

Irvine Area Committee
22 June 2011

IRVINE, 22 June 2011 - At a Meeting of the Irvine Area Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m.

Present

Pat McPhee, Ian Clarkson, Ruby Kirkwood, David O'Neill and Joan Sturgeon.

In Attendance

A. Grossart, Finance Manager, C. Forsyth, Assistant Transportation Manager and J. Smith, (Finance and Infrastructure); C. Hester, Lifelong Learning Officer and B. Anderson, Performance/Grants Information Officer (Community Development) (Education and Skills); and G. Hamilton, Festivals and Events Officer and A Little, Committee Services Officer (Chief Executive's Service).

Also In Attendance

D. Roland, Head of Primary Care Development, NHS Ayrshire and Arran; and Sergeant Brown, Strathclyde Police.

Chair

Provost McPhee in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

Tom Barr, Matthew Brown and John Moffat.

1. Declarations of Interest

1.1 Declarations of Interest: Advice to Elected Members

Submitted report by the Chief Executive highlighting the requirements of Standing Orders and Section 5 of the Code of Conduct for Councillors in relation to declarations of interest.

In a recent investigation report, the Standards Commissioner for Scotland recommended, to the Council that:-

- all Elected Members be made aware of the provisions of Section 5 of the Code of Conduct, including specifically paragraph 5.15, in relation to declarations of interest;
- that Elected Members receive training on how properly to make declarations of interest, including the need to state the nature of the interest; and
- Committee Chairs and officers with responsibility for the conduct of Council or committee meetings should ensure adherence to the proper mode and content of declarations of interest.

Standing Order 16 provides that if any Member of the Council has a financial or non-financial interest in any contract or any other matter as defined by Section 5 of the Councillors' Code Conduct, and is present at any meeting at which that matter is to be considered, he/she must, as soon as practicable after the meeting starts, disclose that he/she has an interest and importantly, state the nature of this interest. Section 5 of the Code, which was appended to the report, sets out the rules in relation to declarations of interest.

To facilitate such declarations, a heading "Declarations of Interest", routinely appears as the first item on agendas for all meetings of the Council and its Committees. The report provided information on the future arrangements for the Committee Chairs when dealing with the Declarations of Interest item on the agenda, the Commissioner's suggested wording for Members declaring an interest in an agenda item and induction training for Elected Members following next year's local government elections.

Noted.

1.2 Declarations of Interest

In terms of Standing Order 16, Councillor Clarkson, as a member of the Marymass Development Committee, declared an interest in Agenda Item 8 (Community Development Grants: Applications for Financial Assistance from Marymass Chess Congress and Marymass Folk Festival), and took no part in the determination thereof. Councillor Clarkson left the meeting for the following items for business, Agenda Item 8 (Community Development Grants: Applications for Financial Assistance from Marymass Development Committee) and Agenda Item 9.2 (Irvine Common Good Fund: Applications for Financial Assistance from Marymass Development Committee).

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 30 March 2011 were signed in accordance with Paragraph 7 (1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

3. NHS Ayrshire and Arran

The Committee received an update from David Roland, Head of Primary Care Development, NHS Ayrshire and Arran on developments in health centres in the Irvine area, which included information on the following:-

- Eglinton Medical Practice - outline plans for the new practice have been drawn up and it is anticipated that work will commence in August 2011 and complete by Spring 2012. Work continues with the practice to improve access to health services; and

- Townhead Surgery - work has been done with Townhead to introduce best practice from other surgeries. A review of the appointment system was undertaken and a number of changes were trialed. These trials were not successful and a further examination of the system is therefore required. The telephone system currently in operation will require to remain in place for a further year, when the system will be reviewed.

The Committee discussed difficulties experienced by patients of the Townhead practice in accessing appointments, both in person and by telephone.

At present there are no further major health centre developments planned for the Irvine area and work will continue with practices in an effort to make the best use of their facilities.

Noted.

4. Strathclyde Police

Sergeant Brown reported on Police activities in the Committee's area, which included information on the apprehension of 3 suspects following the detection of the cultivation of cannabis at a site on Shewalton Road, Irvine. Statistical information on the number of incidents within the Irvine area was provided as follows:-

Ward 1 - 1,009 incidents in total

Ward 2 - 514 incidents in total

Strathclyde Police have been consulted on a number of major events planned for the summer months in the Irvine area, including the British Legion Parade, the Orange Walk, the Circus at the Beachpark, and a 5-mile road race.

Discussion took place on the proliferation of flyposters advertising the circus that had occurred in previous years.

Noted.

5. Strathclyde Fire and Rescue

Submitted report by Strathclyde Fire and Rescue on activity in the Irvine area between 1 April to 10 June 2011.

Noted.

6. Traffic Movement & Safety Issues: Mini-roundabout, Ayr Road/Heatherhouse Road, Irvine

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Infrastructure) on the various options available for improving visibility, preventing driver confusion and providing a wider turning circle at the mini-roundabout at Ayr Road/Heatherhouse Road, Irvine.

