

## **COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION COMMITTEE**

At a Meeting of the Community Participation Committee held in the Education Centre, St. Margaret of Scotland Hospice, East Barns Street, Clydebank, on Wednesday, 19 January 2011 at 2.00 p.m.

**Present:** Councillors Jim Brown, George Black, Jonathan McColl, Marie McNair and John Millar; Ann Aire, Clydebank Women's Aid; Murdoch Cameron, MBE, Community Councils Forum; Neil Etherington, Clydebank Community Forum; Megan Harrison, Faifley Neighbourhood Forum; Anne MacDougall, Clydebank Crime Prevention Panel; Francis McNeill, Community Councils Forum; Brenda Pasquire, West Dunbartonshire Citizen's Advice Bureau; Justeen Peacock, West Dunbartonshire Access Panel; Rhona Young, Clydebank Seniors Forum; Tom Woodbridge, Dumbarton Community Forum; and Rhona Young, Clydebank Seniors Forum.

**Attending:** Peter Barry, Community Planning Partnership Manager; Anne Clegg, Policy Officer - Community and Consultation; Gary Clarke, Energy Advice Officer; Lorraine Macleod, Welfare Rights Officer; John McKenna, Capital Program Officer; and Fiona Anderson, Committee Officer, Legal, Administrative and Regulatory Services.

**Also**

**Attending:** Jeanette Benzie, Clydebank Crime Prevention Panel (Sub).

**Apologies:** Apologies were intimated on behalf of Councillors Ronnie McColl, Jim McElhill and Martin Rooney; and John Diamond and Tony Oliver (Sub), Bellsmyre Neighbourhood Forum.

### **Councillor Jim Brown in the Chair**

#### **CHAIR'S REMARKS**

Prior to commencing with the business of the meeting, the Chair, Councillor Brown, asked the Committee to note that Councillor Margaret Bootland had resigned from her duties as an Elected Member. On behalf of the Committee, Councillor Brown expressed appreciation of Councillor Bootland's valued contribution to the Community Participation Committee over the years.

#### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Brown declared a non financial interest in relation to the presentation by Clydebank Crime Prevention Panel.

## **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of Meeting of the Community Participation Committee held on 15 September 2010 were submitted and approved as a correct record, subject to the undernoted paragraph being amended to read as follows:

Item - Budget Forum Meetings (Pages 3093/3094):-

- (4) to note the views of the representative from the Clydebank Community Forum that future budget consultation meetings should be conducted by the Council in association with the Community Forums in order to improve attendance at such events.

### **PRESENTATION BY CLYDEBANK CRIME PREVENTION PANEL**

With reference to the Minutes of Meeting of the Community Participation Committee held on 14 April 2010 (Page 2807 refers), Anne MacDougall, Chair, and Jeanette Benzie, Secretary, of the Clydebank Crime Prevention Panel gave a presentation on the work of the Panel and were heard in response to members' questions.

The main points covered in the presentation were:-

- Clydebank Crime Prevention Panel is a fully constituted voluntary organisation;
- Members come from all walks of life including representatives from community groups, members of the public; local Elected Members; and local police officers subject to police commitments;
- The aims of the Panel are: to make the Clydebank community a safer place to live; to reduce fear of crime; and to educate people regarding personal safety and safety of personal property;
- The Panel is funded by grants from the Divisional Commander's fund; local Community Housing Associations; the Big Lottery; donations and the sale of alarms; and
- Some of the main achievements of the Panel include the BMX Bike Park; West Dunbartonshire Inter Schools Football Competition; Bogus Caller Initiative; Alarms to victims of domestic abuse; and providing a stall in the shopping centre at Christmas and at community events.

Following discussion, the Committee noted that the Panel had two kinds of personal safety alarms and sets of "jingle bells" for ladies to attach to their handbags or purses to alert them should someone try to steal these items, which were available for sale.

The Chair, Councillor Brown, on behalf of the Committee thanked Mrs MacDougall and Ms Benzie for their very interesting and informative presentation and commended them on the work of the Crime Prevention Panel.

## **PRESENTATION BY HOME ENERGY ACTION TEAM**

Gary Clark, Energy Advice Officer and Lorraine MacLeod, Welfare Rights Officer, of the Home Energy Action Team gave a presentation on Tackling Fuel Poverty and were heard in response to members' questions.

