

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of the Community Participation Committee held in the Council Chambers, Clydebank Town Hall, Dumbarton Road, Clydebank on Wednesday, 21 March 2007 at 2.00 p.m.

Present: Councillors Gail Casey, George Black, Dennis Brogan, Jackie Maceira, Marie McNair and Martin Rooney. Megan Harrison, Faifley Neighbourhood Forum; Frances McGonagle and Elizabeth Conn, Gingerbread Scotland; Bill Rankin, West Dunbartonshire Access Panel; Mary Theresa Doherty, Clydebank Community Forum; Rhona Young, West Dunbartonshire Seniors' Association; Tom Nimmo, West Dunbartonshire Community Care Forum; Catherine Hannan, Ben View Resource Centre; Joe McCormack, Dumbarton and District Citizens Advice Bureau; and Brenda Pasquire, Dumbarton Credit Union.

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

Also Attending: Gillian Jump, Manager of Accounting; Linda McAlister, Personnel Officer; Robert Robb, Senior Officer – Waste Services; and Susan Shannon, Community Waste Officer.

Apologies: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillor Andy White and John Diamond, Bellsmyre Neighbourhood Forum.

Councillor Gail Casey in the Chair

CHAIR

With reference to the Minutes of Meeting of Council held on 25 June 2003 (Page 55, paragraph 192(b) refers), concerning the membership of Committees and the appointment of Conveners thereto, the Committee had been asked to consider the appointment of Convener of the Community Participation Committee.

Following discussion and having heard the Manager of Administrative Services and Councillor Casey in further elaboration, the Committee were asked to note that, since Councillor Casey was still Chair of the Committee and since she was present, it was not appropriate to consider the appointment of another Member to chair the meeting.

Councillors Black and Brogan indicated that they did not agree with this explanation and requested that their dissent be recorded.

PRESENTATION ON SINGLE TRANSFERABLE VOTING SYSTEM

Anne Laird, Manager of Administrative Services and Depute Returning Officer, gave a presentation on the Single Transferable Voting System to be used in the forthcoming elections.

Following the presentation, Members of the Committee requested clarification on some of the issues and topics covered and the Manager of Administrative Services was heard in response to their questions.

The Convener, on behalf of the Committee, thanked Mrs Laird for her most interesting and informative presentation.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of Meeting of the Committee held on 24 January 2007 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

PROGRESS ON RECYCLING AND WASTE MINIMISATION ISSUES

A report was submitted by the Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services (Land and Environmental Services) reporting progress made in recycling and waste minimisation.

Having heard the Senior Officer – Waste Services in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the content of the report; and
- (2) to note that it was hoped to extend opening hours and have the same hours for all three recycling centres.

CCTV – FOLLOW UP AND INVITATION TO VISIT THE MONITORING CENTRE

Reference was made to the Minutes of Meeting of the Community Participation Committee held on 24 January, 2007 (Page 2962, paragraph 11283 refers) when the Committee had agreed to note:-

- (a) that some members of the Community Participation Committee had expressed an interest in visiting the monitoring station to see the systems in operation; and

- (b) that the Local Authority Liaison Officer would investigate the issue of C.C.T.V. provision in Dumbarton High Street and report back to a future meeting of the Committee.

The Committee agreed to note the undernoted response from Sgt. Gavin Paterson, Local Authority Liaison Officer:-

I have followed up directly with the community representative who enquired about lack of CCTV provision in Dumbarton Town Centre.

Clydebank CCTV trust was established by Clydebank business persons after they became aware of a high level of crime within the business areas. They set up the trust and then raised money to allow the installation of limited CCTV coverage in Clydebank – monitored at Clydebank Police Office. Dumbarton Town Centre management declined to get involved but (as far as can be established) were asked. (Clyde Shopping Centre own and manage their own system).

In time, other organisations requested that the CCTV Trust monitor pictures on their behalf. WDC installed many cameras in housing estates and all of these pictures are monitored by the Trust. Registered Social Landlords and others also have a similar arrangement.

