

North Coast Area Committee  
19 November 2015

**Fairlie, 19 November 2015** - At a Meeting of the North Coast Area Committee at 2.00 p.m.

**Present**

Alex Gallagher and Tom Marshall.

**In Attendance**

M. Strachan, Senior Business Manager, J. McKnight, Senior Manager (Community Development), S. Munro, Business Growth Manager and L. Kirk, Access Officer (Economy and Communities); T. Reaney, Senior Manager (Streetscene), T. Fitzsimmons, Divisional Manager - Headquarters, Y. Holland, Project Manager, C. Forsyth, Assistant Transportation Manager, C. Dempster, Assistant Network Manager and H. Miller, Streetscene Officer (Place); and M. Anderson, Committee Services Team Leader (Chief Executive's Service).

**Also In Attendance**

Inspector J. Conway (Police Scotland); Station Manager G. Fleming (Scottish Fire and Rescue Service); and D. Blair and I. Murdoch (Largs Community Council).

**Chair**

Councillor Gallagher in the Chair.

**Apologies for Absence**

Alan Hill and Grace McLean.

**1. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest by Members in terms of Standing Order 10 and Section 5 of the Councillors Code of Conduct.

**2. Minutes**

The accuracy of the Minutes of the ordinary Meeting of the Committee held on 24 September 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: Business Growth (Economic Growth)**

The Committee received a presentation by the Senior Business Manager and Business Growth Manager (Economic Growth) (Economy and Communities) on the Business Support function within Economic Growth

The presentation highlighted the following:-

- the team's vision to have the best business support offer in Scotland;
- the in-house Team North Ayrshire approach and its work with a number of external agencies;
- the significant rise in the number of businesses and jobs supported by the service;
- the geographic portfolios of Business Growth Managers;
- the supports in place in terms of the Early Growth and High Growth offers; and
- examples of some of the companies currently receiving support.

Members asked questions, and received clarification, on the following:-

- the importance of working to safeguard existing jobs, as well as supporting the creation of new employment;
- the strategy for the future of Hunterston;
- whether support might be provided to the Largs Information Bureau; and
- the extent to which innovation can result in job losses and how this might be mitigated.

The Senior Business Manager undertook to (a) provide Members with further information on the strategy for the future of Hunterston; and (b) explore opportunities to provide support to Largs Information Bureau.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair extended his thanks to the officers for their presentation.

Noted.

#### **4. CPP Partners**

##### **4.1 North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership (CPP) Board: Minutes of Meeting held on 10 September 2015**

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the Minutes of the meeting of the North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership (CPP) Board held on 10 September 2015.

Noted.

##### **4.2 Police Scotland**

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

- a breakdown of local crime statistics for periods 24 September to 13 November 2015 and 1 April to 13 November 2015, compared with the same periods last year;
- an attempted robbery at a Largs newsagents;

- a series of housebreakings; and
- policing at planned local events, including the Largs Santa Parade on 3 December 2015.

Members discussed the following:-

- plans to target driving offences in the North Coast area; and
- levels of local policing during the Halloween period and factors which might influence the number of officers on patrol.

Noted.

## **4.2 Scottish Fire and Rescue Service**

The Chair welcomed Station Manager Fleming, who provided a verbal report on issues of local interest for period from 21 September to 13 November 2015, including information on the following:-

- some 40 incidents in the local area, comprising 30 in the Largs area, 10 on Cumbrae and 1 in Skelmorlie;
- 5 fire incidents, 10 special services and 19 unwanted fire alarm systems; and
- community safety initiatives, including post domestic incident report activities, home fire safety visits and Prevention First work.

Members discussed the impact of the adverse weather on the incidence of bonfire call-outs.

Noted.

## **5. Largs Reports**

### **5.1 Targeted Property Condition Exercise: Nelson Street, Largs**

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Place) on opportunities for working with third parties and criteria for use of Compulsory Purchase Orders, to address disrepair in Nelson Street, Largs.

On 20 November 2014, the Committee considered a report on current and potential interventions for addressing poor quality private rented accommodation and requested that a targeted assessment be undertaken in Largs, with findings reported back in due course. Thereafter, at its meeting on 13 August 2015, the Committee received a further report on details of a targeted property condition assessment carried out in Nelson Street, Largs and requested that opportunities be explored for working with third parties, or using Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs), to address disrepair in the area.

