

MINUTE of MEETING of the BROXBURN, UPHALL AND WINCHBURGH LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE of WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL held within COUNCIL CHAMBERS, WEST LOTHIAN CIVIC CENTRE, on 5 OCTOBER 2017.

Present – Councillors Chris Horne (Chair) and Diane Calder

Apologies – Councillors Angela Doran and Janet Campbell

Present

Alan Bell, Lead Officer, West Lothian Council
Andrew Blake, Environmental Health, West Lothian Council
Hazel Hay, Tourism and Town Centre Officer, WLC
Eirwen Hopwood, Parks & Woodlands Manager, WLC
Phyllis McFadyen, Area Housing Manager, WLC
Inspector Scott Robertson, Police Scotland
Des Donnelly, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

2. MINUTE

The committee approved the Minute of its meeting held on 15 June 2017. The Minute was thereafter signed by the Chair.

3. POLICE SCOTLAND UPDATE

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by Inspector Scott Robertson, Police Scotland providing an update on performance, activities and issues across the ward for the period up to and including 31 July 2017.

The report provided information for the period up to and including 31 July 2017 relating to a number of themes including hate crime and fire-raising and provided comparative figures for the same period in 2016. The Inspector commented that all-in-all it was a very positive report.

Inspector Robertson continued by advising on a number of initiatives that were taking place in the ward and included the continuation of Operation Borah which was targeting cannabis cultivation and road safety measures including monitoring of traffic at the new housing development in East Main Street, Broxburn.

The Chair thanked the Inspector for the positive report.

Decision

To note the contents of the report

4. SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by Scottish Fire and Rescue Service providing details of activity for the ward up to 31 July 2017.

Attached to the report at Appendix 1 was a series of graphs that provided 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; these were provided on a ward basis, West Lothian basis and Scotland-wide basis over a number years.

The Fire Officer then provided an update in relation to a number of initiatives taking place including ongoing work to reduce wheelie bin fires which continued to be a problem across West Lothian and local risk management preparedness in relation to RTA's now that the autumn/winter period had arrived.

The Fire Officer then responded to a number of questions from the members and in relation to one of those questions concerning arranging home safety visits, the members were advised that the best way to contact the service to arrange such a visit was through social media. He did acknowledge that this was not so easy for the older population but that the representatives of the fire service attended a number of community groups where such information was provided. However he undertook to provide contact information to elected members so they could share these with constituents if they were asked for assistance on this matter.

Decision

1. To Note the contents of the report; and
2. Requested that Mr Donnelly provided elected members with contact details/leaflets that advised how constituents could arrange home safety visits from the Fire Service.

5. HOUSING, BUILDING AND CUSTOMER SERVICES 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 April to June 2017, noting that there were 18 Policy Voids in the period. It was noted that voids existed for various reasons such as decant, structural, asbestos and electrical issues but council services continued to work together to ensure a seamless process existed to avoid any unnecessary delays.

The Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services continued by providing details of rent arrears for the ward noting that for Quarter 1 of

2017-18 the arrears were £148,857 which was a decrease of £0,185 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.

The Local Area Committee was asked to note the Housing, Building and Customer Service Activity as detailed in the report for the period 1 April to 30 June 2017.

Decision

To note the contents of the report

6. SERVICE UPDATE - NETS, LAND & 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 in the ward for the period 1 May to 31 July 2017

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

In relation to litter prevention it was noted that enquiries regarding incidents of fly-tipping and abandoned vehicles were on the increase across the ward and across West Lothian overall. Therefore the service had identified the need to develop a strategy and actions plans to encourage partnership and joint working on this issue. Litter Prevention Action Plans would also ensure that the council was complying with the Scottish Government's National Litter Strategy, "Towards a Litter Free Scotland".

The Head of Operational Services continued by providing information on the work of the Enforcement Officers and also provided an update on Open Space and Cemeteries, noting that the work on both the Badgers Brook and Tippetknowe playparks were now complete and open to the public.

The committee thanked the officers for all their efforts in the ward with particular note made of the initiative operating at Almondell Park known as "Dog Poo Avenue".

It was recommended that the committee :-

1. Note the work carried out to date and future planned work; and
2. Advise of any areas that required further investigation or inclusion

in future plans.

Decision

To note the contents of the report

7. EDINBURGH AIRPORT AIRSPACE CHANGE - UPDATE

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration advising of the most recent development in Edinburgh Airport's airspace change proposals and to advise that the council had exhausted all avenues to influence the change process.

