

RURAL PANEL.

Minutes of meeting in the Carrick Buildings, Girvan,
on 15th September 2011 at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Councillors Alec Oattes (Chair), Brian Connolly, Sandra Goldie and Mairi Low.

Apologies: Councillors Andy Campbell, Hywel Davies and Ann Galbraith.

Attending: M. Newall, Head of Planning and Enterprise; M. Hastings, Enterprise Manager; G. Collins, Community Engagement Manager; M. McLarty, Senior Accountant; and A. Gibson, Committee Administrative Officer.

1. Introductory Remarks by the Chair.

The Chair welcomed those present to this Panel meeting.

2. Presentation regarding the Carrick Centre, Maybole.

Alan Murray gave a presentation with regard to the new Carrick Centre, Maybole and advised that it would create new community facilities and incorporate a modern church, with a separate dedicated youth facility.

Decided: following a number of questions from Members, to thank him for his informative presentation.

3. Presentation by the Head of Planning and Enterprise regarding the Winter Roads Programme.

The Head of Planning and Enterprise gave a presentation in relation to the Winter Roads Programme in South Ayrshire.

Decided: following a number of questions from Members and the public

- (1) to thank him for his informative presentation; and
- (2) to note that this Council had recently been a finalist as a best service delivery team in winter maintenance.

4. Questions which had previously been raised.

- (1) There was submitted a letter (issued) from Tarbolton Tenants' and Residents' Association enquiring how this Council could justify the continuing substantial financial sums diverted to Carrick/South Carrick to the detriment of the other rural areas within South Ayrshire.

The Community Engagement Manager advised

- (a) that there was to be significant development in the Tarbolton area involving school rebuilds including community facilities, the finance for which had been earmarked in the Capital Programme for 2013/14;
- (b) that the area would also be benefitting from significant private investment in house building;
- (c) that he had recently attended a meeting where the community and school parents representatives had discussed plans for 2012/13 to develop the school campus at Annbank with the option to include dedicated space for community use and shared access to the replacement dining hall/gym as part of a new extension to the existing premises; and
- (d) that funds were allocated on the basis of need and there had been ongoing projects with communities in the Carrick area in both Maybole and Girvan.

Decided: to note the position.

- (2) There was submitted an e-mail (issued) from South Ayrshire Seniors' Forum enquiring
 - (a) if Community Transport was something that could be considered for Grant Aid; and
 - (b) if funding for Grant Aid could be used to fund a development worker with older people.

In relation to (a) above, the Community Engagement Manager advised

- (i) that Community Transport would indeed qualify for grant aid;
- (ii) that there had been a study on community transport to which South Ayrshire Seniors' Forum had contributed;
- (iii) that a workshop held in August 2011 had concluded that the approach taken had been to encourage existing community transport providers, Carrick Community Transport, CAN and SAYLSA to consider ways of working in partnership with the Council and NHS in this process;
- (iv) that the findings of the study and workshop were to be presented to the Community Planning Partnership;
- (v) that the previously funded project, Travel Connections no longer received funding from SPT, however, they had indicated a willingness to look at other options; and

- (vi) that in Kyle there was no community transport infrastructure and the findings of the study had suggested that a way forward would be to support the development of community transport infrastructure around the 'Re-shaping Care Services for Older People' as people would not attend certain events such as "Falls Prevention/Falls Awareness" without transport.

In relation to (b) above, the Community Engagement Officer advised

- (i) that a fund of £200,000 for capacity building around groups and organisations involved with older people existed through the 'Re-shaping Care for Older People' or Change Fund as it was known;
- (ii) that the NHS and South Ayrshire Council were working with the Third Sector interface organisation, namely Voluntary Action South Ayrshire to support community based activities such as helping local groups to function better and sustain themselves;
- (iii) that three posts, to be located in Troon/Prestwick/Ayr and Carrick, had been identified to be based at VASA and they would work closely with this Council and NHS services; and
- (iv) that they would work with South Ayrshire Seniors' Forum to support capacity building activity of all kinds.

Decided: to note the position.

- (3) There was submitted an e-mail (issued) from Ballantrae Community Council raising the following concerns:-
 - (a) the extra traffic on the A77 after the port removal from Stranraer to Cairnryan and the disconnection from the rail service; and
 - (b) the effect on the tourist trade and health with the ever increasing number of large wind turbines.

In relation to (a) above, the Head of Planning and Enterprise advised

- (i) the opening of the new Stena terminal facilities to the north of Cairnryan would intensify competition between the operators on the route to Northern Ireland;
- (ii) that overall traffic volumes were unlikely to increase dramatically as a result;

- (iii) that the stated intention to bus foot-passengers north, to either Girvan or Ayr, would create a modest increase in traffic volumes on the A77, although a public transport option would remain that could transfer foot-passengers to the rail station at Stranraer;
- (iv) that this Council continued to liaise with groups such as SAYLSA about activities to encourage passenger traffic onto the Stranraer – Ayr rail line; and
- (v) that despite the probable modest increase in traffic volumes as a consequence of the proposed transport arrangements, no major issues were anticipated in terms of road safety, traffic flow and roads maintenance.

