund.

4.6 Economy and Communities Update

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Economy and Communities) on updates in respect of the following projects:-

- the Largs Masterplan document, which was reported to the Committee on 24 September 2015 and which will shortly be printed in hard copy and circulated to the various stakeholders;
- the appointment of the Tennant Garmory Partnership as the lead designers for the Gallowgate Square redevelopment, with the ongoing detailed design phase scheduled for completion by March 2016;
- continued officer support for the Largs Matters BID, which is planning a further programme of festivals in the summer;
- the issue of planning consents for the Greeto Water and Gogo Schemes; and
- the timescales for statutory public consultation on the proposals for Blairpark/Halkshill which are dependent on submission of a further revised draft Environmental Statement to FCS.

Members discussed the following:-

- the need to relocate bins in the Gallowgate Square area and the feasibility of a Compulsory Purchase Order to secure the adjacent derelict building for this purpose;
- Largs Matters BID's plans for a food festival, Largs Live event and a classic car event; and
- the position of local Elected Members and the Council with regard to the forestry proposals.

Thereafter, the Chair invited Largs Community Council's Chair to address the meeting on community council's concerns in relation to the Gogo and Greeto Hydro Schemes and the Blairpark/Halkhill Commercial Forestry proposals, including issues around the withdrawal of some of the community benefits previously proposed, management of the site and damage to the Greeto Falls area as a result of ongoing works, and disruption to local residents.

The Committee agreed (a) that officers explore the possibility of a Compulsory Purchase Order on the derelict building adjacent to the Gallowgate Square to provide a potential new location for bins; (b) that the Senior Manager (Energy and Sustainability)(Economy and Communities) make arrangements for a private meeting to take place with representatives of Tilhill and Stakis, Largs Community Council and local Elected Members, if possible immediately prior to the next meeting of the Committee.

5. Fairlie Reports

5.1 Fairlie Community Links

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Economy and Communities) on an update in respect of the consultation process, feedback obtained through the consultation process and the options for the next stages in the project's development.

The proposals for the project have been developed through three phases of public consultation, involving local residents, access users including walkers and cyclists, landowners, visitors to the area and other interested parties. Over 180 interested parties attended the two public drop in sessions held in 2015 and over 235 responses were received through the 2015 stages of the consultation process. This was also supported by the North Ayrshire Outdoor Access Forum. The outcome of the consultation process and notes of the feedback obtained through the consultation, were summarised at Appendices 1 and 2 to the report. Options for the next stages were outlined at Appendix 3.

The Chair invited Mr Riddell on Fairlie Community Trust to address the meeting of the background to the proposals and options for implementation at this stage.

Members discussed the following:-

- options for partial implementation of the proposals to allow a path to be passable at all states of the tide;
- options for addressing access issues at Ferry Row;
- the likely funding implications of the different options available;
- the preferences expressed during the consultation, as set out at section 14 of Appendix 2; and
- the options for rock edge and step edge protection and their cost implications.

The Committee agreed (a) to note (i) the consultation process undertaken and (ii) the feedback obtained through the consultation process; and (b) to recommend that the Cabinet (i) approve Option B (to proceed with the detailed design and construction of the project), as set out at Appendix 3 to the report, and (ii) as part of that option, agree to complete the detailed design and key elements of the project as far as practical within the current financial year, with a view to constructing the path in 2016/17 and (iii) agree to the path design and alignment options identified as respondents' preferences within the table at Appendix 3 to the report.

6. Cumbrae

6.1 Millport Flood Protection Scheme

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Place) on the current position in terms of the Millport Flood Protection Scheme.

The inclusion of Millport Coastal within the national Flood Risk Management Strategy provides an opportunity to consider works to the harbour at Millport as part of any scheme, albeit that such works would need to be integral to the primary purpose of flood defence. A project execution plan has been completed and a contract for the design of the Millport Flood Protection Scheme is currently being tendered. The outline design, consultation process and Flood Protection Scheme submission to the Scottish Government will take approximately 18 months to complete, with the detailed design estimated to take around a further 9 months to complete. The removal of the timber pier will be included as part of the Flood Protection Scheme and the safety of the timber pier will be monitored and managed until the point at which construction of the Flood Protection Scheme begins and the timber section of pier is removed.

Members asked questions, and received further information, on the following:-

- measures to address flood risk following removal of the timber pier;
- whether access by the Waverley would be possible in future; and
- whether any interest had been expressed by the Field Studies Council.

Noted.

6.2 Economy and Communities Update - Millport

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Economy and Communities) on actions taken in relation to the following projects and issues:-

- progress in respect of the Millport Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme, which will be launched in April 2016 and operate for a five-year period thereafter;
- the Millport Economic Group, which plans to hold an initial meeting in March 2016;
- a planned further package of works to the Millport Field Centre; and
- ongoing work to explore the potential for investment in additional accommodation facilities on the island.

Members asked questions, and received further information, on the following:-

- the composition of Millport Economic Group; and
- the desirability of seeking to ensure that local businesses benefit from works associated with CARS projects.

Noted.

7. Community Development Grant Scheme and Local Youth Action Fund: Application for Financial Assistance

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Economy and Communities) on applications received in respect of the Community Development Grant Scheme.

The Committee agreed to make the following awards:-

Community Development Grant Scheme

Organisation	Award
Upbeats Community Choir	£2,000.00
Capall Dorcha Theatre Company	£ 500.00
Open Ayrshire	£ 294.40

8. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the North Coast Area Committee will be held on Thursday 24 March 2016 at 1.45 p.m. in the D.A. Hall, Millport.

Noted.

9. Future Agenda Items

The Committee agreed to note that Members should advise Committee Services of any potential items for inclusion on a future Agenda.

The Meeting ended at 4.20 p.m.