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March 29th<sup>th</sup> 2013

Dear Mr West

Rhu and Shandon Community Council wish to express disquiet at the flawed consultation which took place on the budget for Argyll and Bute for 2013-14. The reason for this letter is to encourage improvements in the consultation procedure for the 2014-2015 budget.

To recap

The Agenda of the January CPG meeting, circulated on 20<sup>th</sup> December included reference to two reports marked as "to follow", one on the Budget and the other on Community Planning, both from yourself. We did not receive these reports until after the meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> January. No-one from the Community Council attended this meeting. I was out of town and by the time the rest of the Community Council received the reports it was too late to arrange a proper consultation.

We know that you are aware of the concern felt by the general public, some Councillors and Community Councils in particular. We were conscious that budgets decisions this year were not going to be easy, and Argyll and Bute had a very difficult task.

However, this is not the first time that there have been inadequate mechanisms in place to allow time for consultation. This has left us with two thoughts; either the officers failed to appreciate that being a Community Councillor is not a full time job or there has been a serious attempt to stifle democracy.

I think we would like you to admit the former!

Can you assure the Council that next year, you will bear in mind that there has to be adequate time for consultation?

Yours sincerely

Jean Cook  
Secretary Rhu and Shandon Community Council.

Copies by email to  
Rhu and Shandon Community Council  
Lomond North Councillors

Posted on R&S Community Council website