

SOUTH CLYDEBANK AREA COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the South Clydebank Area Committee held in Room 3, Dalmuir Community Education Centre, Duntocher Road, Dalmuir, Clydebank on Thursday, 15 August 2002 at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Councillors James McElhill, Mary Campbell, Danny McCafferty and John Syme*; Rhona Young, John Hearn and Gordon King.

* Arrived later in meeting.

Attending: Alexis Jay, Director of Social Work and Housing Services; Alistair Johnston, Section Head (Accounting and Budgeting); and Craig Stewart, Administrative Assistant.

Apologies: Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors John McCutcheon and Andy White; Elizabeth McIntosh and Isabella Ashrif.

Councillor James McElhill in the Chair

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of Meeting of the Area Committee held on 20 June 2002 were submitted and approved as a correct record on the motion of Councillor McCafferty, seconded by Ms. Young.

With regard to administrative arrangements for future meetings of the Area Committee, a copy of a list showing possible meeting venues was circulated, a copy of which forms Appendix 1 hereto. After discussion, it was agreed that Clydebank Town Hall be added to the list.

With regard to the programme of future meetings, a table proposing alternative meeting dates for the Area Committee was circulated, a copy of which forms Appendix 2 hereto. It was noted that the reason for changing the date was to allow a composite report on the findings of all Area Committees, each cycle, to be prepared and submitted through the Community Development Co-ordinating Committee (CDCC) and then to Council within the month.

After discussion, it was agreed that the Area Committee should now meet on the last Thursday of every second month, commencing in September 2002. Therefore, the revised meeting dates would be 26 September 2002; 28 November 2002; 30 January 2003 and 27 March 2003.

It was noted that, given the nature of this matter, it would not always be possible to meet the deadlines required for a CDCC meeting before the Council meeting in a particular month.

With regard to training requirements, it was agreed that Members would be invited to attend a seminar on housing related issues. It was noted that the seminar would be presented by Mr. John Stevenson, Social Work & Housing Services, in the Council Chambers, Council Offices, Rosebery Place, Clydebank on Friday, 30 August 2002 at a time to be determined. Having heard the Chair, Councillor McElhill, it was also noted that an invitation to attend the seminar would be made to Community Representatives serving on North Clydebank Area Committee.

OPEN FORUM

With reference to the Minutes of Meeting of the Area Committee held on 20 June 2002, it was noted that it had been agreed that provision should be made for Open Forums at all future meetings and that both written questions, submitted by a specified date before the meeting, and open questions from members of the public in attendance, without prior notification having been given, should be permitted.

In relation to the latter, it was noted that in many cases it may not be possible to provide an immediate answer to a question that had been asked without prior notice and a written response would require to be sent to the individual concerned by the appropriate officer as soon as possible.

After discussion, the Area Committee agreed:-

- (a) to note that the CDCC had considered the views of all Area Committees on this issue at its meeting on 8 August 2002 and a report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Area Committee thereon;
- (b) that there should be an Open Forum at the beginning of the meeting for written questions and open questions from members of the public in attendance, without prior notification having been given, at the end of the meeting;
- (c) that in respect of (b) above, open questions from members of the public should be limited to two questions per person and that a strict time limit should apply in relation thereto; and
- (d) to recommend to the CDCC that the opportunity for members of the public to ask questions be advertised as widely as possible.

NOTE: Councillor Syme entered the meeting during consideration of the above item.

DISAGGREGATION OF LOCAL GRANTS BUDGET

With reference to the Minutes of Meeting of the Area Committee held on 20 June 2002, it was noted that it had been agreed to await the report of the Finance Working Group and the subsequent decision of Council on the matter of the proposed disaggregation of the budget for local grants to Area Committees, although it was noted that the next meeting of the Finance Working Group was scheduled to take place on 20 August 2002.

In this respect, a copy of a report by the Director of Corporate Services which had been presented to the CDCC on the proposed disaggregation of the budget for local grants to Area Committees was re-submitted.

The Chair, Councillor McElhill, advised the Area Committee that at the meeting of the Council held on 14 August 2002, consideration was given to a Budget Resource Reallocation document which outlined proposals in connection with an additional £1.911 million of resources to be allocated to West Dunbartonshire Council from the Scottish Executive. In this connection, South Clydebank Area Committee would benefit from an additional £12,000 approximately for local grants and £25,000 to develop small environmental projects within the area.

