

Garnock Valley and West Kilbride Area Committee
27 January 2011

DALRY, 27 January 2011 - At a Meeting of the Garnock Valley and West Kilbride Area Committee at 2.00 p.m.

Present

Robert Barr, John Bell, Anthea Dickson, and Elizabeth McLardy.

In Attendance

W. Turpie, Operations Manager - Streetscene (Environment and Related Services) (Finance and Infrastructure); J. McHarg, Assistant Manager, Community Development and B. Anderson, Performance/Grants Information Officer (Community and Culture) (Education and Skills) and P. Shiach, Committee Services Officer (Chief Executive's Service).

Also In Attendance

Sergeant G. Muir and Police Constable B. Cochrane (Strathclyde Police).

Chair

Councillor Barr in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

Jean Highgate and John Reid, North Ayrshire Council; Inspector C. Sweeney, Strathclyde Police; and Station Commander M. Gallacher and L. Brady, Community Safety Co-ordinator (Strathclyde Fire and Rescue).

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest by Members in terms of Standing Order 16.

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the previous meeting of the Garnock Valley and West Kilbride Area Committee held on 24 November 2010 were signed in accordance with paragraph 7(1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

3. Strathclyde Fire and Rescue

Submitted report by Strathclyde Fire and Rescue on activity within the Garnock Valley and West Kilbride in the period 16 November 2010 to 20 January 2011.

The report provided information on the number and type of incidents attended by the Fire and Rescue Service including a deliberate dwelling house fire in Kilbirnie, a deliberate non-domestic fire in Dalry, malicious fire alarm reports in Dalry and Kilbirnie, and Firereach and Work Experience courses which will run from 1 to 4 February 2011 involving pupils from Auchenhavie, Ardrossan, Garnock and St. Matthews Academies.

Noted.

4. Strathclyde Police

Submitted report by Strathclyde Police on activity within the Garnock Valley and West Kilbride area in November and December 2010.

The report provided information relating to beats 07, 08, 09, 10, 11, 12 and 23 which encompass a geographical area including Kilbirnie, Dalry, Beith and Fairlie. Information in relation to Fairlie was included with beat 23 which covers mainly West Kilbride.

The report indicated that in October 2010, the service delivery model for Strathclyde Police underwent a significant change within an integrated service delivery model. As a consequence of this, police resources in wards 6 and 7 have been amended. Full details were contained within the report.

Sergeant Muir advised the Committee that the changes had resulted in 5 new policing sergeants and 18 Community Constables within wards 6, 7 and 8. He outlined areas of concern and priorities including a campaign against violence, issues with domestic violence and drug enforcement.

Members of the Committee sought, and received, clarification on a number of issues within the report, including gang incidents which arose in early January 2011.

Noted.

5. Community Development Grants Scheme/Local Youth Action Fund - Applications for Grant Aid

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

The Committee agreed to make the following awards:

Community Development Grants Scheme

Organisation

West Kilbride Music Club

Award

£500.00

Local Youth Action Fund

Organisation

Garnock Valley Community Safety Forum

Award

£1,500.00

6. Graffiti Squad

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Infrastructure) on the services undertaken by the Council's Graffiti Squad.

At its meeting on 24 November 2010 the Committee had requested a report to a future meeting on the Council's service provision for the removal of graffiti.

The graffiti squad was formed in June 2005 as a fast response team for the removal of graffiti. A team comprises of a driver and an operative. There are three teams to cover North Ayrshire, one based in each geographical area. Each team has a vehicle, appropriate cleaning materials and machinery.

The Scottish Government identified a key priority in the Single Outcome Agreement to reduce crime. National Outcome 9 aims to ensure we live lives safe from crime, disorder and danger. This links locally through the Council's action plan. The local indicator 9a aims to reduce the fear of crime and aims to reduce anti social behaviour. Graffiti is a form of antisocial behaviour.

When there is graffiti in an area it degenerates the neighbourhoods we live in. Criminologists would theorise that graffiti in an area attracts further graffiti, wider anti social behaviour and environmental crime. The aim of the graffiti squad is to remove the graffiti to ensure that a neighbourhood does not enter into the cyclical position where graffiti results in more graffiti.

When the graffiti squad was formed there was a fairly high instance of graffiti removal taking place. The graffiti squad's first full year of operation was in 2006. During that year the squad recorded the removal of 1,080 instances of graffiti. This compares with 664 instances in year 2009, which is a reduction of 38%. The figure for year 2010 to the end of the third quarter was 444 instances. This is a good indication that 2010/11 will continue the trend of reduced instances of graffiti.

