

North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership

Environment Partnership

Minutes of meeting held on 25 September 2009

Attendance

Councillor Tom Barr (**Chair**), North Ayrshire Council
Councillor Margie Currie, North Ayrshire Council
Anne Todd, Community Planning Officer (Chief Executive's), North Ayrshire Council
Damien Griffith, Principal Officer Housing, North Ayrshire Council
Richard Henry, Planning Officer, North Ayrshire Council
Robert Loney, Representative, Outdoor Access Forum
Steve Morley, Team Leader - Economic Development, North Ayrshire Council (For Alex Anderson)
Cameron Sharp, Country Parks Manager, North Ayrshire Council
Mairi Cunningham, Quality Improvement Officer, North Ayrshire Council
Iain Hossack, Policy Officer (Environment)
Jack McConnachie, Transportation Manager, North Ayrshire Council
Marlene McMillan, Lead Public Health Practitioner, NHS Ayrshire and Arran
Bob Baillie, Energy Agency
Jennifer Steadman, Energy Officer, North Ayrshire Council
Hugh McGhee, Senior Environmental Health Officer, North Ayrshire Council

Also In Attendance

Angela Little, Committee Services Officer (Chief Executive's), North Ayrshire Council

Apologies

Liz Marquis, Director, Energy Agency
Yvonne Hunter, Cleansing Controller, North Ayrshire Council
Sandra Bale, Policy Officer, North Ayrshire Council
Jimmy Hyslop, Scottish Natural Heritage
Carol McGinness, SEPA

1. Welcome and Introductions

Councillor Tom Barr welcomed everyone to the meeting and the above apologies were noted.

2. Minutes of previous meeting held on 7 August 2009

The following amendment was made to the minute: -

3.0 SOA Action Plan

10c: The condition of roads, footways, path networks and lighting has improved - Paragraph 4 to read: -

Jack advised that the winter maintenance budget for roads had “**not**” been increased this year, and that this occurred across the country. This has had implications nationwide. A

national survey will look at this impact the previous winter has had on the roads network and this report will be available shortly.

The minutes were then approved.

2.1 Matters Arising

Future Jobs Fund

Steve Morley advised that discussions are taking place with Cleansing in relation to the creation of green jobs. Progress will be provided to a future meeting.

Update on Carbon Management Sub-Group

Jennifer Steadman will replace Alex McKenzie on this Group. Ann Todd will chase up for the next meeting.

Street Lights Renewal

A programme to replace old lighting and replacing old and inefficient columns is ongoing. 15.6% of columns exceeded the 30 year limit and there is a target to reduce this to 14.6% and to further reduce on an annual basis.

Solar Powered Street Lighting Columns

Bob Baillie advised that Liz Marquis had requested information in relation to solar powered street lighting columns and this would be circulated as soon as it becomes available.

Energy Activity within Schools

Bob Baillie reported that he would chase up the figures in relation to energy activity within schools.

Green Gym Pilot

BTCV have been invited to a future meeting and will provide an update at that time.

Town Centre Regeneration Fund

A position statement was circulated at the meeting providing information on the recent submissions to the Town Centre Regeneration Fund.

In June 2009, North Ayrshire Council submitted 4 bids for funding to the Town Centre Regeneration Fund. These projects had to be completed within the current financial year. These bids were not successful.

It was considered that the focus of the bids requires to centre on regeneration, sustainable employment opportunities, and future investment.

Successful bids, totalling £1,848m, were awarded to Irvine Bay Regeneration Company and Cumbrae Development Company for Jack Millers in Ardrossan, the railway station building in Saltcoats and Garrison House.

A second round of bids, approved by the Executive on 18 August 2009, have now been submitted to the fund. The four bids relate to projects in Kilbirnie, Largs, Irvine and West Kilbride and details were provided in the position statement.

Landfill Communities Fund (LCF)

A report was circulated at the meeting providing information in relation to projects to be funded via the LCF in 2009/10.

LCF are funds that the Council as a landfill operator collects on behalf of Customs and Excise. The Council is allowed to divert 6% of the landfill tax to enrolled environmental bodies to carry out a range of works that meet approved objectives. The allocation in 2009/10 of approximately £123,000 has been adjusted to £77,000 as a result of a downturn in the economy, an increase in recycling, and a carry-over from 2008/09.

On 8 September 2009, the Executive approved the projects for the current year. Details of the 9 projects were provided in the report.

It was noted that work is taking place to encourage bids from the Garnock Valley area.

3. SOA Action Plan – Partner Activity Reports

Country Parks Section and the Rangers Service

The report highlighted the following areas under Outcome 12a Our environment is protected and enhanced

- The Country Parks Section, Access Officer and NHS have linked up with the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers to support the BTCV Green Gym.
- Work placements through Careers Scotland for secondary school pupils continues.
- The John Muir Award Programme carried out one full award from January – June 2009.
- The Countryside Liaison Officer co-ordinated and assisted Eco-School projects and grant applications.
- Ranger Service links with Spiers Trust, Beith Cultural and Heritage Society, local schools and the Youth Making Beith Better Project.
- Tournament Bridge restoration was completed in late June 2009 and a programme of events for schools and the local community put in place.

