

MINUTE of MEETING of the FAULDHOUSE AND THE BREICH VALLEY LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE of WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL held within COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CIVIC CENTRE, LIVINGSTON, on 7 JUNE 2017.

Present – Councillors Cathy Muldoon (Chair), David Dodds, Pauline Clark

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

2. ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chair ruled in terms of Standing Order 11 to change the order of business to consider Agenda Item 8 (New West Calder High School Update) immediately after consideration of the Minute.

The Chair advised that in terms of Agenda Item 5 (Village Improvement Fund Support – Polbeth and West Calder Community Garden), the Lead Officer would provide a short update as unfortunately Judith McDermid and Lisa Drinnan were unable to attend the meeting to deliver their presentation.

3. MINUTE

The committee confirmed the Minute of its meeting held on 21 February 2017 as a correct record. The Minute was thereafter signed by the Chair.

4. NEW WEST CALDER HIGH SCHOOL UPDATE

The committee considered a short presentation and report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Finance and Property Services providing an update on the progress of the new West Calder High School.

The report advised that on 28 October 2014 the Council Executive agreed to progress the replacement of West Calder High School and on 22 November 2016 approved the terms of the Financial Close for the project.

The council and development partners HUB South East Limited and Morrison Construction worked closely and in collaboration with Network Rail to ensure that the enabling infrastructure works of the new rail overbridge and new access road were completed on time and on budget.

The Head of Finance and Estates advised that the main school construction works had commenced and were progressing well with phase 1 of ground engineering works, foundations, initial utilities diversions and installations together with the primary steel structure all completed. The next phases would include completing structural steel works, formation of floors and concrete form work, together with the

external envelope which would all be completed by the end of the summer.

The project remained on target with planned timescales for completion forecast for June 2017 with pupils attending from August 2018.

The report also advised that the council and the development partners had actively engaged with the community including the establishment of a consultation group which met bi-monthly with the primary aim of facilitating effective communication on the progress of the project and to allow engagement on any issues that should arise.

The report recommended that the committee note the progress of the project to date and the ongoing community engagement.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

5. VILLAGE IMPROVEMENT FUND SUPPORT - POLBETH AND WEST CALDER COMMUNITY GARDEN

The Lead Officer provided the committee with an update on the improvements that were made to the Polbeth and West Calder Community Garden after receiving a grant from the Village Improvement Fund Support. She advised that the facility had a new heating system and a new floor. It was also advised that it was an all year round facility that was visited by school group.

The Lead Officer advised that an invitation to visit the facility had been extended to the Local Area Committee members.

Decision

To note the update and accept the invitation to visit the facility.

6. POLICE SCOTLAND REPORT

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by Police Inspector Gregor Forbes providing an update on performance activities and issues across the ward for the period up to 28 February 2017.

The report provided statistical information in relation to Crime Groups one to five.

The report provided details of Prevention Events including reducing antisocial behaviour, reducing community and social harm caused by drug and alcohol misuse and making roads safer. Forthcoming events included Rural Crime Awareness day.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

7. MULTI-MEMBER WARD PERFORMANCE REPORT

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

Station Manager Ritchie Hall presented the report, highlighting a number of improvements across the key priorities within the ward.

The report provided statistical information in relation to accidental dwelling fires, fire casualties and fatalities, deliberate fires, fires in non-domestic properties, non-fatal non-fire emergencies casualties and unwanted fire alarm signals.

The Committee was invited to note and provide comment on the Fauldhouse and the Breich Valley Multi-member Ward Performance Report.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

8. SERVICE UPDATE - NETS, LAND AND COUNTRYSIDE

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Operational Services advising members of the recent activity of the NET's Land and Countryside Services teams for the period 1 February 2017 to 30 April 2017.

The report provided statistical information in relation to Grounds Maintenance, Garden Maintenance, Street Cleansing, Parks and Woodland, and Open Space and Cemeteries.

The Committee was informed that the first herbicide visit to shrub beds had been completed without the use of Glyphosate. Spraying of grass channels had also been completed using a mix of Glyphosate and Flazasulfuron. Trials of alternative weed control methods had started and would continue throughout the summer.

