

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of the Community Participation Committee held in the Meeting Room 3, Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton on Wednesday, 22 August 2007 at 2.00 p.m.

Present: Councillors Jim Brown, George Black, Geoff Calvert, Willie Hendrie, and May Smillie. Murdoch Cameron, MBE, Community Councils Forum; Francis McNeill, Community Councils Forum; Megan Harrison, Faifley Neighbourhood Forum; Bill Rankin, West Dunbartonshire Access Panel; John Diamond, Bellsmyre Neighbourhood Forum; Mary Theresa Doherty, Clydebank Community Forum; Joe McCormack, West Dunbartonshire Citizens Advice Service and Brenda Pasquire, Dumbarton Credit Union Ltd.

Attending: Anne Clegg, Policy Officer – Community and Consultation; and Fiona Anderson, Administrative Assistant, Legal and Administrative Services.

Also Attending: Councillor Jonathan McColl; Lynda McLaughlin, Manager of Commercial Operations; Angus Bodie, Manager of Roads; Linda McBrearty, Road Safety Officer; Lewis Morrison, Policy and Development Officer – Disability and Access; and Gillian McNeilly, Manager of Accounting.

Apologies: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Margaret Bootland, Gail Casey, Jim McElhill, John Millar and Iain Robertson. Rhona Young, West Dunbartonshire Seniors Association; Tom Nimmo, West Dunbartonshire Community Care Forum; and Catherine Hannan, Benview Resource Centre.

Councillor Jim Brown in the Chair

Councillor Brown welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited them to introduce themselves.

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL - REVIEW OF COUNCIL DECISION MAKING AND MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive summarising the revisions to Council's decision making and management structure, which was agreed by Council on 27 June 2007.

Having heard the Policy Officer, Community and Consultation, in answer to Members' questions and after discussion, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the changes which have been agreed to the decision making and management structures;
- (2) to note that details of revised scrutiny arrangements, protocols and remits for Committees will be considered by Council at the end of August 2007;
- (3) to note that Clydebank Community Forum was no longer in existence but that its former representative, Mary Theresa Doherty, would continue to attend meetings of the Community Participation Committee as an interim arrangement. However, it was noted that the principle of community members attending as representatives of groups should be maintained and that an up-date would be provided to the next meeting;
- (4) to note that officers should give consideration to the undernoted suggestions and report back to the next Committee meeting:-
 - (a) to empower the community by appointing the Chair of the CPC from the community representatives;
 - (b) to review the timing of CPC meetings;
 - (c) to publicising meetings more widely, including the Open Forum slot;
 - (d) to widening the membership of the CPC and, in particular, that ways of involving young people should be pursued;
 - (e) to clarify the positions of Dumbarton Credit Union and West Dunbartonshire Citizens' Advice Bureau attending as "members" of the voluntary sector and not "representatives"; and
 - (f) that point 2.1, bullet point 5 of the Role and Remit requires clarification.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRUCTURES – ROLE AND OPERATION OF THE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION COMMITTEE (CPC)

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive outlining the feedback gained from an exercise carried out with community representatives, seeking their views on the operation of the CPC.

Having heard the Policy Officer, Community and Consultation in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note:-

- (1) the predominant view favouring the continuation of the CPC and the strengthening of its influencing role;

- (2) that routine pre meetings for community representatives should cease but if, in the future, an agenda item required community representatives to have prior discussions then a pre meeting could be arranged;
- (3) that community representatives should continue to be able to contact officers should they require clarification on Agenda items; and
- (4) that presentations should continue to feature on future agendas as members of the Committee found these interesting and informative but that speakers should be advised of the time allocation including a question and answer session.

CONSULTATION ON INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive:-

- (a) outlining the process of Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA); and
- (b) seeking the Committee's agreement to its role in supporting consultation on IIA.

The Policy and Development Officer – Disability and Access was heard in answer to Members' questions. Following discussion the Committee agreed to note that, where the timescale allows, the CPC should have responsibility for assessing whether or not the decision that consultation should not be required in an impact assessment of a Council policy or service should stand.

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL – LITTER AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

A report was submitted by the Acting Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development (Land and Environmental Services) advising the Committee of a Litter Awareness Campaign which is currently running to promote continuous improvements to the local environment.

