



Whitburn and Blackburn Local Area Committee

West Lothian Civic Centre
Howden South Road
LIVINGSTON
EH54 6FF

21 November 2017

A meeting of the **Whitburn and Blackburn Local Area Committee** of West Lothian Council will be held within the **East Whitburn Community Centre, Hens Nest Road, East Whitburn** on **Monday 27 November 2017 at 10:00am**.

For Chief Executive

BUSINESS

1. Apologies for Absence.
2. Declarations of Interest - Members should declare any financial and non-financial interests they have in the items of business for consideration at the meeting, identifying the relevant agenda item and the nature of their interest.
3. Order of Business, including notice of urgent business and declarations of interest in any urgent business.

Public Session

4. Confirm Draft Minute of Meeting of the Committee held on 25 September 2017 (herewith).
5. Police Ward Report - report by Inspector Forbes (herewith).
6. Fire and Rescue Service Report - report by Station Manager Robertson (herewith).
7. Blackburn Partnership Centre - report by Depute Chief Executive (herewith).
8. Advice Shop Service Update - report by Head of Finance and Property Services (herewith).

9. Service Update - NETS, Land & Countryside - report by Head of Operational Services (herewith).
10. Housing, Customer and Building Services - report by Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (herewith).
11. West Lothian Villages Improvement Fund - Applications - report by Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration (herewith).
12. Community Regeneration Update - report by Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration (herewith).
13. Pensioners' Groups Christmas Fund Allocations 2017 - report by Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration (herewith).
14. Workplan (herewith).

NOTE **For further information please contact Lorraine McGrorty on 01506 281609 or e-mail lorraine.mcgrorty@westlothian.gov.uk**

MINUTE of MEETING of the WHITBURN AND BLACKBURN LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE of WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL held within SEAFIELD COMMUNITY CENTRE, MAIN STREET, SEAFIELD, on 25 SEPTEMBER 2017.

Present – Councillors George Paul (Chair), Bruce Fairbairn and Kirsteen Sullivan

Apologies – Councillor Jim Dickson

In Attendance –

Alistair Shaw, Lead Officer, West Lothian Council
Scott McKillop, Community Regeneration Officer, West Lothian Council
Inspector Gregor Forbes, Police Scotland
Des Donnelly, Fire and Rescue Service
Gary Stoddart, Housing Manager, West Lothian Council
Eirwen Hopwood, Country Park Manager, West Lothian Council
George Scott, Neighbourhood Manager, West Lothian Council
Paul Kettrick, Property and Asset Manager, West Lothian Council

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

2. MINUTES

- (a) The committee noted the draft Minute of its Meeting held on 24 April 2017.
- (b) The committee noted the record of the inquorate meeting of the committee held on 26 June 2017.

3. POLICE WARD REPORT

The committee considered a report by Inspector Forbes, Police Scotland (copies of which had been circulated) which summarised police activity in the ward for the period to 31st July 2017, along with the performance figures for Anti-Social Behaviour for the period April to July 2017.

The report provided information on the Police Scotland National Priorities (delivered locally), the West Lothian priorities and the ward specific priorities. It outlined performance and solvency rates in the ward for the period from April to July 2017, together with comparator figures for the West Lothian area.

The report then went on to provide a full breakdown of the anti-social behaviour figures for the ward before moving on to provide an overview of the various crime prevention activities that had taken place in the ward during the reporting period. The report concluded with information on forthcoming events and local officer contact details.

Arising from the discussion, Inspector Forbes undertook to ascertain when the next test purchase initiative would be carried out in Whitburn. The Inspector concurred with members concerns about speeding traffic and expressed his hope that Police Scotland could work with the council to introduce measures to deal effectively with speeding traffic given the limited success Police enforcement appeared to be having.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

4. WHITBURN AND BLACKBURN MULTI-MEMBER WARD QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by Scottish Fire and Rescue Service providing an update on activity in the ward for the period up to 30th June 2017.

The committee was advised that following the publication of the Whitburn & Blackburn Multi-Member Ward Operational Plan, the Local Senior Fire Officer for Falkirk and West Lothian had produced quarterly performance reports detailing activity against key priorities.

The seven key priorities for the ward were outlined in the report.

Attached to the report, at Appendix 1, was a summary report that provided a series of graphs showing a breakdown of accidental dwellings fires, deliberate fires, fires in non-domestic properties, non-fatal non-fire emergencies and unwanted fire alarm signals for Scotland, West Lothian and the ward.

It was recommended that the local area committee note and provide comment on the Whitburn & Blackburn Multi-member Ward Quarterly Performance Report.

Decision

To note the contents of the report

5. SERVICE UPDATE - NETS, LAND AND COUNTRYSIDE

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Operational Services providing an update on the recent activity of the NETS, Land and Countryside Services teams for the period 1st May to 31st July 2017 and highlighting future works planned for the locality.

The report provided an overview of the routine works and enquiries that had been carried out by the grounds maintenance, garden maintenance and street cleansing teams. Information on the community involvement work of the enforcement wardens and the issuing of fixed penalty notices

was also provided. The report went on to provide a summary of the parks and woodlands routine works and enquiries and concluded with information on the routine works and enquiries dealt with relating to open spaces and cemeteries.

The committee was invited to note the content of the report and advise of any areas requiring further investigation or inclusion in future work plans.

Arising from the discussion, officers undertook to investigate a number of ward issues including the installation of a pedestrian crossing on the area of Whitburn Heritage Trail where it crossed the main road, fly tipping at communal residential bin areas, recharging event organisers for removing fly posting and regular clearance on overhanging branches obstructing road signs.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

6. WHITBURN PARTNERSHIP CENTRE

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Service providing an update on progress with Whitburn Partnership Centre.

The report recalled that the background to the council's decision to develop a £4.955m Partnership Centre in Whitburn. It also recalled that during spring 2015, the community of Whitburn had taken part in a Charrette to establish the long term needs and desires of the community to regenerate the town and, in particular, the town centre. The Charrette had included the establishment of a Partnership Centre. A community engagement group had subsequently been established to oversee and comment on the development of internal spaces, potential partners/new users, as well as to help consult more widely with the community of Whitburn.

An update report had been considered by the local area committee in September 2016 prior to the Council Executive agreeing in November 2016 that the Partnership Centre in Whitburn would be developed through the alteration and extension of the existing Burgh Halls and that the current library would be subject to the surplus property procedure. As part of the overall plans, it had also been agreed that third party funding would be sought in order to carry out improvements at Whitburn Community Centre.

The report then provided details and plans on the improvements which had been updated following further community engagement. Members noted that the Burgh Halls would be completely redeveloped with the current façade being maintained and a new extension being constructed to replace current arrangements at the rear of the building. A new entrance would be created at the side of the building to ensure the civic square was used with access to an open plan library, CIS facility, Access to Employment space and a community museum. The community hall would move to the front of the building. It would double in size and would be available for community

use outwith normal office hours. The first floor would incorporate open plan style office accommodate with staff from housing services and safer neighbourhood team officers based there. It would also include meeting rooms, staff breakout space and other office space, potentially for community use.

The committee then noted the decant arrangements that had been put in place during the refurbishment works including the CIS being temporarily relocated to Whitburn library alongside the newly installed self-payment kiosk and space for two housing officers. All other housing staff and SNT would be relocated to the Mill Centre in Blackburn. Alternative accommodation for user groups had been found to allow activities to continue and alternative accommodation for Boomerang was being explored. A table showing the timescales of the improvements works was provided in the report.

The committee was invited to note the development to date of the Whitburn Partnership Centre.

Arising from the discussion, the Neighbourhood Manager undertook to ensure that Councillor Sullivan was invited to the next meeting of the community consultation group. Members noted that whilst it was unfortunate that none of the partner agencies would be located in the Partnership Centre, there remained scope and opportunities to further develop the community space in the Partnership Centre. Members noted that the Partnership Centre was being delivered as a two location centre and the ongoing commitment to seek third party funding to carry out a range of improvements at the community centre.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

7. HOUSING, CONSTRUCTION AND BUILDING SERVICES

The committee considered a report by the Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (copies of which had been circulated) providing an overview of housing performance for the period 1st April to 30th June 2017.

The performance figures for property void and let for mainstream and temporary tenancies were detailed in the report and the committee noted that for the period April to June 2017 there was a total let of 39 properties for mainstream tenancies and 18 properties for temporary tenancies. There were 28 policy voids in the ward due to properties requiring repairs for asbestos removal, fire damage and Health and Safety issues, 3 of which were being used as decant properties.

A graph within the report demonstrated the position for rent arrears in the ward to the end of Q1 for financial year 2017/18 against the same period in the previous financial year. The current arrears balance in the ward was £317,081, an increase of £33,823 on last year's position of £283,258.

Overall the arrears position for West Lothian had improved by £89,115.

A table within the report provided members with an overview of the level of arrears banding and number of tenants in arrears in the ward at the end of the first quarter of 2017/18 compared to the same period in 2016. Although there were 62 serious arrears cases where tenants owed more than £1,000, members noted that 63% of cases fell into the lower bands with arrears of £300 or less. The rent strategy for 2017/18 would continue to improve rent collection methods and support customers in arrears. Officers were working closely with claimants of universal credits to minimise the risk of rent arrears whilst claimants were waiting on their applications being processed.

Further information was also contained in the report on the following:-

- Whitburn & Blackburn Area Team Activity;
- Capital Programme and New Build Council Housing;
- Tenant Participation; and
- Safer Neighbourhood Council Officer and Youth Work updates.

The report recommended that members note the content of the Housing, Customer and Building Services activity report.

The Housing Manager provided members a verbal update on the BT capacity issues that were affecting the handover of new council properties to tenants and his hope that the situation would be resolved by the end of October.

Decision

To note the contents of the report

8. PENSIONERS' GROUPS CHRISTMAS FUND PROVISIONAL ALLOCATIONS 2017

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

In 2017, the total amount available was £28,808 with the fund being divided by the total number of beneficiaries. The provisional number of beneficiaries was 3704. In the Whitburn and Blackburn ward, there were 304 beneficiaries and a provisional allocation of £2362.08.

Eight applications had been issued to groups across the ward, of which five had been returned. The intention was that the five groups would be supported and the remaining three would be followed up. Appendix 1 of the report detailed those organisations that would be supported, along

with the provisional amount allocated to each.

One application had also been sent to a Livingston-wide group. It had not yet been returned and was being followed up. Two applications had also been issued to West Lothian-wide groups, both of which had been returned. Appendix 2 provided further details on these groups.

The committee note that a full report on the final allocations would be presented to the Voluntary Organisations PDSP later in the year with letters to be issued to groups in late October advising of the funding they would receive.

The report recommended that the committee note the five groups within the ward that had applied to the fund and would be supported.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

9. COMMUNITY REGENERATION UPDATE

The committee considered a report by the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration (copies of which had been circulated) providing an update on regeneration activity within the Whitburn and Blackburn ward.

Progress to take forward the outcomes contained within the Whitburn Masterplan continued to be made. The outcomes were being developed through the Regeneration Advisory Group alongside Whitburn Town Centre Management Group. Given the scale of the Masterplan, the necessary working partnerships had been put in place to further develop the various actions and to pursue feasibility work and funding where appropriate. Main highlights since the last report included Whitburn “Place-branding”, Heritage Trail, Green Infrastructure and Active Travel Planning, Twin Towns Initiative, Aspiring Communities Fund and the development of a regeneration plan for Whitburn.

The report then provided an update on Whitburn Town Centre activity including Town Centre Shopfront Improvement Scheme, Whitburn Traders, Whitburn Gateway Projects and Town Centre Opportunity Sites before moving on to provide an update on the ongoing work to explore potential changes to improve the security, customer experience and aesthetics to the entrance of the community centre.

The report then proceeded to provide an update on regeneration activities in Blackburn including the Blackburn Fun Day, Summer Holiday Programme and West Lothian Alcohol and Drug Partnership application for alcohol diversionary funding. Members noted from the report an update on the Blackburn Partnership Centre which it was hoped would be fully operational by the end of the year. An update on the remaining allocations of village improvement funding within the ward was noted.

