

Garnock Valley Area Committee
15 September 1998

Dalry, 15 September 1998 - At a Meeting of the Garnock Valley Area Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 10.30 a.m.

Present

George Steven, James Jennings and Thomas Morris.

In Attendance

The Director of Housing and Construction Services; C Hamilton, Area Services Manager (Social Work); A Pettigrew, Young People's Services Development Officer; J McKinlay, Area Community Development Officer; J Barr, Area Officer, Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance (Community Services); P. Doak, Accountant (Financial Services); S Paxton, and J. Bannatyne, Administration Officers (Chief Executive).

Also In Attendance

Inspector C. McCreath (Strathclyde Police); and T. Barr, Community Fire Officer (Strathclyde Fire Brigade).

Chair

Mr. Steven in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

Thomas Dickie and Robert Reilly.

1. Minutes Confirmed

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 23 June 1998, copies of which had previously been circulated, were confirmed.

2. Garnock Valley Biblical Garden

Submitted report by the Head of Corporate Business on the progress made in the research into the practicality of creating a Biblical Garden in the Garnock Valley.

The report gave details on the remit of the Garnock Valley Biblical Garden Interim Steering Group including comprehensive details of its three main themes, namely the creation of a Biblical Garden Centre (Phase I), the creation of a Mini Conference/Seminar Facility (Phase II) and Artistic, Cultural and Spiritual Exploration (Phase III). The Taylor Clarke Partnership, Glasgow, have been appointed to undertake an extensive consultation process seeking views from a wide range of groups/organisations throughout the Garnock Valley as a whole and from the Area Committee itself. The cost of the initial research to be undertaken amounts to £15,000, of which £11,500 has been raised to date. The results of the research will be known in October 1998. It is envisaged that the Council will retain ownership of Moorpark House and grounds and that the grounds will be leased to a Trust or successor company. In the event that the project is to proceed, funding will be sought from a number of sources including the European Regional Development Fund, the National Lottery and the Private Sector. The results of the Research Project will be presented to the Corporate Strategy Committee in late autumn 1998.

During discussion, the view was expressed that the proposed facility at Moorpark House may have difficulty in attracting visitors from the main Glasgow-Largs road, given its location at Schoolwynd.

The Committee agreed that the Chief Executive advise The Taylor Clarke Partnership of the

Committee's concern and otherwise noted the progress meantime.

3. Longbar: Option Appraisal and Garnock Valley Housing Market Study

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on the results of the Longbar Option Appraisal and Garnock Valley Housing Market Study, giving comprehensive details of the proposals arising therefrom and confirming the decision of the Housing Services Committee in this regard.

The Director of Housing and Construction Services confirmed that the Longbar Option appraisal has now been concluded by the Consultants, James Cunning, Young and Partners and includes an Executive Summary of the Housing Market Study completed by Amanda Britain Consultancy. This Study covered a much wider area than Longbar itself, the view being taken that to take account of the Garnock Valley area as a whole would be of assistance in attracting significant funding. There are currently 1436 Council Houses in Longbar, 33 of which are vacant with little prospect of occupation in either a long or short-term basis. After consideration, the Housing Services Committee has agreed to reconvene the Steering Group previously set up in 1997 to include the Local Members from Kilbirnie, Glengarnock and Beith to advance a Strategy and Implementation Plan based on the proposals. This representation was based on a distinction drawn by the Consultants between the relatively poor "health" of the market in the Kilbirnie, Glengarnock and Beith areas and the more buoyant situation in Dalry and the southern part of the Valley. The role of the Steering Group is to advance a Strategy and Implementation Plan based on the proposals put forward by the Consultants. The Director of Housing and Construction Services has been instructed by the Housing Services Committee to keep them informed of progress and to report on any proposals put forward by the Steering Group prior to their implementation.

The Committee agreed to welcome and support the proposals and to note the position meantime.

4. Monitoring Reports

(a) Social Work

Submitted report by the Director of Social Work on issues relating to the quality of Social Work Services in the Garnock Valley area.

The report gave specific details, including statistical information on (i) childcare in relation to the Child Protection Register and Child Protection Investigations and Responses, and (ii) Community Care in relation to an analysis of various elements of Community Care Services and Clients Awaiting Nursing or Residential Care. The Area Services Manager reported that attempts were made to minimise the number of children whose names are placed on the Child Protection Register to ensure that the focus of the child protection system is concentrated in areas of real concern. In recent years the numbers of children placed in care by the local Social Work Team has been progressively reducing. He also made reference to the constraints placed on the Social Work Directorate in accommodating the number of persons assessed and approved for residential and nursing care within the Garnock Valley area, due to funding restrictions.

Noted.

(b) Community Services: Litter Awareness

Submitted report by the Director of Community Services on service delivery regarding litter awareness.

The report detailed five instances of fly-tipping over June, July and August and confirmed that no telephone calls had been made to the Litter Hotline during August 1998.

Noted.