In relation to (b) above, the Head of Planning and Enterprise advised

- (i) that the main areas of potential impact from windfarms were economic, environmental and energy related, although there were also potential health issues;
- (ii) that tourism and health were therefore two of many considerations that had a bearing on the existing and future development of windfarms;
- (iii) that this Council had no policy that was either in favour of, or against, windfarm development;
- (iv) that every windfarm development proposal was unique and had to be considered on its merits;
- (v) that this Council was committed to the development of the Tourism sector and recognised its importance within the local economy;
- (vi) that as a Planning Authority, consideration would be given to, amongst other considerations, impact on local economy and community development and impact on tourism; and
- (vii) that health issues were addressed as a part of amenity considerations.

Decided: to note the position.

The Chair announced that the public's participation in this stage of the proceedings had ended and, thereafter, the Panel dealt with the formal business of the meeting.

B U S I N E S S

4. Rural Communities Fund – Revenue Budgetary Control 2011/12 – Position Statement at 31st August 2011.

There was submitted a joint report (issued) of 7th September 2011 by the Executive Director – Development and Environment and the Executive Director – Corporate Services advising of the expenditure against its profiled budgets for the period to 31st August 2011 (Period 5).

Decided: to note the contents of the report.

5. Application for Financial Support.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 22nd August 2011 by the Executive Director – Development and Environment advising that a rural grant application had been submitted by the Carrick Rural Arts Group – Festival of Light 2011 for funding towards the tuition and materials for the lantern workshops to be held in schools and community centres in twelve towns and villages in the Carrick area over a six week period.

Decided: to approve an award of £1,000 to the Carrick Rural Arts Group – Festival of Light 2011.

6. Rural Broadband Development.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 5th September 2011 by the Executive Director – Development and Environment advising of the Scottish Government's proposals for the development of next generation broadband in rural areas.

Decided:

- (1) to note that the Scottish Government proposed to make available funds to support the development of "next generation" broadband in rural areas of Scotland; and
- (2) to endorse a proposal to form a consortium of Local Authorities that would develop a bid for funds from the Scottish Government for rural broadband development in South Ayrshire and beyond.

7. European Fisheries Fund – Axis 4 - Sustainable Development of Fisheries Areas.

With reference to the Minutes of 21st April 2011 (Page 285, paragraph 5), there was submitted a report (issued) of 2nd September 2011 by the Executive Director – Development and Environment updating the Panel on progress with an application for grant assistance from Axis 4 of the European Fisheries Fund.

Councillor Oattes enquired where the other £180,000 would be funded from and the Enterprise Manager responded that £180,000 would be met from the Council's finances.

Decided:

- (1) to confirm the submission of the joint application with Argyll and Bute Council for FLAG status for the fisheries communities of Ballantrae, Girvan, Maidens, Ayr and Prestwick and Troon, to be known as the ABSA FLAG;
- (2) to note
 - (a) that Argyll and Bute Council would take responsibility for the administration function and be the financial lead body; and
 - (b) that any formal offer of FLAG status from the European Fisheries Fund and the financial implications in accepting be remitted to the Leadership Panel for a decision on whether to proceed following consultation with the Chair of this Panel; and
- (3) to endorse the application to the European Fisheries Fund from Argyll and Bute Council for an Fisheries Area Development Officer for the ABSA FLAG area.

8. Ayrshire LEADER Update and Future.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 19th August 2011 by the Executive Director – Development and Environment advising of the progress on the implantation of the Ayrshire LEADER programme, the future of LEADER in the EARDF 2014 – 2020 programme and seeking instructions to represent the interests of rural South Ayrshire in the debate on the detail of this next round of European funded programmes.

Following a question from a Member of the Panel relating to this Council's role in the LEADER Programme, the Enterprise Manager responded accordingly.

Decided: to agree

- (1) that the Panel receive future reports on progress of the Ayrshire LEADER programme in due course;
- (2) that the interests of rural South Ayrshire be represented by Members and Officers in the debate and negotiations on the detail for the next programme of European funds, particularly the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Structural Funds; and
- (3) to receive future reports on progress on the development of these programmes from a rural development perspective.

CLOSING DISCUSSION

At this point of the meeting, the Chair announced that the formal business of the meeting had concluded and opened the meeting to questions from the floor.

9. **Ayrshire LEADER.**

With reference to item 8 above, in relation to the LEADER programme and having heard a member of Tarbolton Tenants' and Residents' Association advise of the difficulties in obtaining LEADER funding, there followed a discussion on this matter.

Decided: to note the position.

The meeting ended at 8.25 p.m.