The report recommended that committee note:-

- (a) Progress to date with the Placemaking in Whitburn initiative;
- (b) Updates on Whitburn Town Centre related matters;
- (c) Updates on Whitburn Community Centre management committee and efforts to improve access to the centre;
- (d) Progress in Blackburn with planning towards developing a regeneration plan for the area; and
- (e) The update on Blackburn Partnership Centre.

The council's Corporate Estates Manager provided members with a verbal update on the latest timescales for the Blackburn Partnership Centre. He also informed the committee that an Asset Transfer Request had been received from the West Lothian Wolves for the existing Blackburn Community Centre. He explained in full detail the various legal stages of the Asset Transfer Request process. The committee agreed to receive a presentation from the West Lothian Wolves if appropriate.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

10. WORKPLAN

The committee noted the content of the workplan to September 2017 (copies of which had been circulated).

Decision

To note the terms of the workplan.



LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE

WARD 7, WHITBURN AND BLACKBURN,

REPORT BY POLICE INSPECTOR GREGOR FORBES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

Police Update for Whitburn and Blackburn

B. RECOMMENDATION

For discussion by the Chair.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I Council Values

Focusing on our customers' needs
Being honest, open and accountable
Providing equality of opportunities
Developing employees
Making best use of our resources
Working in partnership

**II Policy and Legal (including Strategic
Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues,
Health or Risk Assessment)**

**III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to
Officers**

**IV Impact on performance and performance
Indicators**

V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement

VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)

VII Consideration at PDSP

VIII Other consultations

D. TERMS OF REPORT

To update the Local Area Committee on performance, activities and issues across the Ward for the period up to 31st October 2017.

Our Purpose

To improve the safety and wellbeing of people, places and communities in Scotland

Our Focus

Keeping People Safe

Our Values

Integrity, Fairness and Respect

NATIONAL PRIORITIES – DELIVERED LOCALLY

Police Scotland Priorities

1. Violence, disorder and antisocial behaviour
2. Protecting people at risk of harm
3. Road safety and road crime
4. Serious Organised Crime
5. Counter Terrorism

WEST LOTHIAN PRIORITIES

Your West Lothian Priorities

1. Protecting People
2. Reducing Anti Social Behaviour
3. Reducing Violence
4. Tackling Substance Misuse
5. Making our Roads Safer
6. Tackling Serious and Organised Crime

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PRIORITIES

Your Local priorities

1. Preventing Violence and Anti Social Behaviour
2. Making our Roads Safer
3. Tackling Substance Misuse
4. Tackling Acquisitive Crime

PERFORMANCE

Crimes Groups 1 to 5 (Ref: Crime Statistics JG Area Command) (April 17 – October 2017)						
Area	This year to date			Last year to date		
	Rec.	Sol.	% Sol	Rec.	Sol.	% Sol
West Lothian Area	4272	1925	45.1%	4365	1961	44.9%
Whitburn and Blackburn (April to September 2017)	452	229	50.7%	451	212	47%

Future statistics will be posted on the Police Scotland Website that can be accessed via the link below.

Ward plans and Community information can also be obtained by using the link to access the website and then tab into 'your community' and enter your postcode to find the Whitburn and Blackburn Ward.

<http://www.scotland.police.uk/about-us/our-performance/>

ASB performance for period up to and including 31/10/2017

Whitburn and Blackburn Ward – October 2017					
Month	Oct -17	LYTD	TYTD	% Change	
Youth Calls	37	191	229	20%	
All ASB Calls	130	941	976	4%	
Hate Crime	4	24	32	33%	
Vandalism & Reckless Conduct	16	127	115	-9%	
Fire-raising	2	9	8	-11%	
Public Space Assaults	7	60	64	7%	

ISSUES OF NOTE

- **Exceptional Reporting on the above**

The above Anti Social Behaviour results are produced by the West Lothian Community Safety Unit and show the figures up to end of October 2017 and also include the year to date compared to last year to date.

April 2017

Youth Calls – Up by 20%, which equates to 38 more calls compared to last year to date. There were 37 calls reported to the Ward in October 2017 and the overall figure is raised due to exceptional rise earlier in the period. The CAT and Ward officers will continue to task to identified hotspot areas to detect and deter offending.

ASB Calls – Up by 4% in the year to date and this equates to 35 more calls this year to date.

Hate Crime – Rise of 33% with 4 crimes reported in October. The year to date shows 8 more crimes in the year to date.

Vandalism / Reckless Conduct – Down by 9% on last year to date which equates to 9 less crimes. 16 crimes recorded in October.

Fire Raising – Down by 11% on last year to date - this equates to 1 less call than last year to date. 2 fire raising incidents reported in October.

Public Space Assaults – rise of 7% change. 7 crimes reported in October and 64 this year to date. 4 more than last year to date.

PREVENTION

- **Activities**

Reducing antisocial behaviour within our communities

The Ward Officers continue when available to carry out high visibility patrols in local parks and engage with youths as part of their daily tasking.

In an effort to maintain the reduction in youth calls and calls of Anti Social Behaviour the team continue to provide resources at key times in identified areas aimed at reducing ASB and youth calls to the ward.

There are now 3 Key Anti-Social Behaviour tenancies in the ward and these are subject to constant monitoring by police and SNT. An ASBO is live on one and the other addresses are being monitored and any issues reported.

Reducing community and social harm caused by drug and alcohol misuse

The Ward Officers and CAT continue to carry out stop and searches to deter, disrupt, divert and detect offenders.

In October 10 crime reports have been submitted for drug offences with offences including possession of cannabis, cocaine and ecstasy. Also there have been reports submitted for growing cannabis.

2 persons have been reported for being concerned in the supply of drugs.

Making our Roads Safer

The Community Action Team carry out road checks to provide reassurance and carry out enforcement and education of young drivers to work towards reducing the communities fear in regards anti social driving by young persons.

Road Safety –

Local officers have carried out Speed checks at various identified hotspot locations in the Ward and have issued warnings to drivers for speeding that did not meet criteria for offence. 6 tickets were issued for speeding in the Ward in October.

In addition 18 parking tickets were issued in October.

The Ward Officers and CAT will continue to support local schools and Junior Road Safety Officer's with Parksmart schemes around their schools, identifying issues and speaking with parents to remind them of safe driving and parking near schools. A conference was held in Bathgate and Livingston to launch to new Parksmart scheme with WLC and police supporting this.

Tackling Acquisitive Crime

There was a rise in acquisitive crime in October as the dark nights begin. 3 sheds were broken into in Blackburn and also 2 in Whitburn, a motorcycle was stolen from one of the thefts in Whitburn. Enquiries continue to identify the suspects for these.

Enquiries continue into the crimes where persons have not been identified.

- **Initiatives**

Reducing Anti Social Behaviour

The Community Policing Team work closely with the WLC SNT officer for the area and continue to challenge ASB in the home, issue tenancy warnings, and this can lead to Anti Social Behaviour Orders being issued.

There are 3 Key Anti-Social Behaviour tenancies in the ward and these are subject to constant monitoring by police and SNT.

Local officers continue to work with staff from the local children's residential schools and homes in an effort to address missing person enquiries and anti-social behaviour which is contributing to a rise in Whitburn ward.

Tackling Substance Misuse

Local officers will act on intelligence received regarding misuse of drugs and will continue to utilise their powers where appropriate to stop and search people suspected of being in possession of drugs.

Cannabis cultivations were recovered and local officers are submitting a significant amount of community intelligence gained by closer links with the community.

Making our Roads Safer

The local Ward officers and CAT officers will continue to address identified issues of speeding by carrying out Hand Held Radar checks on main arterial routes in the ward.

The ward officers will continue to patrol at Primary Schools at key times in an effort to deter inconsiderate and unsafe parking by parents and guardians.

Where hotspots are identified the local Ward Officers will liaise with Roads Policing to include on their patrol matrix to maximise opportunity of a police presence to address issue.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

#Your View Counts – Please provide your views on policing – look out for your local officers at pop up events throughout summer.

Need the Police? – Call **101**. The 101 campaign is ongoing in an effort to raise awareness of the number for members of the public to use to call the police.

We also request that people sign up and follow your local policing team on Twitter [@WestLothPolice](#) and Facebook – [West Lothian Police](#)

CONTACTS

Sector Inspector

Inspector Gregor Forbes Gregor.Forbes@scotland.pnn.police.uk

Sector Sergeant

Sergeant John Fleming John.fleming@scotland.pnn.police.uk

Community Policing Team Whitburn

Mail to: WhitburnBlackburnCPT@scotland.pnn.police.uk

PC Wilson and PC McInnes

The policing model has been developed providing a funded officer and ward manager (shown above) in each ward in West Lothian. In addition to this there is a team of 1 + 10 uniformed officers known as the Community Action Team available to assist with community enforcement duties and day to day community policing demands in the west side of the area.



WHITBURN AND BLACKBURN LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE

WHITBURN AND BLACKBURN MULTI-MEMBER WARD PERFORMANCE REPORT

REPORT BY SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update the Whitburn and Blackburn Local Area Committee on the activity within Whitburn and Blackburn Multi-Member Ward for the period up to 30th September 2017.

B. RECOMMENDATION

That Committee Members are invited to note and provide comment on the Whitburn and Blackburn Multi-member Ward Performance Report.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I Council Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Being honest, open and accountable• Focusing on our customers' needs• Making best use of our resources• Working in partnership
II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	Quarterly reports on the Multi-member Ward Operational Plans are being produced to ensure delivery of the Local Fire and Rescue Plan, which is a statutory requirement of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012.
III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None.
IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators	WL CPP SOA Performance indicators.
V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	SOA1304_13 Number of deliberate fires per 100,000 population SOA1304_14 Number of accidental dwelling fires per 100,000 population.
VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	The council contributes to directly and in partnership to the delivery of the Ward Plan
VII Consideration at PDSP	None
VIII Consultations	West Lothian Citizen's Panel Survey, July 2014.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 Background

Quarterly reports on the Multi-Member Ward Operational Plans have been produced by SFRS to ensure delivery of the Local Fire and Rescue Plan for West Lothian 2014 – 2017, which is a requirement under the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012, Section 41E.

D.2 Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS Whitburn and Blackburn Multi-member Ward Quarterly Report

Following the publication of the Whitburn and Blackburn Multi-member Ward Operational Plan, the Local Senior Officer for Falkirk and West Lothian has produced a Performance Report detailing activity against the key priorities.

The seven key priorities within the Whitburn and Blackburn Ward area are as follows:

Continuous Priority

- Local Risk Management and Preparedness.

High Priority

- Reduction of Dwelling Fires
- Reduction in Fire Fatalities and Casualties
- Reduction of Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals

Medium Priority

- Reduction of Deliberate Fire Setting
- Reduction of Fires in Non-Domestic Property
- Reduction in Casualties from Non-Fire Emergencies.

E. CONCLUSION

The Whitburn and Blackburn Multi-member Ward Performance Report aligns to the key priorities of the Local Fire and Rescue Plan for West Lothian 2014 – 2017, the West Lothian Strategic Assessment of Community Safety and continues with the excellent partnership working on Community Safety, which is evident in West Lothian.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None.

Brian Robertson

Station Manager, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

October 2017

Appendix 1 - Whitburn and Blackburn Multi-Member Ward Performance Report



West Lothian Council Area

Ward Performance Report

Quarter 2 2017

Whitburn and Blackburn

DISCLAIMER

The figures included in this report are provisional and subject to change as a result of quality assurance and review. The statistics quoted are internal management information published in the interests of transparency and openness.

The Scottish government publishes Official Statistics each year which allow for comparisons to be made over longer periods of time.

Please ensure any external partners in receipt of these reports are aware of this.