The report provided an update on the further investigations undertaken, noting that, before considering a CPO, the Council or a partner would first be required to attempt to resolve any property condition issue by working with property owners. Should that fail, negotiations would then have to be entered into in an attempt to purchase properties without resorting to a CPO. However, given that most properties in Nelson Street meet the required standard, or their owners are actively engaging with the Council to bring their homes up to standard, it would be highly unlikely that the Scottish Government would approve a CPO application. The report, therefore, recommended that Housing Services continue to work with owners in the Nelson Street area in order to facilitate improvement to property condition in that area.

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

- the number of unoccupied properties in the target area;
- whether further progress was anticipated in working with owners to bring properties up to standard;
- whether any contact has been made with tenants;
- the number of properties inspected and the likelihood of those not inspected falling below Tolerable Standard; and
- possible action to address an overgrown gap site on Nelson Street.

The Committee Services Team Leader undertook to liaise with the Council's Enforcement Officer on action to address the overgrown gap site on Nelson Street.

The Committee agreed to (a) note the information provided in the report; and (b) support Housing Services' ongoing work with owners in Nelson Street to improve property condition.

## **5.2 Largs Sea Front Car Park**

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Place) on the estimated implications of introducing tiered charges at Largs Sea Front Car Park.

The current fee for using the car park is £3.00 per stay per day, regardless of duration. At its meeting on 24 September 2015, the Committee considered a report on the likely implications of introducing a reduced parking charge of £1.00 for one hour stays. The Committee requested that further analysis be undertaken on the implications of introducing tiered parking charges for stays of up to one hour, up to three hours, and beyond three hours.

A revised Appendix 1 to the report was circulated at the meeting, showing a summary of the estimated impact of revisions to the pricing structure. Based on an analysis current income and usage, pricing scenario 1, with a charge of £1.00 for up to 1 hour and £3.00 thereafter, was estimated to result in a reduction in car park income of £45,472 over 17 months and £29,944 over the period October 2014 to September 2015. Scenario 2, namely a charge of £1.00 for up to 1 hour, £3.00 for up to 3 hours and £4.00 for over 3 hours, would equate to a reduction of £19,275 and

£14,771 over the same periods. Scenario 3, a charge of £1.00 for up to 1 hour, £2.00 for up to 2 hours, £3.00 for up to 3 hours and £5.00 for over 3 hours, would result in a reduction of £34,128 and £25,945 over those periods.

Members discussed the estimated income loss associated of the various options, balanced against a possible increase in the future usage of the car park as a result of a new charging structure.

The Committee agreed that, subject to the agreement of all four local Elected Members, Scenario 2, as set out in the revised Appendix to the report, be the subject of a one-year pilot commencing in January 2016.

### **5.3 Place Update - Largs**

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Place) on progress in terms of the Largs Campus development.

The planning application for the Largs Campus was submitted at the end of October 2015, slightly later than originally targeted in order to accommodate additional pre-planning consultation with local residents. Detailed design development is ongoing, with workshops being held with staff and pupils. Market testing for the project will commence in November 2015 and this will inform the Stage 2 submission to the Scottish Futures Trust in the New Year. Subject to approval of the planning application, it is anticipated that works will commence on site in April/May 2016, with a targeted completion date of December 2017.

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

- the detailed design work being undertaken in terms of classroom layout, etc.;
- the expectation that the planning application for this project would be considered in February 2016; and
- the consultation process, including further planned consultation with adjacent residents on landscaping measures;

The Project Manager undertook to provide local Members with further information on the main issues identified as a result of the consultation exercise.

Noted.

### **5.4 Active Travel Study for Largs**

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Economy and Communities) on the proposal to develop a study to identify opportunities to improve active travel in Largs.

The need for an Active Travel Study for Largs to identify opportunities to improve walking and cycling for everyday journeys within the town was identified at a recent meeting between representatives from Largs Community Council, Sustrans Scotland and North Ayrshire Council. It is envisaged that it will be developed as a partnership

project between these organisations and be informed by extensive public consultation and engagement. The study will contribute to the delivery of the national priorities for walking and cycling as set out in the National Walking Strategy (NWS) and Cycling Action Plan for Scotland (CAPS), and will assist in achieving Largs Community Council's aspirations to develop and promote the town as being Cycle Friendly.

