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MINUTES of MEETING of MID ARGYLL, KINTYRE & THE ISLANDS AREA COMMITTEE held in the VILLAGE HALL, CARRADALE on WEDNESDAY, 7 OCTOBER 2015

Present:

Councillor Rory Colville (Chair)

Councillor Robin Currie
Councillor Anne Horn
Councillor Donald Kelly

Councillor Donald MacMillan
Councillor Douglas Philand
Councillor Sandy Taylor

Attending:

Shona Barton, Area Committee Manager
Kirsteen MacDonald, Regeneration Project Manager
Stewart Clark, Contracts Manager
Alan Milstead, Carradale Community Business
Alistair MacGregor, Chief Executive, ACHA
Jocelynn McConnachie, Commercial Director, CALMAC
Simon Richmond, Area Operations Manager, CALMAC

1. APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and general introductions were made.

The Chair took the opportunity to congratulate Stewart Clark on his recent appointment as Marine Operations Manager and thanked him for his ongoing work and commitment as Contracts Manager over the years.

Apologies for absence were intimated from Councillors Armour and McAlpine.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest intimated.

3. MINUTE OF THE MID ARGYLL, KINTYRE AND THE ISLANDS AREA COMMITTEE - 5 AUGUST 2015

The Minute of the previous meeting, held on 5 August 2015 was approved as a true record.

Matters Arising:-

Councillor Kelly enquired as to the position with the car parking review and the progress in terms of the public consultation. The Contracts Manager advised that the public consultation document was currently being drafted and would be issued to Members as per discussions at the previous meeting within the next couple of weeks.

Councillor Kelly asked for an update on the progress of the running track at Meadows, Campbeltown. The Contracts Manager advised that he was unsure of the progress to date, but that he would look into the matter and confirm the position to Councillor Kelly by email.

Councillor Currie enquired about the absence of an item on the agenda for the Inveraray Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS). The Area Committee Manager advised that there were no applications to progress at this time, however she had been in discussion with the CARS Officer and the Chair about the possibility of a Special Area Committee meeting in November.

Councillor Horn enquired as to whether there were many Third Sector organisations that had still to lodge their end of project monitoring reports. The Area Committee Manager agreed to contact the Community Development Officer and feedback to Councillor Horn by email.

Councillor Horn advised that she had received a number of representations in relation to the proposal to remove the two week break in October from South Kintyre schools. The Chair advised that the Education service were aware of the situation and that the Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers (LNCT) were scheduled to deal with this issue at their next meeting. He further advised that the Executive Director of Community Services and the Head of Education had agreed that there was a need for further and wider discussions, which should involve the public. Councillor Horn advised that she was aware of the short timescales involved in previous discussions, and requested that Head Teachers be given more time to prepare. The Chair advised that he would be attending the next meeting of the LNCT in November and would keep Members informed of the outcome of discussions. Councillor Kelly advised that he felt that this was an important opportunity for the Area Committee to make a decision. The Chair advised that this item should be continued under Public and Councillors Question Time.

4. PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS QUESTION TIME

Shelagh Cameron, local resident of Carradale advised that she was delighted to note the intention of partnership working between the Council and ACHA in relation to the displaced refugee people of Syria. She asked for clarification of what plans were in place to address the requirement for housing for both the refugees and local people. The Chair advised that the refugee situation was being addressed through the Community Planning Partnership, where all partnership agencies such as ACHA and the Health and Social Care Partnership had an input. The Chief Executive of ACHA advised that he would be making reference to the situation in his presentation at item 7 of the agenda.

Ms Cameron also asked a question in relation to the closure of the Abbeyfield assisted living facility within the village. She explained that this was happening in November and asked what advice the Area Committee could offer in terms of a positive way forward and the possibility of a community buy out. The Chair advised of the newly formed Kintyre Care Services Review Group, and noted that they were looking for active members to attend regular meetings.. Councillor Horn advised that she sits on the group and that the next meeting is scheduled to take place on 20 October 2015. She advised that she has requested that the closure of the Abbeyfield facility is discussed at this meeting. The Chief Executive of ACHA advised that he would be attending a meeting with Argyll and Bute Council to discuss the closure and the possible future use of the facility. The Area Committee Manager agreed to make investigations within the Council as to their position and feedback to Ms Cameron.

Ms Cameron enquired as to the position of slip-ways including the insurance and safety implications in other areas of Argyll and Bute. The Contracts Manager advised that there are a number of slip-ways throughout Argyll and Bute which form part of the infrastructure. He advised that these slip-ways are maintained and insured by the Council. Mr Milstead advised that the slip-way in Carradale was leased by Carradale Harbour Enterprises Ltd, and insured by them also.

