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## MINUTES of MEETING of FORWARD DUNOON AND COWAL GROUP held in the CUSTOMER SERVICES OFFICE, 22 HILL STREET, DUNOON on FRIDAY, 19 APRIL 2013

**Present:** Councillor G Blair (Chair)

Councillor B Marshall  
Councillor A McNaughton  
Councillor J McQueen  
Councillor J R Walsh  
Catriona Craig, Cowal Marketing Group  
Phillip Norris, Cowal Marketing Group  
Iain McNaughton, Sandbank Community Council  
David Torrance, CHORD Project  
Janet McKellar, HELP Project  
Derek Matthews, Service Development Officer  
Stephen Doogan, Area Governance Officer

### 1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of the following:-

Councillor M Breslin  
Sunil Varu, PA23 BID  
Brian Close

### 2. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Forward Dunoon and Cowal Group of 11<sup>th</sup> January 2013 were approved as a correct record.

### 3. MATTERS ARISING

#### (a) TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION

Councillor Marshall advised that Fyne Homes owns the land behind the fence and that this area may be developed with the access from Hanover Street. Councillor McNaughton thought that a hedge was going to be planted along the fence but banners are currently installed. Derek Matthews indicated that he had a proposed plan for this area utilising low maintenance plants.

Iain McNaughton asked about reopening the toilets in the Rose Gardens and Councillor Blair advised this was being discussed. The Group discussed the usage of toilets and the repeated vandalism of the site and associated costs. Derek Matthews advised that all issues would need to be identified before the best option could be taken forward and that this was perhaps an opportunity for a community group to take forward since they may have access to sources of funding which are closed to the council.

It was noted that some paving at the Argyll gardens is damaged, Derek Matthews agreed to check this.

**(b) WOODLAND IN AND AROUND TOWN PROJECT**

Janet McKellar gave a background to the WIAT Funding advising that the Development Group originally took this project forward in the hope that Morag's Fairy Glen and the Bishops Glen would be linked, there were lots of issues with this regarding land ownership and was not taken forward. They were awarded funding for a smaller project through the Forestry for People initiative, which provided funding for a ranger and events were developed with the primary schools. Janet explained that the HELP project paid for the ranger and then had to claim the money back from the fund and Janet explained the problems she was having in regard to this, and noted that she still has not received all the monies due.

**(c) CHORD UPDATE**

The Group heard an update from Councillor Walsh on the CHORD Project. He advised that the refurbishment of the Queen's Hall, the realignment of the road and the redevelopment on the pier have moved onto implementation stage. There has been a delay of a year and the work is due to start in April 2014.

David Torrance spoke in more detail on the business case and the reason behind the delay. David advised he had spoken to Visit Scotland and ACHA about moving their offices into the Queen's Hall and further advised there had been a meeting in Dunoon Library with the users for feedback and how to take the items forward.

The Group discussed the Customer Service Point being located at Dolphin Hall and the reasons behind this move.

Catriona Craig said she felt the Queen's Hall was a good location for the library because it would encourage people through Argyll Street.

Councillor McNaughton advised of the concerns raised by the Transport Forum regarding the frontage of Dunoon in particular the port-a-cabins used for ferry passengers and enquired as to the status of the previous plans to build new or refurbished passenger accommodation under the CHORD proposals and Councillor Walsh advised that the money previously committed was still available through prudential borrowing however, the issue would not be finally settled until the conclusion of the ferries review.

Councillor Walsh advised the meeting how the CHORD money was being funded and the need for the project to progress.

Councillor Marshall said it was imperative there is a statement released advising the major works under the CHORD Project will not

be starting until 2014 so that people are aware that they can book the Queen's Hall this year.

**(d) VELO TAXIS (AGENDA ITEM 3 (H))**

Councillor Blair advised that the Velo Taxis were not coming in April but are due to be delivered before Cowal Games in August.

**(e) BURGH HALL UPDATE**

Councillor Blair intimated his apologies and left the meeting at this stage. Councillor Marshall took over the Chair.

Councillor Marshall gave an update on what was happening in the Burgh Hall saying there was a major film festival planning for June. He further advised that the Hall committee were looking for board members if anybody was interested.

**(f) BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT UPDATE (PA23 BID)**

Councillor Walsh updated the group on the PA23 BID advising there was a need for 10 directors and there are 7 at present, the other 3 will be co-opted. PA23 BID is progressing toward recruiting a development officer to take forward the 5 year plan, the Council will collect the levy. Ewan MacDonald is the new Chair taking over from Iain McNee. Councillor Walsh further advised that 5,000 leaflets were produced for the Visit Scotland EXPO event and 60 professional tour guides recently visited Dunoon as part of a separate initiative.

Catriona Craig advised that the Cowal Marketing Group were part of the EXPO event and had problems getting the leaflets from PA23 BID. She further advised that unfortunately the Cowal Marketing Group had not been advised that the tour guides were coming to Dunoon and if they were they could have helped.

It was agreed there seemed to be a communication issue somewhere and Councillor Walsh and Councillor Marshall would speak to Ewan MacDonald and make sure they contact the Cowal Marketing Group. It was also noted that the FDC group would be a good place to share and circulate such information.

**(g) OFF ROAD BIKING**

Councillor Marshall advised that there was no update on this item. He further advised that a map of the area had been produced and Gordon Ross of Western Ferries was intending as part of his marketing strategy to create a brochure to attract off road bikers to Cowal.

Iain McNaughton advised that there is a local off road bikers group that are very active who may be able to assist.

## (h) **ACTION PLAN**

The Area Governance Officer highlighted the group's previous intention to create an Action Plan for the group and sought clarity as to whether this was still the desire of the group. Councillor Walsh suggested a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses Opportunities, Threats) analysis of the area should be carried out.

The Group discussed tourism of the area and Catrina and Phillip advised the Marketing Group was part of the PAN Argyll Partnership. The group felt that Oban and Cowal are well represented but Dunoon is being left out.

The Group further discussed the signage of the area and was advised the Councillor Glen-Lee was the lead councillor of Tourism and this would fall into her remit.

Councillor Marshall spoke on the meeting Members had with Jane Atterton regarding the economic downfall in Dunoon and the lack of input from HIE in the area.

The Group agreed they would email Eilidh FitzPatrick anything they wanted to take forward and a SWOT analysis form would be sent to everybody to complete.

## **4. HELP COMMUNITY TASKFORCE**

Janet McKellar spoke regarding the funding she has managed to secure for a project to give 6 young people experience as task force employees. She explained the initiative was to give these young people an opportunity to eventually get employment. She spoke on the jobs they have done so far including painting Blairmore Hall, beech cleans etc. Janet further advised that some of the task force are working towards their Duke of Edinburgh Award. Janet said that there was an opportunity to bid again for the funding in June and September.

## **5. POSSIBLE MEETING AMALGAMATION WITH COWAL MARKETING GROUP**

The Group discussed the possibility of the Cowal Marketing Group attending this group instead of having a separate meeting with the council Philip Norris and Catriona Craig agreed it would be beneficial for the Cowal Marketing Group to attend the FDC meeting since it allows both the sharing of ideas and allows discussion with a broad range of participants

The Group agreed Cowal Marketing Group would attend the Forward Dunoon and Cowal Group and therefore the regular separate meeting between the Cowal Marketing Group and the Council was no longer needed.

## **6. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS**

There was no other competent business.

**7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Group noted the date of the next meeting would be Friday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2013 in the Hill Street Office.