Introduction

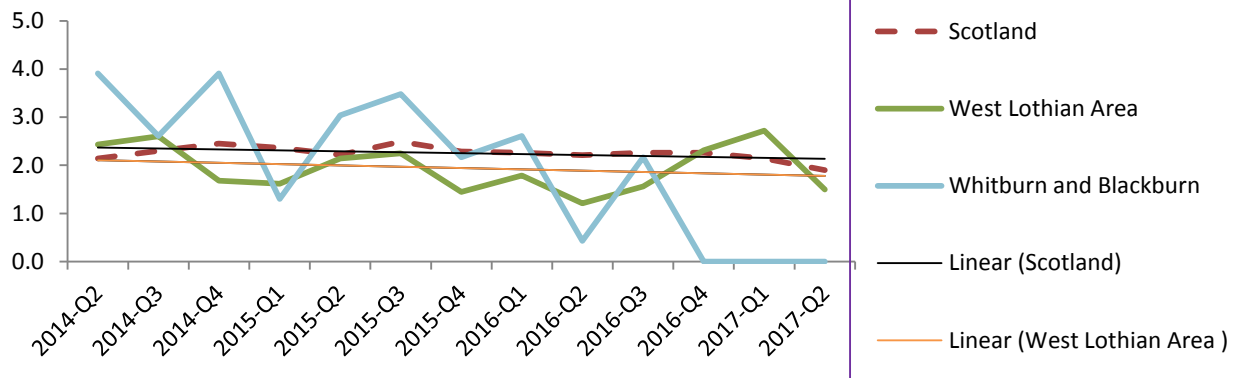
Welcome to the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Ward Performance Report. This performance report is designed to provide citizens, stakeholders and partners with information relating to ward based activity undertaken by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

In addition to historical ward based activity, this performance report provides information on the historic activity in the West Lothian Council area and Scotland. To allow benchmarking to be undertaken, the units of measurement in the performance graphs in the report are based on incidents/events per head of population.

Whilst using historic statistical benchmarking data, consideration must be taken of the somewhat random nature of fire related incidents and events, and how this can pose difficulties in interpreting emerging patterns and trends. This is of specific relevance where ward level data is analysed due to the relatively small number of actual incidents/events that occur in ward areas.

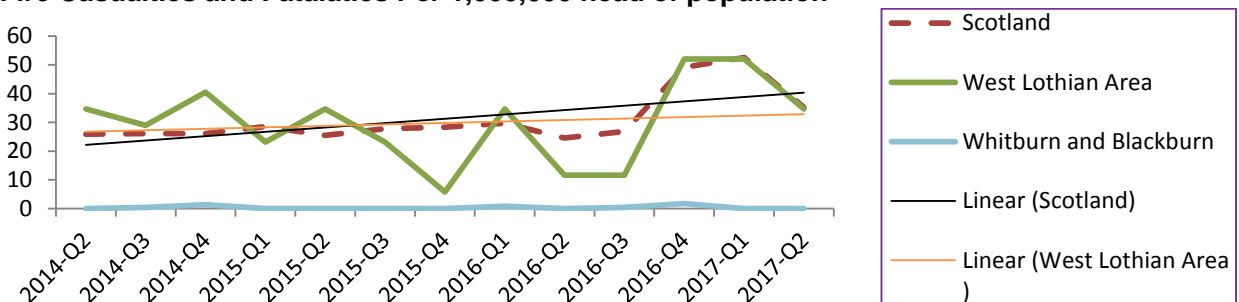
However, regardless of statistical anomalies, emerging patterns and trends in fire related incidents and events can assist the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and Community Planning Partners plan and implement preventative intervention initiatives to target reducing fire related incidents and events.

Accidental Dwelling Fires Per 10,000 head of population



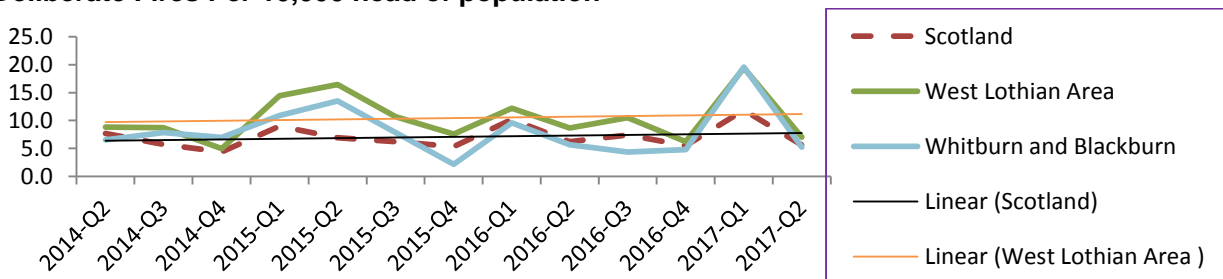
During the 2017-18 year to date reporting period SFRS have dealt with 5 accidental dwelling fire in comparison to 1 during 2016-17 year to date reporting period.

Fire Casualties and Fatalities Per 1,000,000 head of population



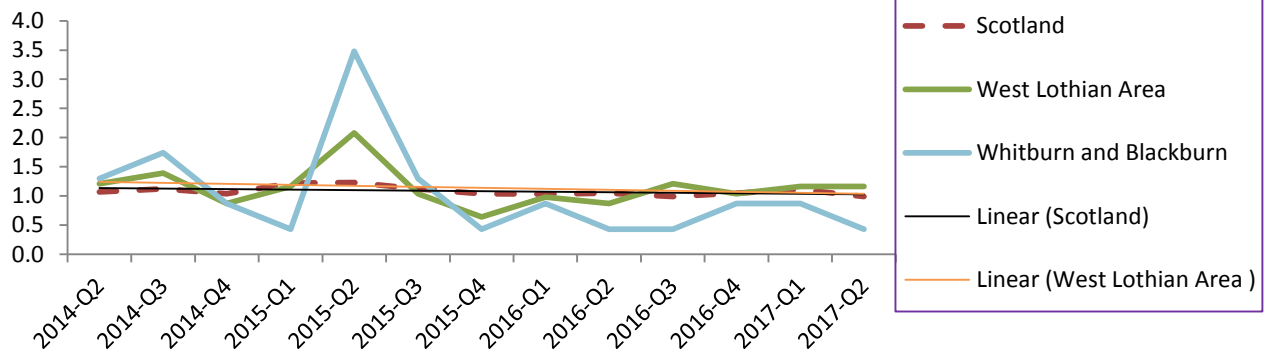
During the 2017-18 year to date reporting period SFRS have dealt with 0 casualties due to fire in comparison to 0 during 2016-17 year to date reporting period.

Deliberate Fires Per 10,000 head of population



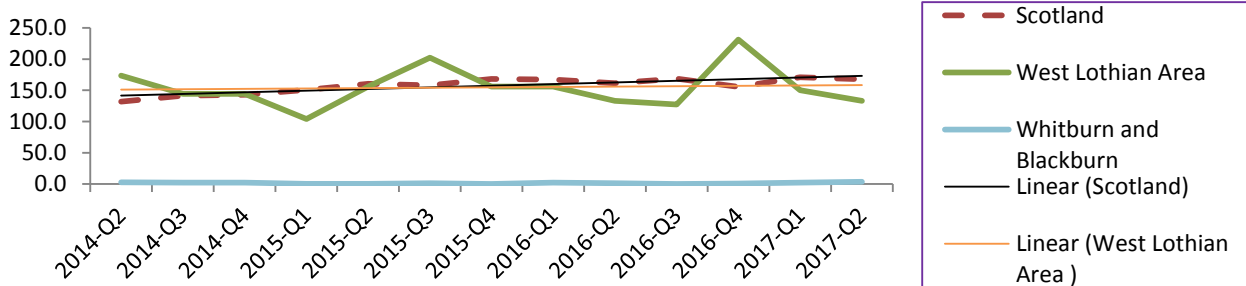
SFRS have dealt with 12 deliberate fires incidents during 2017-18 year to date reporting period in comparison to 13 during 2016-17 year to date reporting period.

Fires In Non Domestic Property Per 10,000 head of population



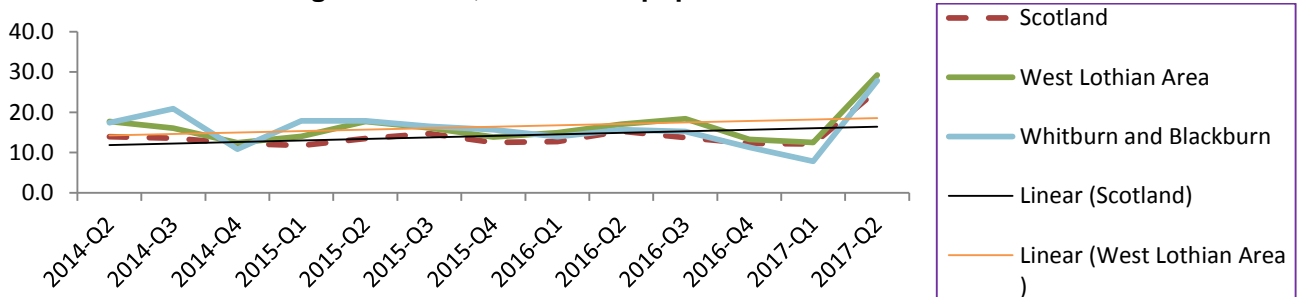
SFRS have dealt with 1 non domestic fires incident during 2017-18 year to date reporting period in comparison to 1 during 2016-17 year to date reporting period.

Non-fatal Non-Fire Emergencies Casualties Per 1,000,000 head of population



SFRS have dealt with 12 casualties from non-fire emergencies during 2017-18 year to date reporting period in comparison to 4 during 2016-17 year to date reporting period.

Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals Per 10,000 head of population



SFRS have dealt with 64 UFAS incidents during 2017-18 year to date reporting period in comparison to 36 during 2016-17 year to date reporting period.

Additional Comments

SFRS is committed to 'Working Together for a Safer Scotland' and to engage with business partners to reduce demand from Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS).



WHITBURN AND BLACKBURN LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE

BLACKBURN PARTNERSHIP CENTRE

REPORT BY DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to update the committee on progress with Blackburn Partnership Centre.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the committee notes that the construction of Blackburn Partnership Centre is complete; and notes the revised timescales for council services opening in the new building.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I Council Values	Focusing on our customers' needs. Being honest, open and accountable. Making best use of our resources. Working in partnership.
II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	None.
III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None.
IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators	Based on experience at existing partnership centres, the new centre is expected to have a positive impact on performance indicators measuring customer satisfaction.
V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	We live longer, healthier lives and have reduced health inequalities. We make the most efficient and effective use of resources by minimising our impact on the built and natural environment.

VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	The council's contribution to the cost of the centre is £3,968,000. When the centre opens, the community centre and health centre will be surplus to the requirements of the partners.
VII Consideration at PDSP	A report on the partnership centre was considered most recently at the Council Executive on 29 March 2016.
VIII Other Consultations	The Head of Finance and Property Services and Head of Housing, Building and Customer Services have been consulted on this report.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D1 Project Summary

Blackburn Partnership Centre has built through a partnership between the council and NHS Lothian. The centre will accommodate the GP practice, community health service, dentist, community centre (including sports hall, IT training suite and multi-purpose early years/young people's space), library, CIS, and the Blackburn and Seafield Credit Union.

D2 Progress to Date

The construction of the building is now complete, as is the internal fit-out of the building. Furniture has been installed, including tables, chairs and library shelving.

There were some unforeseen delays in the handover of the building, originally scheduled for 4 September. NHS Lothian accepted the building on 6 October. The reason for the delay in handover was due to the lack of required certification for essential systems. These are now in place.

At the time of writing this report, Ashgrove Medical Practice are in the process of moving the contents and of their practice into the new building and IT systems have been installed. The practice is to open to the public on Monday 13 November.

Work on the lease agreements progresses but is expected to continue into December, delaying the move-in of council services. The Blackburn and Seafield Credit Union is expected to move-in at the same time as the library and CIS.

D3 Communication

The Community Consultation Group held its last meeting on 25 April of this year. It was agreed at this meeting that the project had surpassed the need for a separate consultation forum and that officers would instead keep the Blackburn Community Council and the Blackburn Community Centre Management Committee informed of progress.