Members were asked to note the work carried out to date and future planned work as outlined in the report.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

9. HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES UPDATE

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services providing an overview of the service activities within the ward.

The report examined void performance in relation to both mainstream tenancies and temporary tenancies.

The Committee was informed that the ward position for Q4 of 2016/17 was £203,402 which was a decrease of £7,631 on the previous year's position. The West Lothian overall position had decreased by £26,707 from the previous year and at week 52 was £1,217,512. While there were 48 serious arrears cases (£1,000+), the Committee noted that 55% of cases were in the lower bands (£300 or less).

The report went on to provide an update in relation to the capital programme and new build council housing.

The Committee was asked to note Housing, Customer and Building Service activity as detailed in the ward report for the period 1 January 2017 to 31 March 2017.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

10. WEST LOTHIAN VILLAGES IMPROVEMENT FUND - APPLICATIONS

A report had been circulated by the Head of Planning and Economic Development advising the Committee of the applications received from the ward area seeking funding from the West Lothian Villages Improvement Fund in 2017/18.

The report recalled that distribution of funding was based on village size. Total allocations per village were set out in a table within the report, with the remaining budgets in brackets.

The applications received for funding were summarised as follows:-

Polbeth Village Gateways – Polbeth Community Council requested £12,350 to provide new gateway signage, bulb planting and community planters along the A71.

Polbeth/West Calder Skatepark - Polbeth Community Council requested £10,000 for a project with West Calder & Harburn CDT to deliver a skate park between the two villages.

Longridge Woodland Drainage – Longridge Community Council requested £7,000 for drainage to the community woodland area including the football field and a community notice board.

Stoneyburn Bowling Club Green Maintenance - £3,000 was requested to purchase equipment which was necessary for maintaining the bowling

green.

West Calder and Harburn CDT – Reassignment of Funds - £5,000 of funds previously awarded to be reassigned as a contribution to the high school community art project.

A copy of the application forms were attached as appendices 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 the projects;
4. reassign £5,000 previously agreed funding to West Calder & Harburn Community Development; and
5. agree that the Head of Planning & Economic Development should make an offer of funding as per the details set out in the report.

Decision

To note the terms of the report and to agree that the Head of Planning and Economic Development should make an offer of funding as recommended in the report.

11. REPORT ON PROGRESS OF REGENERATION PLANNING

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration informing the Committee of progress towards developing regeneration plans within the ward.

The report recalled that the Regeneration Framework, which had been approved by Council Executive in February 2014, contained a commitment to develop regeneration plans in key areas of deprivation in West Lothian. Eight regeneration areas had been identified, based on the data zones within the bottom 20% of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. At present, this process had started in five of the eight regeneration areas, including Fauldhouse and the Breich Valley which covered the communities of Fauldhouse, Stoneyburn, Addiewell and Polbeth.

The report went on to provide details of meetings held in Addiewell, Stoneyburn, Fauldhouse and Polbeth. The key points highlighted in the report were:-

- The Addiewell group had one meeting since the last update.

Community engagement had also commenced in the village with responses gathered from parents at Addiewell Primary School parents night.

- The group in Stoneyburn had begun to carry out community engagement. Members of the steering group had consulted their own groups and clubs and planned to widen the scope of engagement
- The Fauldhouse regeneration group had been significantly strengthened with the addition of nine new community members. The group now had a good spread of representation covering council, CPP, local agencies and the community.
- Two meetings of the Polbeth Regeneration Group had taken place. The head teachers from St Mary's and Polbeth nursery attended the last meeting and provided very positive contributions and suggestions on how they and pupils could work in partnership.

Finally, the report advised that the process for developing regeneration plans was underway with the Fauldhouse and Breich Valley area. Local action groups had been established and had begun the process of evidence gathering and statistical analysis.

It was recommended that the Local Area Committee note:-

1. That four local regeneration groups had been established and were active; and
2. Community engagement activity was underway in three areas.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

12. WORKPLAN

A copy of the Workplan had been circulated for information.

Decision

To note the Workplan