

North Coast and Arran Area Committee
7 October 1996

Largs, 7 October 1996 - 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

The Director of Community and Recreational Services; D Anderson, Head of Cultural and Community Services; M Smyth, Area Community Development Officer (Community and Recreational Services); C Hamilton, Area Services Manager (Social Work); D Nibloe, Principal Officer, Budgeting and Accounting (Financial Services); J Mason, Principal Engineer, Roads Division (Planning, Roads and Environment Services); E Maclean, Early Years Adviser (Education Services); J Bannatyne, Administration Officer and C Graham, Assistant Administration Officer (Chief Executive).

Also In Attendance

Inspector M Scally and Inspector I Reilly (Strathclyde Police).

Chair

Mr Sillars in the Chair

1. Minutes Confirmed

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 26 August 1996, copies of which had been previously circulated, were confirmed.

2. Largs: Barrfields Re-development Project

Submitted report by the Director of Community and Recreational Services on the current position regarding the operation of the Barrfields Complex in Largs including details on the success achieved in respect of Vikingar since its opening in July 1995.

The Barrfields Re-development Project was completed in phases between May 1994 and May 1996. The Complex now comprises the Vikingar Visitor Attraction, Barrfields Pavilion Theatre and Cinema, the Wintergarden Cafe and the Theatre Bar, a Gift And Craft Shop, Largs Swimming Pool, Health and Fitness Suite and the Viking Soft Play Adventure Area.

The Vikingar Exhibition has attracted 60,000 visitors since opening in July 1995 including 12,800 attendances by pupils and teachers from schools. The basic charge per pupil is £1.50 and indications are that attendances are expected to increase in the next academic year. Since 1 April 1996 there have been 115,000 ticketed visits to the Complex and current financial records show that the Centre has met all of its targets. The total net income for the Complex to the end of September has been calculated at £260,000 against a target figure to that date of £259,106. The direct spin-off from the Centre's re-development has been a 30% increase in Swimming Pool attendance compared with periods prior to the Pool's incorporation into the total Complex. The new Soft Play Area has been attended by 2,900 individuals since May and there have been over 6,500 visits to the new Health And Fitness Suites. Over 20,000 have attended the Theatre and Cinema since they have

opened.

The Committee was advised that Largs was awarded the Best Tourism Oscar in the 1995 Herald Tourism Town Awards which Vikingar was instrumental in helping to secure. The development has been a significant motivator in bringing together public and private sector partnership and the annual Largs Viking Festival has benefited immensely from Vikingar. The facility has been short-listed in this year's Scottish Tourist Board Thistle Awards for the Marketing Campaign of the Year and the Wintergarden Scheme has won the British Association of Landscape Industries (BALI) Award for the best interior landscape installation. The original facilities at the Barrfields site (pool and theatre) have developed enormously within the new Complex. Vikingar has attracted new visitors to the Largs area from all over the UK and abroad and has been a catalyst for increased economic activity in Largs. The Centre is providing a nationally respected educational resource for school children and there is also a proposal to introduce a conference leaflet for next year.

Thereafter the Director of Community and Recreational Services responded to various questions from the Committee. The operating costs of the Centre are within the guidelines set by the Council and all requirements in relation to financial targets and attendance levels etc. have been met. He confirmed that a new Manager, Mr Colin Ewing, with experience in Leisure Management in both private and public sectors, has recently been appointed to manage the Vikingar Centre, taking up his duties on 2 October 1996.

After discussion the Committee agreed (a) to welcome the report; and (b) to express his thanks to Clare Watson for her hard work and commitment particularly in her dual role in managing Vikingar in conjunction with her role as Head of Strategy and Business Management Services.

3. Strathclyde Police: Presentation on the "Role of the Police"

The Committee received a presentation by Inspector Mike Scally on the structure of Strathclyde Police and on the role of the Police in the North Coast and Arran area in particular. An information pack was distributed at the meeting.

Noted.

4. Millport: Community Consultation Meeting

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the outcome of a Community Consultation meeting held in Millport on 26 September 1996.

In accordance with the previous decision of the Area Committee to carry out consultation with a wider range of groups in various locations throughout the North Coast and Arran area, consultation meetings have now been held in Skelmorlie and Millport. Details were given on the various issues raised at the meeting which attracted fifteen representatives from eleven groups/organisations.

The Committee agreed (a) that appropriate Directorates of the Council be requested to investigate the various issues raised by the groups/organisations who attended the meeting and report; (b) that arrangements be made for a further Community Consultation Meeting with local groups/organisations in Fairlie on 14 November 1996 at 7.00 p.m. at a venue to be arranged; and (c) that the Chief Executive submit a Monitoring Report to the next meeting on the responses received from the various Directorates to the issues raised at the Skelmorlie Community Consultation Meeting on 19 August 1996.

5. Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1992: Byelaws for the Prohibition of Alcohol in Public Places

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on a decision by the Protective Services Committee to establish a Member/Officer Working Group to include representatives of relevant outside bodies to consider the issue of drinking in public being linked with public disorder as well as the specific aspect of under-age drinking.