The council's lead officer for this project continues to regularly attend Blackburn Community Council meetings to inform of progress and a tour of the completed building was given to the Community Council and the Management Committee recently, which generated positive feedback and some helpful feedback.

This follows a public display in June of this year in the Mill Centre, firstly in the main thoroughfare of the building with officers present over lunchtimes to answer questions

and then in Blackburn Connected.

D4 Public Art

The Public Art Commissioning Group, comprising of the council's Arts Officer and Neighbourhood Manager, Edinburgh and Lothian's Health Foundation Arts Officer and chair of the Community Consultation Group, awarded the Public Art contract to Civic Architects.

Civic Architects have created a mural that tells the story of Blackburn and which will dominate a long section of wall above the reception desk area. The design was created with input from across the whole community; the Community Consultation Group, school children, older people in the community and users of the current community facilities.

The final design has been approved and is expected to be installed imminently.

E. CONCLUSION

Construction of the partnership centre is behind schedule but continues to progress and with continuing community engagement. The building was handed over to NHS Lothian on 6 October. Ashgrove Medical Practice will open to the public on 13 November, and council services and the Blackburn and Seafeld Credit Union are estimated to move in at the end of the year.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

Files held in: Housing, Building and Customer Services and
Financial, Property and Construction Services

Appendices/Attachments: None

Contact Person:

Lorna Kemp
Project Officer – IJB
Lorna.Kemp@westlothian.gov.uk
01506 283519

Meeting Date: 27 November 2017

Jim Forrest, Depute Chief Executive



WHITBURN AND BLACKBURN LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE

ADVICE SHOP SERVICE UPDATE

REPORT BY HEAD OF FINANCE AND PROPERTY SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of the report is to inform the local area committee of the work undertaken by the Advice Shop Service from April 2016 to March 2017.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. Notes the Advice Shop provision in the ward; and,
2. Notes the impact provision is having in terms of supporting the outcomes of the 'Better Off: West Lothian Anti-Poverty Strategy'.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I Council Values	Focusing on our customers' needs; being honest, open and accountable; providing equality of opportunities; making best use of our resources; and working in partnership
II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	None.
III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None.
IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators	The activity contained in the report contributes to service KPIs.
V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	<p>We are better educated and have access to increased and better quality learning and employment opportunities.</p> <p>We live longer, healthier lives and have reduced health inequalities.</p> <p>We have tackled significant inequalities in West Lothian society.</p>

VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	Activities delivered from approved budgets supplemented by external funding from Macmillan Cancer Support, European Social Fund and Scottish Legal Aid Board.
VII Consideration at PDSP	None.
VIII Other consultations	None.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 Background

The Advice Shop is a free, impartial and confidential service to help the people of West Lothian with a focus to alleviate poverty, promote inclusion and equality through advice, assistance and advocacy. It does this by providing comprehensive advice to adults and specifically targets those who are:

- Without work or in low paid work.
- Are poor and/or fuel poor.
- Have money/debt issues.
- Have been affected by cancer or other long term conditions.
- Are over 60.

The Advice Shop service is funded through: a core council budget, European Social Fund, Macmillan Cancer Support and the Scottish Legal Aid Board.

All activity across the service is informed and prioritised by the 'Better Off: West Lothian Anti-Poverty Strategy'. The overall purpose of this strategy is to help minimise the impact of poverty on the people of West Lothian. Its objective is to ensure that people are equipped to cope with the challenges they currently face and the impact that this has on their health, education and community involvement, the aim being to help people to obtain and retain employment as a key route out of poverty.

D.2 Local Provision

Appendix one shows the number of people the service has worked with over the last year in the Whitburn and Blackburn area.

The Advice Shop has helped 2,276 customers to manage their money and to resolve benefit problems. This resulted in 6,225 separate enquiry types. This is an increase of 8% compared to the 2015/16 period and is a result of increasing our sessions at Whitburn CIS and Whitburn Community Centre. Consequently, customers better understand that claimants and benefit administrators have rights, obligations and constraints and have some idea what these are. Customers know how to take the steps they can to sort out their benefit queries and are able to maximise their household income.

The Court Advice Project is funded through the Scottish Legal Aid Board to support anyone who is at court facing eviction who engages with our service to provide positive outcomes. Customers can be in social or private housing or an owner occupier. The service worked with 162 families in the ward to support them to sustain their home.

The service had identified the following priorities for development over the 2016/17 year. To;

- Carry out a Universal Credit consultation within the Whitburn Area.
- Support local services through delivery of training, workshops and briefings to improve confidence and understanding of the social security system and how to refer.
- Continue to work with the Foodbank with the '3 or more' project.
- Develop and enhance the Whitburn CIS and Living Well session.

All of these priorities have been achieved and in 2017/18 we will be working to embed these services into local community, work towards National Standards for Advice Providers and increase awareness of the One-2-One project.

Appendix Two shows the wider work of the Advice Shop and the specific campaigns which are delivered across West Lothian alongside a range of projects which are provided in partnership with key agencies to target the most vulnerable in our communities.

E. CONCLUSION

The report and attached appendices summarise the work of the Advice Shop service in the Whitburn and Blackburn ward area and an overview of the Advice Shop Service as a whole. The Local Area Committee is asked to note the contents of the report and the intention to report on activity in the ward area on an annual basis.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None.

Appendices/Attachments:

Appendix 1: Whitburn and Blackburn Ward Profile April 2016-March 2017

Appendix 2: Advice Shop Annual Report 2016/17

Contact Person: Elaine Nisbet, Anti-poverty and Welfare Advice Manager

Tel: 01506 282936 email: Elaine.nisbet@westlothian.gov.uk

Donald Forrest

Head of Finance and Property Services

Date of meeting: 27th November 2017

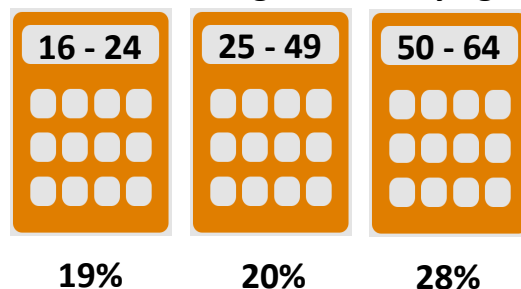
Whitburn and Blackburn Profile April 2016 - March 2017

What we know about the community*



20% Children
63% Working Age
17% Pensionable age

Percentage of working age adults claiming benefits by age

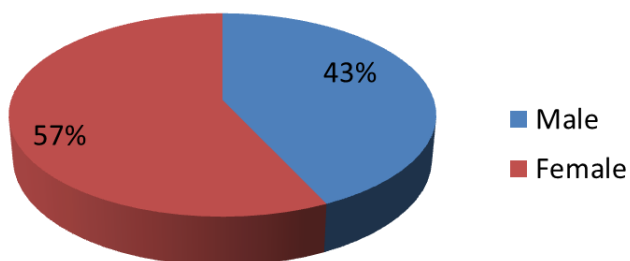


* taken from Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics: www.sns.gov.uk

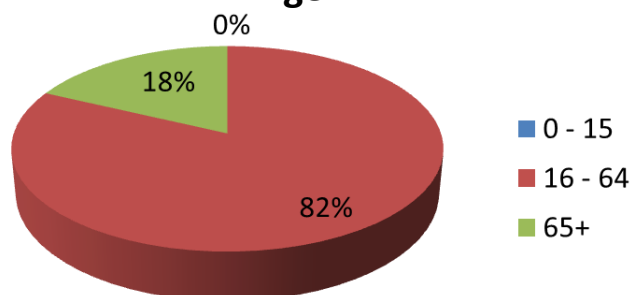
Who we've worked with

2276 Advice Shop Clients

Gender



Age



Preventing Homelessness



Maximising Income for clients

Benefit Awards



Appeals



Energy Savings



More accessible for clients

Whitburn Foodbank



Working with the Foodbank offering urgent support to those in a crisis

Whitburn CIS



Weekly session to enhance engagement in the Whitburn Area

Case Study

We represented a customer who had applied for Personal Independence Payment and was turned down after he had attended a medical assessment. The customer suffers from depression, anxiety and drug misuse. The anxiety that he suffers was as a result of being attacked out of doors and he was stabbed numerous times and almost died.

We had identified he had a case for gaining more points for both the daily living and mobility component.

Following a meeting with the customer we discovered he required significant support from his daughter. This included both care needs within the house and also support when outside due to severe anxiety. We had to quickly build a relationship with the customer to reduce anxiety, build trust and best support customer.

We worked in partnership with West Lothian Drug and Alcohol Service and the customer Community Psychiatric Nurse to gather supporting medical evidence for the customer appeal and to ensure that customer was receiving all the support which he required.

Customers appeal was successful increasing his weekly income by £55.10 per week with an additional backdate of £2314. Following the increased award, we were able to assist his daughter to claim Carers Allowance and Income Support increasing her weekly income by £107.70 per week and ensuring she was able to provide the care and support which was required.

Customer commented;

I was really happy with the help the Advice Shop gave me; I will be able to spend some money on buying things for my house, on buying some new clothing and these will help me gain confidence and feel better about myself. I will still require support

This Year we plan to;

- ◆ Develop and enhance the Whitburn CIS and Community Centre sessions.
- ◆ Continue to work with the Foodbank with the '3 or more' project and 'Festive fiver'.
- ◆ Work closely with partners to ensure customers are aware of and supported to deal with upcoming welfare reforms including Universal Credit.



Annual Report
2016-17



Better off
West Lothian



**West Lothian
Council**

What we do

The Advice Shop is a free, impartial and confidential service to help the people of West Lothian with a focus to alleviate poverty and to promote inclusion and equality through advice, assistance and advocacy.

Our aim is to ensure that everyone in West Lothian has access to a free, quality advice service. The service supports local people to access information, advice, advocacy and representation. By helping households to: increase their disposable income, access fuel advice, manage their debt, remain in their homes, improve their budgeting skills, and appeal benefit decisions made by the Department for Work and Pensions, the Advice Shop helps people to get the support they need to resolve their problems.

The service treats everyone as an individual, ensuring they are able to get help in the way that works for them and meets their needs. We do this by:

- Treating all our customers with dignity, respect and courtesy.
- No one having to wait more than 45 minutes to be seen face to face by an advisor.

- Responding to telephone calls within twenty four hours and answering written or email correspondence within two working days.
- Assessing the enquiry and providing accurate and impartial advice offering options to resolve the issue.
- Keeping customers up-to-date on the progress of their enquiry; advising them of what will happen at the next stage and any action to be taken by both advisor and customer.
- If we are unable to get in touch we will make three attempts to contact the customer before closing the case.
- We hope customers will tell us the outcome of the enquiry, if not we will aim to contact them to discuss the result and to offer appropriate follow up advice.

99.8% customers rated the overall quality of service as excellent or good

98.6% of customers rated the timeliness of the service as excellent or good

99.8% of customers rated the attitude of staff as excellent or good

(Based on result of customer surveys conducted during 2016/17)

Improving access to advice

Customers encounter challenges and problems that they do not know how to deal with and they need help to overcome. Sometimes these issues can be quickly resolved. Other times it is not that simple. More complex situations rarely come neatly packaged up as a single problem and may require more in-depth support from our service. The Advice Shop provides both generalist and specialist advice and

understands the way people's problems can interact and overlap. Getting good advice, quickly and easily can help customers to make informed decisions to stop the problems escalating.

Over the past year, the service has worked with customers and partners to increase access to advice in a variety of ways.



23 pop up sessions available across the county

- Drop in, no appointment needed at the Advice Shop in Bathgate
8.30am – 5pm Monday – Thursday
8.30pm – 4pm Friday
- Over the telephone for either customers or professionals looking for information and advice.
- Lots of information, advice, handy hints and links to other organisations is available through our website pages.
- Email with your enquiry by completing the on-line referral form and, depending on your enquiry; we will either respond by email or telephone you.
- Appointments to discuss more complex issues.
- Self-help guides.

Helping people to help themselves:

At the heart of our approach is the belief that the best way to help people in financial difficulty is to empower them to help themselves. Our information booklets support customers to understand their options and give them the confidence to take the next steps. This self-help approach allows people to manage their own situation.

