

Ardrossan and Arran, Saltcoats and Stevenston Area Committee
14 October 2010

STEVENSTON, 14 October 2010 - At a Meeting of the Ardrossan and Arran, Saltcoats and Stevenston Area Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m.

Present

Anthony Gurney, Margie Currie, John Hunter, Peter McNamara, Ronnie McNicol and Alan Munro.

In Attendance

D. Nibloe, Head of Finance (Finance and Infrastructure); J. McHarg, Assistant Manager (Community Services) and B. Anderson, Performance/Grants Information Officer (Education and Skills); J. Cumming, Project Officer (Economic Development), M. Anderson, Committee Services Officer and D. McCaw, Committee Services Support Officer (Chief Executive's Service).

Also In Attendance

Station Commander M. Gallacher (Strathclyde Fire and Rescue); Sergeant M. Porter (Strathclyde Police); and S. Hammond, North Ayrshire Citizens Advice Service (NACAS).

Chair

Councillor Gurney in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

William Gibson and David Munn.

1. Declarations of Interest

In term of Standing Order 16, Councillor McNamara, as the spouse of an employee of NACAS, declared an indirect interest in Agenda Item 3, and took no part in the discussion thereon.

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 8 September 2010 were signed in accordance with Paragraph 7 (1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

3. Presentation: North Ayrshire Citizens Advice Service (NACAS)

The Committee received a presentation from S. Hammond, Manager of the North Ayrshire Citizens Advice Service (NACAS) on the services provided in North Ayrshire.

NACAS is a charity formed in 1998 with branches in Arran, Irvine, Kilbirnie, Largs and Saltcoats. The Service is a member of Citizen's Advice Scotland and has been credited with a Scottish National Standards for Information and Advice Providers award by the Scottish Government. Whilst the Service relies on Government, Council and Citizen's Advice Scotland for core funding, they also receive contributions from other donors.

The service is free, independent and confidential and it provides impartial advice. In 2009/10 NACAS received 22,210 enquiries from North Ayrshire as a whole. The Service provides general advice and information on:-

- Benefits;
- Consumer issues;
- Debt;
- Education;
- Employment;
- Financial products and services;
- Health and community care;
- Housing; and
- Immigration.

Legal advice is also provided on:-

- NHS complaints;
- Relationships;
- Travel, transport and holidays; and
- Utilities and communications.

NACAS also provide information on the Affordable Warmth Programme, taking an active role in the fight against fuel poverty.

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

- the limited outreach work currently undertaken by the service;
- how data protection issues are handled;
- the recruitment and training of volunteers; and
- accessing NACAS via Facebook and Twitter.

Noted.

4. Strathclyde Police

Sergeant Porter provided information on the following:-

- Current crime within the local area, including housebreakings and car crime;
- Action plans being put in place by the Community Policing Units to address identified local issues;
- New legislation in terms of anti-social behaviour;
- Changes to the structure of the Community Policing teams to address crime trends across the Ardrossan, Saltcoats and Stevenston areas; and
- demands on the force arising from the recent murder in the area.

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

- the ongoing review of staffing within Strathclyde Police and the possible effects on the current policing model in terms of a move from response policing to community policing; and
- the spate of recent housebreakings within the area.

Noted.

5. Strathclyde Fire and Rescue

Submitted report by Strathclyde Fire and Rescue on activity from 24 August to 3 October 2010, which included information on community initiatives, deliberate fire raising, rubbish fires, grass and heath fires, malicious false alarms, and other special services.

Station Commander Gallacher provided further information on the following:-

- the high percentage of false alarm call-outs, especially to commercial premises;
- action to help tackle unwanted fire alarms;
- a deliberate fire raising incident in Caledonia Road in Stevenston involving wheelie bins and the joint action being taken by the fire service and the community policing teams to address the issue of wheelie bin fires;
- community safety work and fire reach courses involving the local schools; and
- the Fire Safety Awareness day to be held on 19 October 2010.

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

- deliberate fire incidents, particularly in relation to Caledonia Road, Stevenston;
- the petrol bomb incident in Saltcoats;
- the enforcement powers available to the fire service under the Fire (Scotland) Act in relation to incidents at derelict sites; and
- powers available to tackle equipment faults within commercial premises.

Noted.

6. Community Benefit Fund: Application for Grant Aid

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on applications for grant received in respect of the Community Benefit Fund.

The Community Benefit Fund has a balance available for disbursement of £11,908.84, £13,631.27 and £2,383.52 for Ardrossan, Saltcoats and Stevenston, and Arran, respectively.

