

Corporate Policy Standing Sub Committee
17 August 2005

IRVINE, 17 August 2005 - At a Meeting of the Corporate Policy Standing Sub Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m.

Present

Margaret McDougall, Thomas Barr, John Bell, Jean Highgate, Margaret Munn, David O'Neill and Richard Wilkinson.

In Attendance

I Snodgrass, Chief Executive; A Herbert, Assistant Chief Executive (Finance); J Murray, Community Planning Co-ordinator and M McKeown, Corporate and Democratic Support Officer (Chief Executive's).

Chair

Councillor McDougall in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

Alan Hill and John Reid.

1. Radio City Business Plan

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the development of a Business Plan for the Radio City Association's Healthy Living Centre in Kilbirnie.

The Radio City Association was established in 1998 to provide local facilities from a disused former cinema in Kilbirnie. The Healthy Living Centre occupies a prime site in the town centre and offers a range of services and facilities.

Following financial difficulties, the Association entered into a period of voluntary administration on 6 March 2005. Since then the Administrator has been working to reduce the fixed operating costs of the Centre by making a number of redundancies in the gym and cafe, and by cutting opening hours. As a result trading losses have been reduced, however, they are still running at around £10,000 per quarter. The Community Planning Partners with a funding interest in Radio City have had a number of meetings to consider the best way to support the Association out of Administration. These discussions have had the full co-operation of the Administrator, individual members of the original Radio City Board, and Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire who agreed to fund a consultant to produce a Business Plan for the Association.

The Business Plan, a copy of which was appended to the report, outlines a vision for the Radio City Association to develop as a vibrant community partnership, providing opportunities for lifestyle change across health, learning and employability. The funding partners from North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership are keen to see the organisation become successful and self-sustaining. The Business Plan will allow the Association, over the next 3 years, to integrate where possible a number of

its facilities to provide more cohesive services to the local community, and to focus more on healthy living initiatives. The Plan recognises the value of the Healthy Living Centre as a hub from which health and wellbeing activities can be delivered across the whole of North Ayrshire.

Financial support to the Association will be made available over the 3 year period covered by the Plan, based on the Association achieving a number of agreed outcomes. The Association will receive £150,000 of Community Regeneration Funds in each of the 3 years. Progress against targets and agreed outcomes will be closely monitored and a Service Level Agreement put in place. The Council will also serve, along with the other funding partners, on an Advisory Group that will monitor developments and lend assistance where required. An officer has been seconded from NHS Ayrshire and Arran to the Association on a short term basis to act as General Manager.

The Sub Committee (a) noted the Business Plan which will be presented to the Association's Board on 29 August 2005; and (b) agreed to the arrangements put in place for future financial support to the Association, and the monitoring of performance against agreed outcomes.

2. North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership: Regeneration Outcome Agreement

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the approval by Scottish Ministers, of North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership's Regeneration Outcome Agreement (ROA) for 2005/06 to 2007/08.

The Community Planning Partnership has produced a Regeneration Outcome Agreement, a summary of which was appended to the report, to guide local regeneration developments in the most disadvantaged areas of North Ayrshire over the period 2005/06 to 2007/08. The Partnership has been allocated £10.9 million from the Scottish Executive's Community Regeneration Fund over this period, and the ROA sets out how this money will be spent.

The ROA was developed around 5 national regeneration priorities which were adopted as local priorities for North Ayrshire. Nine regeneration programmes are included in the ROA, as set out below, each of which includes a number of different regeneration initiatives:-

1. Employability Programme
2. Community Safety Programme
3. Environmental Improvement Programme
4. Active Communities Programme
5. Improving Health Programme
6. Tackling Drugs Misuse Programme
7. Raising Educational Attainment Programme
8. Engaging Young People Programme
9. Support and Community Engagement Programme

The ROA was approved by the Communities Minister in July 2005 and arrangements are now being put in place to implement it.

The Committee agreed to (a) note the approval of the Regeneration Outcome Agreement by the Communities Minister; and (b) receive six-monthly progress reports on the implementation of the ROA, and reports on individual initiatives as appropriate.

3. Financial Inclusion Funding

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on plans to enhance financial inclusion services following the allocation of additional funding by the Scottish Executive.

The Scottish Executive's Financial Inclusion Action Plan promotes financial inclusion as part of its "Closing the Opportunity Gap" approach to tackling poverty and deprivation. The target is to increase the availability of appropriate financial services and money advice to low-income families to reduce their vulnerability to financial exclusion and multiple debts by 2008.

After representations from the Council, the Scottish Executive, based on the high figures for income deprivation and financial exclusion within North Ayrshire, has agreed to allocate £300,000 per annum in 2006/07 and 2007/08 to fund financial inclusion activities. North Ayrshire Welfare Rights Service has secured funding from the Community Planning Partnership to carry out a feasibility study on financial inclusion which is expected to be completed by October 2005. It is anticipated that the study will identify a need for more one-to-one work to support individuals out of financial exclusion and mentoring over a period of after-care. Credit Unions and other relevant voluntary sector groups will be involved in activities, and the aim is to implement the findings of the study from April 2006.

The Sub Committee agreed to (a) note the allocation of financial inclusion funding to North Ayrshire Council; (b) endorse the submission of proposals resulting from the feasibility study to the Community Planning Partnership's Social and Economic Development Group; and (c) receive a further report at a future meeting.

4. Capital Plans: Monitoring Statement

Submitted report by the Assistant Chief Executive (Finance) on movement in the Council's approved capital budgets for 2005/06 and beyond, as a result of projects brought forward from 2004/05, and projects being carried forward to future years.

Noted.

The meeting ended at 3.05 p.m.