

Ardrossan and Arran, Saltcoats and Stevenston Area Committee
18 August 2011

STEVENSTON, 18 August 2011 - At a Meeting of the Ardrossan and Arran, Saltcoats and Stevenston Area Committee of North Ayrshire Council and 2.00 p.m.

Present

Anthony Gurney, Margie Currie, William Gibson, Peter McNamara and Ronnie McNicol.

In Attendance

D. Lodge, Supervisory Engineer (Infrastructure and Design)(Finance and Infrastructure); J. McHarg, Assistant Manager (Community Services). N. Marshall, Resource Co-ordinator and B. Anderson, Performance/Grants Information Officer (Education and Skills); J. Cumming, Project Officer (Economic Development), and M. Anderson, Committee Services Officer (Chief Executive's Service).

Also In Attendance

D. Davidson, Station Commander (Strathclyde Fire and Rescue); Sergeant I. McKay and Police Constable R. Wilson (Strathclyde Police); and J. Ledgerwood, Project Manager (Irvine Bay Regeneration Company).

Chair

Councillor Gurney in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

John Hunter and Alan Munro.

1. Declarations of Interest

In terms of Standing Order 16, Councillor McNamara, as a volunteer on the Ardrossan Music Experience, declared an interest in Agenda Item 6 (Community Development Grants Scheme and Local Youth Action Fund 2011/12: Applications for Financial Assistance) and took no part in the determination thereof.

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee, held on 9 June 2011, were signed in accordance with Paragraph 7 (1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

3. Strathclyde Police

Sergeant McKay and P.C. Wilson provided information on the following:-

- statistics comparing July 2011 with the same period last year, which showed a slight increase in both crime and detection rates for the Saltcoats area, a decrease in crime in the Stevenston area coupled with a higher detection rate, and a rise in both crime and detections for the Ardrossan area;
- a recent spate of housebreakings affecting garden sheds in Sannox Drive, Saltcoats, and the action plan put in place to address this;
- the Police response to incidents involving the theft of copper wiring and roofing lead from properties in the Three Towns area; and
- an anticipated fall in the incidence of underage drinking in public and anti-social behaviour offences following the end of the school holiday period.

Members referred to ongoing parking offences and access difficulties relating to a large commercial vehicle(s) being left on the roadside opposite the cemetery on Sorbie Road, Ardrossan and were advised of the legal position as it relates to this type of offence and that this matter would be added to the daily briefing list for attention by Police Officers. Members also reported that the recent spate of thefts relating to roofing lead also affected properties in other areas, such as Caledonia Road, Sorbie Road, the Rugby Club, Montgomerie Crescent and St. Matthew's Academy, and were advised of action being taken by the Police to tackle this issue.

Noted.

4. Strathclyde Fire and Rescue

Submitted report by Strathclyde Fire and Rescue on activity from 28 May 2011 to 2 August 2011.

Station Commander Davidson provided further information on the following:-

- Station Commander Mark Gallacher's absence on temporary promotion and arrangements for his replacement from 22 August 2011;
- successful joint working with the Police and the Council's Housing Service to tackle malicious false alarms originating from O'Connor Court, Saltcoats, and the apparent resolution of this problem following the relocation of a resident;
- the resolution of access difficulties for units attending the care home off Sydney Street, Saltcoats, following the decision to implement temporary road markings on the access road to the facility, as well as ongoing access difficulties for units associated with car parking on Sydney Street itself; and
- ongoing Home Fire Safety Visits, which Area Committee Members will be requested to help promote after the forthcoming Ward 4 By Election has taken place.

Members discussed the malicious false alarms issue at O'Connor Court, Saltcoats; sought advice on what constituted a "good intent" false alarm; and noted that Station Commander Davidson would bring the issue of access to Sydney Street, Saltcoats, to the Area Committee's attention in the future, should the problem persist.

Noted.

5. Community Benefit Fund: Applications for Grant Aid

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on applications for grant received in respect of the Community Benefit Fund.

The Committee agreed to make the following awards:-

Organisation	Award
1st Stevenston Boys Brigade	£1,500, on condition that representatives of the group make a short presentation to a future meeting of the Area Committee on the outcome of their participation in the Armistice Parade in London
F.R.I.E.N.D.S.	£2,000

6. Community Development Grants Scheme and Local Youth Action Fund 2011/12: Applications for Financial Assistance

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Education and Skills) on applications for financial assistance under the Council's Community Development Grants Scheme and Local Youth Action Fund.

Community Development Grant Awards

Organisation	Award
Maritime Volunteer Service	£900
Stevenston Elderly Forum	£1,210
Wednesday Pensioners	£500
Ardrossan Music Experience	£2,000

Local Youth Action Fund Awards

Organisation	Award
Ardrossan Outdoor Activity Club	£1,500

7. North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership (CPP): Board: Minutes of Meeting held on 16 June 2011

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the Minutes of the Meeting of the North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership (CPP) held on 16 June 2011.

Noted.

8. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

The Area Committee was advised that the next meeting of the Area Committee will be held on Thursday 29 September 2011 at 2.00 p.m. in the Ardeer Neighbourhood Centre.

