

Three Towns Area Committee
9 October 1997

Saltcoats, 9 October 1997 - At a Meeting of the Three Towns Area Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 10.30 a.m.

Present

David Gallagher, Samuel Gooding, David Munn, Margaret Munn, Alan Munro and Samuel Taylor.

In Attendance

D. Anderson, Head of Cultural and Community Services, S. McLaughlin, Area Community Development Officer, A. Pettigrew, Young Peoples Development Services Officer (Community and Recreational Services); S. Burns, Manager Area Services (Social Work); D MacColl, Cemeteries Services Manager (Commercial Services); A. Miller, Training Unit Manager (Personnel Services); and S. Bale, Administration Officer (Chief Executive).

Also In Attendance

Superintendent J Young (Strathclyde Police); and J. Ledgerwood (Three Towns Initiative).

Chair

David Gallagher in the Chair.

1. Minutes Confirmed

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 28 August 1997, copies of which had previously been circulated, were confirmed.

2. Monitoring Reports

(a) North Ayrshire Council Industrial Estate Factories

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on the letting/availability of factories on Council industrial estates.

The report indicated that the level of occupancy and continuing demand for the Council's factory/workshop units is healthy and that the requirements of a particular niche market for certain types of businesses are apparently being met.

The Committee agreed (a) to seek further clarification from the Legal Services Manager on the effectiveness of the security measures installed at Portland Place Industrial Estate, Stevenston; and (b) otherwise noted the report.

(b) Three Towns Initiative

Submitted report by the Three Towns Initiative Manager on the key project work undertaken and future proposals of the Three Towns Initiative.

The Boatfest '97 Initiative taking place from 10th to 14th October was highlighted. This is being undertaken in conjunction with Clyde Marina and the Community and Recreational Services Directorate. It is hoped that the event will attract a large number of visitors and will be successful in

promoting the future development of the marina, harbour and surrounding area.

Noted.

(c) CONNECT: Young Persons Development Project

Submitted report by the Personnel Services Manager on the CONNECT training programme.

The training programme is delivered on a partnership basis by the Personnel Services Department and the Community and Recreational Services Young Peoples Development Service and provides a 16 week training course for 16-18 year olds within the Three Town area to assist them in progressing to mainstream training, further education or employment. In the majority of cases, the participants have to be unemployed for at least 6 months to be eligible for the scheme. It has had a success rate of 68% of trainees managing to achieve either employment, further education or a training place, including places at Moorpark House Training Unit. The programme is funded jointly by the Council, Enterprise Ayrshire and the European Social Fund and it is intended to submit a further bid for European Social Funding.

Noted.

(d) Analysis of Grants

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the Community Developments Grants paid to 28th August 1997 in respect of the Three Towns, including details of the balance of funding remaining.

Noted.

3. Community Development Grants Scheme: Possible Bulk Purchase Facility

Submitted report by the Director of Community and Recreational Services on the feasibility of the purchase of equipment and goods by the Council on behalf of organisations.

There are a number of difficulties involved in relation to the proposal, in terms of ordering the equipment or goods and in particular in relation to the VAT regulations. Customs & Excise have recently confirmed that the regulations would not allow the Council to purchase goods on behalf of other organisations without VAT repayment costs being incurred and there would be no saving benefit to the groups.

The Committee agreed to accept the continuation of the present arrangements whereby grants are awarded directly to the group or organisation.

4. Three Towns Elderly Forums and Federation Grant Applications

Submitted report by the Director of Community and Recreational Services on the remit of the Elderly Forums and the Three Towns Elderly Federation.

The Forums are all independently constituted, managed and operated by volunteers living in the relevant town. The Federation is a campaigning organisation for the Three Towns as a whole but is not a parent or governing body and has not applied for financial assistance. The Federation is supported by the Social Work Directorate Community Development Section, but the work of the Section is currently being reviewed including the type of support given to groups.

Noted.

5. Requests for Financial Assistance

Submitted report by the Director of Community and Recreational Services on requests for financial assistance:-

(a) Stevenston Elderly Forum

The Committee agreed to award Stevenston Elderly Forum £100;

(b) Klassic Clan Drop-in

The Committee agreed to award Klassic Clan Drop-in £600; and

(c) Ardrossan Academy Playgroup

The Committee agreed to award Ardrossan Academy Playgroup £300.

6. Community Safety Challenge Budget 1997/98

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on proposals for the disbursement of the Community Safety Challenge Budget to be recommended to the Corporate Strategy Committee for approval.

