

RURAL PANEL

Minutes of meeting in Tarbolton Community Centre,
on 30th May 2013 at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Councillors Alec Clark (Chair), Andy Campbell, Bill Grant, William J. Grant, Helen Moonie and Alec Oattes.

Apology: Councillor Ann Galbraith.

Attending: C. Monaghan, Head of Policy, Community Planning and Public Affairs; C. Coull, Senior Enterprise Project Development and Funding Officer; D. Sherlock, Improvement Manager; T. Simpson, Principal Accountant; and A. Gibson, Committee Services Officer.

1. Introductory Remarks.

The Chair welcomed those present to this Panel meeting.

2. Declaration of Interest.

Councillor Oattes declared an interest in the application for financial support from SAYLSA relating to item 7 below, as he was a Member of this organisation.

3. Presentation regarding Ayrshire 21.

David Sherlock, Improvement Manager gave a presentation with regard to a LEADER funded project called "Ayrshire 21" which

- (1) aimed at providing targeted help, support and training for rural areas across the three Ayrshire areas; and
- (2) would work with twenty-one local communities that had been least able to take advantage of development and funding opportunities in the past;

The Panel further heard from Julia Whitaker, Ailsa Horizons, who was involved in implementing the initiative in South Ayrshire.

Following questions from a member of the public, the Improvement Manager advised him that there was a programme of activity within the Ayrshire 21 programme aimed at helping communities to access resources and that he would ensure that he be made aware of a conference taking place in June of this year in Kilmarnock. The Panel was also advised that there would be an event regarding Ayrshire 21 at the forthcoming Community Planning conference.

The Improvement Manager also responded to a question from a Member regarding LEADER funding.

Decided: to thank him for his informative presentation.

4. **Updates from Community Forums.**

(1) **The Carrick Community Councils' Forum.**

Julia Whitaker, Ailsa Horizons gave a brief update on the work currently being undertaken by the Carrick Community Councils' Forum.

(2) **The Kyle Community Forum.**

Arthur Spurling, Dundonald Community Council, gave a brief update on the work currently being undertaken by the Kyle Community Forum and expressed concern that, in his view, the Council was not supportive of this Forum.

There followed a discussion on the concerns raised.

Decided:

- (a) to note the position; and
- (b) to agree that the concerns raised by Arthur Spurling be investigated and the outcome reported to the next meeting of this Panel.

5. **Questions which had previously been raised.**

There was submitted a letter (issued) dated 29th April 2013 ([link attached](#)) from Tarbolton Tenants' and Residents' Association advising

- (1) that in their opinion, the roads within the rural community of South Ayrshire were in a deplorable condition and enquiring about the Council's monitoring regime to determine physical condition and subsequent repair priorities; and
- (2) that from the introduction of the Ayrshire LEADER programme, aspects of it had produced difficulties to potential applicant groups/organisations and requesting an update on retrospective reimbursements.

In relation to (1) above, the Head of Community Planning and Public Affairs; read a response from the Head of Neighbourhood Services as follows:-

"South Ayrshire Council approved at a Leadership Panel on 8th June 2010 a paper outlining road defect categorisation and intervention levels. The approval by the Council adopted, as policy, the 'Well Maintained Highways, Code of Practice'. The Code of Practice is considered best practice across the United Kingdom and the vast majority of Roads Authorities in the country have adopted it as policy. The Code of Practice has been endorsed by the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities and the Scottish Government.

The Council's policy confirms inspectorial regimes, intervention levels and repair timescales. An information leaflet has been produced to inform citizens of South Ayrshire, and those who visit and travel through it, of the Council's defect categorisation and repair timescale process.

All roads and footpaths in South Ayrshire are subject to routine inspections. These inspections highlight defects that require repair. These repairs are subject to timescales appropriate to the identified risks and are undertaken on a risk assessed priority.

The Well Maintained Highways Code of Practice confirms that there is insufficient funding within the United Kingdom to fully repair all roads and footpaths such that no defects exist, and, not all defects are dangerous and can be considered emergencies and require immediate attention.

If the Tarbolton Tenants and Residents Association can define those roads and footpaths within its locale that they consider in need of urgent attention to the Council's Roads Service, these will be inspected and a full response will be made to the association”.