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

Saltcoats and Stevenston Awards

Organisation

Springvale Nursery Centre Parents Committee
St. John's Youth Group

Award

£1,851.24
£500.00, subject to payment of the award being deferred until February 2011, following the Group's return from its trip to Krakow in Poland.

7. 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 for financial assistance under the Council's Community Development Grants Scheme and the Local Youth Action Fund.

The Committee agreed to make the following awards:-

Community Development Grants Scheme

Organisation

Whiting Bay Bowling Club
Arran Theatre Arts Trust
Isle of Arran Community Council
Ardrossan Wednesday Pensioner's Club
Argyle Quilting Group
Evolution Skate Park
Saltcoats Victoria Football Club

Award

£ 500
£ 500
£ 150
£ 450
£ 460
£2,000
£4,500, in principle, subject to the Club being able to demonstrate by the February 2011 meeting of the Area Committee that it has raised the balance of monies needed for the project.

Local Youth Action Fund**Organisation**

HCPT Group 207

Award

£2,000

8. Common Good Funds**8.1 Ardrossan, Saltcoats and Stevenston Common Good Funds: Income**

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Infrastructure) on the income generated from the Ardrossan, Saltcoats and Stevenston Common Good Funds.

At its meeting on 24 June 2010, the Area Committee received reports on the draft accounts of the Ardrossan, Saltcoats and Stevenston Common Good Funds and agreed to receive further information on the management and investment of the funds.

All Common Good Funds administered by North Ayrshire Council are invested within the Council's Loans Fund and receive revenue interest based on the average rate of interest achieved during the year for invested funds and on the level of common funds invested. The rate of interest received for 2009/10 was 1.43%, which was significantly lower than the previous two years due to the effect of the economic downturn on interest rates. It is not anticipated that the Loans Fund rate for 2010/11 will be higher than that for 2009/10.

The combined available funds of the Ardrossan, Saltcoats and Stevenston Common Good Funds totalled £232,110 as at 31 March 2010. In addition to income from revenue interest, Saltcoats Common Good receives £900 per annum in income from a local TV relay company.

Members asked questions, and received clarification, on the higher rates of interest applicable to personal investments and the various conditions which apply to higher earning accounts.

At its June meeting, the Area Committee agreed that the level of disbursement from Stevenston Common Good should not exceed £13,500 in 2010/11. However, the proposed levels of disbursement from the Ardrossan and Saltcoats Funds was not formally agreed.

The Committee (a) agreed that the levels of disbursement from each of the Ardrossan and Saltcoats Common Good funds should not exceed £1,000 in 2010/11; and (b) otherwise noted the report.

8.2 Ardrossan/Saltcoats/Stevenston Common Good Funds: Combined Application

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on applications received in respect of funding from the Ardrossan, Saltcoats and Stevenston Common Good Funds.

The Committee agreed to award funding to the Three Towns Firework Festival Group as follows:-

Common Good Fund	Award
Ardrossan Common Good Fund	£820
Saltcoats Common Good Fund	£900
Stevenston Common Good Fund	£700

8.3 Stevenston Common Good Fund: Applications for Financial Assistance

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

The Committee agreed to make the following awards:-

Organisation	Award
The International, Historical, Cultural, and Geographical Agency	£1,050
Community Led Action and Support Project (CLASP)	£3,000

9. Stevenston: Site to the North of Graham Avenue: Street Naming for Housing Development by Barratt West Scotland

Submitted report by the Solicitor to the Council on proposed names for two new street within the development of a site to the North of Graham Avenue, Stevenston.

The Committee agreed to remit to the Solicitor to the Council, in consultation with the 4 Local Members, to determine appropriate street names for the development.

10. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Area Committee will be held on Thursday 25 November 2010 at 2.00 p.m. in the Ardeer Neighbourhood Centre.

11. Future Agenda Items

The Committee (a) highlighted a number of items for inclusion as future agenda items:-

- a presentation by Nigel Marshall, Arran Outdoor Education Resource, on the possibility of the Tall Ships visiting Arran;
- a report on outstanding roads related issues; and
- an update on the protocol for Members and Officers engaging with the media;

(b) noted that the Committee Services Officer had undertaken to investigate separately the legal position in terms of any obstruction to the public footpath arising from wheelie bins; and (c) noted that any additional items for consideration at the next meeting should be submitted to M. Anderson or D. McCaw.

The Meeting ended at 3.35 p.m.