

MINUTE of MEETING of the EAST LIVINGSTON AND EAST CALDER LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE of WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL held within COUNCIL CHAMBERS, WEST LOTHIAN CIVIC CENTRE, on 23 FEBRUARY 2017.

Present – Councillors Frank Toner (Chair), Dave King, Frank Anderson and Carl John

In Attendance – Claire Stewart, Regeneration, WLC, Inspector Ian Wells (Police Scotland), Scott Williamson (Fire Service), Andrew Blake, Environmental Health, WLC, David Lees, Operational Services, WLC, Phyllis McFadyen, Housing, WLC and Jonathan Bertram, Almond Housing.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made

2. ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chair advised committee that he was in receipt of a late deputation request from Ms Helena Paul, Edinburgh Airport Watch and Tony Foster, Kirknewton Community Development Trust, in relation to Agenda Item 6 (Edinburgh Airport Airspace Change Programme – Consultation).

The local area committee unanimously agreed to hear the two deputations.

3. MINUTE

The committee confirmed the Minute of its meeting held on 10 November 2016. The Minute was thereafter signed by the Chair.

4. WEST CALDER HIGH SCHOOL

The committee were provided with an overview of West Calder High School by Acting Head Teacher Lisa Grubb in terms of its successes and strengths, continuing developments and current and future priorities.

Lisa explained some of the success and strengths of the school including almost all young people were transitioning into positive, sustained destinations, assertive mentoring programme and increased pupil voice and pupil leadership opportunities. Lisa also explained that preparation was also underway for the move to the new high school.

The committee were then provided with a summary of continuing developments within the school noting that there had been a real effort recently to reduce exclusions and the methods and training provided to staff to enable them to deal with difficult situations.

A summary was also provided in terms of the attainment for 2016-17 and 2017-18 and included not just academic attainment but health and

wellbeing, culture, values and ethos.

Lisa then responded to questions from the members and the Chair thanked Lisa for the presentation.

Decision

To note the contents of the presentation

5. EDINBURGH AIRPORT AIRSPACE CHANGE PROGRAMME - CONSULTATION

Report by Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration advising that a second consultation on airspace change had now been issued by Edinburgh Airport Ltd and that work had commenced on preparing a response by the council which had to be submitted by 30 April 2017.

The report recalled that in 2011 Edinburgh Airport laid down the development trajectory for the airport and highlighted the potential future increase in airspace capacity to cope with traffic growth by the introduction of new technology. In summer 2015 Edinburgh Airport carried out a trial of an additional new departure route known as “Tutor” with the intention to gather data for a possible west bound departure flight path from the airport. Edinburgh Airport subsequently stated that the trial had been successful but alluded to a more comprehensive look at all flightpaths.

In June 2016, Edinburgh Airport launched “Let’s go Further”, its airspace change programme. Following initial activities the airport embarked on a two phase public engagement and consultation process with Phase 1 aiming to gather views from communities involved and Phase 2 proposing specific flightpaths.

West Lothian Council had already approved a response to Phase 1 of the consultation and a copy of this was attached to the report at Appendix 2. Phase 2 of the consultation had only recently been received by the council and whilst it had not yet received full consideration a number of points were becoming evident and these were summarised in the report and in Appendix 1 attached to the report.

The report concluded that whilst concerns existed over noise and other environmental impacts it was also to be recognised that the proximity of Edinburgh Airport provided an economic benefit to West Lothian including making West Lothian an attractive place to do business and 20% of those directly employed at the airport lived in West Lothian.

The committee was asked to note the launch of the second phase of the consultation on Airspace Change Programme and to note the intention to submit the report and proposed response to the Council Executive for

approval.

Deputation from Tony Foster

The committee heard from Tony Foster of Kirknewton Community Development Trust who spoke about the community's concerns for the consultation that was being undertaken by Edinburgh Airport in terms of their usage of the air space over West Lothian communities. Mr Foster explained that data used by the airport in the consultation documents was inaccurate in a number of ways including existing population figures and projected population figures.

Mr Foster also expressed concerns that many aircraft were already using the route that was part of the consultation and therefore West Lothian communities were already being adversely affected by aircraft noise and that this situation could only continue to deteriorate.

Deputation from Helena Paul

The committee then heard from Helena Paul of Edinburgh Airport Watch who also spoke of her concerns for the manner in which Edinburgh Airport were consulting the public on its proposed changes to the airspace above West Lothian communities.

Ms Paul explained to committee that the documents associated with the consultation were very detailed and complex and made understanding the issues very difficult. Despite the complexity of the issues contained in the whole consultation exercise 71% of the 6,000 respondents to Phase 1 of the consultation on proposed changes to airspace routes were from residents of West Lothian and this was indicative of the strength of feeling in those communities most adversely affected by the proposals.

