

**PUBLIC PROCESSES PANEL.**

Minutes of meeting in County Buildings, Wellington Square, Ayr,  
on 25th February 2015 at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillors Brian McGinley (Chair), Alec Clark, Peter Convery, Ian Douglas, Hugh Hunter, Helen Moonie and Alec Oattes.

Attending: V. Andrews, Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation, L. Bloomer, Executive Director – Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment; R. Riddiough, Head of Legal and Democratic Services; K. Leinster, Head of Community Health and Care Services; K. Dalrymple, Neighbourhood Services Manager; T. Pettigrew, Grounds and Street Services Co-ordinator; and E. Wyllie, Committee Services Officer.

Also Attending: Councillors Bill Grant; Rita Miller and Margaret Toner (Portfolio holders).

**1. Declarations of Interest.**

Councillor Hunter declared an interest in the Rosemount Gardens petition as he resided in that area and advised that he would withdraw from the meeting but remain in the room. He also indicated that he wished to speak on the matter.

Councillor Douglas explained that a constituent had approached him for assistance in relation to this matter and that he had sat in a meeting with the constituent and the Head of Community Health and Care Services. He indicated that he would participate in the meeting.

**In terms of Council Standing Orders No. 17.5 for Meetings, Councillor Hunter withdrew from the meeting and joined the audience.**

**2. Public Petitions.**

**(a) Rosemount Gardens, Prestwick**

Reference was made to the minutes of 10th December 2014 (Page 3, paragraph 4(2)) when the petition had been carried forward to this meeting so that the petitioners could be in attendance, otherwise the petition would fall.

Thereon, there was submitted a petition containing over 20 signatures, in the following terms, namely:-

'We, the undersigned, request that the rosebeds at Rosemount Gardens are allowed to remain and continue to be maintained by South Ayrshire Council'.

Under the provisions Council Standing Orders No. 31 for Meetings, the Chair then invited Jim Fulton, Irene Noble and Heather Noel to come forward to present the case to the meeting.

The Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation referred to the petitions protocol and indicated that petitioners addressing the meeting would be limited to ten minutes in total which included an opportunity to sum-up.

The Panel heard from the three petitioners in turn and the following points were made by them:-

- the rosebeds were admired by many and had been in existence for over thirty years;
- it was felt that there was little savings to be made from their removal by the Council since minimum work was required for their upkeep;
- the rosebeds acted as a barrier and detracted dog fouling, litter and congregating youths;
- there were concerns with the consultation process as petitioners felt that residents had not been included and communicated with over the proposed removal;
- clarification was sought in relation to the calculation used to measure the area of ground that the rosebeds occupied and the associated maintenance costs; and
- that the rosebeds formed part of the identity of the street and that, as a result of the outcome of a previous consultation when shrubs were being removed, roses had been chosen as the preferred replacement in keeping with the street name.

The Panel were given the opportunity to ask the petitioners questions at this point. A Member requested that Officers should explain the calculation of the rosebed area and associated costs during their presentation to the Panel. The petitioners withdrew from the table at this point.

Councillor Hunter, in his capacity as a resident of the street, was invited by the Chair to come forward. The Neighbourhood Services Manager and the Grounds and Streets Service Co-ordinator were also invited to come forward.

Councillor Hunter explained that he had received a copy of the consultation in his capacity as a local member but he felt that he could not complete this due to public perception since he was also a resident of the street. He commented on the interpretation of the word 'efficiency' and said that he considered this to be a reduction in service rather than an efficiency saving. He added that he felt that the lines of communication could have been clearer and suggested that other alternatives be considered such as sponsorship for the upkeep of roundabouts and rosebeds.

The Neighbourhood Services Manager and the Grounds and Streets Service Co-ordinator referred to the report (issued) ([link attached](#)) of 17th February 2015 by the Head of Neighbourhood Services and explained:-

- the background to the exercise relating to annualised hours to reduce overtime and advised that the report to the meeting of the Leadership Panel on 5th November 2013 (Page 7, paragraph 13) had identified a number of similar sites across the South Ayrshire area;
- that the Council's consultation process had been followed with the proposals for the identified sites circulated to Elected Members, Community Councils and Tenants' and Residents' Associations and that no objections had been received in relation to Rosemount Gardens;
- that on the receipt of a complaint from a local resident, work had been postponed until the resident could ascertain if there was any community will to take over maintenance of the site;

- the calculation process and commented that roundabout sponsorship would come under the remit of Ayrshire Roads Alliance and that exploring rosebed sponsorship could be time intensive;
- that the exercise was about efficiency and not a reduction in service; and
- that, should residents take over the maintenance of this site, the service would assist in terms of providing fertilisers, replacement plants and the uplift of garden waste.

Both Officers were asked questions by Members of the Panel in relation to the issues raised and the Chair then gave Mr. Fulton the opportunity to sum up on behalf of the petitioners. He also said that, although he felt that this area should remain the responsibility of the Council, local residents would be willing to maintain the site in order to retain the rosebeds. On behalf of the Panel, the Chair thanked the petitioners for their contributions.

Thereon, the Panel considered the petition and a full discussion took place with three main themes identified as being communication, sponsorship and alternative ways of working.

The Panel

**Decided:**

- (1) that Officers should give further consideration to lines of communication with local residents in such situations where an area of ground did not directly sit with one particular resident;
- (2) that the idea of sponsorship in its broader sense could be further explored; and
- (3) to note that the residents were willing to undertake responsibility for the maintenance of the rosebeds with support from Officers and that this arrangement would be confirmed in writing.

