

Kilwinning, Dreghorn and Springside Area Committee
24 June 1998

Dreghorn, 24 June 1998 - At a Meeting of the Kilwinning, Dreghorn and Springside Area Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 10.30 a.m.

Present

Ian Clarkson, Patrick Browne, Gena Seales, Jane Gorman and Irene Oldfather

In Attendance

S Driscoll, Divisional Manager (Housing Services); G Clark, Operations Manager, Grounds Maintenance; J Wright, Area Officer, Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance (Commercial Services); A Weir, Parks and Horticultural Services Manager; D Gilliland, Area Community Development Officer (Community and Recreational Services); E McCormack, Senior Social Worker (Social Work); K Nichols, Accountant (Financial Services); L Scott, Supervising Engineer (Roads) (Planning, Roads and Environment); M McKeown, Administration Officer and C Graham, Assistant Administration Officer (Chief Executive).

Inspector G McLanaghan (Strathclyde Police); and Community Firefighter T Kane (Strathclyde Fire Brigade).

Chair

Mr Clarkson in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

1. Minutes Confirmed

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 13 May 1998, copies of which had previously been circulated, were confirmed.

2. Monitoring Reports

Submitted Monitoring Reports on the undernoted matters:-

(a) Empty Houses in the Kilwinning, Dreghorn and Springside Areas
Submitted report by the Director of Housing Services on empty council houses within the Area Committee's boundaries, including reasons for refusal of properties. As at 5 June 1998 there were 18 empty properties in the Kilwinning area representing 0.97% of the total stock and 9 empty properties within Dreghorn and Springside, representing approximately 1.05% of stock. The Divisional Manager, Housing Services advised that in Kilwinning 3 properties had now been let. Concern was expressed over the continued delay in the letting of some properties (in particular 15 Waterside Road, Kilwinning which had remained empty for a period of 121 days, during which time it had only been offered for let once). The Committee also considered the potential anomaly of an applicant on the Council waiting list being nominated to a Housing Association while at the same time being made an offer of a Council property, thus being able to choose between two housing opportunities.

The Committee agreed (i) that the Director of Housing Services investigate (A) the reasons for the delay in letting the property at 15 Waterside Road, Kilwinning and (B) the feasibility of identifying when a nomination has been made in respect of an

applicant and in such cases delaying any offer of Council property until the outcome of the nomination is known and advise the Members prior to the next meeting; and (ii) to otherwise note the content of the report.

(b) Litter Awareness
Submitted report by the Director of Commercial Services on the number of calls received by the Litter Hotline. The Area Officer, Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance advised that while no action had been required within the Area Committee's boundaries in respect of fly-tipping, seven calls had been logged requesting action in respect of cleansing and three with regard to grounds maintenance. Noted.

(c) Community Development Grants Scheme: Analysis of Grants Paid to 15 May 1998

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the Community Development grants paid to 15 May 1998 including details of the balance of funding remaining. Noted.

3. Community Development Grants Scheme: Applications for Grant Aid
Submitted report by the Director of Community and Recreational Services on the applications received in respect of community grants to voluntary organisations. Councillor Browne declared an interest in the application submitted by the Rotary Club of Kilwinning and took no part in the discussion.

(a) The Rotary Club of Kilwinning

The Committee agreed to award £210 to the Rotary Club of Kilwinning;

(b) Pennyburn Community Association

The Committee agreed to award £1,000 to Pennyburn Community Association in two stages, with £600 to be paid now and the remaining £400 to be released upon satisfactory receipt of a detailed and structured programme. The award is also subject to the Association opening a separate bank account in respect of the funding;

(c) Pennyburn Rainbow Guides

The Committee agreed to award £340;

(d) Irvine and Dreghorn Brass Band

The Committee agreed to award £600 to the Irvine and Dreghorn Brass Band;

(e) Littlestane Youth Club

The Committee agreed to award £600 to the Littlestane Youth Club; and

(f) Springside Gala

The Committee agreed to award £200 to the Springside Gala.

4. North Ayrshire Community Care Plan 1998-2001: Local Consultations on the Consultation Draft

Submitted report by the Director of Social Work on the outcome of consultations in the Kilwinning, Dreghorn and Springside areas on the Community Care Plan Consultation Draft as requested by the Committee at its meeting on 13 May 1998. Following presentations to each of the Area Committees, separate local consultations had been arranged, providing an opportunity for service users, carers and voluntary organisations to comment on the Consultative Draft. The meetings for the Kilwinning, Dreghorn and Springside areas had been held in Blacklands Community Centre, Kilwinning on 27 May and the Volunteer Rooms, Irvine on 1 June.

Although the numbers in attendance had been low the meetings were successful in that they highlighted interesting and valid points. The Committee was also advised that the consultation process itself had been

monitored and the lessons learned would be taken into consideration when next reviewing the Community Care Plan. Noted.

5. Community Consultation: Meeting with Pupils from St Michael's Academy, Kilwinning

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the actions taken to address issues raised by the pupils of St Michael's Academy, Kilwinning at the Community Consultation Meeting on 1 April 1998.

