

North Coast Area Committee
12 April 2012

MILLPORT, 12 April 2012 - At a Meeting of the North Coast Area Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m.

Present

Alan Hill, Alex Gallagher and Elisabeth Marshall.

In Attendance

C. Forsyth, Assistant Transportation Manager (Finance and Infrastructure); J. McHarg, Assistant Manager (Community Development Team)(Education and Skills); K. Don, Economic Development Officer (Tourism); and A. Little, Committee Services Officer (Chief Executive's Service).

Also In Attendance

D. Whyte, Civil Contingencies Manager and L. Jeffrey, Civil Contingencies Officer (Ayrshire Civil Contingencies Team); J. Trench, WRVS Service Delivery Manager (WRVS); N. Wilson and D. McArthur (Scottish and Southern Energy); Sergeant L. Stewart (Strathclyde Police) and Commander M. Henderson (Strathclyde Fire and Rescue).

Chair

Councillor Hill in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

Robert Rae.

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest by Members in terms of Standing Order 16.

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 7 March 2012 were signed in accordance with Paragraph 7 (1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

3. Strathclyde Police

Submitted report by Strathclyde Police on activity in the North Coast area in March 2012.

The report provided details on crimes and offences relating to beats 20, 21,22 and 24 which encompass the geographical area of Largs, Skelmorlie and Cumbrae. A breakdown of the crimes/offences for the month of February 2012 (and a previous year comparison) was provided in the report.

The main focus of activity and support for public reassurance continued to be the priorities listed in the local Community Policing Plan for 2011/12. The report provided information on:-

- a traffic campaign to target speeding, mobile phone and seatbelt offences;
- joint dog fouling patrols with Council Enforcement Officers in West Kilbride and Skelmorlie; and
- several thefts in the Largs area from unsecured vehicles and properties.

Members asked questions and were provided with information in relation to curfews that can be applied by the Courts that restrict individuals to their homes during specific hours.

Noted.

4. Strathclyde Fire and Rescue

Submitted report by Strathclyde Fire and Rescue on activity in the North Coast area.

The report, which covered the period from 23 February to 1 April 2012, presented the Committee with information on:-

- accidental and deliberate non-domestic fires;
- accidental and deliberate vehicle fires;
- rubbish and heath and grass fires;
- deliberate derelict building fires;
- malicious and good intent false alarm calls;
- road traffic collisions;
- water incidents; and
- special services.

Noted.

5. Isle of Cumbrae: Power Failure

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the recent power failure experienced on Cumbrae.

The Isle of Cumbrae was left without power for a prolonged period in early January 2012. Scottish & Southern Energy (SSE) provides the power to the Isle of Cumbrae via Argyll and Bute and the power required to be restored first to Argyll and Bute and, thereafter, to the Isle of Cumbrae.

The Ayrshire Civil Contingencies Team (ACCT) provides an emergency planning service to all three Councils from its base at Prestwick Airport. During the power failure, ACCT was in regular contact with a number of agencies and organisations, including island based Council staff, SSE, Lady Margaret Hospital, Social Services & Health and Strathclyde Police. The following arrangements have now been put in place in the event of any future power failure to the island:-

- the generator used in the kitchen at the Garrison Centre will be available for use should the need arise;
- Strathclyde Fire and Rescue will provide portable lighting at the ferry terminal outwith daylight hours; and
- the Council could provide portable gas heaters for use in Garrison House.

The Scottish Government encourages communities to carry out a local assessment of the risks their area may face and to develop a Community Emergency Plan. The Emergency Plan should register all the personnel and equipment that is available and could be used during an emergency. It also encourages all vulnerable people to register with their power providers. ACCT has provided Community Councils in North Ayrshire with information from the Scottish Government and a template document (Appendix 1) to assist in the development of a Community Emergency Plan.

Discussion took place on:-

- the establishment of an Emergency Support Team that will liaise with the Civil Contingencies Team to take forward the development of a Community Emergency Plan;
- a commitment from SSE to work with the Civil Contingencies Team
- the storm damage experienced by the islands that resulted in trees bringing down overhead power cables;
- difficulties that had been experienced by SSE in accessing private commercial land to fell trees and preventative felling work that is now underway;
- the possible provision by SSE of a few small generators that would allow operation of the hospital electric water pump;
- issues in relation to the storage and servicing of generators on Cumbrae;
- regular power outages and fluctuating voltage levels experienced on the island and
- the obligation of SSE to maintain voltage levels and the provision of monitors to record the voltage over a period of time;
- the historic geographical boundary that resulted in the provision of power to Cumbrae from Bute;
- the provision of power from Largs that would require the installation of a submarine cable to carry power to Cumbrae; and
- regular power outages on the island.

The Committee noted that (a) the Ayrshire Civil Contingencies Team will (i) support the Cumbrae Emergency Support Team in the development of a Community Emergency Plan; and (ii) liaise with SSE in respect of plans for any future emergency situations; and (b) that SSE will provide a written explanation for the regular power outages on Cumbrae.

6. Cumbrae: Pier and Step Ashore Facilities

The Committee was provided with an update in relation to Millport pier and step ashore facilities.