Responded to over 1600 on-line referrals

Received 39,915 hits to our website pages which provides up-to-date information and advice

Answered 32,763 telephone calls

Financial capability means improving people's ability to manage money well, both day to day and through significant life events, and their ability to handle periods of financial difficulty. It supports people to develop financial skills and knowledge, and gain access to financial services. The Advice Shop helps through:

Council New Build Project



Tenants are invited to have a benefit check prior to taking up a new build tenancy. We want to make sure that prospective tenants understand their income and outgoings, maximise their income through take up of entitlements and consider their options regarding an increase in rent and potential expenditure on a new home. In the last year, there were 149 referrals; 95% engaged with the project. Customers all received a benefit check and, where appropriate, support to complete claims along with the offer of budgeting advice. The average increase in benefit was £2969.

Budgeting Support Project

With the introduction of Universal Credit, there has been a significant change in how customers receive their benefit payments. To help people through this change and to improve their budgeting skills, an advisor works with them over a period of time offering one-to-one meetings, workshops on specific topics and self-help packs.

The advisor works with the customer to: establish income and expenditure, review direct debits and regular payments, support clients to prioritise their outgoings, help clients to switch & save with utility suppliers and insurance providers and, request Alternative Payment Arrangements from the Department for Work and Pensions. Building up a trusted

relationship has been a pivotal part of this project as the advisor has found people have presented with rent and council tax arrears, fuel supplier issues as well as many other debts after initially discussing budgeting.

Financial capability workshops were held as part of the Home Start monthly family group sessions. At the end of the workshops participants found they had learned simple ideas to save money, the benefits of price comparison sites, finding out more about who is out there to help and information on affordable credit.



They were all so positive in their evaluations and sitting in on the sessions there was a good feeling. They were all very open and happy to discuss - this is fab because they often feel like they're the only one who is going through whatever they're struggling with". **Home Start Worker**

Young Parents project



Many young people struggle to manage their money and, often when they have become parents, there is a significant added pressure of providing for their family. In partnership with Children 1st, a family support worker and money advisor worked together to target vulnerable young parents with children aged 0-8 years. The advisor and support worker looked at the whole family, building up a trusting and

secure relationship. Over time, parents learned what to do to manage their budget, borrow responsibly and manage their household income – for many it was the first time they had been in control of their finances. Importantly, parents have been able to build lasting and effective connections between quality advice providers and trusted sources of support.

Peter

Peter was 22; it was evident his life was very chaotic and he was fighting for custody of his six year old son. Peter had accrued massive debts, owing the local authority over £8000 in rent and council tax arrears. Peter was already engaged in court action for rent arrears. The family support worker and money advisor began to work closely with Peter to ensure his income was in place. The money advisor applied for housing benefit to cover his weekly rent charge. The advisor referred him to the Court Advice project to represent him at court. This helped him to secure his tenancy and would help him to have a home for his son should he gain custody. It took several appointments, home visits, calls and letters to get Peter to look seriously at his options going forward. As the advisors gained the trust of Peter and he felt more secure, he disclosed that he had had an addiction

problem from a young age. A referral was made, with his consent, to the Social Work Addictions team.

He was awarded full custody of his son and became his sole guardian. This allowed the money advisor to apply for further benefits. The support worker committed many hours each week to help Peter find some part time work; he was successful in gaining a temporary contract spraying cars. This built his confidence and allowed the money advisor to revisit the whole financial situation with him again. Through intense multiagency assistance, he completed a successful minimal asset bankruptcy.

Peter is now debt free, has a part time job, a secure tenancy with no threat of eviction, addiction free and continues to attend the project for support and to meet other young dads.

We have:

Worked with **14,463** customers

52% are council tenants

77% are working age

Dealt with **60,320** enquiries

Resolved **16** complaints down from **17** last year



Provided support and advice:

Delivered over **100** workshops, presentations and briefings to help front line staff and customers understand better what they are entitled to

Offered **2500** appointments to provide tailored advice

Sent **3073** texts to remind clients of appointments, paperwork and key dates



Made a difference:

Gained **£27.9m** of income for customers

Helped customers to manage **£8m** of debt

36% of money advice customers were supported to enter into a Scottish Government debt scheme including bankruptcy and sequestration

Won **75%** of all appeals which meant customers received over **£1m** of benefits

Supported **655** households to remain in their home through preventative work

Assisted customers to make **£77,467** in fuel savings



Impact on customers:

99% of customers stated they had a better understanding of their situation

93% of customers indicated they feel less stressed and anxious about their finances

96% of customers stated they were more confident in making decisions to improve their situation

92% of customers felt they were more aware of how to manage their finances



(Based on results of customer surveys conducted during 2016/17)



*Volunteering gives me a purpose in life.
Volunteering brings out the potential you didn't know you had.
Volunteering allows you to grow and develop and take on new challenges.
Volunteering can help build your CV and to eventual employment"*

Macmillan @ West Lothian cancer information and support service

2016 saw the opening of the Macmillan @ West Lothian Cancer Information and Support Service. Funded by Macmillan Cancer Support and delivered through the Advice Shop, the new service aims to ensure that no-one in West Lothian faces cancer alone. A network of information and support hubs will be available across the county, providing time to talk, a listening ear, access to high quality information on the non - clinical aspects of living with cancer and referrals to local services such as benefits advice and counselling. The first drop in hub opened in Bathgate Partnership Centre in May 2016, followed by Strathbrock Partnership Centre in January 2017. Three further hubs will be established in 2017/18. Although 3 members of staff are employed by the project, volunteers are responsible for the day to day running of the service. 14 committed volunteers are involved in the project.



I learn new skills, meet new people and help others every time I volunteer"
Mary Reynolds, Macmillan Information & Support Volunteer



Elaine

My husband and I walked down to the Macmillan drop-in and, after a chat and a cup of tea, the volunteers made a referral to the benefits team as most of my benefits including disability benefits had been affected. You can tell the volunteers what you can't sit and talk to family about as you don't want to worry your family and it is all private. My benefit issues have all been sorted with a great outcome and I am now more positive and worry less.

My family has also been supported and the information provided in the form of leaflets, books and website information has allowed them feel less anxious and, as a result, we are a lot closer than we've ever been. We are now as a family able to talk about my cancer openly. If I was to sum up the service it would be "Lifesaving".

Advice Shop Volunteers

The Advice Shop works with an additional 23 volunteers who support customers as:



Disability Benefit Volunteers – Assisting customers to complete disability claim forms at pre-arranged appointment sessions.



Volunteering for the Advice Shop has enabled me to help people with various medical conditions. I fill out forms for them as these forms are difficult and awkward for them to do so. I am happy I trained within the Advice Shop as I have learned a lot about medical conditions and mental health issues" **Janet Cooper, Disability Benefit Volunteer**

Customer Impact

"Perfect help, so glad I made this appointment"

"Appointment couldn't have been handled any better in an understanding and sensitive manner. Volunteer had the ability to empathise with daily struggle"

Disability Buddies – support individual customers who have to attend disability benefit medical assessments in Edinburgh and other areas as part of their claim for benefits.



Volunteering can give you a real sense of purpose; the opportunity to meet other people and also to access relevant training that is hugely beneficial from a personal perspective but also for future job prospects "
Claire Watt, Disability Benefit Volunteer



Garry

I had a Buddy for my last Employment Support Allowance assessment. I went alone to previous assessments, and I felt more confident and less stressed having my Buddy, Claire, with me. We had a meeting a few days before the assessment and that was a big help because I knew who was going with me. She met me in Edinburgh and stayed with me during the assessment. At the assessment, my mind went completely blank once or twice. Claire reminded me about the things I forgot to say.

The service was great, very supportive and lots of people would benefit from it"

Advice Shop Volunteers *continues*

Communication Volunteers – assist customers who are not confident in speaking English to communicate with Advice Shop Advisors at regular Polish session appointment slots.

IT Buddies – support members of the public to get online and use IT. This could be in local libraries, groups or in Access2employment Work Clubs. IT Buddies have worked with a number of partners including Bield Housing, Braid House, West Lothian 50+ Network, and Rosemount Gardens to make computers and the internet more accessible.

IT Buddies have assisted customers to get to grips with new technology and gain confidence in their ability to use their own devices; become better connected with others using email, Skype and social media and access online services such as Universal Jobmatch or online shopping.

Volunteers contributed a total of **1923** hours of support

Recruited, trained and supported **37** volunteers to better support some of our more vulnerable customers

Provided **862** customers with extra support through our volunteers

100% of volunteers who participated in our annual Volunteer Survey agreed or strongly agreed that volunteers are valued and are happy with the way their volunteering is managed and organised.



Targeting those most in need

With the on-going changes to the benefits system, some of the most vulnerable people in our community have been adversely affected. For many, these changes have had a big impact and people can often feel isolated or that things are out of control.

This makes it hard to think clearly and to take action. The service has worked with trusted professionals and partners to develop new ways of delivery, creating a more holistic and sustainable solution to help people more effectively.

Alzheimer Scotland



The on-going changes individuals and their families face as a result of a dementia diagnosis can be overwhelming; part of that is the worry about their changing financial situation. Working with Alzheimer Scotland, a referral pathway has been developed for professionals working with clients with memory problems, a Dementia or Alzheimer diagnosis.

We have allocated an advisor to this partnership. The advisor has undergone specific training, built up knowledge of the type of enquiries and issues. A key element has been to become 'the kent face' to help build trust with customers

and their families. As a trusted partner, the advisor attends a monthly advice session at Alzheimer Scotland's premises, pops into all of the dementia café sessions in the community and champions awareness of the specific needs of this customer group. As a result, all of the Advice Shop advisors have participated in training and are recognised as 'dementia friendly'.

As part of the service's drive to raise awareness of the financial help and support on offer, £172 was raised through a recently hosted "Tea and a Blether" party.

Worked with **150** new customers

Increased income by **£297,614**

Dealt with **450** enquiries

Families Included

The Families Included Service supports families by focusing on early intervention to prevent potential issues from escalating. This service targets the most vulnerable families in West Lothian and provides a holistic service with the aim to improve life chances and choices by removing barriers and creating opportunities.

A key component of the help on offer is to support families to access entitlements, manage their debts and work with their housing providers to help them keep their home. Often these are complex issues requiring longer term support. In the last year we have worked with 86 families and provided a weekly session to help maintain contact and support. The advisor works in partnership with other services to provide positive outcomes to families whilst minimising substantial stress and pressures.



Capability Scotland

As part of the advice offer, the Advice Shop attends the Ability Centre and works with Capability Scotland to support those with complex needs; physical, neurological, and brain injuries. Appointments are managed by Capability Scotland

to ensure that customers get one to one support tailored to their circumstances giving them the time and space to discuss complex and personal needs. We worked with 91 customers in the last year.

Court Advice Project

For those households who are at the doors of court and potentially facing eviction, we operate a drop in advice session and offer court representation. We advocate on customers behalf, work with their housing provider, look at the circumstances surrounding arrears and assist with

income maximisation, and backdate requests to help people stay in their home. A key focus of the work is on preventative measures which should, in future, stop households arriving at the doors of court. We dealt with 573 court enquiries and prevented 655 evictions in the last year.

Macmillan Cancer Support

Advisors offer support to anyone who has a cancer diagnosis living in West Lothian, attending the Western General Hospital or St John’s Hospital in Livingston. Over the last year, we have dealt with 850 benefit enquiries, completed ward visits with in-patients and their families, attended chemotherapy ward appointments and offered a drop in facility. The service works closely with Macmillan staff in Mid and East Lothian, Edinburgh, Fife and the Borders to create a seamless pathway between agencies. As well as maximising income, advisors completed Macmillan Grants, helped with disabled parking badge applications, and referred customers for Social Work care assessments, counselling and complementary therapies.



Pensioner Income Maximisation Service (PIMS)

Working closely with Community Care Assistants, Occupational Therapists both in the community and hospital, NHS health professionals, and Social Policy’s Older Peoples Team, we provide a holistic service to vulnerable older people and people with other long term conditions to ensure they are receiving everything they are entitled to.