Ms Paul also advised committee that she too had concerns for the data that was being used by Edinburgh Airport in the consultation documents with much of it being out of date.

The Chair thanked the deputations for their informative presentations and there then followed questions by committee members.

Decision

- 1) To note the contents of the officer's report;
- 2) To note the contents of the presentation by Mr Tony Foster and Ms Helena Paul;
- 3) To request that when the report was presented to the Council Executive for approval then the Council Executive be asked to forward a copy to the Civil Aviation Authority and the UK Minister for Aviation.

6. FIRE SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Scottish Fire and Rescue providing an update on the activity within the ward for the period up to 31 December 2017.

Attached to the report at Appendix 1 was a summary report that provided a series of graphs showing details of accidental fire dwellings, fire casualties and fatalities, deliberate fires, fires in non-domestic properties, non-fatal non-fire emergency casualties and unwanted fire alarm signals. The Fire Officer then provided an update on these graphs noting that the service was targeting repeat offenders of unwanted fire signals and were also looking into deliberate fire rising as a matter of priority in the ward.

Members were invited to note and provide comment on the East Livingston and East Calder Multi-Member Ward performance report.

Decision

To note the content of the report.

7. POLICE WARD REPORT

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by Inspector Adam Smith, Police Scotland, providing an update on performance, activities and issues across the ward in the period up to 31 January 2017.

The report provided a range of statistics for the months of November, December and January 2017 with comparative figures for the same period in 2015-16 noting that there continued to be a general fall in youth calls and fire raisings and that anti-social behaviour and vandalism remained static. It was however to be noted that there had been a rise in public space assaults from a previously low base level in 2015.

Information continued to be provided in relation to anti-social behaviour, acquisitive crime, substance misuse and road safety initiatives.

With regards to road safety initiatives committee were advised that options for a controlled crossing at Market Street/Bank Street, Mid Calder had been explored between Police Scotland and council Transportation staff and it had been confirmed that there was no safe or suitable location for such a crossing. In addition statistics for the location did not demonstrate a need for such a crossing and it was agreed by all parties that the school patrol crossing was sufficient.

Vehicle collision statistics as collated by council colleagues were also provided in Appendix 1 attached to the report.

Police Scotland also confirmed that they continued to monitor parking along Main Street, East Calder.

Decision

1. To note the contents of the report;
2. To request that Police Scotland review the indiscriminate parking taking place at Kirknewton Railway Station;
3. To request that Police Scotland supply statistics on a ward-by-ward basis in future committee reports; and
4. To note that Police Scotland would continue to enforce parking throughout the ward.

8. PENTLAND HILLS REGIONAL PARK ANNUAL REPORT 2015-16

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration providing a copy of the Pentland Hills Regional Park (PHRP) Annual Report 2015-16 and to also provide an update on the “Pentland Paths Project”.

Each year the PHRP Service produced an annual report that was reported to the relevant council committees. The 2015-16 Annual Report followed the same style of previous reports and summarised the park’s achievements in terms of what had happened as a result of work carried out throughout the year.

The Annual Report set out a number of common themes, these being :-

- ❖ Theme 1 – Local Economic Development
- ❖ Theme 2 – Health & Well Being
- ❖ Theme 3 – Community Partnership & Participation
- ❖ Theme 4 – Learning, Development and Responsible Citizenship
- ❖ Theme 5 – Environmental Quality & Climate Change

The report provided a narrative on each of these themes.

The Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration also provided details of the “Pentland Paths Project” which was a partnership project between the existing local authorities, SNH, Edinburgh & Greenspace Trust (ELGT) and Cairngorm Outdoor Access Trust (COAT). The concept of the “Pentland Paths Project” was to enable a longer term programme of fundraising and improvements with ELGT and COAT undertaking the majority of the fundraising and delivery of activities, details of which were supplied in the report.

It was also noted that during Spring 2016 COAT, contracted by ELGT, carried out a full Path Condition Survey of the key routes in the Pentland Hills Regional Park. Initial findings had revealed substantial costs due to path erosion on the high and ridge routes. This included at Cauldstane

Slap in West Lothian where costs were estimated to be around £160k and a recommendation that the Gala-Ford Bridge be assessed. External funding would be considered to raise this budget including Wind Farm Community Development. Additionally the council's Structures Unit had investigated the bridge and found it to be in sound condition, albeit in need of some repainting.

It was recommended that the committee :-

1. Noted the terms of the Pentland Hills Regional Park Annual Report 2015-16; and
2. Noted the update on the "Pentland Paths Project"

Decision

To note the contents of the report

9. SERVICE UPDATE - NETS, LAND AND COUNTRYSIDE

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Operational Services appraising members of the Nets, Land Services and Countryside activities for the ward for the period 1 November 2016 to 31 January 2017.

