

Irvine Area Committee
10 March 2010

IRVINE, 10 March 2010 - At a Meeting of the Irvine Area Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m.

Present

Pat McPhee, Tom Barr, Matthew Brown, Ian Clarkson, Ruby Kirkwood, John Moffat, and Joan Sturgeon.

In Attendance

Y. Hunter, Cleansing Controller (Finance and Infrastructure); A. Little, Committee Services Officer and E. Fisher, Committee Services Support Officer (Chief Executive's Service).

Also In Attendance

Inspector S. Irvine, Strathclyde Police; L. Brady, Community Safety Co-ordinator, Strathclyde Fire and Rescue; and D. Gillies, Stagecoach Western.

Chair

Councillor McPhee in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

David O'Neill.

1. Strathclyde Police

Inspector Irvine reported on incidents and activities in the Committee's area during January and February 2010. Information was provided in relation to crimes of attempted murder, serious assault, robbery and drugs.

Three new officers are to be deployed in the Ward 2 area and details of two action plans which will be implemented within the ward areas during the month of March were provided:-

- Ward 1 - as part of a town centre initiative additional police activity will be put in place to both detect and deter persons who carry weapons, engage in anti social behaviour or other criminal activities and to provide public reassurance to law abiding citizens within the town centre area. This initiative will involve the use of the 'Ferroguard' metal detector and where available the Dog Branch.
- Ward 2 - a month long period of increased police activity within the Dreghorn, Springside, Broomlands and Bourtreehill areas will commence on 1 March 2010. This additional policing activity, supported by the mobile CCTV unit and other partner agencies is designed to combat anti social behaviour within those communities with a particular emphasis on gang disorder and those involved in drug use and distribution.

Noted.

2. Strathclyde Fire and Rescue

Submitted report by Strathclyde Fire and Rescue on activity within the Irvine area from 7 January to 1 March 2010.

The Community Safety Co-ordinator provided Information in relation to:-

- Fires involving property
- Secondary fires
- Malicious calls
- Heath and grass fires
- Special service
- Road traffic collisions
- Home Fire Safety Visits
- Fire Reach and Work Experience Courses
- Community Education

The Community Safety vehicle will be visiting the Dreghorn area at the beginning of April 2010 and will target the most vulnerable people in the area.

Strathclyde Fire and Rescue are working with NHS Scotland to encourage people to stop smoking in a move to improve health and reduce fires. In addition to promoting fire safety advice, NHS smoking-cessation packs and Smokeline cards will be provided during Home Fire Safety visits.

Noted.

3. Stagecoach Bus Services

Ms D. Gillies, Stagecoach Western provided information on the new timetable in relation to services within the Irvine area which was brought into force on 11 January 2010.

Members asked questions with regard to the timetable and whether services would be withdrawn leaving certain areas without a bus service. The Committee was advised that the number 29 hourly service is being sponsored by Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) on a 3 month basis.

The Committee agreed that Stagecoach Western and SPT be invited to attend an informal meeting of the Irvine Area Committee to discuss the timetabling of bus services and alteration of routes in the Irvine area.

4. Abandoned Shopping Trolleys

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Infrastructure) on the situation regarding abandoned shopping trolleys.

Within the Irvine area there is a regular problem with abandoned shopping trolleys and in June 1998 a meeting took place with local supermarkets to discuss the issue. An agreement was reached that supermarkets would uplift any abandoned trolleys prior to 11.00 am each day and thereafter Cleansing staff would check the local area and uplift any further trolleys. If the supermarkets wish the trolleys returned they are charged at £16 per trolley, if they do not want them returned then they are taken for recycling.

Further meetings have taken place with local supermarkets and in September 2009 the local stores provided funding which allowed the River Irvine to be cleared of approximately 200 abandoned trolleys.

Over the last 6 months the following number of shopping trolleys have been collected:-

- Asda - 203
- Tesco - 44
- Lidl - 12
- Marks and Spencer - 8
- Wilkinsons - 1

A discussion took place on whether the cost of returning trolleys to supermarkets should be increased and if supermarkets would be liable in the event of injury caused by an abandoned trolley.

The Committee agreed that (a) the Solicitor to the Council provide information on the legal interpretation in relation to the liability for abandoned trolleys; and (b) the Corporate Director (Finance and Infrastructure) ascertain the cost to the Council in processing abandoned trolleys and if the charge levied to supermarkets meets these costs, or requires to be increased.

5. Irvine Common Good: Application for Financial Assistance

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

The Committee agreed to award Fullarton Community Health House a grant of £3,000.

6. Urgent Items

The Chair agreed that the following item be considered as a matter of urgency.

6.1 Seagate Castle

It was reported that Seagate Castle in Irvine is in a dangerous state and in need of urgent repairs.

In April/May 2009 Educational Services commissioned a survey of the castle by Robert Potter and Partners which found various serious defects which made the building unsafe. The estimated cost of the total repairs was £600,000.

Members agreed that public safety was paramount and asked questions in relation to the Council's Public Liability Insurance.

The Committee agreed that (a) the Corporate Director (Education and Skills) be requested to provide copies of the survey on Seagate Castle to Members of the Irvine Area Committee; and (b) the Solicitor to the Council provide information in relation to Public Liability for Seagate Castle.

The meeting ended at 3.04 p.m.