

DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT STANDING SCRUTINY PANEL.

Minutes of meeting in County Buildings, Wellington Square, Ayr,
on 7th May 2013 at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillors Kirsty Darwent (Chair), Andy Campbell, Ian Cochrane, Peter Convery, Ann Galbraith, Mary Kilpatrick, Brian McGinley and Alec Oattes.

Attending: L. Bloomer, Executive Director – Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment; J. Cronin, Head of Community, Enterprise and Development; D. Lowdon, Development Officer, Parks and Open Spaces; and A. Gibson, Committee Services Officer.

1. Declarations of Interest.

There were no declarations of interest by Members in terms of Council Standing Order No. 17 and the Councillors' Code of Conduct.

2. Items for Call-in.

The Panel noted that there had been no call-ins for this meeting.

3. Minutes of previous meeting.

The Minutes of the previous meeting of 26th February 2013 (issued) ([link attached](#)) were submitted and noted.

4. Scrutiny Reviews.

Reference was made to the Minutes of this Panel of 26th February 2013 (Page 198, paragraph 4) when it had been agreed that two sub-groups be formed comprising Members of this Panel relating to the following Reviews that were to be undertaken:-

- community involvement in grounds maintenance; and
- the future shape and purpose of libraries in South Ayrshire.

The Panel heard verbal updates as follows:-

(1) Community Involvement in Grounds Maintenance:-

The Development Officer, Parks and Open Spaces updated the Panel on progress to date with particular reference to health and safety and insurance issues together with information he had sought from other Councils and organisations to assist the progress of the Review.

The Executive Director – Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment advised the Panel that due to other recent work commitments placed on the Development Officer, Parks and Open Spaces, additional resources would be given to assist with the work of this Review.

Thereon, a discussion took place on the benefits of the holistic approach that was being undertaken regarding this Review; the possible benefits of competitions being introduced for best kept gardens, areas etc.; the need to recognise that “one size does not fit all”; that to ensure community involvement, the process of involvement should be straightforward and not bureaucratic; and that in the process there may be a role for Community Councils and Associations.

(2) the future shape and purpose of libraries in South Ayrshire.

The Head of Community, Enterprise and Development updated the Panel on the progress of the Review with particular reference to:-

- (a) visiting libraries in South Ayrshire;
- (b) how libraries could be seen in the future;
- (c) a customer survey that would be undertaken with those people who attended libraries; and
- (d) the role volunteers could have.

Thereon, a discussion took place on new technology; local history; outreach including schools, community groups and care homes etc.; how libraries could interface with visitors to South Ayrshire; and whether there could be more tourism information provided at libraries, using the “i” symbol to publicise that. During the discussion, a Member raised the question of whether the frequency of replacing hardware and software gave value for money to the Council. The Executive Director advised that this was not within the remit of this Panel but she would raise with the Chair of the Corporate and Community Planning Standing Scrutiny Panel.

Decided: to note the progress to date of the two Reviews.

The meeting ended at 10.45 a.m.