Other main areas include: -

- Country Park visitors are higher than compared to previous years.
- A revamp of the Visitor Centre Information Point and shop was completed in February 2009.
- A new format for the Events Programme has been launched and distributed.
- The establishment of a base at Eglinton Country Park for the Pupil Support Service

North Ayrshire Outdoor Access Forum

Rob Loney reported that the membership of the Forum is being reviewed. He advised on the following: -

Signage	Recycled plastic will be used. The Leader bid was successful.
Stevenston Beach	The All Access Project will allow wheelchair access to the beach.
Ardeer Quarry	Sustrans have experienced funding cuts and as a result there will be no funding for this project.

4. Local Development Plan SEA: Scoping and Gateway Responses

Iain gave a presentation to the group about strategic environmental assessment and its application during the local development plan process. The main emphasis was the

demonstration of efficient, but effective, practice; using an established Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats (SWOT) analytical tool to identify the main environmental factors, both positive and negative, that the LDP could address. The main LDP issues, and their associated environmental challenges and opportunities, were presented to the group. Iain stressed that the environmental assessment of the LDP demonstrates that SEA is a simple and effective mechanism to identify and address environmental challenges and opportunities and that his door is always open for anyone requiring advice on any aspect of environmental assessment.

5. COSLA Regeneration and Sustainable Development Executive Group

Councillor Currie provided details of the recent COSLA Regeneration and Sustainable Development Executive Group which discussed items including bus gateway, tourism, regeneration funding and loans, aquaculture planning, barriers to renewable energy, biodiversity and flytipping.

The Group made comment on the following areas: -

Allotments	Very expensive for local authorities to become involved in.
Climate Change Update	The bill has gone through. Iain Hossack reported that SNIPA Guidance is available – he will pass this to Anne for circulation. Bob Baillie advised that the Climate Change Fund still have funds available.
Zero Waste	Consultation process ongoing.
Energy Efficiency Action Plan	Officers will be responding to the Draft Plan, which will form part of the Development Plan. Bob Baillie suggested that the Energy Agency provide a brief presentation for the group.
Low Carbon Vehicles	SPT and the Council are jointly working on a response to this consultation.

6. People's Panel Thematic Survey

Anne Todd provided information in relation to the CPP's People's Panel, which is used as a tool to gather information on the attitudes and views of local people on areas such as the local area, employment, health, community safety and community involvement and also to track changes over time.

The Panel is randomly selected from the electoral roll and consists of 2,000 members – 1,000 from the regeneration areas in North Ayrshire and 1,000 from the rest of North Ayrshire. Two surveys are carried out annually – the summer survey which covers a number of topics including neighbourhood; community; employment, training and learning; access to email and the internet; health; access to financial services and access to energy. A number

of responses in the Summer Survey are used as performance measures for the Single Outcome Agreement. The second survey generally focuses on one or two specific themes. The proposed theme for 2009/10 is the economic recession and its impact on individuals and communities, a theme that cuts across all community planning priority areas. It is proposed that the thematic survey will take place during the month of December. The Community Engagement Network have been consulted on possible content of this survey, and all other CPP groups are also being consulted.

Volunteers were sought from the Environment Partnership to liaise with the CPP Team. Iain Hossack and Cameron Sharp agreed to become involved. Any other members who would like to be involved or who have questions they would like incorporated into the survey should advise Anne directly.

7. CPP Update

The Fairer North Ayrshire Fund was introduced by the Scottish Government in 2008 as a 3-year fund to tackle poverty and deprivation. During its first 2 years, the fund was ringfenced to Community Planning Partnerships. However, for Year 3 (2010/11), the Fund will become part of the local government financial settlement and, therefore, part of the Council's budget.

A set of recommendations on the use of the funding for 2010/11 was presented to the CPP Board and the Executive, which included the Clean and Green Programme as follows: -

- Play for All Playpark Improvements - support at Year 2 level minus 3 %; and
- Environment Hit Squad - support at Year 2 level with a 3% increase.

8. AOB

Iain reported on an online tool that assists individuals and community groups through the various stages of how to present schemes and applications

Cameron Sharp advised of a seminar by Scottish Natural Heritage on Changing Nature in Scotland.

The Local Energy Advice Forum (LEAF) have offered to give a presentation to a future meeting of the Environment Partnership. They have also enquired about becoming a member of the partnership.

It was agreed to accept the offer from LEAF to provide a presentation to a future meeting and that the partnership further discuss their request to become a member of the group.

Venues for Future Meetings - Councillor Currie suggested that a future meeting be held in Brodick, Isle of Arran – perhaps in the Spring of 2010.

9. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Friday 6 November 2009 at 10.00 a.m. in Committee Room 2, Cunninghame House, Irvine.

The meeting ended at 12.05 p.m.