

VALE OF LEVEN AREA COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Vale of Leven Area Committee held in the Craft Room, Alexandria Community Education Centre, Main Street, Alexandria on Wednesday, 19 June 2002 at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Councillors James Bollan, Geoffrey Calvert, Ronnie McColl, Margaret McGregor, Craig McLaughlin and Connie O'Sullivan*. Joe Callaghan, James Elder-Woodward, Charles Jamieson, John Kelly, Fiona Malcolm, Martin Rooney and David Thomson.

* Arrived later in meeting.

Attending: David McMillan, Director of Commercial and Technical Services; Crawford Howat, Head of Finance; Stephen West, Section Head (Accounting and Budgeting); and George Hawthorn, Administrative Officer.

Apology: An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Councillor James Flynn.

Councillor James Bollan in the Chair

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Councillor Bollan (Chair) welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the Vale of Leven Area Committee and invited all those present to introduce themselves to the Committee.

QUORUM

It was noted that the quorum for all meetings of the Area Committee was three.

ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS FOR AREA COMMITTEES

A report was submitted by the Director of Corporate Services providing information on the administrative arrangements for future meetings of the Area Committee and seeking the views of the Committee thereon.

Following discussion, the Area Committee agreed to deal with the issues raised within the report as follows:-

(a) Frequency and Timing of Meetings

It was agreed that initially the Committee should meet once every two months with meetings commencing at 7.00 p.m. and concluding at 9.00 p.m.

(b) Location of Meetings

It was agreed that the venues for meetings should rotate and that the next meeting be held in Mill Hall, Haldane, if available. Thereafter, the Clerk should arrange for meetings to be held in other suitable accommodation located in the Vale of Leven area.

(c) Programme of Future Meetings

It was agreed that this Area Committee should meet on the first Tuesday of every second month commencing Tuesday 6 August 2002.

(d) Substitution

It was noted that those Community Representatives with voting rights should contact the Clerk if they were unable to attend a meeting of the Area Committee and thereafter the Clerk would contact the appropriate substitute.

(e) Format of Meetings/Agenda Items

The Area Committee noted the proposed format of meetings.

Councillor O'Sullivan entered the meeting at this point.

(f) Open Forum

The Committee agreed to support the principle of having Open Forums at Area Committee meetings and that this matter should be discussed in more detail at its next meeting in August. The following suggestions were put forward by Members of the Committee:-

- Additional meetings of the Area Committee for the sole purpose of holding an Open Forum.
- A mixture of written questions and open questions to allow greater flexibility.
- Open Forum at all meetings of Area Committees and, if necessary, additional meetings.

(g) Issues/Motions

After discussion, the Committee agreed to recommend to the Community Development Co-ordinating Committee that, in addition to raising issues via the Clerk, Members of Area Committees should be allowed to submit written motions to Committee, in accordance with the procedure referred to in Standing Order 10. Furthermore, the Committee agreed that a report on this issue be presented to the next meeting of the Committee for consideration.

(h) Minutes of Area Committees

After discussion, the Working Group agreed to recommend to the Community Development Co-ordinating Committee that all Community Representatives should be added to the distribution list for the Council Volume of Minutes, which would allow them to see what other Area Committees were doing and keep track of other Council decisions.

It was also noted that the views of all four Area Committees in respect of the above issues would be referred to the Community Development Co-ordinating Committee for consideration.

JOB DESCRIPTION

A paper detailing the job description of Community Representatives on Area Committees was submitted for information.

After discussion, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) that although the proposed job description was satisfactory, it was necessary to separate and clarify the role of a Community Representative from that of a Councillor;
- (2) that Community Representatives should be issued with details of all Councillors' names, addresses, wards and contact numbers and that all Councillors should be given similar information on Community Representatives;
- (3) to suggest to the Community Development Co-ordinating Committee that a mail box be placed in a local office in each of the Area Committees' areas to allow members of public to leave correspondence for the Community Representatives; and
- (4) to recommend to the Community Development Co-ordinating Committee that consideration should be given to the promotion of the Area Committees, in particular the publication of photographs of Community Representatives in local press to enable members of the public to get to know their Community Representatives and how to contact them.

TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES

Having heard Councillor Bollan, the Committee noted that Council had agreed that all Community Representatives would be eligible to apply for travel and subsistence allowances at the rates applicable to elected members. It was noted that claims could be made for formal meetings of the Area Committee (including visits, training and other formal business approved by the Area Committee).

TRAINING

After discussion, the Committee agreed that the training questionnaire, which was included in the information pack, covered most of the training needs of Community Representatives but might need to be supplemented with other more specific training once the Committees were in full operation.

SUPPORT NEEDS

Having heard Councillor Bollan in further explanation and after discussion, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) that it was too early to assess what other support Community Representatives would need and therefore this matter should be continued to a future meeting for consideration; and
- (2) that Community Representatives should be issued with Council Identification badges and a copy of the Code of Conduct for Elected Members.

DISAGGREGATION OF LOCAL GRANTS BUDGETS

With reference to the meeting of the Community Development Co-ordinating Committee on 13 June 2002, when it had been agreed that the report by the Director of Corporate Services on the Disaggregation of Local Grants Budgets be submitted to all Area Committees for comment, there was submitted for discussion a copy of the aforesaid report.

Having heard the Head of Finance in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (a) to note that nearly all of the Local Grants Budget for 2002/2003 had been allocated to Local Groups by the Finance Working Group;
- (b) to recommend to the Finance Working Group that, in future financial years, the Local Grants budget be divided among the Area Committees on the basis of population;

- (c) to recommend that those Groups which operate on a Council-wide basis should continue to be funded centrally by the Finance Working Group;
- (d) that a report be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee showing how the Local Grants Budget might be shared among Area Committees on the basis of deprivation factors as opposed to population; and
- (e) that an analysis of all those Groups who have been awarded funding this financial year be submitted to the next meeting of the Area Committee for consideration. The report should separate the Groups into specific categories such as Childcare and Information Technology and show the total amount allocated to each category.

DATE AND VENUE FOR NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Area Committee would be held in the Mill Hall, Haldane, on Tuesday, 6 August 2002 at 7.00 p.m.

The meeting closed at 9.20 p.m.