

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of the Community Participation Committee held in Meeting Room 3, Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton on Wednesday, 17 September 2008 at 2.00 p.m.

Present: Councillors George Black, Jim Brown, John Millar, Jim McElhill, Iain Robertson and May Smillie. Murdoch Cameron and Francis McNeill, Community Councils Forum; Megan Harrison and Mary Theresa Doherty, Faifley Neighbourhood Forum; Rhona Young, West Dunbartonshire Seniors Association; Joe McCormack, Dumbarton and District Citizens Advice Bureau, and Tom Nimmo, West Dunbartonshire Community Care Forum.

Attending: Liz Cochrane, Head of Service – Policy & Performance; Anne Clegg, Policy Officer – Community and Consultation; and Fiona Anderson, Committee Officer, Legal, Administrative and Regulatory Services.

Apologies: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Margaret Bootland, Jonathan McColl, Jim McElhill and Patrick McGlinchey. John Diamond, Bellsmyre Neighbourhood Forum, and Brenda Pasquire, Dumbarton Credit Union Ltd.

Councillor Jim Brown in the Chair

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP – MR BILL RANKIN

Having heard Councillor Brown (Chair), the Committee noted the sad news that Mr Bill Rankin, Community Representative for West Dunbartonshire Access Panel on the CPC, died in July 2008. It was noted that Bill had been a very committed community activist in the area of disability issues for many years and had made a valuable contribution to many groups and networks.

Members of the Committee expressed their regret at this sad news and Councillor Black paid a personal tribute to Bill.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of Meeting of the Committee held on 18 June 2008 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

RESPONSES TO PREVIOUS OPEN FORUM QUESTIONS

The Committee noted the undernoted responses to items previously raised under the Open Forum:-

- (a) With reference to the Minutes of Meeting of the Committee held on 12 December 2007 (Page 657 refers) in connection with a request for confirmation that all the community groups represented on the CPC made their contact details available on the Community Directory, the Committee noted that the groups not listed thereon have since been contacted and given the opportunity to have their details listed. In addition, it was noted that groups in receipt of Council grants over the last year had also been contacted inviting them to have their details included.
- (b) With reference to the Minutes of Meeting of the Committee held on 18 June 2008 (Page 1235 refers) in connection with problems relating to the enforcement of the yellow lines on Agamemnon Street in Clydebank due to the traffic order having lapsed, the following response which was received from the Manager of Road, Waste and Transportation, was noted:-

“The implementation of permanent Traffic Orders to allow enforcement of the yellow lines is ongoing and is with WDC Legal at the moment. The previous Order, which is currently lined on the street, was a temporary order implemented during the construction phase of the junction improvements. This has now time-lapsed and is not legally enforceable – hence no Police action. There will be a consultation phase starting in the next couple of weeks, so the local community will be able to input at that stage. The formal consultation process requires that in addition to the Police, Fire, Ambulance, etc. affected local residents and recognised community representatives receive copies of the proposals and are given an invitation to provide comment. Notices are put up on street furniture giving contact details for other people to seek information.”

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY

John Kerr, Strategy Officer (Homelessness) gave a presentation on the West Dunbartonshire Homelessness Strategy 2008-2013.

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development regarding the West Dunbartonshire Homelessness Strategy 2008-2013 (details of which were contained in the Appendix to the report) setting out the Council's Strategy for preventing and alleviating homelessness.

Following discussion and having heard the Strategy Officer (Homelessness) in further explanation and in answer to members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note that the Strategy had been approved by the Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee at its Meeting on 6 August 2008;

- (2) to acknowledge the work of the partner agencies in contributing to the development of the Homelessness Strategy;
- (3) to note that the Strategy would be launched in October 2008 and that a Strategy Consultative Group would be established;
- (4) to note that the Strategy involved a five year Action Plan;
- (5) to note with concern that 4 in 10 people presenting as homeless in West Dunbartonshire were in the 16-25 age group;
- (6) to note that it is hoped to introduce a pilot Family Mediation Service project with “crash pad” facilities in West Dunbartonshire to try to prevent the breakdown of family relationships resulting in young people being put out of the family home;
- (7) to note with disappointment and concern that following the Strategy having been approved by the Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee at the meeting on 6 August 2008, the funding for the Health and Homeless Nurse had been withdrawn by the NHS;
- (8) to note that the Strategy Officer (Homelessness) would arrange a meeting with the NHS to discuss the withdrawal of funding from the post of Health and Homeless Nurse; and
- (9) otherwise to note the contents of the West Dunbartonshire Homelessness Strategy 2008-2013.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION COMMITTEE (CPC) – INVOLVING YOUNG PEOPLE EVENT

With reference to the Minutes of Meeting of the Committee held on 18 June 2008 (Page 1234 refers), a report was submitted by the Chief Executive providing information about the ‘Involving Young People Event’ and suggesting future action.

Following discussion and having heard the Policy Officer, Community and Consultation, in further explanation and in answer to members’ questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the success of the event;
- (2) to request that in future more Elected Members should try to attend events of this kind, as only two had attended;
- (3) to note that the Community Participation Committee would try to keep communication links open with the young people locally by focusing on the three Youth Forums; and
- (4) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

REGENERATION OF THE SCHOOLS' ESTATE

With reference to the Minutes of Meeting of the Committee held on 23 April 2008 (Page 1075 refers), a report was submitted by the Executive Director of Educational Services providing an update on progress in the regeneration of the schools' estate.