The report recalled that Edinburgh Airport had carried out two phases of consultation with regards to expansion plans for the airport including changes to its airspace and that the council had responded to both these consultation.

On 2 August 2017 Edinburgh Airport contacted those who had responded to the consultation advising that they had taken into consideration the comments received, made alterations they considered reasonable and intended to submit the change application to the CAA on 3 August 2017

During the course of the consultation process errors were noted in the consultation documents and Environmental Health contacted both Edinburgh Airport and the CAA outlining these concerns. Edinburgh Airport subsequently contacted the authority for more accurate population figures which was provided. Further information was also supplied to the CAA following contact from a local resident who agreed to the information he had gathered being shared with them.

The committee continued to be advised that since the report had been drafted there had been further developments in that the CAA had suspended its review of Edinburgh Airport's flight paths due to technical aspects contained with the submission. Edinburgh Airport had however stated that it would continue to work towards the getting the CAA to commence the review at the earliest opportunity.

The Environmental Health Manager also advised committee that he had contacted the UK Government Minister with responsibility for aviation and that he had responded to say that issues with Edinburgh Airport was a matter for the CAA.

In relation to a question about the methods for measuring aircraft noise the Environmental Health Manager explained that the methodology for measuring aircraft noise had recently undergone a number of changes and that it was not clear if the submission from Edinburgh Airport was based on the old or the new methodology or this was even one of the reasons that the review by the CAA had been suspended.

The Environmental Health Manager confirmed that there was not yet a resolution in sight for the whole issue and that he would endeavour to

provide committee with regular updates on the matter as appropriate. Therefore the committee agreed to leave the item of business on the workplan.

It was recommended that the committee :-

1. Note the current position with regard to Edinburgh Airport's intentions; and
2. Notes that the process was regulated by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and that West Lothian Council had no further opportunity to influence the outcomes.

Decision

1. To note the contents of the report;
2. To thank officers for all their efforts on the matter; and
3. To agree to keep the item on the workplan for future updates.

8. 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 advising of applications received seeking funding from the West Lothian Villages Improvement Fund (WLVIF).

The report recalled that three villages within the Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh ward area were eligible to apply to the Villages Improvement Fund.

Two applications had been received; one from St Philomena's Catholic Church for £15,000 for roof repairs and the other from Winchburgh Bowling Club for £10,000 to improve the toilet facilities. It was noted that the application from Winchburgh Bowling Club had previously been approved by the local area committee but subject to match funding. However it was now reported that the overall project had been reduced in size and therefore match funding was no longer required and all the works could be accommodated within the £10,000 requested.

Both applications were eligible under the scheme and it was recommended that the local area committee :-

1. Notes that one application had been received for funding;
2. Notes that the proposal met the eligibility criteria for supported projects;
3. Supports funding for the St Philomena Catholic Church village improvement project;
4. Agrees to release £10,000 previously agreed for the Winchburgh

Bowling Club toilet upgrade within the need to match fund as the project had now been reduced in size; and

5. Agreed that the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration should make an offer of funding as per the details set out in the report.

The Clerk then advised the committee that as only two members were present they could only agree the recommendations in principle and that the Lead Officer would have to submit a report to Council Executive to approve the villages improvement fund applications.

Decision

1. To note the contents of the report and the two villages improvement fund applications received; and
2. To note that whilst supporting the two applications in principle the Lead Officer would be required to submit a report to the Council Executive for both applications to be approved.

9. PENSIONERS' GROUPS CHRISTMAS FUND PROVISIONAL ALLOCATIONS 2017

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration advising of the provisional allocations made from the Pensioners' Groups Christmas Fund 2017 to groups in the Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh, Livingston-wide groups and West Lothian-wide groups.

It was reported that, from the total fund in 2017 of £28,766 the Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh ward had a provisional allocation of £3,564.69.

The Committee was informed that ten application forms had been issued to groups across the ward, with nine having been returned. The intention was that the nine applications would be supported and the remaining one would be followed-up. One application had been sent to a Livingston-wide group but this application had not yet been returned and this was also being followed-up

Attached to the report at Appendix 1 were the proposed allocations for the ward and Appendix 2 the provisional allocations for Livingston-wide and West Lothian-wide organisations.

It was recommended that committee note that nine groups within the Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh ward had applied to the fund and would be supported.

Decision

1. To note the terms of the report; and
2. To note that officers would continue to chase the outstanding

applications.

10. WORKPLAN

The committee noted the workplan (copies of which had been circulated).

Decision

To note the contents of the workplan.