The Community Safety Challenge Budget established by the Corporate Strategy Committee in 1996/97 has been increased from £10,000 to £12,000. Following wide consultation with relevant agencies and organisations and public notice of the Scheme in the local press, a number of proposals for specific projects have been received from groups and organisations throughout North Ayrshire. Details of the projects received, including relevant costs, were provided in the report.

After discussion, the Committee agreed to recommend to the Corporate Strategy Committee that (a) the proposals in respect of the Community Safety Challenge Budget as detailed in the report be approved; (b) a Working Group comprising the Chair or his nominee, a representative of Strathclyde Police and a representative of Community and Recreational Services be set up in relation to the application by Ardrossan Youth Association for a Three Towns 'Fear of Crime' survey to determine the criteria; prior to the survey going ahead, the evaluation methods; and the means of addressing the issues raised by the survey; and (c) further information be obtained on the application by individual members of the Institute of Advanced Motorists based in Irvine to determine whether this is a separate branch being set up and the appropriate avenue for funding provision.

7. Stevenston: New Street Cemetery

Submitted report by the Director of Commercial Services on the proposals to enhance security at New Street Cemetery, Stevenston.

An initial survey has determined that it may be feasible to implement works to lay the vandalised headstones flat within the cemetery on a phased basis; that the proposal to install barbed wire along the top of the wall would not be appropriate; and that alternatives required to be looked at.

Further investigations will be undertaken and a report submitted to the next meeting of the Area Committee.

After discussion, the Committee agreed (i) that the further report should include the requirement to consult with the local community; and (ii) that the public notice relating to the stones being reset and laid flat over each lair should be circulated within the whole of North Ayrshire.

8. Saltcoats: Customs House

Submitted report by the Director of Community and Recreational Services on the situation in respect of the former Customs House, Saltcoats.

The Committee had previously requested that future use of the building be examined and an indication of the Community and Recreational Services Directorate's proposals for the building be provided. The building is a 'B' listed building and thus there may be restrictions on its future development. The Estates Section have been requested to assist in seeking a possible tenant for the building or provide other suggestions as to its future use. In the interim, however, it is estimated that the cost of securing the short-term future of the building by making good the roof timbers, roof covering, guttering etc. will be £15,000.

After discussion, the Committee agreed (a) that the bid of £15,000 for the works required at the Customs House be considered within the Community and Recreational Services Directorate's preparatory list for the 1998/99 Capital Programme; and (b) that consideration be given to the feasibility of obtaining lottery funding to develop the whole harbour area and link it with the "Big Idea" project.

9. Dog Fouling

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the decision of the Corporate Strategy Committee to pursue the appointment of an officer to deal with dog fouling.

At their meetings in August 1997 the five Area Committees had unanimously agreed to a proposal that the appointment of an officer to deal with the issue of dog fouling throughout North Ayrshire be pursued. This proposal had been approved by the Corporate Strategy Committee on 9 September 1997. Three Area Committees, Kilwinning, Dreghorn and Springside, North Coast and Arran and Garnock Valley Area Committees had agreed to defer any further spending in the current financial year pending the decision of the Corporate Strategy Committee. Those Committees had been invited to review their position on spending during the current year. The Irvine and Three Towns Area Committees had agreed however that due to the magnitude of the problem there should be no delay in implementing further measures and identified sites at Bourtreehill Village Centre in Irvine and Laighdykes within the Three Towns area to extend the measures which had originally been tried and tested in the original Pilot Areas. The three other Area Committees will review their position on spending during the current financial year but as the Irvine Area Committee has already decided to extend the pilot area no decision is required.

Noted

10. Urgent Items

The Chair agreed to consider the following items as a matter of urgency.

11. Saltcoats Elderly Forum

The Chair advised that he had received a note from the Saltcoats Elderly Forum thanking the Council for the provision of the chairlift in Saltcoats Town Hall and the intercoms at Union Street and Raise Street, Saltcoats.

Noted.

12. Stevenston: Garven Road: Community House

The Manager Area Services (Social Work) reported that as agreed previously by the Social Work Committee, following the closure of the Children's Care Unit, Stevenston, four young people from the unit and residential care staff will be transferring into a temporary unit to be formed from the two existing flats located above the Ardeer Community House, Garven Road, Stevenston. The alterations to the flats to form one unit will commence during the week beginning 20th October 1997 and the young people and staff should have moved in by Christmas. Assurances were given that all groups who meet at present within the Community House will still be accommodated there and the groups will be advised of the situation.

Noted.

The meeting ended at 11.30 p.m.