Alan Walker, Chair of Network Carradale Ltd asked for an update in relation to the speed restrictions on the Carradale road network. The Contracts Manager advised that works were ongoing in respect of the extension of restrictions on Shore Road and the signage at Portrigh. He advised that the consultation was underway in respect of the extension to restrictions on the B842 South of Carradale.

Having taken consideration of discussions under Matters Arising, Councillor Kelly asked the Area Committee to use the opportunity to ensure that school holidays in the South of Kintyre are protected for 2017-18 and thereafter. General discussion took place in respect of the need to involve local communities and Elected Members in the decision making process in this regard. The Chair requested that the Area Committee Manager make contact with the Head of Education to request that the Area Committee have the opportunity to comment on school holidays before the dates are submitted to the Community Services Committee for agreement.

Councillor Kelly enquired about the possibility of a briefing note being circulated to Members in relation to the delays with the new Campbeltown Grammar School. The Area Committee Manager advised that she would contact the Head of Facility Services with a view to providing this, however she asked Members to note that an update report would be brought to the Business Day meeting of the Area Committee in November.

Councillor Kelly enquired about the possibility of a briefing note being circulated to Members in relation to the progress of the Town Hall Initiative. The Chair advised that there had been a number of architect and contractor issues which had delayed progress. He advised that there was currently a new completion date of 14 December in place, however due to commercially sensitive information he was not sure whether it would be possible to provide a briefing note. The Area Committee Manager agreed to seek advice in this regard and feedback to Councillor Kelly.

Councillor Philand advised that the Strategic Plan for the Health and Social Care Partnership was now out for consultation. He advised that it was an opportunity for local communities to take part. He further advised that this was being advertised in the local press and on the Council's website.

Having noted that agenda item 7 (ACHA – Annual Update) was of particular interest to the members of public in attendance, the Chair ruled and the Committee agreed to permit them to take part in discussion of item 7.

5. CAMPBELTOWN - JOHN MCTAGGART - CLBC COMMEMORATION PLAQUE

Members considered a report outlining a request to have a plaque erected to commemorate the work of the Campbeltown Loch Berthing Company between 1989 and 2014.

Decision

Members agreed:-

1. to note the contents of the report;
2. that the wording of the plaque be in accordance with the wording in appendix A of the report; and
3. that the plaque is located on the railings adjacent to the entrance gate under the terms and conditions as outlined in section 4.4 of the report.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure Services, dated 7 October 2015, submitted.)

6. CARRADALE COMMUNITY BUSINESS

Members gave consideration to an update report, which outlined the corporate structure of both Network Carradale Limited and Carradale Harbour Enterprises Limited. Mr Milstead outlined the future plans of the Community Business which include obtaining a long term lease from Argyll and Bute Council for the harbour car park, the net store area and the toilet block; and the ongoing discussions with East Kintyre Community Council and the Forestry Commission regarding the setting up of a green composting scheme in Seneval Woods. Mr Milstead advised of the assistance the Company had received from Scottish and Southern Energy, which included repairs to the entrance of the community hall; the steps at the door of the Network Tearoom and the donation of 50 barriers for use at events. Discussion took place in respect of the Community Empowerment Bill and the funding obtained through the Weir Charitable Trust and the Windfarm Trust which Mr Walker noted had assisted with the upgrade of facilities at the village hall.

The Chair congratulated the works of both Network Carradale Ltd and Carradale Harbour Enterprises Ltd and commended the community spirit within the village.

Decision

Members agreed to note the contents of the update.

(Ref: Update Report by Carradale Community Business, dated 7 October 2015, submitted.)

7. ACHA - ANNUAL UPDATE

Members gave consideration to a presentation by Alistair MacGregor, Chief Executive of ACHA, which outlined the investment programme in Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands from transfer to 31 March 2015; the new build programme and the key challenges faced, which include population decline and the energy efficiency standard for social housing. Mr MacGregor outlined the ongoing partnership work with both the Scottish Government and Argyll and Bute Council on the refugee crisis and the ongoing work on the CARS scheme initiative at Inveraray with the project expected to be on-site by November 2015.

Further discussion took place in relation to the revenue budget for day-today maintenance; repairs required to properties in Carradale; the demand for three-bedroom houses in Tarbert; funding from the Scottish Government in relation to aids and adaptations and the progress of the 2 new build units in Carradale. Mr MacGregor agreed to provide further information for Ward 2 Members in relation to the Association's SHQS Investment Programme and in particular to the roof, roughcast and application of external insulated render which has started on over 180 properties on Islay.

Decision

Members agreed to note the presentation.

(Ref: Presentation by Chief Executive of ACHA, submitted.)