Most local authority areas have now moved on from this type of arrangement and have taken the monitoring of images out of police offices and into unique, multi-purpose monitoring stations. These stations offer services to a range of users including Community Wardens, lone workers, vulnerable persons, keyholders. The West Dunbartonshire Community Safety Partnership (WDCSP) has expressed an interest in establishing a similar facility in this area and, to that end, has instructed a professional to undertake a review into the provision of CCTV in West Dunbartonshire. This has still to be completed and will be under discussion at the next meeting of the WDCSP.

I would be happy to organise a visit to the CCTV Monitoring Centre - Committee Members are invited to put their names forward and select a date from the following: Tuesday 10th, Wednesday 11th, Thursday 12th or Friday 13th April at 2.00 p.m. meeting at 1.55 p.m. outside Clydebank Police Office, Montrose Street, Clydebank.

The Committee also agreed to note the additional information which had subsequently been received from Gavin Paterson.

Following discussion regarding the proposed visit to the CCTV Monitoring Centre, the undernoted community representatives expressed an interest in undertaking a visit on Tuesday, 10 April, 2007:- Frances McGonagle, Megan Harrison, Elizabeth Conn, Mary Theresa Doherty, Tom Nimmo, John Diamond and Rhona Young.

COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

The Committee agreed to note that as the community representatives from the Safe Bonhill Group had not attended a meeting, submitted apologies or responded to correspondence in 2006, it had been assumed it no longer wished to be represented on the CPC.

Following discussion the Committee agreed that, subject to the Community Participation Committee continuing in its current form after the elections in May, the vacancy would be offered to another group.

ELECTIONS TO CLYDEBANK EAST COMMUNITY COUNCIL, MARCH 2007

The Committee agreed to note that Clydebank East Community Council has successfully re-formed following the election in March 2007 and will be holding its inaugural meeting to appoint office bearers on Thursday, 22 March 2007.

It was noted that, as one of the local Members for the Community Council area, Councillor Casey would chair the inaugural meeting.

GRANTS TO VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS AND COMMUNITY GROUPS – UPDATE TO CURRENT PROCEDURES

With reference to the Minutes of Meeting of the Corporate Services Committee held on 31 January 2007 (Page 2972, paragraph 11343 refers), there was submitted the relevant excerpt minute together with a report by the Chief Executive recommending new procedures to be introduced in respect of grants to voluntary organisations and community groups and seeking comments from the Community Participation Committee.

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

- (1) to agree with the recommendations of the Corporate Services Committee as follows:-
 - (a) that grant application information and awards would be advertised by a variety of appropriate methods, with due consideration to cost;
 - (b) that there would be one point of contact and a central database introduced by the Council, with link officers identified where appropriate;

- (c) to note that it would not be normal practice for grants to be awarded at 100% of expenditure. Evidence of seeking other funding sources would be requested;
 - (d) that the application form would be amended to incorporate a request for information on Council priorities and additional criteria identified;
 - (e) that additional criteria would be considered in line with 3.1(e). A report would be brought to the Corporate Services Committee after the year end detailing the breakdown of grants by different categories;
 - (f) that grants in excess of £10,000 would be considered once per annum, with the Council making every effort to advertise and inform relevant groups of deadlines within appropriate timescales;
 - (g) that delegated powers would remain as they were at present;
 - (h) that appropriate information would be given in the application pack to ensure applicants were aware of the appeals procedure;
 - (i) that the three grant thresholds be revised in line with paragraph 3.1(j) of the report;
 - (j) that monitoring procedures based upon the new thresholds would be revised to allow more ad hoc monitoring visits and checks;
 - (k) that the new grants package would be brought to the Corporate Services Committee in March 2007.
- (2) to note that the Voluntary Grants Budget was a stand still budget which does not increase by inflation;
 - (3) to recommend to the Corporate Services Committee that grant application information and awards should be advertised within a limited budget of £500;
 - (4) that all community groups should be advised to explore seeking funding from alternative sources as it was likely the Council's Voluntary Grants Budget would be unable to meet the increasing number of requests for funding being received; and
 - (5) to express concern that, prior to this report to the CPC, no public consultation had taken place with the user groups regarding the introduction of the proposed new procedures.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRUCTURES WITHIN THE WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL AREA

