

**EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

**KILMARNOCK CENTRAL LOCAL COMMITTEE - 18 JANUARY 2006**

**QUESTIONS ARISING FROM 15 MINUTE QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION**

	<u><b>MATTER RAISED</b></u>	<u><b>RESPONSE/ACTION TO BE TAKEN</b></u>	<u><b>CURRENT POSITION</b></u>
1.	Named substitute Ian McVey was concerned about the hatched road markings at the Town Centre Tesco store, which were not being observed by motorists.	Sergeant McInnes advised that Police and Traffic Management Officers had reviewed the situation, and taken the decision to remove the road markings, which had been intended to streamline traffic, but were in effect being ignored.	
2	Community Representative Charles Calman enquired about the status of outstanding maintenance works, required to bring the Howard Park Bowling Club premises up to standard, prior to the Club entering into a lease arrangement with the Council.	The Administration Manager undertook to investigate the matter and obtain an urgent response for Mr Calman.	<p>The Principal Surveyor, Development and Property Services, has confirmed that correspondence was received by the Council's Legal Services, mid November 2005, from a solicitor acting on behalf of the Club.</p> <p>This appended a schedule of conditions, from a surveyor appointed by the Club, relating to the current condition of the premises and repairs which the Club wished the Council to address.</p> <p>The Council is currently liaising with the Club's solicitor on this matter and has yet to confirm its position in respect of the requested works, there being budgetary implications arising therefrom.</p>
3	Community Representative Morris Ashbridge referred to the Council's Best Value Review of local Committees and Community Representatives' concerns that they were unable to fully participate in Committee business.  Mr Ashbridge wondered	<p>The Administration Manager explained that the exercise was part of a review of the Administration Service, which itself was part of a Council-wide Best Value Review, required by Audit Scotland.</p> <p>Responses would be analysed and the local Committee would be kept informed of any</p>	

	<p>whether Kilmarnock Central was the only local Committee expressing this concern and whether the review results would be published.</p>	<p>specific proposals arising therefrom in due course.</p> <p>Meantime, Community Representatives could continue to raise issues through existing mechanisms i.e. Committee meetings and annual seminars, or the Administration Manager would respond direct to individuals on any matters of concern.</p>	
4	<p>Community Representative Charles Calman asked whether Community Council's would be invited to participate in wreath laying on Remembrance Day.</p>	<p>Agreed to confirm position with Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services.</p>	<p>The Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services confirmed that invitations had been issued to Community Councils, as in previous years.</p>
5	<p>Community Representative John Mclvor was concerned about the response received to his enquiry about the Council's plans to develop playparks in general and Gatehead in particular.</p> <p>The response indicated that there were no immediate plans to extend or update the playpark in Gatehead, however any community group wishing to seek funds for new facilities would be offered technical support and advice. In Mr Mclvor's view, it was the Council's playpark and therefore the Council's responsibility to initiate improvements.</p>	<p>The Administration Manager confirmed the position, as agreed by the Community Services Committee, that the playpark in Gatehead was not currently a priority, as others were more urgently in need of attention. However, the Council was not abdicating responsibility and if any local group wished to carry out improvement projects, support would be made available.</p> <p>Mr Mclvor indicated that this matter had first been raised during February 2002 and there were still no plans to extend, despite a perceived increase in the number of children using the playpark.</p> <p>The local Elected Member, Councillor Reeves, undertook to make representation to the Head of Leisure on this matter.</p>	
6	<p>Community Representative John Donaldson wondered whether Strathclyde Police would consider adding cycle patrols in the Town Centre over the Christmas period, to back up their Town Centre foot patrols at this</p>	<p>Sergeant McInnes advised that Strathclyde Police would be running a Christmas initiative within Kilmarnock Town Centre, as well as other shopping areas throughout East Ayrshire, during the</p>	

	busy time for shoplifters.	festive period.  This would include officers in high visibility clothing, both on foot and on cycles, as well as plain clothes, to tackle any issues arising including shoplifting, anti-social behaviour etc, as well as security advice.	
7	Community Representative John Donaldson sought confirmation of arrangements for opening the Burns Mall toilets during the Christmas period.	The Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services had advised that the toilets would be open late, one Thursday evening in December, to be agreed with the Burns Mall Manager, to accommodate disabled shoppers. Otherwise the toilets would be open on Sundays 4, 11 and 18 December from 1000 to 1600 hours.	
8	Community Representative John Donaldson was disappointed that no action seemed to have been taken regards the rubbish at the rear of the shops in King Street, between Boots the Chemist and the Bank of Scotland.	The Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services had advised that the ground is privately owned. The owners had been lettered, recording the Council's concerns at the condition of the site. Follow up letters were being issued.	
9	Community Representative John Donaldson asked whether the Scoot traffic system would be operational before Christmas.	The Principal Engineer, Traffic had advised that the Scoot system was now operational. It was being monitored on a regular basis and was subject to ongoing fine tuning.  The centrally controlled computer system was now responding continuously to actual traffic flows to minimise delays to motorists. The system was also providing more frequent pedestrian crossing opportunities at the signalised crossings in the Town Centre, particularly during the day when pedestrian activity was greatest.  The next stage was to	

		introduce the bus priority system, which would enhance the reliability of public transport journeys. This work would be carried out later in the year.	
10	Community Representative John Donaldson requested an update on the Town Centre Christmas celebrations.	The Administration Officer reported that, as in previous years, switching on of Christmas lights was planned for the last Saturday in November, at 1700 hours. Further details of arrangements would be obtained from the Executive Director of Development Services.	The Executive Director of Development Services confirmed that the Christmas lights would be switched on, on Saturday 26 November at 1700 hours. Wizard Productions had been booked for the event, as in previous years. Late opening would be organised by the stores themselves, and discussion was taking place regarding other possible ways of attracting shoppers. Traders would be informed as soon as arrangements were finalised.
11	Community Representative John Donaldson asked in relation to parking charges, whether increasing rates at this time was the right way to regenerate the Town Centre.	The Principal Engineer, Traffic had advised that the Development Services Committee on 12 October 2005 agreed to provide free parking on the four Sundays leading up to Christmas 2005.	<p>The Development Services Committee on 12 October 2005 approved new scales of charges for on-street and off-street parking in Kilmarnock Town Centre. The new charges would come into force from April 2006.</p> <p>The report set out the background to the variation of the charges and the new tariffs. The new tariffs would bring charges in Kilmarnock into line with those in neighbouring local authority areas. The higher hourly charges on-street would encourage the use of the convenient Town Centre off-street car parks and maintain a turnover of on street parking spaces.</p> <p>The charges in the multi-storey car park were not being increased. Parking for 50p per day would continue to be provided in the upper floors and the charges in the lower floors continued to be 30p for up to one hour; 70p for one to two hours; £1.40 for two to four</p>

			hours; and £2 for longer periods.
12	Community Representative Tom Cook highlighted parking problems at Beech Avenue at the end of the school day and during events, including parking on grass verges, with resulting maintenance issues, and blocked runways. Were there any plans for longer term additional parking provision?	Sergeant McInnes would raise this matter with the Traffic Sergeant, for discussion with the Council's Roads and Transportation Department, and report back in due course.	
13	Community Representative Esther Caldwell sought clarification regarding the question and answer procedure at local Committees.	The Administration Manager advised on the process of reporting back at the next meeting on issues raised at the previous, where the required information was not immediately available. Individuals raising issues received direct responses in the interim.  Advance notification by Community Representatives, of issues to be raised, enabled information to be collated and potentially fuller responses to be given at the meeting.	

9 January 2006  
GH/SM