A funding application has been submitted to Strathclyde Partnership for Transport's (SPT) Capital Programme for the development of the study in 2016/17. A further application will be submitted to Sustrans Scotland's Community Links Fund when the scheme opens for applications for 2016/17. The outcome of these applications will be known in early 2016 and a further update provided to the Committee thereafter.

At the invitation of the Chair, the Chair of Largs Community Council provided further information to the Committee on the background project and its aspiration to provide joined up cycling opportunities within the town, including ensure safe access routes to the new Largs Campus.

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

- the provision of cycle parking and related funding issues;
- the need for full consultation to ensure public support for the proposals;
- the partners likely to be involved, namely the community council, Sustrans, SPT and the Council;
- the value of engaging with businesses and local employers on cycle route provision; and
- the expected scope of the project and the extent to which there might be shared use by pedestrians and cyclists.

Noted.

## **5.5 20mph Speed Limit A78 Trunk Road - Discussion**

The Assistant Transportation Manager provided background information on Transport Scotland's initiative to trial 20 mph speed limits on five sections of trunk road, including the main route through Largs from the Nelson Street junction at Nardini's to the Morrison's roundabout. The project targets areas with a higher than normal incidence of road traffic accident rates and where the existing mean speed of traffic is already in the order of the new 20 mph limit.

The Chair invited representatives of Largs Community Council to outline community council's objections to the introduction the 20 mph speed limit, including:-

- the fact that the area covered already has a mean speed of below 20 mph, whilst traffic speeds at other location on the trunk road through Largs present much more significant dangers to pedestrians;

- and the incongruity of a 20 mph limit on the Main Street, while the limit on narrower, adjacent streets remains 30 mph; and
- the adverse impact of signage 'clutter' associated with the new speed limit.

Members discussed the following:-

- the number of road traffic accident fatalities which had occurred outwith the proposed 20 mph area;
- the opportunity for the Council to comment on the proposals;
- issues arising from the implementation of this initiative in other parts of the country;
- the adverse impact of a proliferation of signage; and
- alternative parts of the trunk road, such as through Fairlie, where a 20 mph might be more welcome;

The Committee agreed to invite a representative of Transport Scotland to attend the next meeting to discuss the proposals.

## **5.6 Economy and Communities Update**

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

The developer of the forestry proposals to the east of Largs at Halkshill and Blairpark has submitted an updated draft Environment Statement to the Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS). Officers are reviewing the draft with a view to providing feedback to FCS. Public consultation on the proposals is still expected to take place by the end of 2015, although consultation timescales are dependent on FCS's approval of the statement. Further updates will be provided as the proposals develop.

Separately, the Cabinet has approved the implementation of a first phase of Largs Masterplan improvement proposals at Gallowgate Square. Officers are in the process of procuring detailed design works and it is envisaged that this will allow work to start on site in Spring 2016.

The Senior Business Manager provided a verbal update on the appointment of a contractor to deliver the detailed design works in respect of Gallowgate Square.

Members discussed the following:-

- flooding and road safety concerns on the A760 Largs to Kilbirnie Road in the vicinity of the access to Blairpark; and
- the outcome of the Council's funding bid in connection with works to Gallowgate Square.

The Senior Business Manager undertook to provide Members with further information of the outcome of the funding bid of the works to Gallowgate Square.

Noted.

## **6.1 Economy and Communities Update - Fairlie**

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

The 'live' application for a variation to EDF's authorisation license at Hunterston B has been with the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) since 2014. SEPA intends to submit a 'draft variation' to EDF by the end of 2015 for comment. Thereafter, SEPA plans to undertake statutory consultation with the Office for Nuclear Regulation and Food Standards Scotland. The last stage in the consultation process is consideration by Scottish Ministers, who can direct SEPA to amend the draft variation.

The final decision on the application could be made in March 2016 at the earliest. The next available time period for a final decision would likely be after the 2016 Scottish Parliament Elections. Timescales are, however, subject to change, depending on a range of factors, including the outcomes of further consultation.

Separately, the Access Officer provided a verbal update on proposals to create a resting point for walkers at the point at which the Fairlie coastal path meets the informal path network next to Hunterston sands and to clear vegetation to improve the accessibility of the informal path. A plan and map of the area was circulated at the meeting.

Noted.