The main points covered in the presentation were:-

- The Home Energy Action Team (HEAT) is a Partnership Project funded by Community Planning which aims to help residents combat fuel poverty;
- HEAT offers a range of services to all residents (Council tenants, private tenants and home owners) throughout West Dunbartonshire and the service is free; and
- The services on offer to tackle fuel poverty, such as free home visits; advice and guidance; benefit checks to ensure the maximum amount is being claimed; arranging access to grants to raise property insulation levels to help with heat retention in the home; help with completing forms; acting as advocates for appeals representation; and contacting creditors and negotiating affordable repayments.

The Chair, Councillor Brown, on behalf of the Committee, thanked the officers for their interesting and informative presentation.

## **COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COSTS - COMPARISON PAST AND PRESENT**

With reference to the Minutes of Meeting of the Community Participation Committee held on 15 September 2010 (Page 3092 refers), a report was submitted by the Chief Executive providing information about comparative costs, past and present, for supporting community engagement in Community Planning. This paper shows a significant reduction in the costs of delivering community engagement.

Following discussion, the Committee agreed:-

- (a) to note the comment from the representative of Clydebank Community Forum that, contrary to the recommendation contained in the Minutes of the previous meeting of the CPC held on 15 September 2010 (Page 3094 refers), the recent budget consultation meetings had not been conducted by the Council in association with the Community Council Forums as there had been no Community Forum input;
- (b) to note, in response to a question, that advertising costs for meetings of the Community Forums come out of the Community Engagement Tender and Associated Costs budget;
- (c) to note concerns that the Vale of Leven community Forum is not progressing as quickly as the Clydebank and Dumbarton Forums, and the response that a meeting to re-establish the Vale Forum is being called for February (following a poor turn-out in December due to bad weather);

- (d) to note the Clydebank Community Forum representative's concerns with the pace of progress with Organisation Development Services (ODS) in relation to developing the Forums;
- (e) to note the proposal that Elected Members from the Vale of Leven area meet with members of the Vale of Leven Community Forum in an effort to improve the situation;
- (f) to note the concerns expressed by the representative from Clydebank Seniors Forum regarding the Community Forums in general not being widely enough representative of the community; and
- (g) to note the comments made by the representative of Clydebank Community Forum and the representative of West Dunbartonshire Citizens Advice Service regarding lack of advertising of meeting times and venues.

The Community Planning Partnership Manager was heard in further elaboration and in response to members' questions. Following discussion the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the work being done with ODS to deliver appropriate support to community structures;
- (2) to note the need to improve the advertising for Community Forums and to consider other methods such as information on websites, schoolbag drops and insertion of adverts into free papers;
- (3) to note the need to maximise the use of the advertising budget as it is public money;
- (4) to note the need to endeavour to increase the number attending the meetings of Community Forums as community representation is recognised as being a significant part of community engagement;
- (5) to note, following a question from the representative from Clydebank Crime Prevention Panel, confirmation of the loss of 8 support staffing posts following the closure of the community bases; and
- (6) to note from the representative of Dumbarton Community Forum the important contribution being made by Community Forum representatives on the thematic groups;
- (7) to note from the representative of Dumbarton Community Forum the work being carried out between Dumbarton and Clydebank Forums to map community groups in their areas with a view to publicising Community Forums; and
- (8) to note the view from one of the Community Council Forum representatives that Forums need to be given responsibility for a budget if they are to have any real purpose.

Having heard the Chair, Councillor Brown, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the request for the Community Planning Partnership Manager to bring a progress report to a future meeting of the CPC; and
- (ii) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

### **ANNUAL EQUALITY REPORT 2010**

A report was submitted by the Chief Executive summarising the annual report on the Equality Scheme 2009-12 and attaching the Annual Report as an Appendix.

The Policy Officer, Community and Consultation, was heard in response to members' questions on the report in the absence of the author who was on maternity leave.

It was noted that the Policy Officer, Community and Consultation, would try to obtain the information requested by Councillor Black in regard of Items 7.2 and 8.4 of the Annual Report, outwith the meeting.