**Councillor Hunter rejoined the meeting at this point.**

**(b) Specialist Dementia Home Support.**

There was submitted a petition containing over 3,000 signatures, in the following terms, namely:-

'We, the undersigned, are concerned citizens who urge our leaders to act now to save South Ayrshire Dementia Home support team, SADSA'.

Under the provisions of the Council's Standing Orders No. 31 for Meetings, the Chair then invited Eileen Alexander (Lead Petitioner), Les Anderson and Karen Johnston to come forward to present the case to the meeting.

The petitioners circulated paper copies of certain background information.

The Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation referred to the petitions protocol and indicated that petitioners addressing the meeting would be limited to ten minutes in total which included an opportunity to sum-up. She also advised the Panel that, since there was no provision within the protocol to formally consider additional background material, Members would be entitled to disregard the tabled information. The Panel noted that they would be able to look at this material in their own time outwith the meeting, if they so wished.

The Panel heard from the three petitioners in turn and the following points were made by them:-

- the different experiences of someone with dementia were expressed;
- concerns regarding the loss of a specialised dementia day care outreach service as a result of a procurement exercise undertaken in relation to generic care provision;
- concerns regarding how the exercise had been undertaken. This particularly related to the lines of communication and engagement given the nature of the condition and problems facing dementia sufferers;
- concerns relating to how the new service was impacting on staffing levels as well as the type of support being provided to dementia sufferers and their families; and
- difficulties regarding the consultation process. It was also felt that a two week window was not enough time to collect all relevant views, particularly when it was volunteers collecting these views.

The Panel were given the opportunity to ask the petitioners questions at this point and various matters were raised and discussed, particularly in relation to communication, engagement and consultation processes. The petitioners withdrew from the table at this point.

The Chair then invited Councillor Miller, Portfolio-holder for Social Services and the Head of Community Health and Care Services to come forward.

The Head of Community Health and Care Services referred to his report (issued) ([link attached](#)) of 17th February 2015 which provided background information in response to the petition and which highlighted:-

- that a tender process was undertaken during 2013/14 in order to achieve the delivery of homecare services that were both cost effective and of a high quality with the formal date of transfer to the new provider being 22nd September 2014;
- that, prior to transfer, the Council's social work staff conducted reviews of the service received for all service users and advised that all service users had been further reviewed and where a service user had wished to have or needed to have a change in service delivery, their care plan had been amended to take account of this; and
- that given the specific needs of the people receiving this service there was significant attention to detail in order to ensure that there was consistency of staff providing the same level of care to the same people.

The Portfolio-holder came forward and spoke to the petition and also commented on the current position with the integration of health and social care services.

The Head of Community Health and Care Services and the Portfolio-holder were asked questions by Members of the Panel in relation to the issues raised. It was heard that there was a statutory requirement to write to service users.

The Chair then gave Mrs. Alexander the opportunity to sum up and the Chair, on behalf of the Panel, thanked the petitioners and the Portfolio-holder for their contributions.

Thereon, the Panel considered the petition and a full discussion took place when concerns were raised in relation to consultation process in general.

The Panel

**Decided:** to note that issues relating to consultation and engagement should be taken forward as part of the Council's review of consultation and community engagement processes particularly in the changing context of the integration of health and social care.

**3. Call-ins from Leadership Panel.**

The Panel noted that there had been no call-ins from the Leadership Panel meeting which had taken place on 17th February 2015.

**4. Minutes of previous meeting of 10th December 2014.**

The Minutes of the Public Processes Panel of 10th December 2014 (issued) ([link attached](#)) were submitted.

Clarification was sought in relation to public petitions (Page 2, paragraph 4(1)) and Councillor Bill Grant's contribution to the petition on the 'Streets Ahead Campaign'. It was noted that although Councillor Grant was not the Portfolio-holder for that particular function, he was representing the Portfolio-holder (Councillor McDowall) who had been unable to attend on that occasion.

**Decided:** that the Minutes be approved.

**5. Action Log and Work Programme.**

There was submitted an update of the Action Log and Work Programme (issued) ([link attached](#)) for this Panel.

The Panel considered the action log. In terms of the completed action relating to the Public Petitions Procedures, clarification was sought by a Member of the Panel as to whether the protocol should be revised in light of today's events to make some reference as to whether background information could be submitted along with a petition, if appropriate. It was noted that the Head of Legal and Democratic Services would investigate this idea further.

In respect of the Public Petition – Streets Ahead Campaign, the Executive Director – Economy, Neighbourhood and Environment provided an update in relation to the current status of the report due to be submitted to the Leadership Panel and explained that the report had not been submitted to the meeting of 17th February 2015 as the consultants required more time to develop the model. She advised that she had apologised to the lead petitioner and had provided him with an explanation in relation to this delay. It was noted that this report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Leadership Panel taking place on 17th March 2015.

**Decided:** to note the current status of the Action Log and Work Programme.

**The Provost left the meeting during consideration of the above item.**

**Closing remarks.**

The time being 12.50 p.m., the Panel decided to continue the remainder of business to the next meeting of this Panel taking place in four weeks time, normally set aside for the purposes of considering any Call-ins, on Thursday, 26th March 2015 at 10.00 a.m.

The meeting ended at 12.50 p.m.