

## NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

## REPORT

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| To: Bellshill and District Area Committee | Subject: Bellshill and District Community Forum Minute |
| From: Chief Executive                     |  |
| Date: 1 March 1999                        | Ref: CE012/023/004B                                    |

**1.0 Purpose**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to submit the minute of the Bellshill and District Community Forum meeting of 21 January 1999 to the Area Committee. The minute is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

**2.0 Recommendation**

- 2.1 Bellshill and District Area Committee is requested to note the Bellshill and District Community Forum minute.

*Sandie Maday*

Chief Executive

**MINUTE OF MEETING OF BELLSHILL AND DISTRICT COMMUNITY  
FORUM HELD IN BELLSHILL ACADEMY ON  
21 JANUARY 1999 AT 7.30PM**

**PRESENT:**

D Robertson, Young Peoples' Representative;  
W Foy, Central Area Representative;  
T Leggate, Elderly Peoples' Representative;  
M Hendry, Disabled Peoples' Representative;  
M Walker, Churches and Religious Groups' Representative;  
S Rees, Information and Advice Projects;  
K MacPhee, West End Representative;  
E Davidson, West End Representative;  
M Macdonald, Central Area Representative;  
I Lester, Central Area Representative;  
J Gilmour, Community Safety Representative;  
J Gardiner, Community Councils' Representative;  
C Kennedy, East End Representative;  
J McLellan, East End representative; and,  
I Wotherspoon, East End Representative.

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** J Lees, Chief Executive's Department; A Moir, Social Work Department; S Wright, Community Education Service.

**APOLOGIES:**

S Toyer and R McCarey.

**1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

Miss Lees opened the meeting, welcomed those present and introduced Mr Moir and Mr Wright who were attending the Community Forum meeting to discuss any training needs which participants may have identified and also to begin to discuss with members how the Forum may most effectively action plan and determine its workload and communication methods.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minute was approved by Mr Robertson.

### 3. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTE

#### Social Evening

Forum members who had attended the informal social evening held on 14 January 1999 in Orbiston Neighbourhood Centre advised that this had been an enjoyable and worthwhile evening.

### 4. FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AND IDENTIFICATION OF TRAINING NEEDS

#### i) General Discussion

Mr Moir explained that himself and Mr Wright were attending the Forum meeting to begin to discuss with Forum members any training needs or support requirements which they may have identified as being necessary to assist them in undertaking their duties on the Forum. He explained that these may be practical training requirements, including Committee Skills training, Office Bearers Duties and Responsibilities, or developmental assistance, including for example, how to share information and report back to the wider community represented by the Forum.

Mrs Davidson suggested that it was difficult for Forum members to identify any training needs they may have since they remained unsure of both individual members roles on the Community Forum and also what was expected and required of the Community Forum in general. She further suggested that North Lanarkshire Council should provide the Community Forum with a clear definition of what it expected from the Forum and clarification on the purpose and functions of the Forum.

Mr Robertson commented that the Community Forum was very much the members' structure, with Forum members elected to represent the views of the wider community. Given this responsibility and accountability to the local community he suggested that it was up to the Forum itself to determine its own appropriate remit and principles.

#### ii) Communications

Clarification was sought on how the Forum representatives may bring issues from the wider community to the attention of the Community Forum. Miss Lees confirmed that it would take some time for the Forum to become established with the wider community aware of its existence, however once this community awareness was in place then local groups or individuals would be able to take matters to the appropriate representative or directly to the Forum itself. She emphasised that this would be a gradual process and both the Area Committee and Community Forum were still in their infancy. In the meantime the Community Forum could look at a number of communication methods to let the local community know of its existence including, regular press releases in "The Bellshill Speaker," or open meetings convened in the local areas.

Ms Kennedy and Mr McLellan sought clarification on the role of the Community Forum in relation to Community Councils and it was suggested that the Community Forum was a duplication in service since Community Councils could currently raise local issues with North Lanarkshire Council.

Miss Lees highlighted that Community Councils were statutory bodies representing very specific geographical areas with a direct relationship to the local authority. She highlighted that Community Councils were formally consulted for example on local planning applications. The Community Forum was established by North Lanarkshire Council as a key element of its Decentralisation Scheme. The Community Forum was intended to work directly with the Area Committee and provide a communication and consultation link between the Area Committee and wider community. The Community Forum differs from individual Community Councils in that it represents the whole area served by Bellshill and District Area Committee and the membership categories are determined to try to ensure involvement by all areas, age ranges and particular groups within the community.

iii) Remit

Mr Robertson suggested that the Forum should spend some time considering its remit and trying to determine a common set of aims.

Mr Moir circulated a series of questions he had prepared designed to help the Forum consider its remit and he suggested that members divide into smaller groups to discuss these. He suggested that himself, Miss Lees and Mr Wright were available to assist the small groups.

iv) Group Suggestions

- Group 1**
- to draw to the attention of the Area Committee issues of concern that are brought to the Forum;
  - to identify a structure and elect Office Bearers; and,
  - to develop aims and objectives and methods of evaluation.
- Group 2**
- to focus on common issues;
  - to be consulted on Council matters including budgets, future priorities and in the case of Community Councils - planning applications;
  - how will the Community Forum relate to the range of Council departments and could Sub Committees be established?
- Group 3**
- to identify those issues common to the whole Bellshill and District Area;
  - to investigate the occurrence of issues in local areas;
  - to consult with communities on Council proposals or services and report back any concerns or suggestions to the area Committee; and
  - to offer guidance/leadership.

v) Community Forum Remit

Community Forum members discussed the suggestions from each of the small groups and noted the similarities. It was recognised and agreed that as the workload of the Community Forum increases then it may be necessary to establish Sub Committees which relate to the relevant local issues. It was agreed that the suggestions should be collated with a remit compiled accordingly for consideration at the next meeting.

**5. INDICATIVE AGENDA ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED BY BELLSHILL AND DISTRICT AREA COMMITTEE AT ITS MEETING OF 4 FEBRUARY 1999**

The Community Forum noted the list of indicative agenda items.

**6. NORTH LANARKSHIRE COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY**

Miss Lees outlined the background to the establishment of the North Lanarkshire Community Safety Partnership. She explained that the Partnership had determined five priority themes and Area Committees and Community Forums were requested to bring forward any local community safety issues.

After discussion the Community Forum agreed that road and traffic safety concerns were common to all areas within Bellshill and District, and the following particular issues were also identified:

- the limited duration of time available to pedestrians using pelican crossings;
- the incidence of motorists' speeding;
- disrepair of roads within Bellshill and District; and,
- insufficient street lighting at new traffic island on Main Street, Mossend.

The Community Forum further agreed to continue this matter to allow for consultation with member organisations.

**7. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

Thursday 4 March 1999 at 7.30pm.