The report provided a summary of works carried out and enquiries received in relation to Grounds Maintenance, Garden Maintenance and Cleaner Communities.

Further information was also contained within the report concerning Parks & Woodland and Open Space & Cemeteries. With regards to open space routine works the committee were advised that plans for a 3G pitch had been drawn up for East Calder Park with further community consultation to follow and that Almond Park had been successful with a Land Trust application for £17.5k to improve the ponds in the park with work hopefully completed by end of April 2017.

Officers then responded to a series of questions from members who included a request that officers investigate the condition of the footpath that ran from Mid Calder to the local school which had a damaged fence and overgrown shrubs.

It was recommended that the Local Area Committee:-

1. Note the work carried out by the service within the local area; and
2. Advise on any areas that required further information or investigation.

Decision

1. To note the contents of the report; and

2. Requested that officers investigate the condition of the path between Mid Calder and the local school.

10. ALMOND HOUSING REPORT

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by Almond Housing Association providing an update on the activity of the association.

The committee were advised that the Association's Board of Management had recently approved the 5 year Investment Programme which included a variety of work within the Craigshill area, with an ongoing emphasis on Energy Efficiency works. Also during 2017-18 a number of programmed works would be carried out in Craigshill and included boiler upgrades, external wall insulation & roofing works, partial electrical upgrades, external paintwork, kitchen replacements and environmental improvements at Pine, Fir and Hazel Grove.

The report continued to provide information on digital inclusion noting the results of a recent survey carried out by the Association. An update was also provided on welfare rights and money advice noting that the service which had been funded by the Scottish Legal Aid Board since 2013 would cease on 31 March 2017 so the Association would be looking at alternative ways of continuing to provide the service including working with the Advice Shop in the meantime.

Decision

1. To note the contents of the report; and
2. Requested that Almond Housing Association provide members with further information in relation to a) the need for external paint work on the houses in Almondbank Drive and b) how the organisation was sign-posting Craigshill residents towards internet access available in local libraries.

11. HOUSING UPDATE

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulate) by the Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services providing an update on the housing service activities for the ward.

The report examined Property Void and Let Performance for both mainstream and temporary properties for the months of October, November and December noting that at present there were 5 policy voids for various reasons including electrical, asbestos, decant and upgrading.

The Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services continued by providing details of ward arrears noting that for Quarter 3 of 2016-17 the ward position was £55,909 which was an increase of £1,792 on last year's position. However it was noted that the overall position for West Lothian

had decreased by £245,116 from last year. Overall the position remained positive and would continue to be tracked.

The report continued by providing details on the capital and new build council house programme noting that 20 houses had been handed over to date.

Information was also contained in the report on Tenant Participation and Safer Neighbourhood work.

It was recommended that the Local Area Committee note the Housing, Customer and Building Service activity for the period 1 October to 31 December 2016.

Decision

1. To note the contents of the report; and
2. To request that officers provide members with further details with regards to void properties in terms of the costs of the repairs to these properties and lost revenues.

12. WEST LOTHIAN VILLAGES IMPROVEMENT FUND - APPLICATIONS

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration seeking approval of the applications received for funding from the West Lothian Villages Improvement Fund in 2016-17.

The Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration provided a summary of the scheme which included the shop front improvement scheme and the small scale village improvement scheme. Under the village improvement scheme the following represented the full money allocated to each of the eligible villages within the ward:-

- East Calder - £125,000 (£77,794 remaining)
- Midcalder - £125,000 (£82,000 remaining)
- Kirknewton - £55,000 (£44,000 remaining)
- Pumpherston - £55,000 (£55,000 remaining)
- Uphall Station - £55,000 (£17,918 remaining)
- Wilkieston - £20,000 (£20,000 remaining)

The report then provided a narrative on the funding applications received including two from Kirknewton Community Development Trust; one for £10,000 for the Kirknewton Gateway Project and the other for £11,000 for a Flying Fox for the local park; a third was one from East Calder Community Resource Association for £3,860 for the refurbishment of a telephone kiosk to include a Public Access Defibrillator and the fourth

from East Calder and District Community Council for £6,205 for the Hogg Hill Path Improvement.

Further details of each of the application were attached to the report.

It was recommended that the Local Area Committee :-

1. Note that four applications had been received for funding;
2. Note that the proposals met the eligibility criteria for supported projects;
3. Support funding for all four projects with the qualification of two as detailed in the report; and
4. Agree that the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration should make an offer of funding as per the details set out in the report.

Decision

To approve the terms of the report