In respect of Millport Pier, the Assistant Transportation Manager provided information in relation to:-

- works that have been undertaken to maintain the safety of the timber and that the deck planks are only considered adequate for pedestrian traffic;
- stabilisation of the masonry section in 1989 and ongoing issues with sheet piling starting to void;
- budgetary issues for repairs,
- the requirement for a long term plan for the Pier and the commission of a study of the Pier to be carried out shortly;
- permission from the Scottish Government for any major changes to the Pier; and
- CPAG budget approval for major projects and a report to the Council on the options for the Pier.

Discussion took place on the following areas:-

- the creation of an offshore breakwater as a coastal defence, which in turn would provide a platform for improved step ashore facilities and increased moorings; and
- the inclusion of the breakwater option in the consultant's study of the pier and consultation with the local community on the options being considered.

In respect of the step ashore facilities at Millport, the Economic Development Officer (Tourism) provided the following information:-

- LEADER funding has been provided to investigate marine landing facilities on the islands of Arran and Cumbrae, including step-ashore facilities at Millport;
- a technical brief has been prepared and will go to tender by the end of April. An appointment will be made by the end of May and site survey work will take place by mid-June;
- consultation will take place with interested parties from the marine leisure and recreation sector and the Cumbrae Community Development Company will be the point of contact on the Isle of Cumbrae;
- at this time the Council's visitor moorings off Millport will not be extended.

Noted.

7. WRVS

J. Trench, WRVS Service Delivery Manager, provided information on the lunch club initiative that has been piloted in Largs.

Local volunteers operate the lunch club from St. John's Church to 18 residents of Largs. Referrals are received from Social Services and GPs and individuals can contact the club directly. The club offers older people the chance to get out of the house, have a hot, freshly prepared meal, make some new friends and have a chat with old acquaintances. Some social activities are also offered such as gentle chair exercises, healthier lifestyle advice, entertainment and quizzes.

Members asked questions and were provided with information in relation to:-

- the capacity of the club to provide a service to 25 residents in the Largs area; and
- scope for expanding the service to the West Kilbride and Stevenston areas.

Noted.

8. Traffic Regulation Order: The North Ayrshire Council (Largs) (Traffic Management) (Amendment) Order 2012

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Infrastructure) on the proposal to make permanent the alterations to traffic movement that were introduced by the promotion of The North Ayrshire Council (Various Streets, Largs) (Temporary Traffic Management) Order 2011, by promoting The North Ayrshire Council (Largs) (Traffic Management) (Amendment) Order 2012.

As a consequence of implementing amendments to traffic movement within Hyndman Green, Tron Place and Frazer Street, that developed during the construction phase of the Largs Traffic Management Scheme, it was necessary to promote an 18 month Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) in February 2011. The Temporary Order is due to expire in August 2012 and it is now necessary to commence the process to make these changes permanent by promoting a new TRO.

In order to relocate the Puffin Crossing facility from its old position in front of the Railway Station to its new location at Hyndman Green, the independent Safety Audit Report deemed it necessary to close the Stanlane Place/Main Street junction. This meant that traffic travelling along Stanlane Place had to pass through Hyndman Green and exit onto Crawford Street. The Safety Audit Report also required access to Frazer Street to be restricted by size of vehicle in order to deter 360 degree manoeuvres at the new roundabout by vehicles approaching from the south.

In addition, traders made representations to the Council to relax the vehicle restrictions at Tron Place to allow general traffic access at all times of the day and to reduce the number of disabled bays within the street to permit additional limited waiting public parking.

All of the changes have been implemented and are operating well. The statutory process is underway to promote the new TRO.

Members asked questions and were provided with information in relation to:-

- a request to Amey to reduce the sightline hatching at Greenock Road to increase parking provision;
- concerns that the signage and road markings at Aitken Street do not clearly indicate a road crossing and meetings with Transport Scotland that will result in improved design options being prepared; and
- signage to indicate the parking provision available at Brooksby.

The Committee agreed to (a) note that the statutory process is underway to promote the TRO; and (b) approve implementation of the TRO if no objections are received.

9. Community Development Grant Scheme: Applications for Financial Assistance

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Education and Skills) on applications received in respect of the Community Development Grant Scheme.

The Committee agreed to make the following awards:-

Organisation	Amount
Cumbræ Parent/Carer Toddler Group	£1,530
Largs Players	£1,500

10. North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership (CPP): Board Minutes of Meeting held on 15 March 2012

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the minutes of the meeting of the North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership (CPP) held on 15 March 2012.

Noted.

11. Urgent Item

The Chair agreed that the following item be considered as a matter of urgency to allow the matter to be actioned without delay.

12. Largs Regeneration Meeting

At its meeting on 7 March 2012, the Committee agreed that it would be appropriate for Local Members to meet on a six weekly basis with local businesses and community groups to take forward the recommendations of the Largs Town Centre research and action plan.

The Committee agreed that meetings with local businesses and community groups be arranged following the local government elections.

The Meeting ended at 3.25 p.m.