Having considered the issues raised and the responses received from the various Directorates of the Council and Strathclyde Police in pursuance of relevant solutions, the Committee agreed (a) to approve the actions taken; and (b) to advise the Head Teacher of St Michael's Academy and the School Council accordingly.

6. Kilwinning: Pedestrian Precinct

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the current position regarding the reinstatement of Kilwinning Pedestrian Precinct.

On 13 May 1998 the Committee had instructed the Director of Planning, Roads and Environment, along with other appropriate Directors to carry out the relevant works to reinstate the Precinct to a satisfactory standard, at the same time or on completion of British Gas Transco's reinstatement works, and report. They also agreed to remit to the Corporate Strategy Committee to consider a Town Centre Management Policy for North Ayrshire.

The report indicated that following a site meeting in late May, the Roads Section had been in correspondence with Thomas Bermingham Ltd., Kilmarnock, British Gas Transco's contractor, regarding the reinstatement of the gas main track which is of poor quality and will require to be re-laid. Although a few minor areas had been re-laid to a satisfactory condition, a large number of broken and cut blocks require to be replaced. It was however anticipated that sourcing the replacement blocks could be problematic and the contractor would continue to pursue the matter with British Gas Transco.

The Head of Roads advised, however, that a supplier had now been located and, subject to delivery, work would commence on 6 July. Work by the Commercial Services Directorate to replace dead and vandalised trees and to repair tree grilles had commenced on 22 June and the Parks and Horticultural Services Manager advised that the timber required to repair the seating had been delivered and the contractor would commence work on 29 June. The Commercial Services Directorate replaced the wooden bins in the Main Street with Gladstone bins on 4 June and the graffiti on Council owned shops in the Precinct has been removed by the Architectural Services Department. The report further indicated that the Head of Corporate Business, in conjunction with the Director of Housing Services, is progressing matters on how the concept of Town Centre Management can be taken forward in North Ayrshire and will report in due course.

The Committee having considered all the information, agreed (a) that the Head of Roads continue to pursue with British Transco's contractors the reinstatement of Kilwinning Pedestrian Precinct as a matter of urgency; and (b) otherwise to note the current position.

7. Kilwinning: Stevenston Road: Bus Services

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the outcome of further consultations with SPT on the bus services operating at Stevenston Road in Kilwinning. On 13 May 1998 the Committee, having previously been advised of the frequency

and route of the bus services on Stevenston Road, agreed to further liaise with Strathclyde Passenger Transport in requesting the local bus owners to give consideration to reviewing the frequency of the services. Following consultations between Strathclyde Passenger Transport and the two local bus service operators, both Kelvin and Stagecoach have indicated it was not their intention at this time to increase any services on Stevenston Road. Strathclyde Passenger Transport have also indicated that the current service, although less than that previously provided, continued to meet their minimum service levels and accordingly there would be no provision of additional services on a subsidised basis. The Committee agreed (a) to remit to the Council's representatives on the Strathclyde Passenger Transport Authority to raise the matter at the earliest opportunity; and (b) to note the position meantime.

8. Kilwinning: Town Centre: Provision of Christmas Decorations
Submitted report by the Director of Community and Recreational Services on progress regarding the provision of Christmas Decorations in Main Street, Kilwinning. The Parks and Horticultural Services Manager advised that a meeting with shopkeepers, business groups and other interested bodies will be held early in July when updated costs for the provision of lights, fixtures, fitting etc. would be provided and contributions requested. It was expected that there would be an increase in the 1997 estimated costs of £6,000, plus £3,000 running costs per annum. There is no Capital or Revenue budget available for the provision of such lighting and therefore alternative funding requires to be investigated, including the possibility of sponsorship.

In noting the report, the Committee agreed that the Members should also be in attendance at the meeting in July.

9. Community Safety
(a) Crime Statistics

Submitted report by Strathclyde Police "UA" Division regarding the level of recorded crime in the Sub-Division.

The report gave the crime statistics, excluding traffic offences, for the month of April 1998. Statistics for the year to date highlighted a 17% decrease in crime compared with the same period last year within the Kilwinning, Dreghorn and Springside areas with the detection rate having increased to 44%. Drug problems continue to be one of the main areas of concern to Strathclyde Police and will continue to be specifically targeted.

Strathclyde Police advised that with effect from the next meeting of the Committee, crime figures would be provided individually for the towns of Kilwinning, Dreghorn and Springside.

Noted.

(b) Strathclyde Fire Brigade: Fire Statistics for April and May 1998
Submitted report by Strathclyde Fire Brigade on fire statistics within the Kilwinning, Dreghorn and Springside areas for April and May 1998. The report indicated a total of 27 incidents during the month of April and 37 in May. The number of malicious calls has again fallen.

Noted.

10. Urgent Items
The Chair agreed the following item be considered as a matter of urgency.

11. Kilwinning: Regeneration
The issue of Regeneration Funding for Kilwinning was raised and the Committee agreed that a joint report by the Directors of Community and Recreational Services

and Social Work be submitted to the next meeting advising of the work being carried out in that area with a view to submitting an application to the Regeneration Partnership.

The meeting ended at 11.10 a.m.