

North Coast and Arran Area Committee
30 March 1998

Largs, 30 March 1998 - At a Meeting of the North Coast and Arran Area Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 10.30 a.m.

Present

John Sillars, Margaret Highet, Elizabeth McLardy, Robert Rae and Richard Wilkinson.

In Attendance

J. Leckie, Head of Education Services (Education); D. Nibloe, Principal Officer, Accountancy (Financial Services); T. Jones, Operations Manager, Cleansing (Commercial Services); L. Scott, Supervising Engineer, Maintenance (Planning, Roads and Environment); J. Rankin, Museums Curator and M. Smyth, Area Community Development Officer (Community and Recreational Services); and J. Bannatyne, Administration Officer (Chief Executive).

Also In Attendance

Inspector W. Ross (Strathclyde Police); Sergeant M. Oates (Police Liaison Officer); and T. Barr, Community Fire Officer (Strathclyde Fire Brigade).

Chair

Mr. Sillars in the Chair.

1. Minutes Confirmed

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 16 February 1998, copies of which had previously been circulated, were confirmed.

2. Monitoring Reports

(a) Area Committee Statistics

Submitted report by the Director of Education giving information on attendance, running costs and leaver destinations in relation to pupils attending primary, secondary and special schools within North Ayrshire.

In general terms, the running costs per pupil and attendance statistics for North Ayrshire Schools compare favourably with the national averages. Information relating to school leaver destinations is used by school staff and assists the Ayrshire Careers Partnership in the provision of advice to pupils leaving school. Information on various aspects of school related performance will continue to be gathered and analysed on a North Ayrshire basis in order that discernible trends can be identified and investigated where appropriate. Relevant information for parents is published in school handbooks.

The Committee agreed to receive annual reports on attendance, running costs and leaver destinations in relation to schools in the North Coast and Arran Area.

(b) North Ayrshire Council Industrial Estate Factories

Submitted quarterly report by the Legal Services Manager on the letting/availability of factories

on Council Industrial Estates within the North Coast and Arran area.

The Keppenburn Workshops, Main Road, Fairlie comprises 6 industrial units. The current occupancy rate is 100% and 16 full-time staff are employed in connection with these units.

Noted.

(c) Community Development Grants Scheme: Analysis of Grants Paid to 18 February 1998

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on Community Development Grants paid to 18 February 1998 in respect of the North Coast and Arran area, including details of the balance of funding remaining.

Noted.

3. Community Development Grants Budget for Area Committees 1998/99

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the Community Development Grants Budget for Area Committees for 1998/99.

The Community Development Grants budgets for Area Committees, totalling £73,947 for the financial year 1998/99 were approved by the Corporate Strategy Committee at its meeting on 3 March 1998. The North Coast and Arran Area Committee budget for the forthcoming year, which has been maintained at the 1997/98 level, amounts to £12,220.

Playscheme grants will continue to be decided by the Area Committee but drawn from the central Playschemes Support Budget totalling £26,000.

The Challenge Budget for Community Safety for 1998/99 is set at £2,000 for each Area Committee.

Noted.

4. Community Development Grants Scheme: Requests for Financial Assistance

Submitted report by the Director of Community and Recreational Services on the undernoted applications for grants to voluntary organisations.

(a) Largs Chess Club

The Committee agreed to award the Largs Chess Club £900 to be met from the 1998/99 budget.

It was further agreed that the Largs Chess Club be requested to obtain information from those persons attending the Largs Chess Congress Event on the numbers in their party and where they are staying, and advise the Council of their findings.

5. Easter Playschemes 1998

Submitted report by the Director of Community and Recreational Services on applications for funding in respect of Easter Playschemes for 1998 within the North Coast and Arran area.

The Chair approved the undernoted applications in relation to Easter Playschemes as a matter of urgency to enable them to be funded from an underspend within the Playscheme Support Budget for 1997/98:-

- (i) Fairlie Summer Scheme, Quarriers Homes - Travel Passes; and
- (ii) West Kilbride Out of School Care - £183.67.

The Committee agreed to homologate the decision.

6. Largs: Viking Festival 1998

Submitted report by the Director of Community and Recreational Services on the programme for the 1998 Festival.

The Festival programme proposed for 1998/99 aims to reduce expenditure and subsidy and areas of potential savings have been examined. Market research in 1997 indicated that the economic benefit of the Festival to Largs traders is approximately £5 - £10 per visitor with the number of visitors estimated at around 10,000 - 15,000. The Festival programme will be run over 5 days rather than 10 as previously to reduce costs (i.e. 26 - 30 August). Advertising and printing costs will also be reduced with greater emphasis placed on local publicity. The 1998 expenditure is estimated at £19,250 with estimated income of £16,380 which includes an application for grant from the Largs Common Good Fund amounting to £7,700 which has still to be confirmed. Although sponsorship is currently being sought in an effort to meet the shortfall of £2,870 and fund additional activities, none has been secured to date. Full details were given on the Festival programme for 1998 together with information on the Festival budget for 1997 and the projected budget for the 1998 event.

After discussion, the Committee agreed that following the submission of a report by the Director of Community and Recreational Services on the outcome of this years Largs Viking Festival, a full review be undertaken of the event.

7. Largs: Common Good: Applications for Grants

Submitted report by the Director of Financial Services giving details on a number of applications received for grant assistance from the Largs Common Good Fund for the financial year 1998/99. With regard to an application from the Brisbane Queen Festival Committee, the Committee was advised that the accounts submitted with the application do not appear to have been audited and lack sufficient detail to allow analysis. Clarification is currently being sought from the applicants.

