

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

NORTHERN AREA LOCAL COMMITTEE - 5 SEPTEMBER 2003

ANNUAL SEMINAR FOR COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES

Report by Community Representatives Working Party

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1** The purpose of the report is to advise the Local Committee of arrangements to hold an Annual Seminar for Community Representatives in November 2003; to seek the Committees views thereon; and to request details of any issues in respect of the Local Committee process that Community Representatives would wish discussed at the Seminar.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** The Council, in January 1998, established an Annual Seminar for Community Representatives. The Seminar is to provide a forum for Community Representatives to exchange best practice ideas, to identify personal development needs and comment on the decentralisation scheme insofar as it affects Local Committees.
- 2.2** The Council also established a Community Representatives Working Group supported by Council Officers to progress development of the Annual Seminar. 4 out of the 7 Local Committees are represented on the Working Group with Irvine Valley, Kilmarnock North and Kilmarnock South still to nominate Representatives.
- 2.3** The first Seminar was held on 28 November 1998 and was attended by Community Representatives/Substitutes, both past and present, the Chair of the then Decentralisation Sub-Committee and various Chairs/Vice-Chairs of the Local Committees.
- 2.4** The Seminar concentrated on the roles of the Chair, Community Representatives, Substitutes, Councillors and Council Officials within Local Committee operations and highlighted positive and negative aspects of the Local Committee process.
- 2.5** The second Seminar was held on 26 February 2000 and concentrated primarily on the Community Grants Process and Social Inclusion as it relates to Local Committees.
- 2.6** The third Seminar was held on 10 November 2001 and discussed sharing experiences of being a democratic and non-democratic organisation/society.

- 2.7** The most recent Seminar took place on 9 November 2002. The topics for discussion were how Community Representative/Substitutes work together and with the Council, how this could be improved and how to bring in new people and break down apathy.

3. FUTURE ANNUAL SEMINARS

- 3.1** The Working Group of Community Representatives recently met to discuss arrangements for the next Annual Seminar.
- 3.2** After discussion it was agreed that the Seminar should be held in November of this year but that consideration should be given to altering the format of the Seminar to try and provide a greater opportunity for more Community Representatives and Substitutes to attend.
- 3.3** It was, therefore, suggested that the Seminar could either be held on a Saturday between 10 am and 2 pm, including lunch, or in the evening between 6.30 pm and 9.30 pm.
- 3.4** The Working Group, having previously considered venues for future Annual Seminars, agreed that the Council Headquarters, London Road, Kilmarnock is the best available accommodation to suit the needs of the Annual Seminar. The Working Group recognised that alternating venues between the North and South of East Ayrshire would have been useful but noted that at each seminar, transport was provided to assist Community Representatives attending the Seminar.

4. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

- 4.1** The Working Group agreed that all Community Representatives/Substitutes should have an opportunity to consider whether the Seminar should take place on either an evening during the week or a Saturday morning in November, and also consider what issues they would wish discussed at the Seminar. It was, therefore, agreed that this report be prepared and submitted to this cycle of Local Committees to allow sufficient time for Community Representatives to consider such issues.
- 4.2** On receipt of the issues from individual Community Representatives, the Working Group will ascertain the best day for the Seminar and also compile a programme and workshops covering those issues which have raised the most concern.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1** Minor administrative allowances as required in relation to supporting the running of the Annual Seminar.

6. LEGAL/POLICY IMPLICATIONS - NIL

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 The Committee is asked to:-

- (i) note that that Seminar will take place in November of this year;
- (ii) consider whether the Seminar be held on a Saturday between 10 am and 2 pm, including lunch, or an evening during the week between 6.30 pm and 9.30 pm; and
- (iii) submit issues to be discussed at the Seminar.

Community Representatives Working Group
CB/KC
20 August 2003

BACKGROUND PAPERS - NIL

Any person wishing further information on this report should contact Bill Walkinshaw, Administration Manager on (01563) 576135.

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