At its meeting on 16 February 2011, the Irvine Area Committee requested that Infrastructure and Design Services prepare a report on the feasibility of improving visibility, preventing driver confusion and providing a wider turning circle at the mini-roundabout.

The introduction of the Ayr Road/Heatherhouse Road mini-roundabout in May 2008 has successfully reduced speed, congestion and accidents at this location. Turning movements for HGVs and longer vehicles has significantly improved and peak time queuing on Heatherhouse Road has been reduced substantially. A new roundabout is due to be constructed on Ayr Road (north of Heatherhouse Road) in the near future to serve a new Sainsbury's supermarket which will help to further reduce the speed of traffic on Ayr Road.

Three options have been considered to provide a best value approach in achieving the greatest gain for minimum cost.

Option 1 – Do Nothing.

Option 2 – Increased Road Signage & Anti Skid Surfacing at a cost of £3,000.

Option 3 – Carriageway Widening & Option 2 at a cost of £65,000.

Further cost effective improvements have been identified to address the visual impact and presence of this mini-roundabout with the recommendation that Option 2 is approved by the Committee for implementation at an estimated cost of £3,000.

The Committee agreed to approve Option 2 for implementation to improve movement and safety at the mini-roundabout at Ayr Road/Heatherhouse Road, Irvine.

7. Traffic Regulation Order: A737 Ayr Road/Lamont Drive, Irvine: Proposed Prohibition of Right Hand Turn

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Infrastructure) on the proposed Prohibition of Right Hand Turn Order.

The A737 Ayr Road is part of the traffic distributor network linking Irvine to the A78 Trunk Road via Three Stanes Roundabout. It also serves traffic accessing and egressing the nearby Springbank Industrial Estate, via Lamont Drive, and the Riverway Retail Park via Merryvale Roundabout.

Lamont Drive is a residential area but is also currently the only access to Springbank Industrial Estate and therefore is subject to a high volume of vehicular traffic during business hours with much of this traffic requiring to turn right from Ayr Road into Lamont Drive and from Lamont Drive to Merryvale Roundabout.

Planning permission to build a supermarket on Ayr Road, Irvine has been granted, with the condition that a new roundabout is constructed on the A737 Ayr Road to facilitate vehicular traffic travelling to and from the supermarket. This new roundabout is likely to slow the flow of traffic travelling northbound towards Merryvale Roundabout and the Springbank Industrial Estate.

In order to maintain traffic flow it is proposed that traffic should be prohibited from turning right from Ayr Road into Lamont Drive and from Lamont Drive to Ayr Road, as illustrated in the roadmap appended to the report.

The Committee agreed to (a) note that the investigation, preparation and statutory process is underway for a Traffic Regulation Order for the prohibition of right hand turn at A737 Ayr Road/Lamont Drive, Irvine; and (b) approve the implementation of the Order should no objections be received.

8. Community Development Grants Scheme and Local Youth Action Fund 2010/11: Applications for Financial Assistance

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Education and Skills) on applications received in respect of the Community Development Grants Scheme and Local Youth Action Fund 2010/11.

The Committee agreed to (a) make the following awards:-

Community Development Grants

Irvine Horticultural Society	£596.00
Annick Childminding Group	£1,334.32
Marymass Chess Congress	£500.00
1st Irvine Girl Guides	£1,450.00
Woodlands Senior Citizens Club	£800.00
Marymass Folk Festival	£1,500.00
Irvine and Dreghorn Brass Band	£1,200.00
Marymass Development Committee	£2,400.00
Irvine Sea Angling Club	£400.00
Fullarton Wheelers Cycling Club	£700.00
Irvine and District Pipe Band	£1,500.00

Local Youth Action Fund

Clarke Drive Boys Amateur Football Club	£101.80 for equipment and that a future meeting of the Committee consider the award of 50% of the costs of the tracksuits if the Group successfully fundraise £449.10.
Redburn Youth Centre Sports Group	£2,000.00 and the group be advised of the outdoor facilities available at Arran Outdoor Resource Centre for future trips
Irvine Duke of Edinburgh Award Group	£2,000.00

The Committee was advised of an award that had been paid to Bourtreehill Girls Group in 2010/11 towards the costs of an outdoor activity week end. The Group had received some free services and were seeking approval to use the remaining funds of £400 towards a fun day.

The Committee was also advised of a late application to the Community Development Grants Scheme from Age Concern Broomlands and Bourtreehill for financial assistance towards the running costs of the group.

(b) approve the request from Bourtreehill Girls Group to use the remaining funding for a fun day; and (c) award Age Concern Broomlands Bourtreehill £1,600 towards the running costs of the group.