1998 (c) Community Development Grants Scheme: Analysis of Grants Paid to 24 June

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on Community Development Grants paid to 24 June 1998 in respect of the Garnock Valley area, including details of the balance of funding remaining.

Noted.

5. Community Development Grants Scheme: Requests for Financial Assistance

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

(a) Kids R Us

The Committee agreed to award £200;

(b) Dalry Pre-School Playgroup

The Committee agreed to award £400;

(c) Beith Drop-In

The Committee agreed to award £550, subject to written agreement from the Group that constant adult supervision and monitoring will be in place when using this technology;

(d) Garnock Rugby Club

The Committee agreed to award £250 and to advise the Club to approach the Scottish Sports Council in respect of further funding;

(e) Ayrshire Aikijutsu Club

The Committee agreed to award £440, subject to appropriate Public Liability Insurance being obtained by the Club prior to release of the grant; and

(f) Geilsland School

The Committee agreed to award £500.

6. Kilbirnie: Bridgend: Proposed Drop-In Centre

Submitted report by the Legal Services Manager on the progress of discussions with Messrs W and J Knox, owners of the former Mission Hall in relation to the proposed lease of the property.

It is proposed that the lease shall be for a period of three years from a date of entry to be agreed and will be terminable by either party giving three months written notice. The accommodation will be on a rent-free basis and at no time during the currency of the lease would there be any interference with the pedestrian access from Bridgend to the premises of the Landlord. The finalised formal Lease Agreement will contain all other normal full repairing and insuring terms. The Group will now be arranging for the setting up of a formal Management Committee to enable negotiation of the Lease to be concluded. The Head of Architectural Services will now require to carry out a re-assessment of the property to determine the specific works to be carried out. Further potential sources of funding are to be investigated with a view to further upgrading the former Mission Hall premises in the future.

Noted.

7. Dog Fouling

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on (a) the progress to date on the current initiatives to combat dog fouling in North Ayrshire; and (b) proposals for future action based on the current budget allocation for 1998/99 amounting to approximately £18,000.

The Officers Working Group on dog fouling have framed a programme for 1998/99 which recommends:-

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| Cleaning of bins | Continue cleaning and emptying |
| Bin replacement/maintenance | Maintain and repair |
| Provision of new bins | Provide 5 new bins per Area Committee |
| Signs | A global sum of £500 be allocated to provide signs in identified high profile areas. |
| Dog Tidy Bags | No further provision of bags, encourage the practice of using supermarket carrier bags. |
| Leaflets/Posters | No further provision be made at this time. |
| Partnership with Strathclyde Police | Continue to support partnership. |
| Prosecutions | Co-operate with Strathclyde Police, write to the Scottish Office urging extended Police powers to impose financial penalties and write to COSLA to support this action and write to the Scottish Office in similar terms. |
| Publicity | Promote responsible dog ownership in relation to fouling exhibitions etc. and secure publicity which "outlaws" fouling offences and publicise successful prosecutions. |

After discussion the Committee agreed (i) to endorse the proposals in the report; and (ii) to remit to the Chair in consultation with the individual Members to determine the locations for the five new dog bins.

8. Community Safety

(a) North Ayrshire Community Safety Forum and its links with the Area Committees

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on developments in the promotion of Community Safety within North Ayrshire, including the role of the Area Committees.

The North Ayrshire Community Safety Forum on which the Council is represented by the five Area Committee Chairs along with appropriate officers, has now been established and meets regularly. Details were given of the various ways in which the Council is promoting Community Safety including the Steering Groups at Area Committee level. Area Committees will continue to promote Community Safety at local level, liaising with the Forum through their Chairs and will be in

a position to seek bids for funding within their areas under the Community Safety Challenge Fund.

The Committee agreed (i) to recognise the continuing role of Area Committees to promote Community Safety at a local level in liaison with the Forum; and (ii) to consider requests for financial assistance from the Community Safety Challenge Budget to promote Community Safety within the Area Committee boundaries.

(b) Crime Statistics

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on crime statistics within the Garnock Valley for July 1998, provided by Strathclyde Police.

There were 90 crimes reported in the Garnock Valley in July 1998, which is a reduction of 11 on those reported in July 1997. Serious crime (i.e. serious assault) has risen from 3 reported in July 1997 to 5 reported in 1998. The detection rate for crime in the Garnock Valley as a whole for the year to date is 46%. In an effort to address speeding complaints a Spotlight Initiative was carried out in the Garnock Valley area during the month of July at 17 identified locations, both rural and urban resulting in only three persons charged with exceeding the speed limits. Fines are administered on the basis of a fixed penalty.

Noted.

(c) Fire Statistics

Submitted report by the Chief Executive on fire statistics within the Garnock Valley for the period 1 June 1998 to 31 July 1998.

The report detailed incidents within the Garnock Valley by Station Area and using specific Fire Brigade codes. There were no fatalities or serious injuries during this period.

Noted.

The meeting ended at 11.45 a.m.