Having heard the Chair, Councillor Brown, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

### **FAIFLEY NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM**

The Committee was asked to note that Faifley Neighbourhood Forum had ceased to operate. The representatives on the Community Participation Committee were Megan Harrison and Mary Theresa Doherty.

The Convener extended sincere thanks to Megan and Mary Theresa for their contribution to the Committee over many years and wished them all the best for the future.

Following discussion, the Committee agreed to note that the Community Councils Forum had expressed a willingness to assist Megan in her venture to establish a Community Council in the Faifley area.

The Chair also asked the Committee to note that June Todd had resigned as Chair of the Clydebank Community Forum and expressed appreciation of her contribution to the CPC over the past year and conveyed his best wishes for the future. It was further noted that Neil Etherington would now be Clydebank Community Forum's representative and that the Committee would be notified of a substitute in due course. The Chair welcomed Neil to the Committee.

Following a question from the representative of Clydebank Community Forum regarding a resultant vacancy in the membership of the CPC, the Policy Officer, Community and Consultation, clarified the position regarding the allocation of places for community representation on the Committee.

## **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

The Committee agreed to note that the dates of the Community Participation Committee Meetings in 2011 would be as detailed below:-

### **All Meetings would be held on a Wednesday at 2.00 p.m.**

- 23 March: Meeting Room 3, Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton  
18 May: St. Margaret of Scotland Hospice, East Barns Street, Clydebank  
17 August: Meeting Room 3, Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton  
19 October: St. Margaret of Scotland Hospice, East Barns Street, Clydebank  
21 December: Meeting Room 3, Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton

Following discussion, it was agreed to recommend to Council that the date for the December meeting of the Community Participation Committee should be brought forward to earlier in the month.

Having heard the Chair, Councillor Brown, in response to a question from the representative of Clydebank Community Forum, and following discussion, the Committee agreed:-

- (a) to note that the November meeting of the CPC had been cancelled as there had been only two items of business on the Agenda;
- (b) to note that the decision to cancel had been taken in agreement with the Convener, the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Opposition;
- (c) to note that the presentation scheduled for the November meeting had been re-scheduled for the January meeting;
- (d) to note the steps taken by the officers in advance of meetings to try to ensure that sufficient items of business were forthcoming from both from within Council Services and from the community representatives themselves; and
- (e) to note the importance of items on the Agenda having purpose and relevance.

## **COMMUNITY NEWS**

Committee members were invited to provide information for the Community News item in advance of meetings on an on-going basis and were reminded of the importance of being pro-active in this regard.

## **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS FROM COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES**

Councillor Brown (Chair) invited community representatives to raise topics for inclusion on future Agendas.

It was noted that current topics included:-

- Clydebank Rebuilt
- Update on Regeneration of the Schools' Estate
- Fairtrade
- Regular update on Recycling and Waste Minimisation
- Future Development on Strathleven Corridor
- Council Tax Presentation (annually)
- An update on Addiction Services and in particular whether funding is internal or external
- Clyde Valley Community Planning Partnership
- Shopmobility

Following discussion, it was agreed:-

- (a) to note that Shopmobility would be the presentation topic at the March meeting of the Committee;
- (b) to note the explanation given for the removal of Community Planning Partnership/Community Forums from the list of topics;
- (c) to note the suggestion from the representative from Dumbarton Community Forum that Community Planning Partnership/Community Forums should be reported on at the October meeting of the Committee to allow time for sufficient progress to be made in the growth of the Forums;
- (d) to note the request from Clydebank Women's Aid for a report to the next meeting on the provision of the Mobile Crèche facility as it was considered the withdrawal of this facility had adversely affected the work able to be done by groups in the community;
- (e) to note the request from the representative of West Dunbartonshire Citizens Advice Service for an officer from the Roads Department to attend a future meeting of the Committee to discuss issues regarding the narrow lanes on local roundabouts and misuse by motorists; and
- (f) to note the suggestion by Councillor Black that a representative from the Road Traffic Department of the Police should be invited to address the Committee concerning lane management and marking on local roundabouts.

### **OPEN FORUM**

The Committee noted that there were no Open Forum questions as there were no members of the public present.

Following discussion, it was agreed to note that the Committee had experienced general difficulties with the acoustics in the room. It was noted that officers would endeavour to rectify the matter for the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 3.45 p.m.