Over the last year we have provided a pop up session at Carers of West Lothian’s office to help carers access help in a location where they are comfortable and secure.



One2One Project

For some of our customers their long term, enduring poor mental health means that engaging with services and trusting professionals are difficult issues. Customers are referred into the project and will be allocated a named advisor who will work with the customer over period of time to help stabilise their financial position. Advisors will visit customers at home, if appropriate, liaise with other partners and professionals and support customers to attend appointments. The project started in October 2016 and is working with 63 customers. In the short time that the project has been running a total of £141,000 income has been generated.



John

John was referred to the One2One project by his psychiatric nurse. His initial enquiry was about his inability to pay his council tax and he was relying on help from family. Talking with the advisor, it was quickly identified that the customer suffers from severe anxiety, depression and paranoia and

had been admitted to hospital due to suicide attempts. John was visited in the hospital by his advisor and who learned that John lived with his father, had no income for 28 years and his father had been supporting him financially. Due to the severity of John’s mental health he was not engaging with any services and therefore was not known to anyone.

The advisor identified that John was entitled to Employment and Support Allowance and Personal Independent Payment. However, providing his identification was challenging as he did not seem to know or be able to locate his bank details or National Insurance number. Eventually after working closely with John’s father this information was obtained and benefit claims submitted.

As a result of the intervention by the One2One project John is now receiving his Employment and Support Allowance payment of £125 per week. Not only does John now have an income after 28 years, this has also helped rebuild his relationship with his father.

John’s Personal Independent Payment claim is still pending and the advisor is still working with him.

Anti poverty

‘Better Off’ is the Community Planning Partnership’s approach to tackling poverty in West Lothian. The strategy was developed in 2012 in consultation with partners and local community groups and individuals. The Advice Shop takes the lead in co-ordinating the Anti-Poverty Strategy and Annual Action Plan.

In 2016/17 the anti-poverty strategy focused on significant issues including;

- Child poverty
- Financial capability
- Food poverty
- Fuel poverty

The Advice Shop was responsible for several actions in these areas and delivered targeted activity to help support people experiencing poverty.

Financial Capability – Affordable Credit

Working with Fife and Falkirk Councils, a project has been agreed to support local people who are on a low income or finding it difficult to manage their budgets and to access affordable credit. Targeting people who are likely to have incomes of lower than £15,000 with no record of savings and who have an extremely poor or no credit rating, advisors will help adults and families to build financial resilience, access and use mainstream banking options and build the capability to manage their money on a day-to-day basis.

The councils have procured the services of Conduit Scotland, who are a not-for-profit Community Development Financial Institution (CFDI) and, will provide fair and affordable loans. Customers will be able to apply on-line at www.conduitScotland.com, by telephone on 0300 111 0556 or by applying at the branch in 79 South Bridge Street, Bathgate.

Along with affordable loans Conduit Scotland will work in partnership with the Advice Shop to offer:

- Money and Budgeting Advice
- Debt Management
- Income Maximisation
- Support to access other financial services, for example bank and savings accounts and credit union accounts
- Referrals to other support services



Food Poverty

At times of extreme hardship, when households have no money, they can turn to the Foodbank to receive a three day emergency food parcel. The reasons for households needing to turn to Foodbanks are varied and multi-faceted. As trusted partners, the Advice Shop is not only a distributor of vouchers but also holds emergency food parcels for dispersal. For those who face persistent food poverty the project looks to work with individuals who find themselves requiring to use a foodbank three or more times in a six month period. One to one support is provided by a dedicated advisor looking at the individual’s income and expenditure as well as looking at their debt and budgeting skills,

In 2016/17, 33 individuals engaged in further advice and support after exceeding their three or more voucher limit. With support from their advisor they were able to make ends meet and have not found themselves requiring food bank vouchers in the last six months.



Child Poverty

Working in partnership with West Lothian Council Registration Services, new parents are offered a referral to the Advice Shop for advice about entitlement to benefits and tax credits and a full financial health check. Between April 2016 to March 2017, 74 new parents engaged with the Advice Shop through this campaign resulting in £111,284 extra income gained.

Families affected by the new lower benefit cap have been contacted and offered tailored advice and support to deal with the impact of the cap on their household income. We worked with 36 affected households to check entitlement to and make claims for benefits and tax credits resulting in £24,784 extra income gained. Those affected have also been supported with advice regarding housing, debt and money management.


Fuel Poverty


During the winter months of 2016/17, the Advice Shop delivered a Keep Warm in winter campaign which offered specialist energy advice and help to access financial support towards energy costs. Over winter, 699 customers received help resulting in fuel savings of £64,226. We also supported 197 customers to make applications for Warm Home Discount, a one off payment of £140 for vulnerable

people with a low income to help towards high winter fuel bills. If successful, these applications would increase income for customers by a total of £41,300.

How to contact us:

-  **Telephone:** 01506 283000
-  **Email:** advice.shop@westlothian.gov.uk
-  **Website:** www.westlothian.gov.uk/advice-shop

 **Address:**
The Advice Shop,
Bathgate Partnership Centre,
South Bridge Street,
Bathgate,
EH48 1TS

 **Opening Hours:**
Monday-Thursday 8.30 – 5pm
Friday 8.30 – 4 pm

See our website for up-to-date information
on all of our outreach sessions.



Information is available in Braille, tape, large print and community languages. Please contact the interpretation and translation service on 01506 280000. Text phones offer the opportunity for people with a hearing impairment to access the council. The text phone number is 01506 591652. A loop system is also available in all offices.



WHITBURN & BLACKBURN LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE

SERVICE UPDATE – NETS, LAND & COUNTRYSIDE

REPORT BY HEAD OF OPERATIONAL SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise members of the recent activity of the NET's, Land & Countryside Services teams for the period 1 August – 31 October 2017.

B. RECOMMENDATION

The Local Area Committee is asked to:

1. Note the work carried out by the service within the local area.
2. Advise of any areas that require further information or investigation.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	Council Values	Focusing on our customers' needs; making best use of our resources; working in partnership
II	Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	None
III	Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None
IV	Impact on performance and performance Indicators	None
V	Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	We make the most efficient and effective use of resources by minimising our impact on the built and natural environment
VI	Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	In line with available revenue and capital budgets
VII	Consideration at PDSP	None
VIII	Other consultations	None

D1 TERMS OF REPORT

Report on activity for period 1 August – 31 October 2017.

D2 Grounds Maintenance Routine Works

Routine grass cutting has been completed for this year. The second weed control application has also been completed.

Hedge cutting and shrub bed renovation works are programmed for completion throughout the winter months.

The weed control trial finished at the end of September, with the results scheduled to be reported to PDSP in December.

The most recent Land Audit Management System, (LAMS) inspections in the West area was 67, which is the target figure. LAMS inspections rate the quality of ground maintenance in randomly selected areas.

Grounds Maintenance Enquiries

In total 65 grounds maintenance related enquiries were received and dealt with during this reporting period.

Adopt Open Spaces in Private Est – 1
Complaint Grounds Maintenance - 3
Drainage Flooding Grass Areas – 4
Enforcement Officer Enquiries - 2
Grass Area Damaged - 1
Grass Cutting Enquiries – 11
Grass Cutting Missed/Not Cut – 1
Grounds Property Vandalised – 2
Hedge Cutting Enquiries - 6
Public Park Enquiries - 12
School Grounds Enquiries – 1
Shrub Bed Enquiries - 2
Shrub Bed Overhanging Path – 10
Shrub Beds Not Maintained - 2
Shrub Beds Obscuring Sightline – 1
Sports Facility Enquiries - 3
Weeds General Enquiries – 1
Weeds on Paths or Roads - 2

D3 Garden Maintenance Routine Works

Garden Maintenance Scheme grass cutting cycles are completed for this year. Hedge cutting was also completed by the end of October

Garden Maintenance Enquiries

In total 38 garden maintenance related enquiries were received and dealt with during this reporting period.

Complaint Garden Maintenance - 4
Garden Maintenance General Enquiries – 18
Garden Maintenance Grass Not Cut - 5
Garden Maintenance Hedge Cutting – 4
Garden Maintenance No Longer Required – 2
Garden Maintenance Standard of Cut - 5

D4 Cleaner Communities Routine Works

Cleaner Communities staff are continuing to carry out routine works to remove litter, fly tipping and debris on roads, footpaths and open spaces throughout the ward. Priorities at present are dealing with leaf fall.

Cleaner Communities Enquiries

In total 126 cleaner communities related enquiries were received and dealt with during this reporting period.

Complaint Street Cleansing - 1
Dead Animals – 4
Dog Fouled Grass/Open Space – 6
Dog Fouling on Paths/Roads – 24
Dog Waste Bin New Request - 3
Glass on Paths or Open Spaces – 3
Graffiti Non Offensive – 1
Illegal Fly Tipping/Dumping – 46
Litter Bin New Request for Bin - 1
Litter General Enquiries – 1
Litter in Grass/Open Space – 1
Litter On Paths/Road Verges – 3
Needles/Syringes Abandoned - 3
Street Sweeping Enquiries – 7
Vehicle Abandoned – 22

Enforcement Community Action

Enforcement Officers dealt with enquiries in relation to various Environmental issues within the area and carried out targeted patrols in respect of Dog Fouling complaints in both Whitburn and Blackburn. During the period specified 3 Fixed Penalty Notices for Littering were issued and one for Dog Fouling.

Lunchtime littering by pupils from Whitburn Academy has been a problem since the end of the summer break and Enforcement Officers carried out patrols in the area. On several occasions the Officers were met with severe verbal abuse from the pupils and were forced to seek assistance from Police Scotland and school senior management. Details were noted of any offenders and the school notified, warning letters were also sent to parent/guardian.

Several Abandoned/Nuisance vehicles have been dealt with and removed from streets throughout the ward gaining compliance on all occasions.

Enforcement Officers carried out Audits on School Transport Buses and Taxi's on behalf of Transport Department at Whitburn Academy, St Kentigerns and St Joseph's Primary school. This is partly designed to ensure the vehicles used are in a fit state and drivers hold the appropriate drivers licence.

Enforcement Officers assisting colleagues in Community Learning & Development Youth Services through the positive destinations programme.

Enforcement Officers assisting colleagues from Licencing Department on several occasions by checking Identification and authorisations of window cleaners. Carrying out Audits at licensed premises and ensuring the appropriate legal notices are being displayed.

With the assistance of local groups Education and Engagement Officers assisted with clean-ups at various areas within the ward which resulted in a large amount of rubbish being collected.

Education & Engagement Officers attended residents and community group meetings and followed up any concerns raised.

With the assistance of local traders and in an effort to curb the amount of cigarette litter in the ward a "No butts "campaign has been ongoing and a number of other initiatives are being planned.

Officers have also engaged in partnership working with various agencies such as Police Scotland, Housing Associations, Woodlands Trust Scotland, Forestry Commission, WLC Countryside Rangers, WLC Housing and WLC Waste Services on a range of issues.

D5 Parks and Woodland Routine Works

Polkemmet Country Park

Confirmation has now been received for the two Landtrust grants for the restoration of the pond and upgrade the path that runs by the River Almond.

Works are continuing at Polkemmet Country Park to remove the walls and kerb the main entrance drive.

Working in partnership with Roads, a new path is planned to start Tuesday 14th November which will be a part of the Sustrans cycle route and run parallel with the entrance road within the Park, allowing safer pedestrian and cycling access to the Park. The front stone pillars have been rebuilt and realigned to accommodate these works. Some road resurfacing of potholes, a new layby and other surface improvements are programmed to be done at the same time.

Again working in partnership with Roads works are underway to provide an access path, again as part of the Sustrans cycle route, into Polkemmet from the East side of the Park. This route will take pedestrians and cyclists around the golf course and into the Visitor Centre area safely which will eventually linking into the Whitburn Town Walk. Works are being planned to upgrade the Whitburn Town Walk from Whitburn to Polkemmet looking at improving path surfaces, removing derelict fencing and upgrading street furniture etc.

