

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING - 25 JUNE 2009

PROVOST'S OFFICE SUPPORT TO EAST AYRSHIRE CARERS CENTRE

Report by the Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the support to which the Provost's Office has given to East Ayrshire Carers Centre during 2008/2009.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council, at its meeting of 26 June 2008 (Item 9, Page 425, 07/12), received a report which outlined the intention of the Provost to establish a protocol whereby the Provost of the Council would, each year, support a particular Trust/Charity within the area and that, for 2008/09, the focus would be on East Ayrshire Carers Centre. The support was to promote and recognise the services which the Carers Centre delivers in order to raise the profile and ultimately gain wider support of the Centre.
- 2.2 The Provost had intimated that she wanted to focus on the East Ayrshire Carers Centre and in particular development work within the Dalmellington area.

3. SUPPORT TO EAST AYRSHIRE CARERS CENTRE DURING 2008/2009

- 3.1 The Provost began the programme of fundraising activities on 9 October 2008 when furniture was delivered, donated by Scottish Co-operative, to Dalmellington House. The House has since been transformed into a luxurious respite facility to be used by Carers from throughout the UK along with providing training for young carers who will be able to learn a range of skills that can be utilised within the new Centre.
- 3.2 The Provost attended the launch of the DVD created by young carers within the Cumnock and Doon Valley area which would be used to educate young people on the difficulties young carers face at home and at school.
- 3.3 The next phase of fundraising activities involved East Ayrshire Council employees who made a donation of £10.00 each in return for trained volunteers from the Carers Centre offering half hour massage, reiki and Indian head massage sessions within Council offices in Kilmarnock and Lugar. The therapy day raised nearly £450.00 and the money raised supported the fundraising for the Centre's Christmas events and included shopping trips for adult carers and Christmas parties for young carers.
- 3.4 The Provost, along with Jane Smith, Chief Executive Officer of East Ayrshire Carers Centre took some of the young carers to meet characters from the Palace Theatre's Pantomime "Mother Goose" on 29 November 2008. The cast of the panto were also supporting the Provost's chosen charity and audience

members were invited to donate money on their exit from the theatre after the performances. £2,860.80 was raised which exceeded all previous fundraising records at the Palace Theatre.

- 3.5** On 30 November, the Provost was joined by young carers Maxine Bennie and Callum Larson along with Michelle McManus, the 2003 winner of “Pop Idol” as she switched on the Christmas lights in Kilmarnock. Young Carers Corey Murray and Samantha Allan helped the Provost with the switch on of the Christmas lights in Cumnock on Saturday 6 December and Sophie McTurk assisted the Provost in Drongan on Sunday 7 December.
- 3.6** In the lead up to Christmas, Council staff were asked to donate presents for the young carers and a group of staff volunteers wrapped the presents which were distributed at the young carers Christmas parties throughout the area prior to Christmas Day. A special thanks is given to Mr Donaldson of Kev’s Kards who donated the paper for wrapping the presents.
- 3.7** The Provost along with Councillors John MacKay and Kathy Morrice attended the Howard Park Hotel where young carers were able to enjoy a Christmas lunch and a catch up with friends. This lunch was part of a series of outings and events which were organised and which gave the young carers an opportunity to relax away from their every day responsibilities for caring for a family member.
- 3.8** The Provost’s Christmas message in 2008 gave special mention to the East Ayrshire Carers Centre and stated that she had been moved by the dedication of the Centre staff and the commitment and resilience of the carers. The Provost’s Christmas Card also featured three young carers.
- 3.9** 100 carers and invited guests including Cathy Jamieson, MSP, and Councillors Kathy Morrice and Barney Menzies gathered to celebrate the 250th anniversary of Robert Burns at a lunch held on 23 January 2009 at Cumnock Town Hall.
- 3.10** The Provost’s Charity Ball was held on 20 March 2009 in the Park Hotel. Michelle McManus was joined by singer Andrew Merry and the band Bliss who entertained more than 200 guests from a range of East Ayrshire businesses and organisations who attended the Ball.
- 3.11** Pipers Willie Gilmour, Euan Howie and Stuart Allan welcomed guests as they arrived at the Park Hotel, Kilmarnock. Jen McGinlay of West FM was MC for the evening and String Octet comprising musicians from local schools played throughout the dinner. Local businesses and individuals donated wonderful gifts for the raffle and auctions which took place during the course of the evening.
- 3.12** Funds raised from the evening totalled £14,566.77.
- 3.13** Finally, more than 50 Ayrshire carers and young carers joined HRH the Princess Royal on 15 April for the opening of Dalmellington House in Main Street, Dalmellington, which as said, will provide the highest of quality respite and other facilities for carers from throughout the UK.

4. SUPPORT FOR COMBAT STRESS FOR 2009/10

- 4.1** The Provost has intimated that for the coming year she intends to focus on Combat Stress, which is the leading charity specialising in the care of British Veterans who have been traumatised profoundly by harrowing experiences during their service career and who are suffering from poor mental health as a result. Combat Stress has three residential centres located in Surrey, Shropshire and in Ayrshire at Hollybush House in Dalrymple. The Ayrshire facility has 25 beds and can accommodate a small number of accompanying carers. Combat Stress was founded in May 1919 so 2009 marks its 90th anniversary. In recognition of this, the organisation will hold their annual gala concert at the Grand Hall, Kilmarnock, on Friday 6 November 2009.

5. FINANCIAL/LEGAL/POLICY IMPLICATIONS - Nil.

6. COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1** The support given to the East Ayrshire Carers Centre supports the aims of the Community Plan in terms of improving opportunities and eliminating poverty.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Council is asked to:-

- (i) acknowledge the efforts of everyone involved and congratulate them for the support given and money raised through the Provost's Office during 2008/09 for the East Ayrshire Carers Centre totalling £14,566.77; and
- (ii) recognise and endorse the approach being taken by the Provost for 2009/10 to focus on Combat Stress.

Elizabeth Morton
Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support

JMcG/SR
4 June 2009

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS - NIL

Any person wishing further information on this report should contact Bill Walkinshaw, Head of Democratic Services on Tel No (01563) 576135.

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