

Three Towns Area Committee  
15 May 1997

**Ardrossan, 15 May 1997** - At a Meeting of the Three Towns Area Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 10.30 a.m.

**Present**

David Gallagher, Samuel Gooding and Samuel Taylor

**In Attendance**

J. Ferguson, Assistant Principal Estates Officer (Legal Services), S. McLaughlin, Area Community Development Officer (Community & Recreational Services), M. Francey, Area Services Assistant Manager (Social Work), A. McCutcheon, Pre 5 Worker (Education), W. Nichol, Senior Accountant (Financial Services) and S. Bale, Administration Officer (Chief Executive).

**Also In Attendance**

Inspector W Ross (Strathclyde Police), H. Aitken and A. Paton (North Ayrshire Women's Aid).

**Chair**

Mr Gallagher in the Chair.

**Apologies for Absence**

Peter McNamara, David Munn, Margaret Munn and Alan Munro.

**1. Minutes Confirmed**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 3 April 1997, copies of which had previously been circulated, were confirmed.

**2. Community Safety: Presentation by North Ayrshire Women's Aid**

The Chair welcomed Helen Aitken and Ann Paton of Cunninghame Women's Aid to the meeting.

Ms Aitken and Ms Paton gave a full and informative presentation on the history of Women's Aid in the local area since it was initially set up in 1980, the different forms of domestic violence which can be suffered by women and the services which are provided by North Ayrshire Women's Aid. These services include offices in Stevenston, the Women's Centre in Saltcoats and three refuges for women including one in Ardrossan. Among the services provided by Women's Aid are free and confidential advice, refuge space if available or alternative accommodation, a part-time children's worker in each refuge, research work and training.

The Committee thanked Ms Aitken and Ms Paton for their informative presentation.

**3. Monitoring Reports**

**(a) Review of Monitoring Reports 1996/97**

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on a review of the 1996/97 monitoring reports.

During the first year of operation of the Area Committees, monitoring reports have been provided on a number of services including the Garden Tidy Scheme, Social Work, Nursery

Education, Road Lighting etc. The process for identifying, preparing, submitting and presenting reports was considered at a special meeting of the five Chairs of the Area Committees on 15 April 1997. There was a general consensus of opinion that the reports were useful in appraising members of local service delivery. It was considered, however, that the reports could be presented in a better format to include appropriate benchmarks such as service targets/plans/standards agreed by Directors, actual results for previous time periods and national standards. It is proposed that officers develop appropriate reporting formats to include the use of benchmarks and that members be encouraged to identify local issues where it is considered that monitoring reports would be beneficial. It was suggested by members that benchmarks should include public consultation by both members and officers.

The Committee acknowledged that the purpose of the monitoring reports is to ensure that Council policies are being implemented satisfactorily at a local level. The Committee also acknowledged that decisions on specific service delivery relating to the local area have to be taken by the relevant service Committee and will be reported to the Area Committee as appropriate.

After discussion the Committee agreed to approve the proposals for more relevant and concise monitoring reports.

**(b) Analysis of Grants to 3 April 1997**

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the Community Development Grants paid to 3 April 1997.

The balance of funding remaining is £19,045.00.

Noted.

**4. Requests for Financial Assistance**

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on requests for financial assistance.

**a) Stevenston Elderly Forum**

The Committee agreed (a) to award £135.00 to meet the costs of one delegate attending the National Pensioners Conference; and (b) to continue consideration of that element of the application for running costs for a further report giving a detailed breakdown of these costs.

**b) Saltcoats Elderly Forum**

The Committee agreed to grant £135.00 to Stevenston Elderly Forum.

**c) Ardrossan Elderly Forum**

The Committee agreed to grant £135.00 to Ardrossan Elderly Forum.

**d) Three Towns Forum on Disability**

The Committee agreed to grant £400.00 to the Three Towns Forum on Disability.

**e) Kerr Avenue Residents Association**

The Committee agreed to meet the cost of a suitable lawnmower subject to satisfactory quotations being submitted by the applicants.

**f) Cunninghame North District Cub Scouts**

The Committee agreed (a) to grant £250.00 to Cunninghame North Cub Scouts; and (b) to refer the application to the North Coast and Arran Area Committee to consider an additional contribution, as 20% of the Cub Scouts are from Skelmorlie.

**g) Carousel Community Playgroup**

The Committee agreed (a) to grant £336.00 to Carousel Community Playgroup; and (b) to request that the Director of Education submits a report to the Education Committee in due course on the implications of the phasing out of the nursery vouchers.

**5. Dog Fouling**

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on progress in establishing the five pilot project areas selected to combat dog fouling.

The installation of the dog bins in the pilot project area of Sinclair Street leading down to Auchenharvie playing fields, Stevenston has now been completed. New posters have been produced and distributed throughout the pilot area at local libraries, area offices and all other locations where requests have been made, along with dog tidy bags which are available free of charge. Efforts are being made to secure maximum media coverage of the provision and to raise awareness of the problem. Leaflets outlining dog owners responsibilities have also been distributed. During Environment Week 10 - 18 May 1997 there will be a co-ordinated campaign involving the Police and the Dog Warden visiting the pilot project areas to promote the campaign. The system of dealing with complaints is continuing with every complaint being reported to Commercial Services Directorate, the Police and the Dog Warden.