9. Irvine Common Good Fund

9.1 Draft Accounts

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Infrastructure) on the draft revenue account in respect of Irvine Common Good Fund for the year to 31 March 2011, and the proposed level of grant funding for 2011/12.

In 2010/11, the Revenue Account was in deficit by £22,264. This arose primarily as a result of the award of grants totalling £80,903 (detailed in section 1 of the appendix) set against a budget of £54,000. Also the costs associated with the Fund's properties totalled £41,260 against a budget of £35,000, which included an electricity refund of £18,006 for the control pillar at the Co-op.

The year end balance on the revenue account now stands at £233,918. The capital balance remains unchanged at £622,383 giving an overall fund balance of £856,301 at 31 March 2011. It is not anticipated that interest rates or rents will change dramatically in 2011/12 and it is currently envisaged that a similar level of income will be received. A number of revenue and capital costs require to be met from the Irvine Common Good Fund, resulting in a recommended budget level of £54,000 available for disbursement.

A review of the Common Good Fund will be undertaken within the next few months and a report on proposals will be brought to a future meeting of the Area Committee.

Discussion took place on a number of areas including:-

- the electricity refund of £18,006;
- expenditure on Common Good properties anticipated in 2011/12;
- the requirement for the repairs to the Bogside Road within the current financial year; and
- the current estimated value of Irvine Common Good assets.

The Committee agreed that (a) the budget be set at £54,000 for grants Irvine Common Good Fund for 2011/12; and (b) the Corporate Director (Finance and Infrastructure) investigate the requirement for the repairs to Bogside Road, Irvine within the current financial year and report to a future meeting of the Committee.

9.2 Applications for Financial Assistance

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on applications for financial assistance from Irvine Common Good.

The Committee agreed to (a) continue to set aside funds to meet the annual commitment to the Irvine Old Folks Joint Wards of £8,000; and (b) make the following awards:-

Marymass Development Committee	£67,500 (which includes sums paid to the Common Good Fund in respect of the rental income from the fairground and food franchise, estimated at £11,000 and £2,500 respectively) and that the Development Committee review the future Marymass Festival programme in light of the financial constraints of the Irvine Common Good Fund; and
Irvine and Dreghorn Brass Band	Nil, and that the Band be encouraged to apply to the Local Youth Action Fund.

10. Corporate Grants to Elderly Groups

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the distribution of Corporate Grants for Elderly Groups within the Irvine Area in 2011/12.

At its meeting on 12 October 2010, the Executive agreed the disbursement of the Corporate Policy Grants budget for 2011/12. The Irvine area was allocated £17,175 for disbursement to elderly groups in the local area, based on the elderly population.

Elderly grants are paid to fund social events such as summer outings and Christmas lunches, and also to support other activities for the benefit of the elderly population in the area. The appendix to the report set out the distribution of the elderly grants within the Irvine area, including an allocation of £758 to the disbanded Springside Welfare Committee.

As a result of the Scottish Parliamentary elections and Referendum, Committees of the Council did not take place during the period 25 April to 18 May 2011. In order that elderly grants could be made to elderly groups in the Irvine area prior to June, the Chair agreed that Irvine Members be consulted on the proposed distribution of the elderly grants. Members indicated their approval of the distribution as detailed in Appendix 1, and the grants were therefore paid to the groups.

The Committee agreed (a) that the sum allocated to the disbanded Springside Welfare Committee be retained until the second phase of payments, and in the event that no application is received from an elderly group in the Springside area, the sum be distributed amongst the other Irvine elderly groups as detailed in Appendix 1; and (b) to note the awards made to elderly groups in the Irvine area as detailed in the appendix to the report.

11. Area of Ground adjacent to Ruby Tuesday's and the Forum at Bridgegate, Irvine

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Infrastructure) on the repairs required at the private area of ground owned by Ridgecrest Ltd., adjacent to Ruby Tuesday's and the Forum at Bridgegate, Irvine.

The hard landscaped area in front of the Forum located at Bridgegate, Irvine, and privately owned by Ridgecrest Ltd., has been the subject of numerous correspondence between Irvine Community Council, Brian Donohoe MP, Campbell & Meechan Solicitors for Ridgecrest Ltd., and North Ayrshire Council regarding the state of disrepair.

Limited legal powers are available to the Council to force the owner to bring the area up to an acceptable standard. The report provided details of the legal options available to the Council and the actions that could be taken, which included:-

- Serving a notice in terms of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 requiring the owner to take the necessary remedial action, and if the owner fails to do so, to take such action themselves and to recover costs from the owner; and
- The Council carrying out repairs to the footway infrastructure in the interests of safety and charging the costs to the owners under the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984. The cost of safety repairs and new street lighting has been estimated at £18,885.00.

It is envisaged that the recovery of costs would be negligible at this time as Ridgecrest are currently in liquidation.

The Committee noted (a) the content of the report; and (b) that the complex legal and ownership issues would require further investigation.

The meeting ended at 3.35 p.m.