Graffiti can be reported in a number of ways, complaints from the public, through the community warden's service, housing services, housing associations, the police and the general workforce of the Council. Once the graffiti is reported, the service target to have it removed is 7 days. Currently 96.8% of graffiti is removed within 7 days. Offensive or racist graffiti is prioritised and removed within 24 hours.

Once an instance of graffiti is reported the main process by which the removal of the graffiti is managed is through the Council's customer service system LAGAN. The contact centre assistant will input the details from the member of the public onto the system. The LAGAN message is picked up locally at the depot by a cleansing supervisor. The LAGAN message acts like a job ticket and the local cleansing supervisor then instructs the graffiti squad to attend and remove the graffiti. This builds up their daily work schedule. Once the graffiti removal is completed the job is closed off on the LAGAN system. When they are not clearing graffiti the squad is used to clear other environmental crime.

The graffiti squad forms a small but significant part in assisting the Council achieve a safe and secure community a key objective of the Community Planning Partnership.

The number of incidents of graffiti removal and performance against time scales for removal are reported on a quarterly basis by Housing Services through the Community Planning Partnership.

Noted.

7. West Kilbride - Kirkton Glen

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Infrastructure) on the current status of the sports facilities at the Kirkton Glen, West Kilbride.

At its meeting on 24 November 2010, the Committee requested that a report be prepared, setting out the condition of the sports facilities at Kirkton Glen in West Kilbride.

The report detailed the conditions of the grass football pitch, running track, tennis courts and the blaes seven-a-side football pitches.

The report submitted a number of options for consideration, including: -

- Further assessment to establish interest in local tennis, or a wider sports club to include football and athletics;
- Options to restore the running track should demand for the facility be demonstrated;
- Restoration of the tennis courts, should suitable demand be demonstrated, and
- Promotion of the all weather pitch at West Kilbride primary school to engage the community and encourage wider community use

In terms of the blaes pitch at the Glen, the following were suggested for consideration: -

- Reinstatement of the pitch as blaes with improved drainage and resurfacing. While this would bring the pitch up to standard, it would not solve the problems bringing the pitch into disrepair. A bollard could be erected to prevent vehicles crossing the pitch, however the risk of vandalism would still exist, as would the ongoing parking problems when games are taking place on the grass pitch;
- Convert the blaes pitch to grass to provide training facilities for football teams. The grass would require more maintenance however it may discourage vehicles from driving on the pitch;
- Replacement of the blaes pitch with an all weather pitch. This would cost approximately £150,000;
- Convert the blaes pitch to a carpark at minimal cost. This would improve parking but would result in the loss of a pitch.

The costs of the remedial work required to bring the facilities at the Glen up to the required standard were estimated at £33,035. Full details were contained in Appendix A to the report.

The Committee sought, and received, clarification on a number of issues relative to the report, including external funding which may be available to sports clubs forming in the area, whether the proposal from the local resident, Mr Wilson, was for a tennis club or multi sport facility, and the role of Education and Skills in the on-going consultation process relative to Kirkton Glen. The Assistant Manager, Community Development advised that development of facilities of this nature fell within the remit of his section, and that he would arrange for the Community Club Development Manager to meet with the local resident, Mr Wilson and the Head of Service (Community and Culture) (Education and Skills) to explore possibilities for the future of the Glen

The Committee noted the report, and agreed that a report on the outcome of any discussions be reported to the next meeting.

8. Dates and Venues for Meetings 2011

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the dates of and venues for meetings of the Area Committee in 2011.

The Committee has, since 2008 held its meeting at various, suitable locations within the wards of Dalry and West Kilbride, and Kilbirnie and Beith.

Following approval of the meeting dates for 2011, and as a result of the change of meeting day from Wednesday to Thursday, West Kilbride Community Centre is unable to offer ground floor accommodation in 2011.

The Committee noted the dates and venues for 2011, and agreed that the possibility of holding meetings in West Kilbride Village Hall, be investigated.

9. Future Agenda Items

The Committee agreed that the Corporate Director (Education and Skills) be requested to report to the next meeting on the condition of Meadowside Pitches in Beith.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Area Committee is scheduled for Thursday 10 March 2011 at 2.00 p.m. in Beith Community Centre.

The meeting ended at 3.05 p.m.