

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of the Community Participation Committee held in the Council Chambers, Municipal Buildings, Station Road, Dumbarton on Tuesday, 29 June 2004 at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillors Jim Bollan, Margaret Bootland, Gail Casey, Jack Duffy, Jackie Maceira, Marie McNair, Connie O'Sullivan and Andy White. Murdoch Cameron MBE, West Dunbartonshire Community Councils Forum; Wendy Hutchinson, West Dunbartonshire Community Councils Forum; Patricia Rice, Clydebank Unemployed Community Resource Centre; Hope Robertson, South Drumry Tenants and Residents Association; Frances McGonagle, Lone Parent Group and Jeanette Jennings, Faifley Neighbourhood Forum.

Attending: Tim Huntingford, Chief Executive; Liz Cochrane, Principal Policy Officer; Anne Clegg, Policy Officer – Community and Consultation; Frank Newall, Head of Service (Schools' Estate) and Fiona Anderson, Administrative Assistant, Legal and Administrative Services.

Apologies: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Dennis Brogan and Margaret McGregor.

Councillor Gail Casey in the Chair

3192 Before proceeding with the business of the meeting, Councillor Casey intimated that this would be the last meeting of the current interim membership and thanked the Community Representatives for their attendance and contribution to the work of the Committee.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

3193 In accordance with Standing Order No. 6, Councillor Casey advised the Committee that, unless anyone was otherwise minded, she intended to vary the order of business and deal with Item 8 on the Agenda first as Mr Newall, Head of Service (Schools' Estate) was present to respond to any questions arising from the discussion.

PRIVATISATION OF THE SCHOOLS' ESTATE – PPP – PUBLIC CONSULTATION

- 3194 The Convener invited Councillor Bollan to speak to the item Privatisation of the Schools' Estate – PPP – Public Consultation, as he had requested that it be placed on the Agenda.
- 3195 Councillor Bollan intimated that as the Community Participation Committee was the Council's main vehicle to communicate with the community, this Committee should, in his opinion, play a lead role in organising public consultation. He suggested that public meetings be held in every school and that a full page in the Council Newspaper be devoted to space for members of the community to comment on PPP.
- 3196 Following discussion and having heard Members and Officers in relation to this issue, it was noted that West Dunbartonshire Council had been granted £100m to build new schools and that the time for discussion on PPP had now passed.
- 3197 Having heard Mr Newall, Head of Service (Schools' Estate) and Mr Huntingford, Chief Executive in further explanation, it was noted:-
- (a) that the Chief Executive would prepare a report for the August meeting of Council detailing proposals in relation to the £100m funding; and
 - (b) that the Community Participation Committee would thereafter have the opportunity to discuss and comment on this report.
- 3198 Following further discussion, Councillor Bollan, seconded by Patricia Rice, moved:-
- 3199 That, as the Community Participation Committee was the Council's main mechanism for consulting with the community, it should embark on a broad ranging consultation exercise with the citizens of West Dunbartonshire regarding PPP.
- 3200 This should include the following:-
- (1) the CPC should call an open public meeting in every school in West Dunbartonshire to discuss PPP;
 - (2) the CPC should also convene a local one day conference to discuss PPP and that this should be facilitated by two prominent academics and two prominent educationalists to give opposing views, to stimulate debate and discussion; and
 - (3) the Council should devote a full page of every edition of the Council newspaper to allow local council tax payers to make comments on the Council's PPP proposal.

3201 As an amendment, Murdoch Cameron, seconded by Councillor Duffy, moved:-

3202 That the Community Participation Committee await receipt of the Chief Executive's report before making a decision.

3203 Following further discussion, 2 Members voted for the motion and 11 for the amendment which was accordingly declared carried.

Mr Newall left the meeting at this point.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

3204 A note of the Inquorate Meeting of the Committee on 21 April 2004 and the Minutes of Meeting of the Committee held on 7 May 2004 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

PRESENTATION

3205 Mr Nigel Rooke, Youth Fund Co-ordinator based at the offices of West Dunbartonshire Partnership gave a presentation on the Youth Fund/Trust which has initial funding from the Better Neighbourhood Services Fund.

3206 Having heard Mr Rooke in answer to Members' questions, the Convener, on behalf of the Committee, thanked him for his interesting and informative presentation.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION COMMITTEE – COMMUNITY MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE

3207 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive outlining arrangements for community membership on the Community Participation Committee.

3208 Following discussion and having heard the Policy Officer, Community and Consultation, in further explanation, the Committee noted that it was hoped most of the new Membership would be in place for the September meeting.

3209 It was agreed:-

- (1) that those organisations, as listed below in the Option approved by Council, giving a total of 18 representatives, would receive information on the role of the Committee and its membership.