Members then discussed holding a Special Meeting of the Area Committee on Arran, on a date to be determined to consider items of particular relevance to the island.

The Committee agreed (a) to note arrangements for the next ordinary meeting of the Area Committee; (b) that it be remitted to the Committee Services Officer, in consultation with the Chair, to make arrangements for a Special Meeting to be held on Arran at a date to be determined; and (c) that Area Committee Members be invited to submit suggested items of business relating to Arran, for consideration at the Special Meeting.

9. Future Agenda Items

The Committee (a) highlighted as an item for inclusion on a future agenda, the poor state of repair of the Council-owned car park to the rear of the Windmill amusements and the long-standing problem associated with the egress of water from the adjacent privately owned premises onto the car park; and (b) noted that any additional items for consideration at the next meeting should be submitted to M. Anderson or D. McCaw.

10. Urgent Items

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

10.1 Ardrossan: Princes Street Bus Stop

The Supervisory Engineer (Infrastructure and Design) provided an update on the operation of a bus stop on Princes Street, Ardrossan, which had been the subject of a report to the previous meeting of the Area Committee.

The Committee was advised of a proposal to lengthen the existing bus stop, with the loss of one parking space, and to relocate to the front of the bus stop the raised kerb allowing disabled access.

The Project Manager (Irvine Bay Regeneration Company) expressed concern about a wider issue relating to buses in the Princes Street area and the continued practice by Stagecoach of undertaking driver change-overs on Princes Street, rather than at the nearby depot.

Members discussed the cost of undertaking works to the bus stop, in the light of both Stagecoach's continued failure to comply with the agreement not to change drivers at this location and the tendency by drivers themselves not to pull their vehicles fully into the bus stop already provided. As a separate matter also adversely affecting Princes Street, Members discussed the location of large road signs which overshadowed commercial premises on Princes Street, and noted that Irvine Bay Regeneration Company would take this matter into account when considering proposed improvements to the area.

The Committee agreed that the Supervisory Engineer (Infrastructure and Design), following further consultation with Members of the Area Committee, (a) raise the concerns expressed about the operation of the bus stop on Princes Street, Ardrossan, with Stagecoach; and (b) report back to a future meeting of the Area Committee.

10.2 Tall Ships Event

The Area Committee received a presentation by the Resource Co-ordinator for the Arran Outdoor Education Resource Centre on the success of the recent Maritime Festival event in July 2011 in support of a visit to Lamlash Bay, Arran, by Tall Ships participating in the 2011 Sail Training International Tall Ships Race. Further information on the event was circulated at the meeting.

The successful event, which received Community Development grant funding from the Area Committee and was supported by Arran Yacht Club, Strathclyde Police, Visit Arran, the local business community and a civic reception by the Provost, attracted visits from a total of 26 Tall Ships and 677 crew. The range of events which formed part of the Maritime Festival to entertain the public and crews of the Tall Ships, included a BBQ, Arran Pipe Band, Taste of Arran activities, an evening bar and ceilidh, dinghy sailing, powerboat rides, a COAST display and the Arran Viking Longship. Arran Outdoor Education Centre provided a waterborne welcome to visiting Tall Ships, guidance and advice to visiting crews and a water taxi service as requested, as well as communication co-ordination with the Tall Ships and facilities for crews.

The Council, as the main sponsor of the event, provided a venue for the various attractions and grant funding supported the hire of toilet and showering facilities at the Pier Head. Local Elected Members also participated by visiting some of the Tall Ships and attending the civic reception by the Provost. The programme of events, and the visits by Members to the Tall Ships, was much appreciated by the captains and crews of visiting Tall Ships, who received a very favourable impression of North Ayrshire. The economic benefit to the island was estimated at well in excess of £75,000.

Councillor Currie also reported verbally on the success of the event, its consistency with the objectives of the Tourism Strategy for Ayrshire and Arran and the potential for it to be a springboard to develop further this lucrative element of the tourism sector on Arran. Councillor Currie expressed her thanks and appreciation for the work of Officers, Members and volunteers in supporting the event.

Members discussed the following:-

- the excellent work by staff from the Arran Outdoor Education Resource Centre, the Council's Festivals and Events Officer, Community Learning and Development, the Council's Island Officer, volunteers from Arran Yacht Club, other local organisations and the wider public in support of the programme of events;
- the importance of building on the success of the Maritime Festival to encourage future visits by the Tall Ships and similar events;
- the potential for putting photographs of the event onto the Council's website to showcase Arran and its attractions;
- how the Council's Economic Development Service might help to maintain and develop the momentum created by this successful event;
- the wider benefits brought by the Tall Ships, including a visit by 3 Tall Ships to Lochranza and 1 to Irvine to allow its captain to view The Carrick; and
- the need for further participation by the local business community in supporting the event in future.

The Committee agreed (a) to thank all of those who participated in the event for their hard work and support; (b) that the Economic Development Manager be invited to attend a future meeting of the Area Committee to discuss what support can be offered to the Maritime Festival; and (c) that Communications make arrangements for photographs of this year's event to be displayed on the Council's website.

The Meeting ended at 3.55 p.m.