

Liaison Meeting between the Three Towns Area Committee and the Community
Planning Partners
1 June 2005

STEVENSTON, 1 June 2005 - At a Liaison Meeting between the Three Towns Area Committee and the Community Planning Partners at 11.00 am.

Present

Councillors David Munn, Peter McNamara, Margaret Munn, Alan Munro, and Nan Wallace (North Ayrshire Council); Janis Mitchell (Scottish Enterprise).

In Attendance

C Nelson, Head of Catering and Cleaning and J Kelly, Operations Manager, Catering and Cleaning (Property Services); W Docherty, Local Manager (Social Services); and S Bale and E Fisher, Corporate and Democratic Support Officers (Chief Executive's).

Also In Attendance

Jim McHarg (3TFM).

Chair

Councillor D Munn in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

Councillor Gordon Allison (North Ayrshire Council), Marella O'Neill (LHCC) and ADO Lindsey (Strathclyde Fire and Rescue).

1. Minutes

The Minutes of the Liaison Meeting held on 20 April 2005 were confirmed.

2. Modern Apprenticeship Programme in Ayrshire

The Liaison Meeting received a presentation from the Manager of National Training Programmes at Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire on the Modern Apprenticeship Programme in Ayrshire.

Modern Apprenticeships offer those aged over 16 paid employment with the opportunity to train for jobs at craft, technician and management level. They are a way of gaining skills and qualifications that will help to start a career without having to study full-time, and are available across a wide range of industries. Modern Apprenticeship frameworks can also be used as the basis for training of more mature employees but are mainly aimed at those from 16 years and capable of achieving a Vocational Qualification at Level 3 or above. The success of Modern Apprenticeships is dependent on the contribution of key partners in enterprise networks, education, training and industry and include Sector Skills Councils, Careers Scotland and Scottish Enterprise. In North Ayrshire there are 785 Modern Apprentices, but this number would be higher if Skillseekers were included.

Discussion took place on the costs of each apprenticeship, the costs of administering the scheme, whether all young people get the opportunity and what is the linkage

with schools.

The Partners were advised that the costs range from £1,000 to £9,000 depending on the level of qualification, occupation and age, 40% of which is retained to nearer the end of the apprenticeship to ensure completion of the course. Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire are seeking to make linkages with the schools so that there is a more natural progression for young people to go on to Modern Apprenticeships. Partners were also advised that the Council's Senior VQ Officer could advise the Partners of North Ayrshire Council's involvement in the Modern Apprenticeship Scheme.

The Liaison Meeting agreed to ask North Ayrshire Council's Senior VQ Officer to attend a future meeting to advise the Partners of the Council's involvement in the Modern Apprenticeship Scheme.

3. Format of Area Committee Liaison Meetings with Community Planning Partners

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the agreement to open the Area Committee Liaison Meetings to the press and public and to allow public participation.

The remit of the Area Committee Liaison Meetings, which were introduced in 2003, to replace the Community Partnership Forums, is to support the implementation of Community Planning at a local level and to improve and address service delivery activities and functions.

To date the Area Committee Liaison Meetings have excluded the press and public, but there has been a shift amongst all public agencies towards more openness and transparency and greater involvement of the public.

The issue has also been raised at the Strategy and Co-ordination Group of the Community Planning Partners who considered the purpose of the Liaison Meetings as follows:-

- they should be used for ongoing community consultation;
- they could assist the Strategy and Co-ordination Group by identifying local issues and concerns; and
- they could be used as a communication channel.

Community Engagement is a key part of Community Planning and at the Strategy and Co-ordination Group's Community Engagement Working Group, the following proposals for success were outlined:-

- discursive, partnership approach rather than confrontational;
- all working together for the community;
- open to the community to attend/participate; and
- awareness raising for Members on other services.