With reference to the Minutes of Meeting of the Community Participation Committee on 24 January 2007 (Page 2966, paragraph 11297) a report was submitted by the Chief Executive:-

- (a) providing details of the current community engagement structures and identification of their roles; and
- (b) providing the opportunity for the Committee to discuss any potential duplication.

Having heard the Policy Officer, Community and Consultation in further explanation the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the contents of the report;
- (2) to note that the community representatives present considered the Community Participation Committee to be a good platform to raise issues and receive prompt answers to questions;
- (3) to note that those community representatives not present at the meeting would be contacted regarding their views of the Community Participation Committee;
- (4) to note that the Elected Members present considered the Community Participation Committee to be a valuable and effective Council Committee; and
- (5) that the Community Planning Partnership Board and the Community Participation Committee had different remits and aims and complemented each other.

Councillor Brogan left the meeting at 3.40 p.m.

COMMUNITY DAY/COMMUNITY WEEK

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive:-

- (a) providing background information on Community Week and on the Council's Community Day which are annual events; and
- (b) detailing arrangements for 2007.

Having heard the Policy Officer, Community and Consultation in elaboration the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the contents of the report; and
- (2) to note the suggestion to include a competition which would involve members of the public visiting each stall on the day.

DISCLOSURE CHECKS

Following the inclusion of an Agenda item regarding disclosure checks, the Committee agreed to note the following information:-

The Leader of the Council has received a letter from Frances McGonagle, community representative on the CPC, raising urgent concerns in relation to disclosure procedures for staff working in schools and community centres and asking for the subject to be put on the agenda of the CPC and other committees.

West Dunbartonshire Council is currently meeting all the legislative requirements relating to Disclosure Scotland checking. All new staff (and staff changing jobs) who are working with children and/or vulnerable people, are Disclosure Scotland checked. The Council operates a Safe Recruitment Policy.

In light of the legislation planned for 2008, WDC is actively considering arrangements for retrospective checking.

Having heard Linda McAlister, Personnel Officer, in further elaboration and in response to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note:-

- (a) that West Dunbartonshire Council is currently meeting all the requirements of the legislation regarding Disclosure Checking;
- (b) that, in light of the legislation planned for 2008, West Dunbartonshire Council should pursue arrangements for retrospective checking; and
- (c) that the Community Participation Committee should request periodic updates regarding arrangements for retrospective checking.

DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Committee agreed to note that it has not been possible to set a date for a future meeting of the CPC due to the local elections being held on 3 May 2007.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS FROM COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES

Following discussion it was agreed that, subject to the Community Participation Committee continuing in its current form after the elections in May, arrangements would be put in place to ensure hospitality was provided for the pre-agenda meetings.

OPEN FORUM

The Convener, Councillor Casey, invited Mr Neil Etherington of Parkhall and North Kilbowie Community Council, to address the Committee.

Mr Etherington thanked officers for providing a comprehensive report on Community Engagement Structures in response to his request at the January meeting and noted that arrangements were in progress to compile an electronic "Who's Who" of all the voluntary groups.

The Convener thanked Mr Etherington for his attendance and input to the meeting.

CONVENER'S REMARKS

The Convener intimated that she wished to record her thanks to all officers who have had input to the Community Participation Committee over the years, to the Elected Members for their contribution and to the officers facilitating the Committee for their help and advice.

VOTE OF THANKS

Councillors Black and Rooney gave a vote of thanks to the Chair and commented that one reason the Community Participation Committee was so successful was that it was chaired so competently by Councillor Casey.

The meeting closed at 4.20 p.m.