

Irvine Area Committee  
28 March 2012

**IRVINE, 28 March 2012** - At a Meeting of the Irvine Area Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 9.30 a.m.

**Present**

Pat McPhee, Tom Barr, Matthew Brown, Ian Clarkson, Ruby Kirkwood, John Moffat and Joan Sturgeon.

**In Attendance**

I. Mackay, Solicitor to the Council (Corporate Services); M. Armstrong, Head of Logistics and Infrastructure, D. Yuille, Project Manager, J. McHarg, Assistant Manager (Community Services) and B. Anderson, Performance/Grants Information Officer (Education and Skills); A. Bodie, Head of Infrastructure and Design and A. Grossart, Finance Manager (Finance and Infrastructure) and A. Little, Committee Services Officer (Chief Executive's).

**Also In Attendance**

Station Commander M. Gallagher, Strathclyde Fire and Rescue.

**Chair**

Provost McPhee in the Chair.

**Apologies for Absence**

David O'Neill.

**1. Declarations of Interest**

In terms of Standing Order 16, Councillor Clarkson, as a member of the Marymass Development Committee, declared an interest in Agenda Item 10 (Irvine Common Good Fund: Application for Financial Assistance from Marymass Development Committee), and took no part in the determination thereof. Councillor Clarkson addressed the Committee as a member of the Marymass Development Committee and then left the meeting.

**2. Minutes**

The Minutes of the previous meetings of the Committee held on 15 February and 14 March 2012 were signed in accordance with Paragraph 7 (1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

**3. Strathclyde Police**

Submitted report by Strathclyde Police on activity in the Irvine area.

Noted.

#### **4. Strathclyde Fire and Rescue**

Submitted report by Strathclyde Fire and Rescue on activity in the Irvine area between 7 February and 19 March 2012.

Noted.

#### **5. West Road and Seagate, Irvine - Traffic Management Issues**

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Finance and Infrastructure) on the outcome of the study regarding traffic management and parking concerns within West Road and Seagate, Irvine.

On 12 October 2011, the Committee considered a report on Irvine Town Centre Car Parking Strategic Direction. The Committee agreed that the Head of Infrastructure and Design submit a report to a future meeting on re-opening West Road as a through-road, with no waiting restrictions implemented meantime. A site visit then took place on 29 January 2012 to view the parking and access issues at West Road and Seagate, Irvine.

The report provided details of the parking and access issues and alternative traffic movement solutions that had been considered for West Road and Seagate, Irvine.

In respect of West Road, the report recommended that a daytime restriction be introduced (08.00 am to 6.00 pm, Monday to Saturday) no waiting/no loading at any time along the full length of the east side of West Road, from the junction with Castle Street up to and around the turning area. This will ensure traffic movement can be maintained for all classes of vehicle during this period. Strathclyde Police have verbally indicated support for this restriction and would carry out enforcement duties subject to available resources.

Within Seagate the provision of road markings was not considered advisable as the thermoplastic material would flow between the gaps in the setts and would result in an untidy effect especially within an historic conservation area. Additional signing would be considered at appropriate locations to advise motorists where not to park. The assistance of Strathclyde Police, who are responsible for the enforcement of road traffic offences, can be sought when instances of obstruction of either the carriageway or footway areas occur. Ownership of the car park to the rear of Seagate Castle has been determined and it is not a private car park, and therefore should be available for public parking. Signage should be provided to indicate this.

The Committee agreed to (a) note the findings of the traffic study and approve the promotion of a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) to introduce a daytime no waiting/no loading parking restriction on West Road; and (b) approve the TRO's immediate implementation if no objections are received during the consultation period.

## **6. New Leisure Centre, Irvine**

Submitted report by the Corporate Director (Education and Skills) on the progress to date to deliver the new leisure centre in Irvine town centre.

The initial proposals for the new leisure centre were presented to the Area Committee on 23 November 2011 for consideration.

The report provided information on consultations undertaken and planned with relevant stakeholders (Appendix 1) including the general public. A Frequently Asked Questions document (Appendix B) was produced for distribution at the various events that have taken place.

An Archaeological Consultant has been appointed to carry out a survey of the site and to provide a watching brief. Once this survey is complete, the main construction works will start on site to build the new leisure centre. Two separate tender exercises will be run concurrently for the appointment of contractors for the enabling and main construction works. The Council's Community Benefits Officer will work closely with the project delivery team and the prospective tenderers to maximise training opportunities and give local suppliers and sub-contractors an opportunity to bid for work packages under the main contract.

