

North Coast Area Committee
24 September 2015

Fairlie, 24 September 2015 - At a Meeting of the North Coast Area Committee at 2.00 p.m.

Present

Alex Gallagher, Grace McLean and Tom Marshall.

In Attendance

A. Laursen, Team Manager (Regeneration), J. McHarg, Senior Manager (Participation and Empowerment), J. McKnight, Senior Manager (Community Development) and G. Hunter, Town Centre Manager; C. Haining, Streetscene Officer (Place); and M. Anderson, Committee Services Team Leader (Chief Executive's Service).

Also In Attendance

Inspector J. Conway (Police Scotland); Station Manager L. Elliot (Scottish Fire and Rescue Service); Neil Gallacher (Managing Director), Craig Little (Operations Director) and Scott Watson (Marketing and Communications Manager) (Complete Solutions FM Ltd); and L. and R. Young (Largs Viking Festival Committee).

Chair

Councillor Gallagher in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

Alan Hill.

1. Declarations of Interest

In terms of Standing Order 10 and Section 5 of the Code of Conduct for Councillors, Councillor Gallagher, as Chair of the Viking Festival, declared an indirect non-pecuniary interest in the Agenda Item 5.2 (Largs Update Report) as it related to the erection and dismantling of the Largs Viking Festival Village.

2. Minutes

The accuracy of the Minutes of the ordinary Meeting of the Committee held on 13 August 2015 was confirmed and the Minutes signed in accordance with Paragraph 7 (1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

3. Presentation: New Investment on Cumbrae

The Committee received a presentation by representatives of Complete Solutions (FM) Limited on the company's proposals for the WestPoint Coastal Resort and Cumbrae Solar Farm on the island of Cumbrae.

The presentation highlighted the following:-

- the proposed £5-6m development of a 43 acre site on Cumbrae, including the provision of 300 holiday lodge/park homes, a retirement village component, a swimming pool with hydrotherapy facilities, spa and indoor sports and on-site restaurant, bar and hotel;
- ongoing consultation to encourage community involvement in the resort project; and
- plans for a £4-5m solar development comprising 22,000 panels over a 26 acre site located in a valley near the top of the island of Cumbrae; and
- the anticipated benefits of the projects in terms of tourism and employment.

Members discussed the following:-

- the work undertaken to gauge the financial sustainability of the proposed resort development;
- any issues in terms of land contamination in the vicinity of the resort site;
- the anticipated timescales associated with the projects;
- issues for the solar farm proposals in relation to feed in tariffs and grid connection; and
- the lack of domestic fuel provision on the island.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair extended his thanks to the representatives of Complete Solutions (FM) Limited for their presentation.

Noted.

4. CPP Partners

4.1 Police Scotland

Inspector Joseph Conway provided a verbal update on issues of local interest for the period from 13 August to 24 September 2015, including information on the following:-

- crime statistics for the North Coast area, including a drop in overall reported crime compared with the same period last year;
- one serious assault since the last Area Committee meeting; and
- policing at recent events, such as the Scooter Rally, Largs Viking Festival, Kelburn PFC and the Country and Western Festival.

Members discussed the potential impact of the introduction of a 20mph limit in Largs, as reported in the national press.

Noted.

4.2 Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

Station Manager Lawson Elliot provided a verbal report on issues of local interest for period 30 July to 20 September 2015, including information on the following:-

- a total of 39 incidents over the reporting period, comprising 28 unwanted automatic fire alarm incidents, 7 fires (4 involving property and the rest secondary refuse/grass fires), 2 special services incidents, and 2 malicious calls;
- the new policy in relation unwanted automatic fire alarms, which will be implemented on 1 December 2015;
- the increased challenges of high risk referrals for home fire safety visits and the provision of fire retardant bedding; and
- Prevention First, the daily scrutiny paper for suspected malicious/anti-social events reported to Police Scotland.

Members discussed the recent increase in malicious calls.

Noted.

