

Community Planning Partnership Management Committee

Wednesday 5th October 2005

Third Theme Group – Update

SUSTAINING AND DEVELOPING OUR COMMUNITY'S CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

At the last Theme Group meeting on the 24th August 2005, there was a good attendance of 18 people, and an auditor from Audit Scotland sat in to observe the business being conducted as part of the Best Value Review of Argyll and Bute Council. Fergus Murray, the Council's Development Policy Manager gave a presentation on the Argyll and Bute draft Local Plan and an update on the current status of finalising the document in view of objections raised. It was confirmed that until the document is fully implemented, any applicants should make reference to the relevant Local Planning Officer as at this stage sections of both the new and the old document are relevant. Concerns about the local infrastructure are still to be resolved and it was noted that there has been no comment to date on the plan from Scottish Water.

Malcolm MacFadyen, Head of Planning and Performance for the Council, gave an update on the Local Housing Strategy. It was confirmed that Year 1 targets have been met in almost all cases, with just one or two issues requiring an alteration and these will be accommodated within the overall timescales. Although awaiting formal feedback from Communities Scotland, initial indications are that the Strategy Forum is performing very well. A fruitful discussion followed which was of value to all CPP partners.

A review of the Theme Group's six priority actions took place and the following progress was noted.

Priority 1. To provide adequate and affordable housing.

All actions are on target and it was noted in particular that financial packages for the progressive care initiatives on Mull, Iona and Jura have now been resolved.

Priority 2. To address accessibility and transportation needs.

As discussed in some detail at the previous Theme Group meeting, it was noted that actions were on target.

Priority 3. To enhance the sense of community participation and identity.

The Regeneration Outcome Agreement has been submitted to Communities Scotland and received a positive response. The final annual report for the SIP has been completed and it was noted that European Funding has been achieved to try and take forward the development of community enterprise for the Soroba area which is no longer part of the ROA.

Priority 4. To protect and enhance Argyll and Bute's rich environmental assets.

There has been limited progress to-date in implementing the action points and it was agreed that SNH would take the lead in preparing a presentation for the next Theme Group on this priority.

Priority 5. To address waste management, renewable energy and energy conservation issues.

Alan Miller updated the group on the positive improvements to waste infrastructure and agreed to provide a further update at a future meeting. With regard to renewable energy and energy conservation issues, it was agreed that Audrey Martin would take the lead in providing an update on renewable energy actions at the next Theme Group meeting.

Priority 6. To enhance Argyll and Bute's rich cultural heritage.

The Council's Cultural Strategy has been approved and is in place, with ongoing consultation with all interested stakeholders.

Donald MacVicar
Head of Community Regeneration

12th September 2005.