To facilitate the development of the East Road site, it is proposed to accumulate various surrounding properties under the single ownership of North Ayrshire Council. A District Valuer has been appointed to carry out a valuation of the development site to determine a square metre rate that can be applied pro rata to the site assets. This will provide a benchmark for further negotiations. The report provided information on the investigations and negotiations underway in relation to the transfer of assets.

Formal notification has been issued to Annick Community Association to inform them of the Council's decision to build the new leisure centre on the East Road site and to give details of the project timeline. North Ayrshire Council Facilities Letting Section has worked closely with the users of the centre to help find alternative arrangements that will continue to meet their needs.

A design to demonstrate how the war memorial could sit at the heart of the proposed public realm in front of the Town House has been prepared. The proposals would present an opportunity to extend the memorial wall to include names from conflicts post World War II. The details of any proposals that include the memorial will be drawn up in conjunction with the British Legion, Historic Scotland and conservation accredited architects.

In relation to the management of the new leisure centre, the Council's Executive agreed to undertake a market test, through a tender process, of interest in managing the new leisure centre. It is anticipated that the process to identify and appoint an operator will take 12 months from April 2012 to May 2013.

Consultations have been held with North Ayrshire Council's Planning and Roads Services to establish the parking provisions for the project to comply with statutory requirements. The planning application for the new leisure centre will be submitted with a proposal that includes the designation of the current car park (under Council ownership) opposite Annick Community Centre on the north side of East Road for the sole use of the leisure centre during opening hours. It is planned that this provision will form part of the wider parking strategy for Irvine which is currently being developed by North Ayrshire Council to address the parking related issues with regards to the short and long stay provision within the town. To facilitate the enabling and archaeological works it is proposed to set in motion the process to permanently close the public car park behind the war memorial off High Street and temporarily close the Jail Close at the end of May 2012. An advert will be placed in the local press informing the public of the arrangements.

The East Road site was selected for the new leisure centre development not only for the potential economic benefits it would bring but also because of the opportunity to act as a catalyst for the regeneration of the Grade 'B' Listed Town House. It is recognised that the fabric of the building is in a poor state. Design work to date has considered options to incorporate the refurbishment of the Town's House within the leisure centre development. Work is ongoing to develop proposals to facilitate an integrated approach to the delivery of cultural, leisure and healthy living services in the heart of Irvine. The report provided details of the types of services that are under consideration for the Town House.

Initial work on the capital costs of refurbishing the Town House as an integral part of the leisure centre development have identified that up to £4m is required to deliver the refurbishment and provide a facility that is operationally fit for purpose and ready to be occupied. It is planned that the capital funding required will be secured through a range of sources.

The Town House is currently occupied by North Ayrshire Council Licensing and the Scottish Court Service. Arrangements are in place for Licensing to relocate to Cunninghame House in April 2012. The future of the Court Service within the Town House is still under consideration. It is proposed to plan the development of the site to minimise any disruption to the occupants of the Town House. Consultations have been held with the Scottish Court Service to ensure continuity of service during the enabling works.

Members asked questions and were provided with information in relation to:-

- the requirement to close the car park behind the war memorial to facilitate the enabling and archaeological works;
- the development of a Parking Strategy for Irvine Town Centre that will consult the public on short and long term parking and consideration of 'resident only' parking zones if required;

- the timeline for the construction of the centre;
- closure of the lane at the Police Station and consultation with a local business owner on this closure; and
- the provision of regular reports to the Executive and Irvine Area Committee on the project's progress.

The Committee agreed to (a) note the progress made to date to deliver the new leisure centre; and (b) receive further reports on the integration of the Town House within the leisure centre development.

## **7. 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 received in respect of the Community Development Grants Scheme and Local Youth Action Fund 2011/12.

The Committee agreed to make the following awards:-

### **Community Development Grants**

Broomlands Primary School Parent Council	£600
Annick Primary School Parent Council	£665
Irvine Beat FM	£2,000
Annick Childminders Group	£1,582

### **Local Youth Action Fund**

North Ayrshire and Arran District Scout Council (1st Ayrshire Stanecastle) Scout Group	£2,000
Bourtreehill Youth Group	£2,000
Irvine Judo Club	£500
Irvine Vics Youth FC	£1,500
Greenwood Community Sports & Leisure Club	£2,121.63
	(£1,716.23 from the LYAF and £405.40 from the CDGS)

## **8. Quarry Road: Rent**

The Solicitor to the Council reported on matters in relation to the rental of the site at Quarry Road, Irvine.