5. Largs Reports

5.1 Largs Sea Front Car Park

Submitted report by Executive Director (Place) on the implications of introducing a reduced parking charge for one-hour stays.

At its meeting on 13 August 2015, the Committee requested information regarding the likely implications of introducing a reduced parking charge of £1.00 for one hour stays at Largs Sea Front Car Park. Currently, the fee for using the Largs sea front car park is £3.00 per stay per day, regardless of duration.

The report indicated that, based on modelling of the usage information for the period from May 2014 to March 2015, a dual charge of £1 for one hour stays and £3 thereafter, would have resulted in a reduction in income of £25,966. For the first quarter of 2015/16, the reduction would have been £10,242. The report acknowledged, however, that reducing the charge for shorter stays may increase usage by visitors and residents who currently choose to park in the streets near the seafront.

Members discussed the following:-

- alternative charging options; and
- the need for any changes to be considered by all four local Members and, thereafter, introduced on a pilot basis initially.

The Committee agreed (a) to request that a report be submitted to the next meeting to analyse the likely impact, based on usage data for 2014/15, of introducing tiered charges for 1 hour, up to 3 hour and over 4 hour stays in the Largs Seafront Car Park; and (b) otherwise, to note the content of the report.

5.2 Largs Update Report

Submitted report by Executive Director (Place) on associated costs with the building and dismantling of the Viking Festival Village for 2015, and providing an update on Largs Campus.

At its meeting on 13 August 2015, the Committee requested a detailed breakdown of the costs associated with erecting the Viking Festival village, to allow Members to assess if the costs might be reduced and whether to consider alternatives to erecting the village on a year on year basis, in addition to the regular update information on matters relating to Largs.

The report provided further information on the costs associated with building the Viking Festival Village. The majority of the build is done out-with core hours, with the costs for labour and materials for the 2015 event being is £30,132.03. A detailed breakdown was provided at Appendix 1 to the report. In addition, the report gave an update on the Largs Campus project, including the pre-planning consultation events which were held on 24 and 26 August 2015, continued engagement with staff, pupils and parents, and the outcome of an archeological survey. It is anticipated that the full planning application will be submitted at the end of September 2015.

The Chair invited representatives of Larks Viking Festival Committee to give a short verbal report on the wider economic benefits associated with the festival and the positive feedback received from visitors.

Members discussed the following:-

- the hourly charging rate applied by the Council for the construction and dismantling of the Viking Village;
- the rationale for construction of the village being undertaken largely on a time-and-a-half charging or double-time basis, whilst dismantling work appears to be possible on a plain time basis;
- the value of associated attractions, such as the adjacent fairground; and
- ways in which the festival could capitalise on the educational benefits of school pupils visiting the Viking Village.

The Committee agreed (a) to record its appreciation of the work of the Viking Festival Committee in organising the event; and (b) otherwise, to note the content of the report.

5.3 Largs Masterplan

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Economy and Communities) on progress in respect of the Largs Masterplan.

The Masterplan was attached as an appendix to the report and set out outline proposals for the town centre and promenade, including the identification of four priority areas, at Aubery Park, the Seafront/Promenade, Main Street and the Ferry Terminal, and Gallowgate Square. Further design development will be required to realise full improvement proposals and cost estimates.

Members discussed the following:-

- the submission of a funding application to take forward improvements to Gallowgate Square; and
- the importance of the Promenade in tourism terms and the need to prioritise improvements to it.

The Committee agreed to (a) note completion of the Masterplan; (b) endorse its proposals; and (c) note the intent to progress Gallowgate Square during 2015/16.

5.4 Economy and Communities Update

Submitted report by Executive Director (Economy and Communities) on actions taken in relation to the list of projects and issues in relation to Largs.

The report provided an update on the Largs Forestry proposals, which will undergo statutory public consultation once the Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) is satisfied with the final draft of the Environment Statement. It is anticipated that this consultation will take place before the end of 2015, after which, the FCS will review comments received and then either grant the proposals subject to conditions, or refuse consent. In terms of the hydro electric proposals, planning consents were issued to the Greeto Water and Gogo Schemes on 24 July 2015 and on 2 September 2015, respectively.