In the 1997/98 budget, the sum of £1,600.00 is available to each Area Committee to undertake additional provision to combat dog fouling. It is proposed that consideration be given to how the £1,600.00 should be spent, once the pilot projects have been completed and assessed in August 1997. Currently, there is provision to provide signs for display in school playgrounds where a particular problem has been identified.

Inspector Ross confirmed that the Police are supporting the dog fouling measures during Environment Week and endeavouring to extend the promotion of the campaign into shops, pet shops etc., preferring to educate dog owners in the first instance rather than take enforcement action. A request has, however, been submitted to the Procurator Fiscal to ascertain whether authority can be given for a fixed penalty to be imposed for dog fouling offences.

After discussion, the Committee agreed (a) to authorise officers, in consultation with the Chair, to purchase signs for display in school playgrounds; (b) that consideration be given to displaying appropriate signs in Hamilton Street, Dockhead Street, Saltcoats and the Promenade; and (c) otherwise to note the progress.

**6. Cunninghame Watersports Association: Permanent Watersports Facility in the Three Towns Area**

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on a meeting held with Cunninghame Water Sports Association on 9 April 1997.

In February 1997, the Committee agreed (a) to refer investigation of the various proposals and sites of a Watersports Centre in the Three Towns to the appropriate Directorates for their consideration; and (b) to meet with the Cunninghame Watersports Association again once the various investigations had been completed.

A technical report had been obtained on the Customs House building at Saltcoats harbour, indicating that the building fabric is in a very poor state and whilst it is not considered to be dangerous

at this time, extensive rehabilitation work will be required to allow the property to be considered a structurally sound shell. A site visit was held on 9 April 1997, attended by representatives of Cunninghame Watersports Association and the Area Committee. Having viewed the Customs House building, the Committee agreed that it was unsuitable for the purposes of the Watersports Association.

The Watersports Association were advised that the only financial assistance available from the Council would be by way of an application to Community and Recreational Services for grant assistance, the maximum grant available being £3,000.00. Loan assistance could also be considered, but would be subject to the financial status of the organisation. The Watersports Association would require to prepare a sound business plan identifying the sources of all funding which they required.

The Committee considered that the most appropriate site which the Watersports Association should pursue is the former Shell site owned by Clydeport. The Watersports Association had already had some discussions with Clydeport and with Ardrossan Sea Cadets who are currently seeking new premises as their building is due to be demolished as part of the harbour redevelopment. The Watersports Association agreed to meet with Clydeport and with Ardrossan Sea Cadets to explore the options further and report back.

The Committee agreed (a) to await a further response from the Cunninghame Watersports Association; and (b) to request that the Director of Community and Recreational Services submit a report to the next meeting on the future use of the Customs House, Saltcoats and the measures which require to be taken to preserve the building.

#### **7. North Ayrshire Law Centre: Management Committee Membership**

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the need to appoint members to represent the Council on the North Ayrshire Law Centre Management Committee.

On 15 April 1997, the Corporate Strategy Committee agreed continued support for the North Ayrshire Law Centre Urban Programme Funded Project conditional on further changes in the composition of the Management Committee including the appointment of three elected members from the Council to be appointed by the Three Towns Area Committee.

The Committee agreed to appoint Councillors D Gallagher, A Munro and P McNamara to the North Ayrshire Law Centre Management Committee.

#### **8. Areas Requiring Environmental Improvement**

Submitted report by the Head of Corporate Business on progress in dealing with the areas requiring environmental improvements identified by members.

The majority of the areas identified by members as requiring environmental improvements have now been dealt with. An update was provided to the meeting on further action which had been taken.

The Committee agreed (a) to note the progress to date; and (b) that the Head of Corporate Business pursue any outstanding items and reports back to the local member concerned.

#### **9. Crime Statistics for Three Towns**

Inspector Ross reported on crime statistics within UB Sub Division which includes the Three Towns area. Over the periods April 1996 to March 1997, compared with 1995/96, the number of reported crimes has decreased from 4987 to 4424, being an 11% reduction.

During 1997/98, one of the Police objectives will include influencing driver behaviour to improve road safety. During the week beginning 2 June 1997, as part of the Spotlight Initiative, the Police will be targeting the problem of graffiti and are requesting that elected members and members of the

public notify any areas of concern to them.

After discussion, the Committee agreed (a) to note the report; and (b) to request the Directors of Social Work and Commercial Services to submit a report to a future meeting on the feasibility of the removal of graffiti being undertaken by the Community Service Scheme.

#### **10. Stevenston: Erosion of Sand Dunes**

The Chair reported that there is an ongoing problem with three and four wheeled vehicles using Stevenston beach and there is concern about the erosion of the dunes.

After discussion, the Committee agreed (a) to request the Legal Services Manager to investigate what legal action can be taken to prohibit individuals from using the beach in this way and report to the next meeting of the Committee; and (b) that the Director of Community and Recreational Services arrange to re-erect the bollard on the bridge leading down to the beach.

#### **11. Urgent Items**

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

#### **12. 'No Ball Games' Signs**

Councillor Taylor referred to the proliferation of 'No Ball Games' signs in his Ward. Members also considered this to be a problem in other areas.

After discussion, the Committee agreed to request the Director of Community and Recreational Services to report on (a) the provision of playground/kickabout areas in the Three Towns area; and (b) the criteria for establishing where 'No Ball Games' signs are installed.

The meeting ended at 12.05 p.m.