After discussion, it was agreed:-

- (a) that any applications for a small grant would be made using the existing mechanism for making such applications;
- (b) that there should be no upper limit on any small grant application and each application would require to be judged on its own merits with funding being determined accordingly;
- (c) to note that it was anticipated that applications for grant funding would be included on the agenda of the next meeting of the Area Committee, subject to CDCC and Council approval; and
- (d) to continue consideration of the budget allocation for small environmental projects to the next meeting of the Area Committee, in order that Ms. Jay could liaise with Ms. Liz Cochrane, Principal Policy Officer, prior to a recommendation being presented to the Area Committee thereon.

SOURCES OF FUNDING AVAILABLE TO THE AREA COMMITTEE

With reference to the Minutes of Meeting of the Area Committee held on 20 June 2002, it was noted that it had been agreed that the Finance Section would be requested to provide a presentation at the next meeting of the Area Committee on all sources of funding that may be available to the Committee in order that consideration may be given to the ways in which the Area Committee could maximise the funding available to it.

In this connection, a report was submitted by the Director of Corporate Services.

After discussion, the Area Committee noted that, due to the holiday period and the limited time available since the date of the last meeting, it had not been possible to complete the exercise in time for a presentation to be made to this meeting but a full and detailed report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Area Committee. It was also noted that a copy of this report would be provided to the Chair, Councillor McElhill, when available.

In relation to a point raised by Councillor Campbell, it was agreed that copies of the Budget Resource Reallocation document referred to in the previous item would be sent out, for information, to all Community Representatives on the Area Committee.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive providing an update on the position of a Code of Conduct for community representatives on Area Committees.

It was noted:-

- (a) that the first meetings of Area Committees in June 2002 agreed the importance of developing a Code of Conduct for community representatives and this should reflect the key issues addressed in the new national Code of Conduct for Councillors; and
- (b) that the National Code of Conduct for Councillors, which had been circulated to all community representatives on Area Committees, had been approved by the Scottish Parliament and it was anticipated that the implementation date of the Code would be autumn of this year.

After discussion and having heard the Clerk, the Area Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note that at the meeting of the Joint Consultative Forum held on 4 July 2002, it had been agreed that the draft protocol for Member/officer relations be continued to the next meeting of the Forum to be held on 7 November 2002;
- (ii) that any Code of Conduct for community representatives should cover relationships with Council officers and that a draft Code of Conduct, which incorporated this issue, would be considered by Area Committees once Council had agreed its protocol for Member/officer relations; and
- (iii) that, in the meantime, members be invited to comment on the issues in the national code, and the draft protocol, which they believe might be of particular relevance to community representatives, prior to these issues being included in a draft code to be submitted to a future round of Area Committee meetings.

RAISING ITEMS AT MEETINGS OF AREA COMMITTEES

A report was submitted by the Director of Corporate Services providing information on how Members of the Committee can raise issues of particular interest at meetings of the Area Committee.

After discussion and having heard the Clerk, it was agreed:-

- (a) to endorse the suggestion that if an individual member of the Committee wished to raise a particular item, then this item could appear at the end of the agenda, solely for the purposes of the Committee determining whether or not a report on the issue was required, in which case the relevant departmental Director would be requested to bring a report back to a future meeting of the Committee; and
- (b) to note that a report on the comments and recommendations of the first formal meetings of the Area Committees had been submitted to the Community Development Co-ordinating Committee on 8 August 2002, with a view to making co-ordinated recommendations to Council at its next meeting on 28 August 2002 and, thereafter, a report on the Council's decision would be submitted to a future meeting of the Area Committee.

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE STRATEGIC COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

A report was submitted by the Co-ordinator of West Dunbartonshire Strategic Community Safety Partnership:-

- (a) explaining the purpose of the West Dunbartonshire Strategic Community Safety Partnership and the nature of the Scottish Executive funding of this partnership; and
- (b) requesting a nomination from South Clydebank Area Committee to sit on one of the working groups of the Partnership to assist in the award of community grants.

After discussion and having heard Councillor McCafferty, it was agreed to continue consideration of the matter to the next meeting of the Area Committee in order that an invitation could be extended to Ms. Anna Frost, Community Safety Officer, to attend.

DATE AND VENUE FOR NEXT MEETING

The Committee noted that the next meeting of the Area Committee would be held on Thursday, 26 September 2002 at 7.00 p.m. at a venue to be determined.

The meeting closed at 8.55 p.m.