

Committee Minutes

South West Neighbourhood Partnership

Edinburgh, 23 February 2010

Present: Councillors Coleman (Vice-Convener), Buchan, Burns and Lowrie; Keith Bell (Sighthill, Broomhouse and Parkhead Community Council), Carol Cawood (Prospect Community Housing), Tom Crombie and Alan Dickson (Craiglockhart Community Council), Andy Devenport (Tollcross Community Council), Gordon Fisher (Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Service, and Hellen McDonough (Longstone Community Council).

1 Convener

In the absence of the Convener, Councillor Coleman chaired the meeting.

2 Welcome and Introduction

Councillor Coleman explained the format of the meeting, which would have a skills and employment theme and was designed to encourage engagement between agencies and residents in the South West Neighbourhood Partnership area.

She referred to Councillor Wilson's absence and it was agreed that a letter of condolence be sent to him, on behalf of the South West Neighbourhood Partnership, following the recent loss of his mother.

3 Order of Business

Notice was given of an urgent composite motion by Keith Bell and Councillor Burns on the possible closure of community learning and development establishments in the South West Neighbourhood Partnership area.

South West Neighbourhood Partnership
23 February 2010

4 Minute

Decision

The minute of South West Neighbourhood Partnership of 24 November 2009 was approved as the correct record, subject to the amendment of Item 6, paragraph 3 to read “..the investment objectives, benefits...”.

4 Neighbourhood Partnership Community Grants Fund

Details were given of applications made to the Neighbourhood Partnership Community Grants Fund.

Decision

- 1) To award a grant of £5,000 to Craiglockhart Community Council to finance a commission of a piece of sculpture to be located near the community civic centre.
- 2) To award St Cuthbert's School Council £2,717 to purchase new curtains and rails for the main hall of the school.
- 3) To award Wester Hailes Division Girl Guiding £1,000 to cover event, travelling and equipment costs for the Guide movement's centenary celebrations.

(Reference: - report by the South West Neighbourhood Manager, submitted.)

Declaration of Interest

Tom Crombie declared a non-financial interest, as chair of Craiglockhart Community Council, in relation to paragraph 1) above.

5 Emergency Motion – Possible Closure of Community Learning and Development Establishments

The Vice-Convenor ruled that the following motion, notice of which had been given at the start of the meeting, be considered as a matter of urgency in order that any action be taken as soon as possible.

The following composite motion by Keith Bell and Councillor Burns, together with an amendment by Councillor Buchan at point 4, was approved: -

South West Neighbourhood Partnership
23 February 2010

“Community Centres

South West Neighbourhood Partnership notes that the Lib-Dem/SNP Council Coalition, as part of its budget for 2010/11 recently set on 11 February, has agreed to close the following six Community Centres at the beginning of this coming April:-

Gorgie War Memorial Hall
Colinton Mains Community Centre
Longstone Community Centre
Sighthill Community Centre
Platform Adult Learning Centre
The Number Shop

South West Neighbourhood Partnership further notes that the first five of these Centres are in the South West and West areas of the city.

South West Neighbourhood Partnership is not aware of any public consultation on these proposals prior to the decision being made on 11 February 2010 and is neither aware of any consultation with the Neighbourhood Partnership members of the respective areas.

South West Neighbourhood Partnership therefore requests that these imminent closures are halted to allow time for:-

- 1 a Partnership-specific report to be produced, looking at the effect of the closures including, but not limited to, the alternatives to the closed centres, the transport links for the affected areas to access these alternatives, in particular those with limited mobility and wheelchair users, access to the alternative centres for people with special needs and whether the alternative centres will offer all the services currently offered by the affected centres;
- 2 the provision of proper consultation with the community to see what their opinions are as opposed to the normal 'consultations' that are carried out by Children & Families department;
- 3 Councillors elected to represent Wards 7 & 9 to be encouraged to support their constituents in securing the best Community Learning facilities that they can; and
- 4 this motion to be referred to the meeting of the City of Edinburgh Council on 11 March 2010.”

South West Neighbourhood Partnership
23 February 2010

In addition, an undertaking was given that elected members for the South West Neighbourhood Partnership area would be invited to the stakeholders' meeting arranged for Tuesday 9 March 2010 in Wester Hailes Education Centre at 6.30pm.

(Reference:- composite motion by Keith Bell and Councillor Burns, submitted.)

6 Public Questions

Decision

That the Neighbourhood Manager be asked to respond in writing to the public question submitted on the repair of potholes in Craiglockhart and across the city as a result of the recent winter conditions, the response to be displayed at the next Partnership meeting.

(Reference: - written question, submitted.)

7 Westburn School Site – Presentation

Paul Hyatt, Sue Wilson and Jackie Stewart, all Community Learning and Development, Bruce Penman, Stevenson College and Andrew McTaggart, Library Service, presented proposals for the development of the Westburn school site.

Details were given of the proposals, including the provision of a one stop shop for the community, a hub for the development and support of community groups, an information and resources centre and access for children, young people and adults. Various other elements of the proposed development were explored.

In response to a question on whether organisations such as the lunch club and carpet bowls club currently operating at Sighthill Community Centre would transfer to the new premises, it was confirmed that the final decision had yet to be taken on whether all the facilities currently available would move. Careful consideration would be given to address the different needs of the community and there were also operational issues, for instance the fact that the hall at the Westburn site would not be long enough for carpet bowls.

Concern was expressed that the Longstone area remained isolated, with little or no transport available between the area and the Westburn site. It was confirmed that there was an awareness of the issues at Longstone and efforts would be made to keep community-based provision in the area.

South West Neighbourhood Partnership
23 February 2010

In response to a question on the expected timetable, it was confirmed that a project team and strategy group had been established and that Christine Doherty, South West Partnership and Information Manager, would be a member. General costings were currently being calculated and it was hoped the building would be fully operational by October 2010, with partial use available during August and September.

Clarification was sought that Sighthill Community Centre and Sighthill Library would be permanently situated at the West Burn Location, which would prove to be inconvenient because of it being at the opposite side of the road and less convenient to Sighthill residents. It was acknowledged that this was known and that the arrangement described would be an interim one to cover the transition.

A range of options had been explored and it was agreed that this had been the best solution, as opposed to using Portakabins and a mobile library service.

In response to a question on whether office space would be provided in the new building for Community Councils it was confirmed that this request would be added to the list of desirable items for consideration.

Decision

- 1) To thank Paul Hyatt, Sue Wilson, Jackie Stewart, Andrew McTaggart and Bruce Penman for their interesting presentation.
- 2) To note the concerns raised during the open discussion.

8 Skills and Employment Fair

At this point, those present were encouraged to take the opportunity to speak to representatives from skills and employment agencies in the South west neighbourhood partnership area.

Feedback forms were available and information from these collated.

9 Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 11 May 2010 at 7.00pm at Gorgie Parish Church Hall, 190 -192 Gorgie Road