A meeting was held at Polkemmet with the local organisations to discuss future use at Polkemmet which would help generate interest and more involvement from the local community, whilst attracting visitors to the Park, thus feeding into the local economy. Discussions centred around a possible event calendar which could be promoted to stimulate interest. Also discussed was how 'The Friends of Polkemmet' could be supplemented to help organise and identify appropriate future events.

Parks and Woodland Enquiries (15)

Complaint Country Parks – 0
Country Park Forestry or Woods – 1
Country Park General Enquiries - 0
Ranger Service Polkemmet – 0
Tree Affecting Public Utility – 1
Tree Blocking Light – 0
Tree Branches Overhanging – 1
Tree Broken or Damaged or Dead – 3
Tree Dangerous or Unsafe – 3
Tree Enquiries General – 6
Tree Leaves Causing Problems - 0

Tree and Woodland Routine Works

The Polkemmet Urban Woodland Management Plan has been drafted by Central Scotland Green Network Trust and is currently being amended, after consultation with Forestry Commission Scotland. This includes the upgrade / alteration of woodland paths and there are opportunities for Woods In and Around Towns (WIAT) funding for the proposed link paths in to the visitor centre and to make a loop path crossing the River Almond on the west side of the Park.

D6 Open Space and Cemeteries

Open Space Routine Works

Work to investigate existing drainage systems at King George V Park, Whitburn, and to look into the feasibility of improving the drainage of the site has been programmed by the Flood Team for November 2017. Depending on scale of required works, work will be completed spring 2018 at the latest.

Discussions continue with Planning Services to ensure adequate active open space provision is provided by the developers at the Heartlands in Whitburn.

Open Space Enquiries (3)

Children Play Enquiries – 2
Glass or Litter in Play Areas – 1

Cemeteries Routine Works

Whitburn Cemeteries

Autumn routine grass cutting, leaf lifting, grave reinstatement works and burial duties ongoing across the cemetery estates. Manse Road wall reinstatements works to commence, with completion approximately by the end of December 2017.

Cemeteries Enquiries (16)

Cemeteries General Enquiries – 4
Cemetery Property Vandalised – 1
Complaint Cemeteries and Burials - 5
Lair Enquiries – 6

E. CONCLUSION

The weed control trial finished at the end of September, with the results scheduled to be reported to PDSP in December.

The Enforcement Officers been involved in a number of community projects within the ward, with the aim of raising awareness of environmental issues.

Works are continuing at Polkemmet Country Park to remove the walls and kerb the main entrance drive.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

Open Space Strategy

Capital Programme

Appendices/Attachments: None

Contact Persons: Eirwen Hopwood, Parks and Woodland Manager, 01506 284500

Eirwen.Hopwood@westlothian.gov.uk

Jim Jack
Head of Operational Services
27 November 2017



WHITBURN AND BLACKBURN LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE

HOUSING CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES

REPORT BY HEAD OF HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide the Local Area Committee with an overview of the service activities within Whitburn and Blackburn ward for the period 1st July – 30th September 2017.

B. RECOMMENDATION

The Local Area Committee is asked to note Housing, Customer and Building Services activity as detailed in the ward report.

C SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

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I	Council Values	Focusing on our customers' needs. Being honest, open and accountable. Making best use of our resources. Working in partnership.
II	Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 Housing (Scotland) Act 2010
III	Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None
IV	Impact on performance and performance Indicators	There is no impact
V	Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	There are positive impact on the following SOA indicators: SOA4 – we live in resilient, cohesive and safe communities SOA8 – we make the most effective use of resources by minimising our impact on the built and natural environment
VI	Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	None
VII	Consideration at PDSP	Yes
VIII	Other consultations	N/A

D TERMS OF REPORT.

Housing Performance Information

The purpose of this report is to provide the Local Area Committee with an overview of the activities of Housing, Customer and Building Services, specific to the Whitburn and Blackburn ward.

Property Void & Let Performance: Mainstream Tenancies

Void Period	July 2017	%	August 2017	%	September 2017	%	WL Target %
0-2 weeks	11	50%	13	62%	10	71%	55%
2-4 weeks	1	5%	1	5%	1	7%	30%
4+ weeks	10	45%	7	33%	3	22%	15%
Total Lets	22	100%	21	100%	14	100%	100%

Property Void & Let Performance: Temporary Tenancies

Void Period	July 2017	%	August 2017	%	September 2017	%	WL Target %
0-2 weeks	5	72%	9	75%	3	50%	80%
2-4 weeks	2	28%	3	25%	3	50%	15%
4+ weeks	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	5%
Total Lets	7	100%	12	100%	6	100%	100%

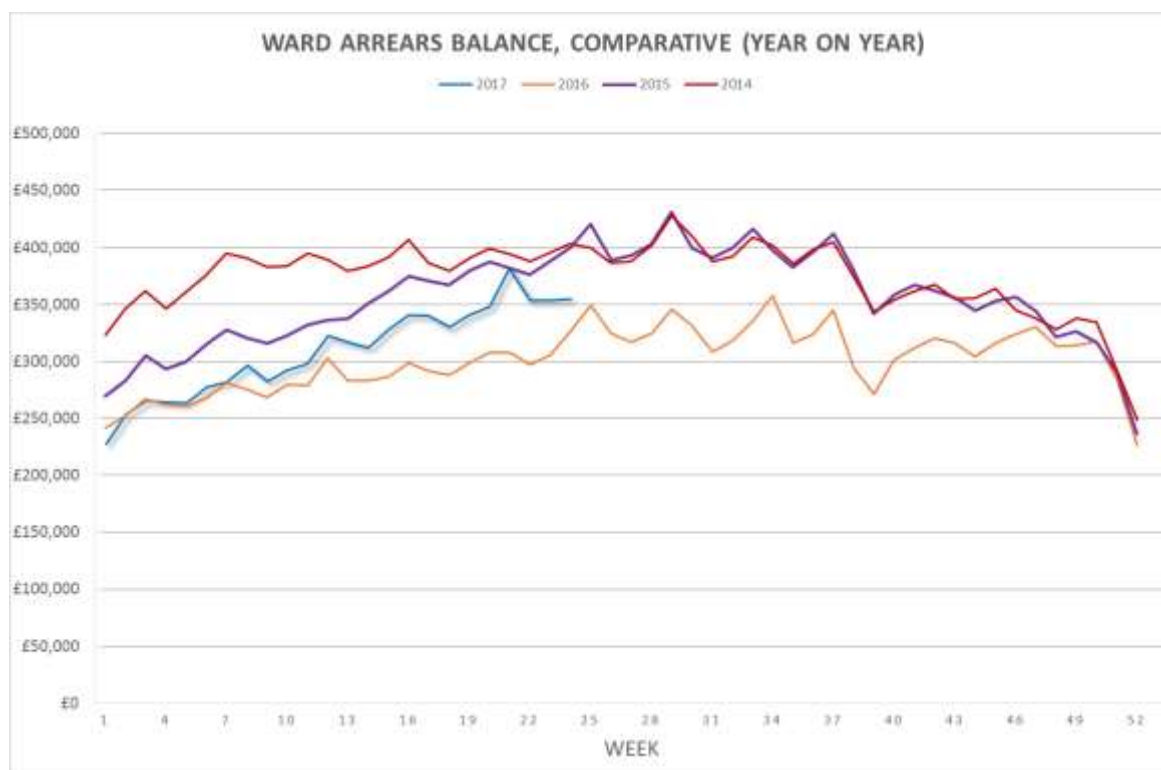
Delays in re-letting can occur for a variety of reasons. The type or location of the property, the completion of void work or the identification of additional works not visible during the initial inspection.

Ensuring that vulnerable persons are appropriately supported through the viewing and sign up process can also add to timeframes. Some of our applicants have specific support requirements which require detailed planning and co-ordination by both social work and housing services prior to tenancy management.

In the year to date there have been 96 mainstream tenancies and 43 temporary tenancies let by the Whitburn and Blackburn Housing Team.

There are 20 Policy Voids in the ward; this is due to properties requiring repairs for asbestos removal, fire damage and Health and Safety issues. Three properties are currently being used as decant properties which are all occupied.

Rent Arrears



	2016/17 (WK24)		2017/18 (WK24)	
Arrears Banding	Balance	Tenants In Arrears	Balance	Tenants In Arrears
£0.01 to £99.99	£16,319	415	£14,914	337
£100.00 to £299.99	£73,147	390	£66,216	348
£300.00 to £499.99	£58,671	153	£77,227	200
£500.00 to £749.99	£48,544	79	£42,539	69
£750.00 to £999.99	£38,766	45	£47,819	56
£1000.00 to £1999.99	£61,587	45	£72,755	52
£2000+	£28,742	10	£33,543	13
Total	£325,777	1137	£355,014	1075

The Ward position for Q2 of 2017/18 is £355,014. This is an increase of £29,237 on last year's position. The West Lothian overall position has increased by £78,929 from last year and at week 24 was £1,829,932

While there are 65 serious arrears cases (£1,000+) it should be noted 64% of cases are in the lower bands (£300 or less)

We will continue to work with tenants in arrears and look to focus on:

- Arrangements to pay - increase the visibility of tenants with arrangements within the performance model to identify trends in missed payments for follow up action
- Making best use of resources by considering communicating more with customers through email and telephone
- Increase Direct Debit Take Up by targeted work for example tenants who currently pay by Standing Order
- Benchmarking with other local authorities to ensure we identify and consider implementing any best practice
- Performance Monitoring and Reporting will be reviewed and where appropriate streamlined to ensure information is meaningful and robust to assist with improving rent arrears due.

Whitburn and Blackburn Area Team Activity

Officers in the team have a number of tenancies under supervision for issues such as child & adult protection, anti-social behaviour and poor tenancy conditions. Our officers' work with a range of services and agencies to ensure tenants and residents are fully supported, tenancies maintained and sustained as far as possible and appropriate action taken where necessary.

Rent arrears activity continues to be a weekly priority task for the team and we will continue to work with all our tenants in offering the support, advice and assistance. Such assistance includes, referrals for money and debt advice, benefit health checks, completion of income and expenditure to help set up a sustainable payment plan and where appropriate, assist with applications for Discretionary Housing Payments.

Capital Programme and New Build Council Housing

Local New Build

Work started on site at Redhouse, Blackburn in June 2016. Lovell Partnerships are developing this site for 100 homes.

Ward	Site	No. of Units	Start Date	Houses handed over	Site complete
Blackburn	Redhouse	100	June 2016	25	Ongoing

Capital Programme

Blackburn	Ladeside	Upgrade BISF Properties to EESSH standard	10%	Substantial design issues and asbestos removal, works started on 25 th May, external wall upgrade works started 7 th June with works expected to be completed by September 2018
Whitburn	The Loch Scheme	Structural roof works: Stairs and balcony repairs: Insulation: render upgrades:paths: lintel & cills where required	5%	Individual properties completed that required urgent major repairs. Programme is in design development due to structural issues and how owners properties can be included to allow tenants properties to be completed
Whitburn	Empire Street, Baillie Street and Bog Road	Roofs & Roughcast to all: Heating upgrades and chimney removals:steps and paths	95%	This years programme is progressing well in line with programme and budget. No issues.
Whitburn	Glebe Road, Union Road, Armadale Road, Manse Avenue, Griffith Drive, Dick Gardens	Roofs & Roughcast to all: Heating upgrades and chimney removals:steps and paths	0%	In operation preparation stage, major upgrade to commence on site in September 2017 and be complete by March 2018.

Tenant Participation

TP Through the Years –A special event to mark 20 years of Tenant Participation was held in August to recognise council tenant volunteers for their long service and outstanding contribution to helping the decision making process within Housing, Customer and Building Services.

The event was attended by many tenant volunteers as well as staff and partners from other organisations. The highlight of the event was a presentation of an award to local tenant Danny Mullen for ‘Outstanding Contribution to Tenant Participation’.

