

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 22 JUNE 2017.

Present – Councillors Dave King (Chair), Damian Timson and Carl John

Apologies – Councillor Frank Anderson; Jonathan Bertram, Almond Housing Association

In Attendance – David Maule, Lead Officer, WLC, Inspector Ian Wells (Police Scotland), Inspector Adam Smith (Police Scotland), Scott Williamson (Scottish Fire & Rescue), David Cullen, Operational Services, WLC, Phyllis McFadyen, Housing, WLC, Deborah McAlpine, Social Policy, WLC, Laura Wilson, Community Regeneration, WLC and Lesley Keirnan, Community Regeneration, WLC

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

2. MINUTE

The committee confirmed the Minute of the meeting held on 23 February 2017. The Minute was thereafter signed by the Chair.

3. 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 for the period up to 31 May 2017.

The report provided a range of statistics for the months of February, March, April and May with comparative figures for the same period in 2016 noting that across the ward the figures were either in line with the rest of West Lothian or better.

Inspector Smith advised the committee that April had seen a spike in anti-social behaviour calls and that on closer scrutiny of the calls the increase was mainly attributable to three particular addresses in the Craigshill area. Police were working closely with colleagues at Almond Housing and at the council on the situation.

Inspector Smith also spoke about the recent East Calder Gala Day which had coincided with a Scotland football match. The situation had been dealt with in a robust manner and Police Scotland had in fact reviewed its procedures for the gala days following the recent terrorist incidents across the United Kingdom.

Information continued to be provided in relation to road safety measures in the ward including the monitoring of scrambler bike usage in the

Pumpherston area, continued monitoring of parking along Main Street, East Calder and continuing to work with parents with regards to road safety around primary schools.

The report concluded with a brief update on substance misuse and acquisitive crime.

Decision

1. To note the content of the report;
2. To note Police Scotland comments in relation to the policing of the recent East Calder Gala Day;
3. To note the increase in anti-social behaviour calls in May and the reasons for this; and
4. To seek the support of Police Scotland colleagues in promoting the introduction of 20mph limits on Main Street, East Calder, Main Street, Mid Calder and Main Street, Kirknewton.

4. FIRE SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service providing an update on the activity within the ward for the period up to 31 March 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 wheelie bin fires continued to be a problem in the ward as it did in most other wards in West Lothian and that the Fire Service was reviewing its strategy on working with schools on fire raising and other fire safety matters and trying to adopt a more targeted approach.

It was also noted that there continued to be partnership working between the council and the Fire Service in terms of home safety visits and working with new council tenants.

Members welcomed the positive report and commended the Fire Service on taking a more pro-active approach to fire safety measures.

Decision

To note the contents of the report

5. ALCOHOL DIVERSIONARY ACTIVITIES

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated)

by the Head of Social Policy providing details of two applications submitted to the Alcohol Diversionary Fund. Copies of the applications were attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The report recalled that a new governance process for Alcohol Diversionary Funding was approved by the Council Executive on 21 January 2014, placing the responsibility for this funding within Social Policy.

Two applications had been received by the council; one from Booze you Looze and Craigshill Offbeat and all projects for Alcohol Diversionary Funding were required to meet the outcomes in the ADP Joint Commissioning Plan.

The report recommended that local area committee agree to the release of £19,090 from the Alcohol Diversionary Fund to support the applications made by Booze you Looze and Craigshill Offbeat.

Decision

To approve the terms of the report.

6. HOUSING UPDATE

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) 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 period January to March 2017. It was noted that delays in re-letting could occur for a variety of reasons including additional works not visible during the initial inspection and the type and location of the property.

The Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services continued by providing details of rent arrears for the ward noting that for Quarter 4 of 2016-17 it was £39,389 which was an increase of £4,798 on last year's position. It was also reported that much work was being done in preparation of Universal Credit which was being introduced in February 2018 which would bring with it a number of challenges for both the council and its tenants.