The Group will comprise the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Protective Services Committee, the Depute Leader and the Convener, representatives from the Licensing Board, Strathclyde Police, North Ayrshire Council's Education and Social Work Directorates, representatives of Community Councils within North Ayrshire and representatives from the Justices of the Peace Committee. The Area Committee was requested to nominate one member to serve on this Working Group.

The Committee agreed to appoint Councillor Wilkinson to serve on the Working Group.

6. Draft Revised Community Development Grants Scheme

Submitted report by the Director of Community and Recreational Services on draft proposals for a Revised Community Development Grants Scheme.

The Head of Cultural and Community Services indicated that the proposed revised scheme would bring together the inherited schemes previously operated by the former Strathclyde Regional and Cunninghame District Councils. The new scheme will be designed with a view to clarifying to applicants the criteria which requires to be met in respect of the various types of grant applications and will be presented in a form which allows simplicity of access to applicants. Applicants will receive an application form together with a book of guidelines on the scheme and completed applications will thereafter be determined by the appropriate Area Committee or Service Committee. Emphasis was placed on the role of the Area Community Development Officers which will be crucial to the success of the new scheme in terms of the provision of personalised advice on the submission of grant applications. Members were invited to comment on the draft proposals or alternatively to submit their comments/observations on the proposals by 16 October 1996 as the finalised proposals for the scheme will be submitted to the Community and Recreational Services Committee on 5 November 1996 for approval. The scheme will be monitored in the early stages and revised if considered necessary.

After discussion the Committee agreed to welcome the new draft proposals.

7. Monitoring Reports

(a) Nursery Education Initiative

Submitted report by the Director of Education on the progress being made in the implementation of the Nursery Education Initiative.

Noted

(b) Road Lighting

Submitted report by the Director of Planning, Roads and the Environment on the nature of the Road Lighting function and the systems in use for Lighting Maintenance within North Ayrshire. The report included statistical information in relation to the contractual response times under the Lighting Maintenance Contractor and service response times provided by Scottish Power, the programme of Planned Maintenance operations and Dark Lamp Faults.

Noted.

(c) Road Maintenance Contracts

Submitted report by the Director of Planning, Roads and the Environment on the current position regarding the 1996-97 Road Maintenance Programme.

Noted.

(d) Analysis of Grants Paid to 20 September 1996

Submitted report by the Chief Executive detailing the various categories of grants paid to 20 September 1996.

The Committee was advised that the cost of a free let previously agreed in respect of a stage performance by the Peggy Inglis School of Dancing at Barrfields in June amounting to £384 has now been met, reducing the balance available for Mainline grants to £3,111.

Noted.

8. Requests for Financial Assistance

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on requests received for financial assistance in respect of the North Coast and Arran Area Committee.

(a) Community Grants

(i) Arran Duke of Edinburgh Award Group

The Committee agreed to grant the Arran Duke of Edinburgh Award group £400 towards the cost of transport.

(ii) Kilmory Public Hall Trustees

Kilmory Public Hall Trustees have applied for funding in the sum of £4,000 to install and update the heating system for the lesser and main halls, kitchen and toilets within Kilmory Public Hall.

The Committee agreed (a) to continue consideration to enable alternative sources of funding to be investigated; and (b) that a report be submitted to the next meeting.

(b) Sports, Arts and Leisure Grants

(i) Machrie Tennis Club

The Committee agreed to grant Machrie Tennis Club £500 towards the cost of the works as indicated in their application.

9. Largs Common Good: Application for Financial Assistance from Largs and District Round Table

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on an application received from the Largs and District Round Table for financial assistance of £1,000 towards their Annual Fireworks Display in 1996.

The Committee agreed to contribute £1,000 towards this event.

10. Largs: Naming of New Private Housing Development by Scotway Developments Limited Adjacent to Warren Park Nursing Home

Submitted report by the Director of Planning, Roads and the Environment on the provision of a street name for the new development adjacent to Warren Park Nursing Home, Largs.

The Committee agreed that the street be named "Warren Park Mews" as recommended by Councillor Wilkinson, the local member.

11. Largs Promenade: Proposed Cycling and Skateboarding Zone

The Committee was advised that Councillor Highet had recently consulted with Inspector Mike Scally of Strathclyde Police (Largs office) on problems resulting from the use of Largs North and South promenades by cyclists and skateboarders. She suggested that consideration be given to the possibility of designating where possible a zone along the landward side of Largs North and South promenades for cycling/skateboarding by the painting of a single continuous line along the landward side of the North and South promenades along with appropriate symbols.

Inspector Scally reported that Strathclyde Police could not enforce the use of such a zone but expressed the view that he was in favour of its introduction on a trial basis.

The Committee agreed that the Director of Planning, Roads and the Environment be requested to investigate the proposal and report.

12. Largs Community Council: Consultation with Community Councils on Planning Applications

The Committee was advised that Largs Community Council have indicated that they are experiencing problems in meeting the requirement to request within seven working days of the issuing date of the weekly list of planning applications, further detailed information in relation to specific planning applications where considered appropriate. The Community Council have requested that consideration be given to extending this period.

The Committee agreed that the Director of Planning, Roads and the Environment be requested to consider the request and thereafter advise the Community Council.

The meeting ended at 12.10 p.m.