

Three Towns Area Committee
27 September 2006

STEVENSTON, 27 September 2006 - At a Meeting of the Three Towns Area Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 10.00 am.

Present

David Munn, Gordon Allison, Margaret Munn, Alan Munro, Samuel Taylor and Nan Wallace.

In Attendance

J Leckie, Head of Service, A Milson, Learning Manager, Quality Development and B Anderson, Performance/Grants Information Officer (Educational Services); A Smillie, Team Leader Architect, Technical Services (Property Services); M Anderson and E Fisher, Corporate and Democratic Support Officers (Chief Executive's).

Also In Attendance

Sergeant S Leary and Community Police Officer L Morgan (Strathclyde Police); and Station Officer E Elliot (Strathclyde Fire and Rescue).

Chair

Councillor D Munn in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

Peter McNamara.

1. Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 16 August 2006, copies of which had previously been circulated, were confirmed.

2. Saltcoats Town Hall - Restoration Proposals

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Educational Services) on proposals for the restoration of Saltcoats Town Hall and the associated public consultation strategy for the project.

The Council's Technical Services department has carried out a survey of the condition of Saltcoats Town Hall, including the improvements required to meet current legislation and capital works of £3m has been approved by the Council. The anticipated works will take around 12 months and will have implications for users and groups who will require to decant during the building programme.

Plans for the hall were shown to the Committee and are now available for inspection and comment from members of the community and user groups. It is proposed that display boards be made available within the Town Hall and local library for public inspection.

The Committee agreed to approve the actions taken in terms of the outline proposals for the restoration of the Saltcoats Town Hall and the public consultation exercise outlined in the report.

3. Strathclyde Police

Submitted report by Strathclyde Police detailing the number and types of incidents of crime in the Committee's area from 31 July to 10 September 2006.

Sergeant Leary reported a decrease in robberies and serious assaults, attributing the latter partly to increased police searches for offensive weapons. The number of domestic housebreakings is down slightly owing to good detection rates and the flow of intelligence. Incidents of vandalism stemming from a small group of youths are causing general damage and disorder in the area. 4 youths were apprehended in early September and appeared in front of the Children's Panel on 'Unruly Certificates'.

There has been proactive policing on Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings between 4 pm and 3 am, aimed at tackling drinking in public and breach of the peace, as well as preventing disorder later in the evening. Alco-Dip Test Kits are also being piloted. These kits, which cost £1 each and are funded by Safer Scotland, allow the police to test liquids they suspect contain alcohol. The test kits have already been put into use within the Committee's area with a number of positive tests and individuals reported.

Discussion took place on young drivers who speed and the use of off road vehicles on vacant land, including land in ICI's ownership. The police have the power to seize vehicles although response times to incidents can be an issue given that the traffic section is currently based in Ayr. Strathclyde Fire and Rescue advised of their intention to distribute leaflets warning young people of the dangers of careless driving and Strathclyde Police indicated that the mobile police office could be parked on the shore front in Stevenston, an area where speeding regularly occurs, to give young people a chance to view a road safety DVD.

There was also discussion on the use of the shore front in Stevenston by various groups. Water sports are becoming increasingly popular in the area, as is kiting with buggies. Users of kites have requested a fenced off area and are in negotiation with the Council in this regard. It was suggested that Community Learning and Development may be able to assist the various groups using the beach to work together.

The Committee agreed (a) to note the report; and (b) that the Learning Manager, Community Learning and Development liaise with the various groups using the beach at Stevenston to offer support in co-ordinating their activities.

4. Strathclyde Fire and Rescue

Submitted report by Strathclyde Fire and Rescue detailing response figures and activities in the Committee's area between 3 August and 20 September 2006. There were 161 incidents in the Three Towns area for that period and the report gave details of these.

Station Officer Elliot reported that, to date, a total of 334 home fire safety visits have been completed, with 410 smoke detectors. Referrals are starting to increase and crews are very busy as a result. It is hoped that the corresponding reduction in accidental house fires can be partly attributed to this, in addition to increased media coverage over the past months.

The Committee was advised that there continue to be problems with automatic fire alarms in Wheatley Gardens and Arran View Nursing Homes in Saltcoats. An action plan has been put in place to address the issue of unwanted alarm calls.

Discussion took place regarding derelict properties being set alight and it was reported that there are problems with dangerous properties in Witches Lynn, Ardrossan and at "Jack's Place", Saltcoats. Consultation is taking place between the Council's Building Standards Section, Strathclyde Police and Strathclyde Fire and Rescue with a view to making such buildings secure.

Secondary fires, including maliciously ignited rubbish, were also identified as a problem, especially at the rear of shops. Strathclyde Fire and Rescue will visit premises to encourage shop owners to be more responsible with their rubbish and the subject has been raised at the local Neighbourhood Compact meeting. The Learning Manager, Community Learning and Development, also indicated that work was being undertaken on proposed combined action plans for the Police, Fire and Rescue and the Council's Cleansing and Youth Services sections to help tackle secondary fires.

The Committee agreed that Strathclyde Fire and Rescue report back to the next meeting on the outcome of their contact with (a) the owners of derelict premises; and (b) Cleansing Services regarding additional uplifts in the Committee's area to prevent secondary fires.

5. Community Development Grants Scheme: Applications for Financial Assistance

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Educational Services) on applications for financial assistance under the Council's Community Development Grants Scheme.

The Community Development Grants Scheme has a balance of £9,407.50.

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

Community Development Grants Scheme

Organisation	Award
Kilwinning Community Sports Club	£500
Cunninghame Action Club	£750
The Glebe Tennis Association	£1,150
Ardrossan Christmas Decorations Committee	£1,000 subject to submission of receipts in respect of a previous grant award

and (b) refuse the application by "D" in the Park.

6. Ardrossan Common Good Fund: Application for Financial Assistance

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on an application from Ardrossan Christmas Decorations Committee for financial assistance from Ardrossan Common Good Fund.

The balance of funding available for disbursement from Ardrossan Common Good Fund is £2,060.

The Committee agreed to award a grant of £1,000 to Ardrossan Christmas Decorations Committee, subject to submission by the Group of the financial monitoring for a previous Community Development Grant award.

7. Stevenston Common Good Fund: Applications for Financial Assistance

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on applications from Ryan Vogwell and the International, Historical, Cultural and Geographical Agency for financial assistance from Stevenston Common Good Fund.

The balance of funding available for disbursement from Stevenston Common Good Fund is £7,606.54.

The Committee agreed (a) to award a grant of £700 to Ryan Vogwell on the basis that the applicant will be representing a national body at the European Tae Kwen Do Championships; and (b) to underwrite the cost of the event to be held by the International, Historical, Cultural and Geographical Agency up to a maximum of £1,250.

The meeting ended at 11.40 am.