

COUNCIL DECISION ON COMMUNITY EVENTS CONDEMNED

Ayr, Carrick and Cumnock MP Corri Wilson has expressed her disbelief at the recent decision by South Ayrshire Council to inflict charges on community groups for the use of stalls and equipment for gala days and other events.

Many of these events already run at a loss, with community groups fundraising throughout the year in order to put them on. Others provide groups with a much needed opportunity to raise money and awareness, often supporting council interests such as local schools and community centres.

Ms Wilson has today written to council leaders seeking clarity on the decision and asking for details of the impact assessment the council will no doubt have taken before making such a choice.

Commenting, Corri Wilson MP said:

“It is inconceivable to me that the current administration in South Ayrshire Council believes jeopardising rural galas and events like the Carrick Lowland Gathering is a good way of saving money.

“Apart from the opportunity these events give communities to come together, to raise money, to entertain families, there are a large number of small businesses and voluntary organisations that rely on gala days to raise funds, promote local produce and raise awareness of issues important to our communities. They also attract much needed visitors to South Ayrshire at a time when the Council is unable to organise a coherent tourism strategy.

“The Council Leader may wish to play politics on this issue and talk of tough choices, but there is no getting away from the fact that this is a punitive measure that will do untold harm, particularly to our rural communities, while raising a very small amount of money for Council coffers.”