8. MAKI FERRY SERVICES

Members were given an update by the Area Operations Manager of Calmac on a number of issues with ferry services in the MAKI area which included capacity issues and the timetables for the Islay service for both the summer and winter months; the contingency provisions in place for the Portavadie to Tarbert service and the position of the Ardrossan to Campbeltown service.

Discussion took place in relation to the need to consult local communities in relation to proposed timetables, with Mr Richmond agreeing with the need to consult wherever possible, and outlining Calmac's role in the Argyll Ferry Users Group. Mr Richmond noted that the frustration of people in Islay is the capacity of ferries and the need for more sailings. Mr Richmond outlined the long term plans, advising that bigger vessels were being built and as such there would be a need to look to extend piers for larger vessels. Further discussion took place in respect of the Ardrossan to Campbeltown service, with Councillor Horn, as Chair of the Ferry Sub-group outlining the recent achievements of the group and Members advising that the service provides an alternative route to the Kintyre Peninsula, given that the A83 is the only road in and out of the area. Mr Richmond advised that the decision in relation to the continuation of the service lies with Transport Scotland.

The Chair thanked both Mr Richmond and Ms McConnachie for the information provided.

Decision:

1. Members agreed to note the information provided; and
2. Invited Calmac to attend the Area Committee meeting annually, to provide regular updates.

Councillor Horn left the meeting at 11.45am.

9. TRANSPORT SCOTLAND

Having noted that Transport Scotland were unable to attend the meeting, the Chair advised that the Contracts Manager had received an update in respect of works

planned on the A83 for this financial year. Members advised that a particular area of concern was the overgrowth South of Mundell's Yard and asked the Contracts Manager to feed comments back to the Network Manager. Having noted the dissatisfaction of Members at the lack of attendance, the Area Committee Manager agreed to invite Transport Scotland to the next meeting of the Area Committee in December 2015.

Decision

Members agreed to note the update provided.

10. ROADS ISSUES & ROADS REVENUE BUDGET

Members gave consideration to a report which outlined the end-of-year financial information on the roads maintenance spend for the 2014 to 2015 financial year and for the first quarter of the 2015 to 2016 financial year. Discussion took place in respect of the proposed footpath in Machrihanish and the quality of works carried out by SSE on the road north of Carradale for which the Area Committee expressed appreciation and thanks to SSE. Further discussion was had in relation to the essential works being carried out at Tibbertiche on the Oban Road, with Members noting that the Meadow's scheme in Mid Argyll would now take place in next year's programme of works.

Decision

Members agreed:

1. to note the contents of the report; and
2. requested that a report be brought to the next Business Day meeting, highlighting options on how information could be provided to Members in the future.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure Services, dated 7 October 2015, submitted.)

11. FLOODING PROTECTION

Members gave consideration to a verbal update by the Contracts Manager in relation to the possibility of a preferential purchase scheme. Mr Clark advised that he was in discussions with both the Council's Procurement and Commissioning Manager and Perth and Kinross Council. Mr Clark further advised that Perth and Kinross Council were in the process of rolling out the scheme, which he understood they were also funding. Mr Clark advised that due to current financial pressures, Argyll and Bute Council were not in a position to provide any funding, and that their role would be to merely pass on any savings as a means to assisting homeowners in the MAKI area with the physical protection of their properties.

Councillor Kelly advised that the issue of flooding at Saddell Street and John Street in Campbeltown had not yet been resolved. Mr Clark advised that the issues in Campbeltown were still being dealt with and agreed to forward the survey carried out by the Flooding Working Group to Councillor Kelly by email.

Decision

Members agreed to note the information provided.

12. HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY

Members gave consideration to a report outlining a request which had been received by the Council from the organisers of Holocaust Memorial Day asking that consideration be given to organising an activity for the day on 27 January 2016.

Decision

Members agreed:-

1. to note that Holocaust Memorial Day will take place on 27 January 2016; and
2. to offer their support for events which are taking place in the local area where appropriate, and promote the opportunity for communities to participate in the commemoration.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director of Customer Services, dated 7 October 2015, submitted.)

13. ITEM TRACKER

Members gave consideration to the item tracker.

Discussion took place in respect of the letter sent by the Council to the MOD supporting MACC's request to make changes to the Overage Agreement, with the Area Committee Manager agreeing to confirm with the Head of Economic Development and Strategic Transportation the outcome of the letter. Members also requested that the Area Committee Manager make contact with Scottish Water to set an appropriate timetable for attendance at future meetings to provide information on the 5 year Capital Programme and the input into the development aspirations for Argyll and Bute as a whole.

Members requested that both the Townscape Heritage Initiative which related to the Town Hall and the Running Track be added to the tracker for progress updates.

Decision

Members agreed to note the item tracker.

(Ref: Item Tracker, dated 7 October 2015, submitted.)

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