Irvine Common Good Fund receive a nominal rent of £1 to the Council in respect of Quarry Road Depot, Irvine. The Council's Estates Section has advised that, based on available comparisons, the market rental value for the lease of this ground would be in the region of £2,500 to £3,000 per annum. The maximum period that backdated rent can be claimed is 5 years.

The Committee agreed to recommend to the Council that the market value for the rental of Quarry Road Depot should be set at £3,000 per annum.

### **9.1 Irvine Common Good Fund**

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on applications for financial assistance received in respect of Irvine Common Good Fund.

The amount of funding available for disbursement from Irvine Common Good in the year 2012/13 will be £55,259.

In previous years, the Committee has agreed to set aside funds from the Irvine Common Good Fund to meet commitments to the Marymass Development Committee and Irvine Old Folks Joint Wards Committee, subject to satisfactory applications being received. Irvine Old Folks Joint Wards Committee generally apply for funding of £8,000 in October of each year.

Applications for financial assistance have been received from the Ayrshire Sikh Association and Marymass Development Committee. Details of the application from the Ayrshire Sikh Association were provided in Appendix 1.

The Committee agreed to (a) continue to set aside funds to meet the annual commitment to the Irvine Old Folks Joint Wards of £8,000; and (b) refuse the application from the Ayrshire Sikh Association and advise the Association to make application to the Community Development Grants Scheme.

### **9.2 Marymass Development Committee**

Councillor Clarkson, as a Member of Marymass Development Committee, addressed the Committee in support of the application from Marymass Development Committee for financial assistance from Irvine Common Good Fund. Councillor Clarkson circulated an income and expenditure report, detailing the breakdown of the budget.

Members asked questions and were provided with information in relation to:-

- sponsorship of £3,000 generated for Marymass; and
- income to services of the Council from the Marymass festival.

Councillor Clarkson thereafter left the meeting.

Submitted report by the Solicitor to the Council on an application from the Marymass Development Committee for funding from Irvine Common Good Fund for the 2012 Marymass Festival.

The Area Committee has traditionally received applications for funding from Irvine Common Fund submitted on behalf of the Marymass Development Committee, an unincorporated group who have assumed responsibility for the organisation of the annual Marymass Festival.

In June 2011, the Area Committee considered a request for funding from the Marymass Development Committee. The application was for £53,517.50. At the Committee's meeting the Area Committee were advised that the income available for disbursement from the Irvine Common Good Fund for the year 2011/12 was £54,000. The decision taken by the Committee at that time was to award the Marymass Development Committee the sum of £67,500 which included £11,000 for fairground rent and £2,500 in respect of food franchise and that the Development Committee review the future Marymass Festival programme in light of the financial constraints of the Irvine Common Good Fund.

The Council's Executive at its meeting of 17 January 2012 considered a report from the Chief Executive on the future and structure of the Marymass Festival and agreed that Officers of the Council work with the Marymass Development Committee to establish a new Development Company to assume responsibility for the organisation and funding of the festival.

Officers have met with members of the Marymass Development Committee on three occasions and initial soundings on the establishment of the new organisation have been well received. However, the focus of the meetings has revolved around a budget for the 2012 festival. Officers have impressed upon the Development Committee that while the award made last year was for £67,500 this was well above the limit of income available and that it was extremely unlikely that such level of funding would be available in 2012. Requests for a revised budget for the 2012 festival have not so far produced any detail.

The current application submitted on behalf of the Marymass Development Committee is for £51,615. No detail had been submitted with the application in support of this sum. Officers of the Council provided the Development Committee with a breakdown of costs with a projected budget of £42,000 (Appendix 1).

Discussion took place on:-

- a Council contribution towards the costs of Marymass;
- the funds set aside within the Marymass budget to support community groups arranging events and whether these groups could apply to the Community Development Grants Scheme for funding;
- the potential underspend in the Common Good Fund for 2011/12 (after the Quarry Road backdated rent is paid), estimated at £4,000. If this underspend could be added to the 2012/13 grant disbursement figure the amount available for disbursement would increase to £59,259.

The Committee agreed (a) to make an interim award of £40,000 to the Marymass Development Committee; and (b) that the Marymass Development Committee provide detailed financial information in support of any further application for funding.

## **10. Future Agenda Items**

The Committee agreed that (a) concerns raised by local residents in relation to Bourtreehill Village Centre be included on a future agenda; and (b) any additional items for consideration at the next meeting should be submitted to A. Little or E. Fisher.

The meeting ended at 11.30 a.m.