Following discussion, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note that reports providing updated information would continue to be submitted to every second meeting of the CPC unless something urgent required earlier reporting; and
- (2) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP – KEY DEVELOPMENTS

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive providing a quarterly update on key developments within West Dunbartonshire Community Planning Partnership (CPP) following the most recent Board meeting which had taken place on 23 June 2008.

Following discussion and having heard the Head of Service, Policy and Performance, in further explanation and in answer to members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the current position regarding the recruitment process;
- (2) to note the delay in finalising the new structures caused by the necessity to readvertise two of the posts;
- (3) to note that copies of the guidance relating to the criteria for use of the Community Resource Bases would be distributed to the members of the CPC for information; and
- (4) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

REVIEW OF RACE EQUALITY SCHEME

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive detailing the proposal for reviewing the West Dunbartonshire Council Race Equality Scheme which is due to be carried out by 30 November 2008.

Following discussion and having heard Policy Officer, Community and Consultation, in further explanation and in answer to members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the proposed Action Plan to review the scheme;

- (2) to note the general progress with the existing Action Plan and the approach being taken in the promotion of race equality and compliance with the law; and
- (3) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

FINAL DRAFT COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive presenting the final draft of the Community Engagement Strategy, prior to Council approval. The report also outlined further action needed to take the Strategy forward.

Following discussion and having heard the Policy Officer, Community and Consultation, in further explanation and in answer to members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note that consideration would be given to how to make the CPC work more effectively, how to give it a more interesting role and how to renew and refresh the membership;
- (2) to note that the proposed review of Community Planning engagement structures should be widened to include tenants' and residents' groups, Community Councils and other key representative groups;
- (3) to recommend to Council:-
 - (a) the adoption of the Community Engagement Strategy;
 - (b) points 7.2 to 7.7 as detailed within the report;
 - (c) that an action plan for 2009-10 is drawn up to take forward the implementation of the Community Engagement Strategy; and
- (4) to note the concern expressed by some of the community representatives regarding lack of feedback to the community following public consultation exercises.

After discussion and having heard Councillor Brown (Chair), it was agreed that a suggestion for the Community Participation Committee to convene a Public Seminar to look at issues of public concern be placed on the Agenda of a future CPC Meeting for discussion.

Having heard the community representative for West Dunbartonshire Seniors Association inform the Committee of the Association's imminent demise, following discussion it was agreed that officers would make the necessary contacts in connection with the representation.

Councillors Black and Robertson and Mr. Tom Nimmo, community representative for West Dunbartonshire Community Care Forum, left the meeting following consideration of the above item.

DRAFT REVISED CONSULTATION STRATEGY

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive presenting a revised draft Consultation Strategy for comment prior to Council approval.

Following discussion and having heard the Policy Officer, Community and Consultation, in further explanation and in answer to members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note that the Consultation Strategy and associated training would support a more co-ordinated and consistent approach to consultation and would contribute to efficiency and effectiveness in the wider community engagement approaches; and
- (2) to recommend the Strategy to Council.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Committee members were reminded to provide information for the Community News item in advance of meetings on an on-going basis.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS FROM COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES

Community Representatives were reminded to raise topics for inclusion on future Agendas and were asked to give consideration to the current list of topics:-

- Regular update on Regeneration of the Schools' Estate
- Waste Aware: Recycling
- Housing – Strategic Delivery Plans
- Fairtrade
- Facilities for Visitors
- Gender Equality – Men's Health (Partnership Activity)
- Bye-law relating to Rules for the Administration of Public Park and Open Spaces specifically with regard to dog fouling

Following discussion, it was agreed to request that a report on the Boundaries Commission plans to add Clydebank to North Renfrewshire constituency be submitted to a future meeting.

OPEN FORUM

Mr Neil Etherington of Parkhall and North Kilbowie Community Council raised several issues during the Open Forum:-

- (1) In response to a comment made during the meeting regarding poor attendance by members of the public at public consultation meetings, Mr. Etherington reminded the Committee that individuals could and did use the mechanism of raising issues with the Community Council in their area and often had problems resolved at that level;
- (2) In relation to a response posted on the Forum on the Council's web portal concerning the forthcoming 2015 Housing Review consultation meetings being aimed primarily at Council housing tenants, Mr Etherington requested confirmation that all council tax payers could attend these meetings.

Following discussion, the Head of Service, Policy and Performance, confirmed that this first stage of the consultation process related to the direct impact of the Standard Delivery Plan on tenants. However, it was also noted that other interested members of the community would not be excluded from these meetings.

- (3) Mr Etherington again expressed concern at the poor representation of community representatives at the meeting despite most of the absent organisations having appointed substitute members for such instances; and
- (4) Mr Etherington also expressed disquiet that much of the meeting had consisted of political comments and emphasised that the Community Participation Committee was not an appropriate forum for comments of this nature.

Councillor Brown (Chair) confirmed that a review of the CPC membership would be undertaken as part of the larger review of the Community Engagement Strategy.

Councillor Brown also reminded colleagues that CPC meetings should not be of a political nature.

The meeting closed at 4.10 p.m.