## **7.1 Economy and Communities Update**

Submitted report by Executive Director (Economy and Communities) on actions taken in relation projects and issues affecting Skelmorlie.

The report advised that consideration is being given to the relocation of the school pick up point at Skelmorlie Cross. This was one of a number of issues considered to be contributing to congestion issues. Progress on this matter will be reported to a future meeting.

Noted.



## **7.2 Update on the Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) and Skelmorlie Community Tennis Club**

Submitted report by Executive Director (Economy and Communities) on activities within the Skelmorlie area.

Officers from Place and Economy and Communities have provided support, guidance and practical assistance to Skelmorlie Tennis Club in order to offer the local community an opportunity to enjoy tennis related activities at the Club. During summer 2015, volunteers were assisted to clear courts and club grounds of weeds and moss in order to offer summer activity programmes. The programmes concluded for the summer with an Open Day in August 2015 which was very well attended by both members and non-members throughout the day. Officers will now support the committee over the winter months in conjunction with sportscotland to consider a development plan for summer 2016.

Separately, Skelmorlie Community Sports Club is continuing to finalise its funding package to complete the works in relation to the MUGA during 2016.

Members asked questions, and received clarification, on the following:-

- the location of the tennis courts;
- whether there were any plans for indoor tennis provision; and
- available officer support for Skelmorlie Community Sports Club and whether there might be any role for Elected Members.

Noted.

## **8.1 Economy and Communities Update**

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

The Millport Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) scheme will be launched early in 2016, and it will operate for a five year period thereafter. A specific officer will be appointed to take forward the CARS project.

A draft copy of a Cumbrae Economic Plan has been circulated to those who attended the recent workshop, with a notice advertising the production of the document also being placed in the Largs and Millport Weekly News. Comments on the document are being sought by the end of November 2015, along with expressions of interest in involvement in a Cumbrae Economic Group, the first meeting of which will be held in December 2015.

Separately, the outcome of funding applications to both the Coastal Communities Fund and Scottish Government for the implementation of projects within the Garrison House Grounds is still outstanding.

The Senior Business Manager provided an update on the funding bids set out at Section 2.3 of the report, advising that the Scottish Government had declined the bid in respect of the implementation of projects within the Garrison House grounds.

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

- the expected composition, remit and structure of the new Cumbrae Economic Group;
- the role of Cumbrae Community Development Company in consulting on the Cumbrae pharmacy proposals; and
- the status of any plans to facilitate the transportation of fuel on the Largs-Cumbrae ferry and any implications in terms of costs and/or reduced capacity for vehicles.

The Senior Business Manager undertook to provide Members with (i) a copy of the Cumbrae pharmacy proposals consultation and (ii) any further information which might be available on plans to facilitate the transportation of fuel on the Largs-Cumbrae ferry.

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**

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Award</b>
Church of the Nazarine - North Ayrshire Food Bank	£20.50
Largs Allotment Association	£276.00

#### **10. Winter Services and Weather Emergencies Plan 2015**

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Place) on the Roads Winter Service and Weather Emergencies Plan 2015, in support of the Council's statutory duties under the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984.

A review of the Council's Winter Service and Weather Emergencies Service is undertaken annually over the summer months, with any service provides recorded in the Winter Action Plan set out at Appendix 1 to the report. Such improvements have also incorporated into the latest Roads Winter Service and Weather Emergencies Plan 2015 provided at Appendix 2.

Members asked questions, and received clarification, on the following:-

- media reports in relation to an anticipated cold winter in 2015; and
- the provision and maintenance of grit bins.

#### **11. Date and Venue of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the North Coast Area Committee will be held on Thursday 11 February 2015 at 2.00 p.m. in Largs Library.

Noted.

#### **12. Future Agenda Items**

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

#### **13. Urgent Item**

The Chair agreed that the following item be considered as a matter of urgency to allow an award to be made.

##### **13.1 Largs Common Good Fund**

The Committee Services Team Leader advised of the receipt of an application for Largs Common Good funding from St Vincent de Paul (St. Mary's) Largs to support the annual Christmas party for over 65s in Largs.

The Committee agreed, subject to (i) receipt of the group's constitution, bank statement and accounts and (ii) satisfactory assessment by the Council's Finance and Corporate Support and Economy and Communities Services, to make an award of £500 to St Vincent de Paul (St. Mary's) Largs.

The Meeting ended at 4.10 p.m.