Having heard the Manager of Commercial Operations in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the introduction of two Litter Control Officers and an additional two litter control assistants who have responsibility:-
 - (a) for promoting the Litter Control Strategy;
 - (b) for educating and increasing public awareness via talks and presentations to community groups, schools, etc.,
 - (c) for the enforcement and legislative aspects of litter, dog fouling, fly tipping and graffiti via fixed penalty notices; and

- (d) for assisting with Community Clean-ups and street cleanliness monitoring in partnership with “Keep Scotland Beautiful” (KSB).
- (2) to note that work undertaken to date includes the introduction of a “Three Pronged Approach” to tackling dog fouling issues:-
 - (a) to note that free “biodegradable poop scoop” bags are distributed to various outlets throughout West Dunbartonshire to encourage responsible behaviour by dog owners, with more than 1.2 million bags being issued since the introduction of the strategy;
 - (b) to note that over two hundred additional dual purpose litter/dog waste bins have been installed throughout the Authority; and
 - (c) to note that additional signs have been placed on lampposts throughout the area highlighting the terms of the Dog Fouling (Scotland) Act 2003.
- (3) to note that an education programme for schools incorporating a DVD entitled “The New Adventures of Binman” along with associated quizzes and a board game have been developed and rolled out to primary schools in the West Dunbartonshire area with over 45 visits having taken place;
- (4) to note that a Litter Awareness Campaign was launched in mid-June to run over the summer holidays and included coverage on local radio and in local newspapers to stimulate greater awareness within the community; and
- (5) to note that a number of measures exist to monitor performance including a Statutory Performance Indicator on Street Cleanliness and that the Street Cleanliness Index would be submitted to the next meeting for information.

Following further discussion, the Manager of Commercial Operations was asked to investigate:-

- (a) the possibility of publishing statistics regarding the number of fixed penalty notices issued for littering, fly tipping and dog fouling incidents;
- (b) the possibility of installing extra litter bins in each lay-by in West Dunbartonshire with appropriate wording encouraging visitors and residents to enjoy West Dunbartonshire and keep it tidy;
- (c) the possibility of installing more litter bins in Bellsmyre;
- (d) the possibility of discouraging chewing gum on the pavements, for example by providing posts to stick chewing gum on in shopping centres; and

- (d) the reports of a bad smell in the Dumbarton Town Centre area.

TRAVELLING GREEN PROJECTS IN SCHOOL

A report was submitted by the Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services updating the Committee of the success of West Dunbartonshire Council's "Travelling Green" project.

Having heard the Road Safety Officer in elaboration of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to acknowledge the continuing success of the Travelling Green project in West Dunbartonshire Council schools; and
- (2) to acknowledge the national recognition that the project has brought the Council.

Following discussion, the community representatives drew the attention of the Road Safety Officer to the issue and hazards of cars continuing to park at school gates despite measures to dissuade members of the public from careless and dangerous parking near schools.

Following a question regarding how the Council would reclaim staff time against the grant allocated for the national rollout of the Travelling Green project up to a value of £200,507, the Road Safety Officer agreed to provide Councillor Black with a written note of relevant costs.

BUDGET CONSULTATION ARRANGEMENTS: BUILDING ON EXISTING PROCEDURES

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive:-

- (a) outlining West Dunbartonshire Council's Budget Consultation arrangements; and
- (b) suggesting options for improving the process in line with the Best Value Improvement Plan.

Having heard the Policy Officer, Community and Consultation and the Manager of Accounting in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note that a more detailed list of the possible options for consideration at as early a date as possible would improve the consultation process;
- (2) to note that options should be accompanied by information about their impact on service delivery;

- (3) that two public meetings should be held, one for Clydebank and one for Dumbarton and the Vale of Leven;
- (4) that officers should be asked to give consideration to the timing of public meetings and the need to advertise these well in advance; and
- (5) to recommend that Council adopts the budget consultation process outlined within the report.

DRAFT JOINT VOLUNTARY POLICY/STANDARDS FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TRAINING EVENT

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive informing the Committee of the community engagement training event and highlighting the work being done to embed good practice in involving the community and working with volunteers.

Having heard the Policy Officer – Community and Consultation in further explanation, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS FROM COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES

The community representatives were invited to suggest topics for inclusion on future agendas.

Following discussion, the Committee agreed that the undernoted topics be included:-

- (a) Waste disposal including landfill sites and disposal of toxic waste;
- (b) the Community Warden service – achievements to date and future of the service;
- (c) rent harmonisation, i.e. bringing Clydebank rents into line with Dumbarton and the Vale of Leven; and
- (d) the Licensing Forum and Licensing Board: the 2005 Liquor Act.

OPEN FORUM

Mr. Neil Etherington of Parkhall and North Kilbowie Community Council thanked officers for providing a comprehensive report on Community Engagement Structures – The Role and Operation of the CPC, in response to his request at the January meeting.

Mr. Etherington requested that the undernoted topics be considered for inclusion on the agenda for future meetings of the CPC:-

- (a) the Community Directory and methods of promoting this to groups;
- (b) the Resource Base proposals;
- (c) the People's Fund – a major new community initiative; and
- (d) the local Licensing Forum.

He also raised a point about using the Citizens' Panel for Budget Consultation but was advised by the Policy Officer, Community and Consultation, that the timescale for administering a survey and collating the results would be unrealistic.

Having heard the Policy Officer – Community and Consultation, the Committee noted that a report on the People's Fund would be submitted to a future meeting.

Councillor Brown, Chair, thanked Mr. Etherington for his attendance and input to the meeting.

The meeting closed at 4.15 p.m.