

Garnock Valley Area Committee
6 January 1998

Dalry, 6 January 1998 - At a Meeting of the Garnock Valley Area Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 10.30 a.m.

Present

Robert Reilly, James Jennings, Thomas Morris and George Steven.

In Attendance

J. Leckie, Head of Education Services (Education); J. McKinlay, Area Community Development Officer (Community and Recreational Services); J. Ferguson, Assistant Principal Estates Officer (Legal Services); W. Telford, Senior Accountant (Financial Services); J. Bannatyne, Administration Officer and D. McCaw, Assistant Administration Officer (Chief Executive).

Also In Attendance

Sergeant S. Gibson (Strathclyde Police); and T. Barr, Community Fire Officer (Strathclyde Fire Brigade).

Chair

Mr. Reilly in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

Thomas Dickie.

1. Minutes Confirmed

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 November 1997, copies of which had previously been circulated, were confirmed.

2. Monitoring Reports

(a) Analysis of Examination Results

Submitted report by the Director of Education on examination results relating to Secondary Schools published by the Scottish Office and made available to parents in school handbooks.

A short presentation was given on (i) the relative ratings for Standard Grade subjects which are used for internal comparisons on individual subjects by schools, to determine how the subjects are performing against each other; and (ii) the Value Added Approach to results which seeks to ascertain the value added by a particular school in respect of achievement levels in individual subjects and what steps can be taken to improve performance in low performance subjects.

The SOEID initiative in Raising Standards aims to move to a three year average of school performance in an attempt to smooth out annual variations and enable trends to be identified and targets to be set. In the interests of fairness, comparisons can only be made between similar schools and a schools characteristic index is to be introduced to enable similar establishments to be identified for comparison purposes. In addition to keeping parents informed the detailed analysis of examination results is also a useful management tool for Head Teachers. The Council's Education Committee has agreed that Secondary Schools should submit a report to the Director of Education outlining the actions proposed to raise attainment. The target of increasing the number of awards achieved with schools will be a priority for school plans for

session 1998/99. Statistics show that with a few exceptions, the Garnock Valley examination results are close to the National Average and most Garnock Valley Schools receive a good report from the Schools Inspectorate.

Noted.

(b) Industrial Estate Factories

Submitted quarterly report by the Legal Services Manager on the letting/availability of factories on Council Industrial Estates within the Garnock Valley area.

The Bridgend Industrial Estate, Kilbirnie comprises 7 industrial units. The current occupancy rate is 100% and 14 full-time staff are employed in connection with these units.

The Paddockholm Industrial Estate (Riverside Place), Kilbirnie comprises 4 industrial units details of which were given in the report. The current occupancy rate is 100% and 36 full-time staff are employed within these units.

The Paddockholm Industrial Estate (River Place), Kilbirnie comprises 9 industrial units. The current occupancy rate is 55% and 2 applications for unit leases are currently being negotiated at present. There are 4 full-time and 3 part-time staff currently employed in connection with these units.

Noted.

(c) Community Development Grants Scheme: Analysis of Grants Paid to 14 October 1997

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on Community Development Grants paid to 14 October 1997 in respect of the Garnock Valley area, including details of the balance of funding remaining.

Noted.

3. Community Development Grants Scheme: Requests for Financial Assistance

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

(a) Dalry Parents Association/Fun Fit Kids

The Committee agreed to award Dalry Parents Association/Fun Fit Kids £580;

(b) Beith High Church Playgroup

The Committee agreed to award Beith High Church Playgroup £150; and

(c) Kilbirnie Fun Week Committee

The Committee agreed to award Kilbirnie Fun Week Committee £1,000;

4. Community Safety

(a) Crime Statistics

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on crime statistics within the Garnock Valley at October 1997, provided by Strathclyde Police.

The detection rate on crime for the year is currently 39%. Instances of car crime and

vandalism are down. Crimes of dishonesty in general are down by 20%.

Throughout the year the crime of housebreaking has been a major concern and figures show that it is up by 12% on the year to date although the increase rate has recently fallen due to success in arresting offenders.

Drug related crimes are up by 6%. During November 29 persons were searched for drugs with 6 proving positive. Weapon related offences for the year are down by 80%.

With regard to litter complaints in Kilbirnie the problem was found to be associated with school children from Garnock Academy. Four Officers were deployed to combat this problem and the initiative has proved to be successful as a result of continued monitoring.

Noted.

(b) Fire Statistics

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on Fire Statistics for the period 10 October to 21 November 1997.

The Committee agreed (a) that the Community Fire Officer investigate the reasons for the high level of Other Code Three incidents in Dalry and advise Councillor Morris; and (b) otherwise to note the position.

Noted.

5. Urgent Items

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

6. Kilbirnie and Dalry: Closure of Community Facilities

On 5 January 1998 a Public Meeting was held to discuss the Council's decision to close the Bridgend Community Centre as one of a number of measures taken to bring the Council's 1997/98 budget into line.

Concern was expressed at the Public Meeting that proper consultation on the closure had not taken place and that the impact on user groups and the local community in general had not been fully considered.

Councillor Steven, who attended the Public Meeting, informed the Committee that a petition concerning this issue with over 600 signatures had been submitted to the Council.

After discussion the Committee acknowledged the level of community concern over the closure brought about by the necessity of the Council bringing the budget for 1997/98 into line by this measure and others and expressed its discontent over the manner in which the closure of the community facilities in Kilbirnie and Dalry were handled.

The Committee further requested that the Director of Community and Recreational Services ensure that every effort is made to provide information and assistance to individuals, local groups and organisations disadvantaged by the closure.

The meeting ended at 11.05 a.m.