Community Councils Forum	2
Tenants & Residents Federations	2
Seniors Alliance	1
Youth Representative	1

Community Care Forum	1
Lone Parents (Gingerbread)	1
SIP Community Forums (x3)	3
West Dunbartonshire Access Panel (representing the disability forums)	1
Minority Ethnic Association	1
Neighbourhood Forums (x3)	3
Individual community groups (on a rota basis)	2

- (2) that these organisations be asked to nominate a representative and a named substitute;
- (3) to seek a person to act as a representative for young people;
- (4) to write to all individual community groups not specifically represented to invite them to have a rota place on the Committee for one year; and
- (5) that the suggested method of selection for the two individual community group rota places would be to select two groups by lot.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION COMMITTEE – INVOLVING YOUNG PEOPLE

3210 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive setting out some of the issues regarding how young people can be involved in a meaningful way in the work of the Community Participation Committee (CPC) and in other Council decision-making structures.

3211 After discussion and having heard the Policy Officer, Community and Consultation, in further explanation the Committee agreed to note the report and to recommend the undernoted points to Council:-

- (1) that the Youth Forum undertake research for the Community Participation Committee on the best ways to involve young people, including: youth surveys to young people in schools (via Pupil Councils); youth clubs; youth forums and young people on the streets;
- (2) the Youth Forum be requested to assist in the design of surveys/consultation documents;
- (3) the Youth Forum could ask questions like:-
 - what would you want in your area for young people?
 - What are the issues you think the Council needs to address for young people?
 - Can you think of any current youth services or facilities that need improving or renewing?

- (4) that young people should be involved in the decisions taken on schools;
- (5) that, in relation to the Community Participation Committee, the Policy Officer would:-
 - send summary documents to Youth Forum for information;
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 - send timetables of meeting and appropriate deadlines for any consultation process;
 - forward agendas for meetings; and
 - produce a draft format for CPC newsletter for young people to edit (to ensure suitable format)
- (6) that the Policy Officer Community and Consultation would investigate electronic communication of information to young people; and
- (7) the CPC Convener, the Policy Officer, and a community representative from the CPC would speak more widely with young people to gather views on how young people should be involved in Council decision-making processes.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION COMMITTEE – REVIEWING OUR CITIZENS’ PANEL

- 3212 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive considering the use of the Citizen’s Panel as a consultation tool and inviting comments and suggestions on the plans for review.
- 3213 Having heard the Policy Officer, Community and Consultation, in further explanation, the Committee agreed:-
- (1) to note that officers were currently undertaking a review of the operation of the Citizens’ Panel, which includes an investigation of a shared partnership approach to the Citizens’ Panel; and
 - (2) to note that some members of the Citizens’ Panel found the recent questionnaires too lengthy and this discouraged people from completing and returning them.

DEVELOPMENT OF DIVERSITY AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

- 3214 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive outlining the new staffing arrangements, which will support the development of diversity, and equalities work in West Dunbartonshire.

- 3215 Having heard the Principal Policy Officer in further explanation, the Committee discussed the role of the Community Participation Committee in the promotion of Diversity and Equal Opportunities, and agreed to invite the two new Officers to attend a future meeting to discuss priorities and options for action.

OPEN FORUM

Disabled Friendly Surfaces

- 3216 Concern was expressed regarding the ridged matting which had been placed on each floor outside the lifts at the Council Offices in Garshake Road as people with mobility problems were finding it hazardous. It was also noted that the raised treads on the stairs were posing similar problems.
- 3217 Having heard the Chief Executive confirm that these modifications had been installed following a survey by the Access Panel to aid partially-sighted people, it was noted that the Chief Executive would arrange for officers to investigate whether there are options for replacing these with some other material.

Disabled Access

- 3218 Following a report from Patricia Rice regarding a Community Planning meeting which had been held in the Denny Tank building, it was noted with concern that there was no disabled access to this building.
- 3219 The Chief Executive confirmed that all Council Committee Meetings should be held in venues which were accessible to all members of the public.

Public Toilets

- 3220 Murdoch Cameron, on behalf of Balloch and Haldane Community Council, wanted it to be recorded that it was delighted the public toilets in Balloch had been re-opened. He pointed out that the Community Council was totally against the introduction of Automatic Public Conveniences (APCs) and requested more information on the matter.
- 3221 Patricia Rice requested that officers from Housing and Technical Services investigate the possibility of providing and installing radar operated toilets.

Post of Director of Education and Cultural Services

- 3222 Wendy Hutchinson asked for clarification on the situation regarding the vacant post of Director of Education and Cultural Services. The Chief Executive advised that Mr Bob Cook had been asked to continue as Acting Director of Education and Cultural Services for one year, after which time the matter would be reviewed.

The meeting closed at 11.50 a.m.