The report also provided further information on the Council's business development work in the area, following the appointment of a Business Growth Manager with direct responsibility for Largs and Cumbrae.

Members discussed how the Largs Masterplan will merge with the coastal strategy elements of the Council's wider Economic Development and Regeneration Strategy.

The Committee agreed (a) to invite the Council's Senior Business Manager and Business Growth Manager for Largs and Cumbrae to give a presentation on their work at the next meeting of the Committee; and (b) otherwise, to note the content of the report.

6. Fairlie Reports

6.1 Economy and Communities Update

Submitted report by Executive Director (Economy and Communities) on actions taken in relation to the list of projects and issues in relation to Fairlie.

The report provided updates in relation to:-

- the A78, including attendance by officers at meetings of the Fairlie Safer Roads Group and the positive impact of traffic signals and the change to the road surface;
- the Shore Path project, including public consultation on the Coastal Path Bay Street to South Car Park proposals and completion of the South Car Park to Hunterston Roundabout part of the project.
- the Scottish Environment Protection Agency's ongoing consideration of EDF's application to vary its authorisation to dispose of radioactive waste at Hunterston B; and
- the job losses likely to arise at Hunterston as a result of the proposed closure of the Longannet Coal Power Station in Fife in March 2016.

Members discussed potential safety issues around the use of the coastal path by both pedestrians and cyclists.

Noted.

7. Skelmorlie

7.1 Economy and Communities Update

Submitted report by Executive Director (Economy and Communities) on actions taken in relation to the list of projects and issues in relation to Skelmorlie.

The report provided an update on issues in relation to Skelmorlie Cross, including the proposed relocation to Skelmorlie Community Centre of the pick up point at Skelmorlie Cross and the removal of the bus bay marking from the Spar side at Skelmorlie Cross.

The Committee also received a verbal update by the Senior Manager (Community Development) on progress in respect of the MUGA, namely the Community Sports Club's award of charitable status, and support being provided by officers to assist in the development of Skelmorlie Community Tennis Club.

The Committee agreed (a) to receive a further update on the Skelmorlie MUGA and Skelmorlie Community Tennis Club at the next meeting of the Committee; and (b) otherwise, to note the content of the report.

8. Cumbrae

8.1 Economy and Communities Update

Submitted report by Executive Director (Economy and Communities) on actions taken in relation to the list of projects and issues in relation to Cumbrae.

The report provided an update on the following:-

- the Millport Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme, which will be launched early in 2016, and it will operate for a five year period thereafter;
- the current position with regard to the Garrison Stables and options for a Compulsory Purchase Order;
- a public consultation event held on 31 August 2015 to discuss the proposed Cumbrae Economic Regeneration Plan;
- continued support for the Field Studies Council (FSC) in their operation of the Millport Field Centre, including attendance at the launch of the Year of Fieldwork on 14 September 2015; and
- plans to continue to explore the potential for investment in additional accommodation facilities on the island through proposals emerging at both the WestPoint Village and George Hotel.

Members discussed the following:-

- the submission of a funding application to the Coastal Communities Fund; and
- a forthcoming meeting between officers of the Council and representatives of Complete Solutions (FM) Limited and Highlands and Islands Enterprise.

Noted.

9. Community Development Grant Scheme and Local Youth Action Fund: Application for Financial Assistance

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Economy and Communities) on applications received in respect of the Community Development Grant Scheme.

The Committee agreed to make the following awards:-

Community Development Grant Scheme

Organisation	Award
Fairlie Fairtrade Initiative	£700.00
Largs Gaelic Choir	£900.00

10. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the North Coast Area Committee will be held on Thursday 19 November 2015 at 2.00 p.m. in Largs Library.

Noted.

11. Future Agenda Items

The Committee agreed to note that Members should advise Committee Services of any potential items for inclusion on a future Agenda.

The Meeting ended at 4.05 p.m.