After full discussion, the Committee determined the applications for grant as follows:-

Organisation	Decision
Largs and District Round Table	Agreed £750
Largs Illuminations Committee	Agreed £3,500
Largs Viking Festival	Agreed £7,700
Largs Museum Trust	Agreed £600
Largs United Free Church of Scotland	Refused
Helter Skelter	Agreed Members of the Area Committee meet with the organisation to discuss the application
Brisbane Queen Festival Committee	Continued pending receipt of further information

It was further agreed (a) that the Largs Round Table, the Largs Illuminations Committee and the Largs Viking Festival Forum be advised that the level of funding agreed for the current financial year cannot be guaranteed in future years and that other sources of income should be identified; and (b) to note that the balance remaining to meet applications for grant from the Largs Common Good Fund for the current financial year is £1,450.

8. Roads Management and Maintenance Revenue Budget Programme

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the proposed programme of works within the North Coast and Arran area for the year 1998/99.

On 18 March 1998 the Infrastructure and Environment Services Committee approved the Roads Management and Maintenance Revenue Budget Programme for the year 1998/99. Details were given on the programme of works proposed for the North Coast and Arran area. Under the Best Value Regime approximately one third of all schemes will require to be put out to competitive tender.

Noted.

9. Largs: Douglas Park Aviary

Submitted report by the Director of Community and Recreational Services on a proposal to transfer 10 caged birds from an aviary at Douglas Park, Largs to Belleisle Park, Ayr.

The structure of the aviary at Douglas Park, Largs is in poor condition and has required continual maintenance. If retained it would require to be redesigned to provide more appropriate accommodation. The removal of the structure will involve additional costs. The Committee expressed concern over the lack of consultation with the local member.

After discussion, the Committee agreed (a) to continue consideration of this matter meantime; and (b) that the Director of Community and Recreational Services contact the local member for further discussion and report to the next meeting.

10. Community Consultation: North Coast and Arran Area: Review

Submitted report by the Director of Community and Recreational Services on the progress on certain issues raised during the community consultation process throughout the North Coast and Arran area.

Noted.

11. Largs: Jet Skiing Activities

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the outcome of enquiries into problems relating to congestion at the Largs Slip and the offshore activities of jet skiers at Largs.

A sign has now been erected at the car park area of the Largs Slip indicating that parking is restricted to RNLI crews only and that otherwise no parking or waiting is allowed in the area of the slipway at any time. Additionally double yellow lines have been introduced on the promenade and Strathclyde Police have indicated that they are in a position to take action in circumstances where motor vehicles or trailers are parked on or are obstructing the slipway or promenade. Complaints relating to noise have previously been addressed by the Council's Environment Section and these will continue to be monitored. In relation to the offshore activities of jet skiers, the Marine Safety Agency has confirmed that it is currently considering how best to amend Merchant Shipping Legislation so that jet skis will be obliged to obey the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (1972) as amended (COLREGS). Inspector Ross confirmed that in circumstances where utter disregard for the consequences of jet skiing was in evidence, a common law charge of reckless

conduct could apply and the Police would be prepared to prosecute. Efforts will continue to identify suitable alternative locations for use by jet skiers with a view to alleviating the offshore problems at Largs.

The Committee agreed that a further report on progress be made to a future meeting.

12. Operation Spotlight: Fly-Tipping

Submitted report on the success of a Joint Initiative between Strathclyde Police and North Ayrshire Council between 9 March and 22 March 1998 to tackle the problem of fly-tipping.

The establishment of the Litter Hotline enables the Council to respond quickly to complaints from members of the public regarding illegal dumping. The problem has been aggravated by the necessity for companies to pay a Landfill Tax to dispose of their refuse in approved sites. Already, warnings have been given to several companies and individuals in relation to fly-tipping and some more serious cases have been submitted to the Procurator Fiscal whose response is still awaited. Although the formal initiative has ended, the partnership which has been established between Strathclyde Police and North Ayrshire Council will continue, supported by appropriate advertising initiatives.

The Committee welcomed the degree of attention being given to this issue together with the opportunities which the partnership has presented for the Council throughout the current initiative and in the longer term.

13. Largs: Moorburn House: Housing Enquiries

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the current procedure adopted to deal with housing enquiries at Moorburn House, Largs.

Noted.

14. West Kilbride: Kirktonhall: Housing Surgeries

Submitted report by the Chief Executive confirming that Housing Surgeries which were previously held each Thursday from 10.00 a.m. until 12 noon in Kirktonhall, West Kilbride have now been transferred to Wednesday between 10.00 a.m. and 12 noon at the same location, in the interests of security.

Noted.

15. Largs: Footpath running from Cairnie's Quay to Bowencraig Walk

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the outcome of (i) an inspection of the footpath running from Cairnie's Quay to Bowencraig Walk, Largs; and (ii) an investigation into what work can be undertaken to prevent the continuing erosion of the coastline at that location.

The report gave details of proposed works to be undertaken by the Directors of Planning, Roads and Environment and Community and Recreational Services following an inspection by an Engineer from the Department of Roads.

The Committee agreed (a) that a further report be submitted to a future Committee giving details of the works which have been carried out; and (b) to note the outcome of the investigations meantime.

16. Strathclyde Fire Brigade: Fire Statistics

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on Fire Statistics for the period 1 January 1998 to 28 February 1998.

Noted.

The meeting ended at 11.50 a.m.