In relation to (2) above, the Head of Policy, Community Planning and Public Affairs read a response as follows:-

“Last year the three Ayrshire Councils were looking at ways to alleviate the challenges facing groups with regard to retrospective reimbursements. The Scottish Government agreed that advance payments made by them to lead authorities could be used to temporarily support the cash-flow of groups who had difficulties in paying their final invoices and making their final claim. South Ayrshire Council secured agreement from elected members to consider cash flow support on a case by case basis for projects within their area and this facility was provided to 2 projects. Other mechanisms were put in place which facilitated more frequent claims from groups, for example, rather on a quarterly basis, claims were submitted on a monthly basis and payments to groups were made within a short period of time to ease cash flow.

Councils are now considering the future EU Funds Programme 2014-2020 and await the detail from Scottish Government on the approved Operational Programmes. The Council recognises that challenges still exist for community groups however the 2014-2020 EU Programme should facilitate new ways of working between EU funding streams and we will explore what other mechanisms may be developed to help community groups and organisations deliver new projects in the future.”

Decided: to note the above responses.

B U S I N E S S

6. Rural Communities Fund – Revenue Budgetary Control 2012/13 – Final Outturn for the year ended 2013.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 15th May 2013 ([link attached](#)) by the Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation

- (1) advising of the performance of the Rural Communities Fund's expenditure against its budget for the year ended 31st March 2013 which showed a full year underspend of £31,050 against the Rural Communities Fund budget; and
- (2) providing an analysis by electoral ward of grants awarded by this Panel since 2010/11.

Decided: to note the contents of the report.

7. Application for Financial Support.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 20th May 2013 ([link attached](#)) by the Head of Policy, Community Planning and Public Affairs advising that rural grant applications had been submitted as undernoted.

Decided: to award grant as follows:-

<u>Organisation</u>	<u>Summary of Application</u>	<u>Panel Decision</u>
Annbank and Mossblown and Toddler Group	To seek funding towards the cost of refurbishment and upgrade of the premises and the purchase of essential equipment to facilitate the development of the toddler group.	Approve award of £2,090;
Ballantrae Development Group (sub-group of Ballantrae Community Council)	To seek funding towards the running costs of the farmers markers.	Approve award of £2,304;
Carrick Coastal Rowing Club	To seek funding towards the cost of purchasing the premises for a new club house.	Approve award of £3,000;
Carrick Rugby FC	To seek funding towards the costs of developing a feasibility study and an options appraisal.	Approve award of £4,500;
The 2 Pins Community Company	To seek funding towards the cost of Architects drawings for a new community facility.	To defer consideration to a special meeting of this Panel, to allow further information to be sought and that the applicant be invited to that meeting to provide any additional information;
Tarbolton Tenants' and Residents Association – The Glebe Project	To seek funding towards the cost of the development of a low maintenance garden at "The Glebe".	Approve award of £3,000.

Councillor Oattes, having declared an interest in the following request for financial support, as he was a Member of this organisation, left the meeting during consideration thereof.

SAYLSA – The Community Rail Partnership for Carrick and Wigtownshire	To seek funding towards project costs.	As undernoted.
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Councillor Bill Grant, seconded by Councillor William J. Grant, moved that SAYLSA's request for funding be refused as this would be an inappropriate use of funds from the Rural Communities Budget.

By way of an Amendment, Provost Moonie, seconded by Councillor Clark, moved that the application be deferred to a special meeting of this Panel to allow further information to be sought.

On a vote being taken by a show of hands, two members voted for the Amendment and three for the Motion, which was accordingly declared to be carried.

Decided: that SAYLSA's request for funding be refused.

At this point, Councillor Oattes re-joined the meeting.

The Panel further agreed that, at the next meeting of South Ayrshire Council on 27th June 2013, they be requested to carry forward the underspend of £31,050 against the Rural Communities Fund budget for the year ended 31st March 2013 to financial year 2013/14.

8. Update on the Ayrshire LEADER Programme 2007-2013.

There was submitted a report (issued) of 14th May 2013 ([link attached](#)) by the Head of Policy, Community Planning and Public Affairs

- (1) updating on the progress of the Ayrshire LEADER Programme 2007-2013; and
- (2) outlining the development of the new European Funding Programme 2014-2020.

Decided: to note the update of the current Ayrshire Leader Programme 2007-2012 and the development of the new EU Funding Programme 2014-2020.

The meeting ended at 8.30 p.m.

At the conclusion of the meeting, there followed an informal discussion session with the members of the public present.