Information continued to be provided on the capital programme and new build council housing, tenant participation including digital inclusion and the work of safer neighbourhood team.

In relation to questions raised by local members following the recent tragic tower block fire in London, the local area committee was assured by officers of the council that no council house buildings in West Lothian had the same type of outside cladding as used on the tower block and that a review of the council's historic building portfolio was also underway.

In relation to the properties belonging to Weslo and Almond Housing

Association officers undertook to ascertain the position with regards to the materials used in the construction process of their housing stock and advise local ward members in due course.

It was recommended that the local area committee was asked to note Housing, Customer and Building Services activity as detailed in the report for the period January to March 2017.

Decision

1. Noted the contents of the report;
2. Noted the update with regards to the types of materials used to clad council housing and that a review of other council buildings was being undertaken;
3. Requested that information on the types of materials being used on the housing stock belonging to Weslo and Almond Housing Association be provided to local ward members; and
4. Requested that officers ascertain if online facilities would be available in the new East Calder Partnership Centre.

7. NETS, LAND AND COUNTRYSIDE UPDATE

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 in the ward for the period 1 February to 30 April 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 in the report concerning Parks & Woodland and Open Space & Cemeteries. With regards to Almondell Cemetery members were advised that the maintenance contract for the cemetery was due to return to the council later this year however as the existing contractor had gone into administration that was now happening sooner rather than later and staff continued to work on this process..

With regards to East Calder Park approval for a 3G pitch had been now been granted following additional funds from SportScotland. Additionally a contract for an upgrade to Marrfield Park was currently out to tender with developer contributions towards the project having been approved.

In relation to the contents of the report ward members raised a number of issues that they requested officers investigate including the following :-

- 1) That the dog waste bin at Raw Holdings at the entrance to Mansfield, East Calder be replaced following damage sustain in a vehicle accident;

- 2) That a dog waste bin situated near to St Paul's Primary school also be replaced;
- 3) That the height of a dog waste bin situated at the last bus stop just before turning into the Kaims Estate, Kirknewton be lowered;
- 4) Provide members with an update on the installation of a flood monitoring system for the burn;
- 5) Ascertain if the trees hanging over the burn could be cut back as they were causing the burn to flood on occasion; and
- 6) Review the condition and maintenance of the path that ran from Mid Calder to the old primary school and as it was a walking route to school.

The Open Space and Cemeteries Manager undertook to forward the various points raised to the appropriate service area.

Decision

- 1) To note the contents of the report; and
- 2) To request that officers investigate and report back on a number of points raised by ward members and to report back on them in due course.

8. COMMUNITY REGENERATION UPDATE

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration providing an update on community regeneration activity in the East Livingston and East Calder Ward.

The report recalled that the Regeneration Framework which was approved by Council Executive in February 2014 contained a commitment to develop regeneration plans in key areas of deprivation in West Lothian. In addition to this, as part of the Community Empowerment Act there was a requirement on all Community Planning Partnerships to develop plans to improve their most disadvantaged areas.

Eight regeneration areas had been identified in West Lothian based on the data zones within the bottom 20% of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. To date this process had commenced in five in eight of the identified areas.

A new Community Regeneration Officer had been appointed in May 2017 to cover the East Livingston and East Calder Ward area and would begin to implement the regeneration process in Craigshill with work already underway to gather statistical information and to map local services and organisations.

The report then provided a summary of the activities currently underway in the ward and included promoting physical activity through participation in Parkrun, a further application to the Village Improvement Fund for renovations to St John's Lodge, Mid Calder and the transfer of a small strip of land at Camps Junction, Kirknewton as part of an overall package to deliver a high profile arts work funded through a Public Arts Grant.

It was recommended that the local area committee note the community regeneration activity within the ward in relation to the regeneration planning process.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

9. WORKPLAN

A copy of the workplan had been circulated for information.

Decision

To note the contents of the workplan