At a recent meeting the Leader of the Council, the Area Committee Chairs, the Community Planning Co-ordinator and the Chair of the Community Planning Strategy and Co-ordination Group discussed ways of improving the effectiveness of the Liaison Meetings and encouraging Partner attendance. The recommendations detailed below were approved by the Council's Corporate Policy Committee on 10 May 2005 and were accepted by the Community Planning Strategy and Co-ordination Group on 11 May 2005:-

- (a) the Area Committee Liaison Meetings should be open to the press and public;
- (b) that an Open Forum be held for approximately 10 minutes at the end of each Liaison Meeting, at which members of the public could put any questions to the Members and officers in attendance or raise any issues;
- (c) that the Liaison Meetings would require to be publicised in advance, indicating that they would be holding Open forums;
- (d) that it should be included in the publicity that it would be preferable if members of the public could submit questions in advance of the meeting; and
- (e) with regard to the press in attendance, the Open Forum was intended for the public only to participate in. The mechanism for the press to put questions to the Council is through the Communications Section of the Council.

It was acknowledged that (a) appropriate training would be required for elected Members and Partners before the proposals could be implemented; and (b) it would not be possible to have sufficient officers in attendance to answer all questions by members of the public and a note of questions would need to be taken to be answered at a later date.

Noted.

4. Health Issues

The Liaison meeting on 20 April 2005 discussed the current health issues associated with oral health and nutrition and on ways in which the Partners might work together to improve the eating habits and general health of the people living in the Three Towns Area.

The various Services of the Council were asked to report back on the following items:-

- The property at Garven Road, Stevenston and whether it would be suitable as a Community Health House;
- Home Economics in schools;
- Initiatives to teach cookery during the summer period;
- Promoting the safety aspects of cooking;
- Talks at parent evenings on healthy eating;
- Advertising health initiatives through a newsletter;
- Young people starting off in first tenancy taking an interest in home economics; and
- Use of 3TFM radio station to promote healthy living.

The Liaison Meeting was given updated reports by the various services of the Council and 3TFM .

Social Services

At the moment the Garven Road property is used as a base for Better Neighbourhood Services. The lease will continue until the Autumn when it will revert back to Social Services. The suggestion that it could be converted to a Community Health House will be raised through the Community Planning Health and Well-being Group to ascertain if there is scope for this within the Regeneration Outcome Agreement.

Educational Services

In Secondary Schools all S1 and S2 pupils will have Home Economics, the time allocation determined by each individual Head Teacher, with the average being 50-55 minutes per week.

In all schools Hygiene and Safety is taught in the early stages and will continue to be reinforced through all practical activities.

Healthy Eating should be taught in all schools along with practical cookery lessons. This should be in line with current guidelines, eg 5-14, Government dietary targets for 2005 and Hungry for Success.

In some schools within the Authority the REHIS Elementary Food Hygiene course is taught in co-operation with Environmental Health. Pupils who complete the course and are successful in the examination are awarded a national certificate.

Catering and Cleaning (Property Services)

The Partners were advised that rather than the proposed initiative to teach cookery in schools during the summer period, it had been suggested that it would be more appropriate for Catering Managers to go into Community Centres.

The new Ardeer Community Centre has a no smoking policy and a healthy eating agenda. Vending machines have low sugar drinks and low fat snacks. The Partners were advised that the Head of Educational Resources is to hold an initial meeting with the relevant officers on 10 June 2005 to examine health issues and vending machines in schools in particular.

It was reported that the Catering Service have offered schools the opportunity for a representative to attend parent evenings to talk to parents about healthy eating. In an audit of secondary schools, Catering Managers reported that there was a noted improvement in the healthy eating habits of pupils going from primary school to secondary school. Catering Managers are also going into schools to promote the eating of fruit and vegetables which may be the reason for the notable difference. A dental hygiene programme has been introduced for all Primary 1 pupils to look at

tooth brushing habits.

3TFM Radio Station

The Station Manager reported to the Partners on the draft schedule of programmes for the radio station due to beginning broadcasting on 3 June until 30 June 2005 which will include messages from community groups on health issues. A local Three Towns doctor has volunteered to provide a weekly slot.

The Liaison Meeting recognise the vast amount of work undertaken by volunteers and offered its congratulations to 3TFM.

The Liaison Meeting agreed that the various Partners report on any further progress to the next meeting of the Liaison Meeting.

The meeting ended at 12.40 pm.