Rate you’re Estate – A pilot project organised for tenants, council staff and partners took place in the Armadale area in August. The aim of the project is to allow participants to identify areas for inspection within communities to ensure they are kept clean and in good condition, identifying potential issues such as litter, fly tipping and graffiti and having them addressed.

Although, poorly attended by residents in the area, a walk about took place with key members of staff from Housing, Neighbourhood Environmental Team (NETs) Weslo, local police, and a local elected member. Several concerns were raised and have been addressed.

Local Housing Staff Training – Two members of the TP Team met with colleagues from all local housing offices to look at the various methods available to encourage customer involvement and identify local initiatives that can be tried out in the coming months.

Staff are very keen to engage with their customers to address local issues such as, garden tidying, communal bins and waste management. Local initiatives will be developed and scheduled to be carried in early Spring 2018.

Tenant Led Inspections (TLI) – In September, tenants were invited to participate in a training session to help them understand the TLI process. From this session, two new recruits have volunteered to get involved in this latest inspection team looking into Council House New Build Properties. The TLI team are working with staff from Housings’ Strategy and Development Team and Customer Participation Officers. A final report should be presented to senior managers near the end of the year.

Rent Focus Groups – Council tenant were invited to attend one of a series of focus groups arranged in the east and west of the county, to discuss how they pay their rent. The meetings were well attended with 22 tenants taking part.

Safer Neighbourhood Council Officer Ward Information

The Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNT’s) across the nine multi member ward areas are an integral part of the Community Safety Unit and are a key feature of partnership working. In all the wards, partnership working involves the local housing team, youth worker, council officer with the SNT and officers from Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service all working together to tackle antisocial behaviour in the wards. When necessary, the Community Safety partners will liaise with others from the voluntary organisations including Mental Health advisory workers and private landlords in order to reduce antisocial behaviour.

The SNT officers and other Community Safety Partners continue to provide early intervention to prevent crimes and antisocial behaviour from occurring and the further escalation of incidents. During the reporting period the team dealt with range of community safety/antisocial behaviour issues which includes

- Carrying out a letter drops to neighbours affected by particular reported incidents of anti-social behaviour and following up action through the issuing of appropriate warning letters.
- Working with Environmental Health with regards to an unoccupied parked caravan that was parked on the public highway.
- working with Police to tackle noise nuisance caused by youths accessing a property and working with housing colleagues to instigate the house abandonment processes as concerns tenant not occupying property
- Partnership working to address youth issues at Whitburn Community Centre. Follow up visits to the youths and discussion with their parents about the youth’s abusive behaviour targeted at staff and other centre service users. No further incidents reported.
- Allegations of noise at a property which has been investigated and found to be malicious.

There have been two Anti-Social Behaviour Orders granted at court and one interim Anti-Social Behaviour Order awarded during the reporting period. ASBOs are deemed as a last resort to all other methods of curtailing antisocial behaviour within communities. It is only when particular individuals refuse to heed warnings issued, that the Antisocial Behaviour Order is requested through the legal process. .

E. CONCLUSION

To note the contents of the report.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None

Appendices/Attachments: None

Contact Person: Gary Stoddart, Housing, Customer & Building Services

Email; gary.stoddart@westlothian.gov.uk

Tel: 01501 678012

Date: 27th November 2017



WHITBURN AND BLACKBURN LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE

WEST LOTHIAN VILLAGES IMPROVEMENT FUND - APPLICATIONS

REPORT BY HEAD OF PLANNING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to advise the Local Area Committee of the applications received from within the ward area seeking funding from the West Lothian Villages Improvement Fund (WLVIF) in 2017/18.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Local Area Committee:

1. notes that two applications have been received for funding;
2. notes that the proposals meet the eligibility criteria for supported projects;
3. supports funding for the projects; and
4. agrees that the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration should make an offer of funding as per the details set out in this report.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I Council Values	Focusing on our customers' needs. Making best use of our resources. Working in partnership.
II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	The projects meet the funding eligibility criteria. There is no requirement for a strategic environmental assessment and the projects do not raise any equality or health issues.
III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None.
IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators	None.
V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Our economy is diverse and dynamic, and West Lothian is an attractive place for doing business.- We live in resilient, cohesive and safe communities.

VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	A total of £1.65m capital fund is available for projects and the proposal can be met from within this budget.
VII Consideration at PDSP	These projects have not been considered by a PDSP. The overall Villages Improvement Fund was considered by Development & Transport PDSP.
VIII Other consultations	None.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

Background

In 2012 the Council Executive agreed the eligibility criteria for a West Lothian Villages Improvement Fund (WLVIF). Funding of £1.65m is available to support eligible schemes with the funding phased over five years. The fund has the following two work streams:

1) A shop frontage/shop improvement scheme, to which local independent retailers can apply. This operates in a similar way to the shop frontage improvement schemes for traditional town centres i.e. a grant of up to £750 and no more than 50% of the cost of the shop front improvement.

2) Small scale village improvements and initiatives, this can include a number of types of investment, including both physical improvements to the streetscape and investment in community provision:

- Provision of street furniture such as seating, cycle stands and direction signs.
- Improved village gateways (e.g.; through planting, landscaping and/or signage).
- Improved sense of place in village centres through hard landscaping, planting and soft landscape improvements.
- Tidying and landscaping of gap sites within villages.
- Access improvements in and around villages.
- Investment in projects that engage and support young people.
- Investment in other local community facilities.

Four villages in the Whitburn and Blackburn ward are eligible under the scheme. Distribution of funding is based on village size. Total allocations per village are as follows, with the remaining budgets in brackets:

- Greenrigg: £55,000 (£51,045)
- Seafield: £55,000 (£47,750)
- East Whitburn: £55,000 (£55,000)
- Blackburn: £125,000 (£0)

Applications

The following applications have been received for this round of funding:

Greenrigg Environmental Enhancements - £24,541

This application has been submitted by Central Scotland Green Network Trust (CSGNT), which has worked closely with Greenrigg Community Council to develop a project to make improvements to the woodland areas, particularly those around the primary school.

The works would be contracted and managed by CSGNT. The application for this project is contained within Appendix One and corresponding map within Appendix Two.

Dyke Road Park Entrance Fence - £2,184.36.

This application is from Greenrigg Community Council which is looking to jointly fund a project to replace the existing fencing either side of the path into the park area within Dyke Road/Polkemmet Drive. Match funding for this has been approved by Housing Services who will also manage the project using a contractor.

The application for this project is contained within Appendix Three.

E. CONCLUSION

Four villages within the Whitburn and Blackburn ward are eligible to apply to the Villages Improvement Fund. The applications detailed above meet the eligibility criteria of the fund and the Local Area Committee is asked to support them.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None.

Appendices: Three

Appendix One: Application for Greenrigg Environmental Enhancements

Appendix Two: Map of Greenrigg Environmental Enhancements

Appendix Three: Application for Dyke Road Park Entrance Fence

Contact Persons:

Scott McKillop, Community Regeneration Officer, Tel. 01506 281092,
scott.mckillop@westlothian.gov.uk

Hazel Hay, Town Centre Manager, Tel. 01506 283079,
hazel.hay@westlothian.gov.uk

Craig McCorriston
Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration

27 November 2017

Appendix One:

**West Lothian Villages Improvement Fund
Application form**

- Please refer to the guidance notes when completing this form
- Please complete in the form in **black ink**
- No project should start or commit expenditure before receiving the approval of grant

1. Applicant Organisation Details

Organisation Name	Central Scotland Green Network Trust
Project title	Greenrigg Environmental Enhancements
Contact person	Carol Campbell
Position	Development Officer
Address	Hillhousebridge, Shottskirk Road, Shotts, North Lanarkshire, ML7 4JS
Telephone number	
Email Address	
Type of organisation	Scottish Charity & Company Limited by Guarantee
What date was your organisation formed?	Established 1985, Merged 1992, Name change 2014
What is your charity number? (if applicable)	SCO 15341
What are the main activities of your organisation? (please answer in no more than 100 words)	Central Scotland Green Network Trust helps realise the Vision for the Central Scotland Green Network. The Vision for the CSGN is that 'by 2050 Central Scotland will have been transformed into a place where the environment adds value to the economy and where people's lives are enriched by its quality'. CSGNT provides opportunities to maximise the health, education and biodiversity benefits of greenspace to communities particularly in disadvantaged areas. CSGNT's objectives are - To drive forward and co-ordinate CSGN's delivery; Raise awareness of, and participation in the CSGN; Provide support and capacity to partners and directly deliver projects with stakeholders.
Do you have an equal opportunities policy or statement?	
	Yes -

If yes please provide a copy	attached
Does your organisation take account of equality issues around age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief?	Yes
Are you applying for other funding? If so, please detail:	Approved Anticipated

2. Project details

Council ward	Whitburn and Blackburn
Project location	Greenrigg
Project start date	Tree survey anticipated February 2018 Works on site anticipated March 2018
Project finish date	Anticipated April 2018
Estimated Outcome	Improved landscaping and enhanced community assets adjacent to Greenrigg Primary School and within Greenrigg Community Woodland.

Project description	
Describe fully the project for which grant is being sought (background and context of the project, description of works).	
<p>CSGNT was approached by Greenrigg Community Council to assist with improving the natural environment of the village, particularly in relation to areas adjacent to Greenrigg Primary School and Greenrigg Community Woodland (which are within WLC's ownership).</p> <p>The Trust has worked with the Community Council to draw up proposals, which will turn an unused, neglected and unsightly area of land, into an area that can be used by children and their families to explore and engage with nature. A tree safety survey will be carried out in the woodland north-west of the school with any necessary tree works carried out thereafter. This area will then be cleared of rubbish and vegetation. A new path will be created to connect from the existing play area and lead into the woodland strip running along the WLC/NLC boundary. Edible fruiting and nutting trees will be planted for community use and pupil learning.</p> <p>Drainage works and path upgrades will be undertaken in Greenrigg Community Woodland to address wet sections of path, which will improve the surfaced access network. This will comprise new open drainage ditches, new culverts installed and scraping existing paths and re-laying whin-dust surfacing.</p>	
Partners involved	Greenrigg Community Council

(other local organisations you are working with)	
--------------------------------------------------	--

Evidence of need

What evidence is there that your project is needed? It is vital that you show that you have identified the need for your project, eg letters of support, or local survey.

Greenrigg Community Council has identified the need to clean up the area close to the playground and make better use of the woodland strip in order to reduce fly tipping and litter and provide a natural area to investigate and play in.

The drainage and path works are needed within the community woodland to address muddy sections and improve the path, making it easier for those with mobility issues, prams and bikes to use and enjoy the greenspace.

Outcomes

Describe what your project will deliver.

Village Improvements; e.g Number of sites improved
Area of landscaping

- A community asset is created from a neglected area of land, which is currently overgrown and used for fly tipping and dumping.
- Primary school pupils can engage and learn about nature, using the site as an outdoor classroom.
- The community woodland is enhanced and used by more of the local community.

Community Facilities: e.g number of facilities improved
-Projected usage

3.Project Costs

Amount of funding requested	
-----------------------------	--

Item of expenditure	Cost (£)
Service checks	450
Contingency	926
CSGNT Design, Management & CDM fees	3500
Preliminaries	1211
Tree safety survey and tree works	3750
Site clearance – vegetation and litter removed	1550
New path works	2693
Fruit tree planting – ground preparation, trees, guards and stakes	4700

Seating	1800
Community woodland path & drainage upgrades	3961
Total project costs	24,541

Project management

Describe how your project will be managed and administered including details of any:

- Design / plans
- Implementation arrangements e.g contract tenders
- Planning Approval

Central Scotland Green Network Trust will complete the designs, tender drawings, tender package and tender administration and undertake contractor management on site.

4. Declaration

We wish to apply for a Village Improvement Fund Capital Grant. The above is an accurate outline of the proposed project. We have read and understood the guidance notes for applicants and agree to the conditions therein. We understand that the grant may be modified or withdrawn if all the conditions are not adhered to. We are willing to co-operate in the monitoring of the grant scheme and to meet with their representatives if required to do so. We will acknowledge the support of the Fund in any related PR activities.

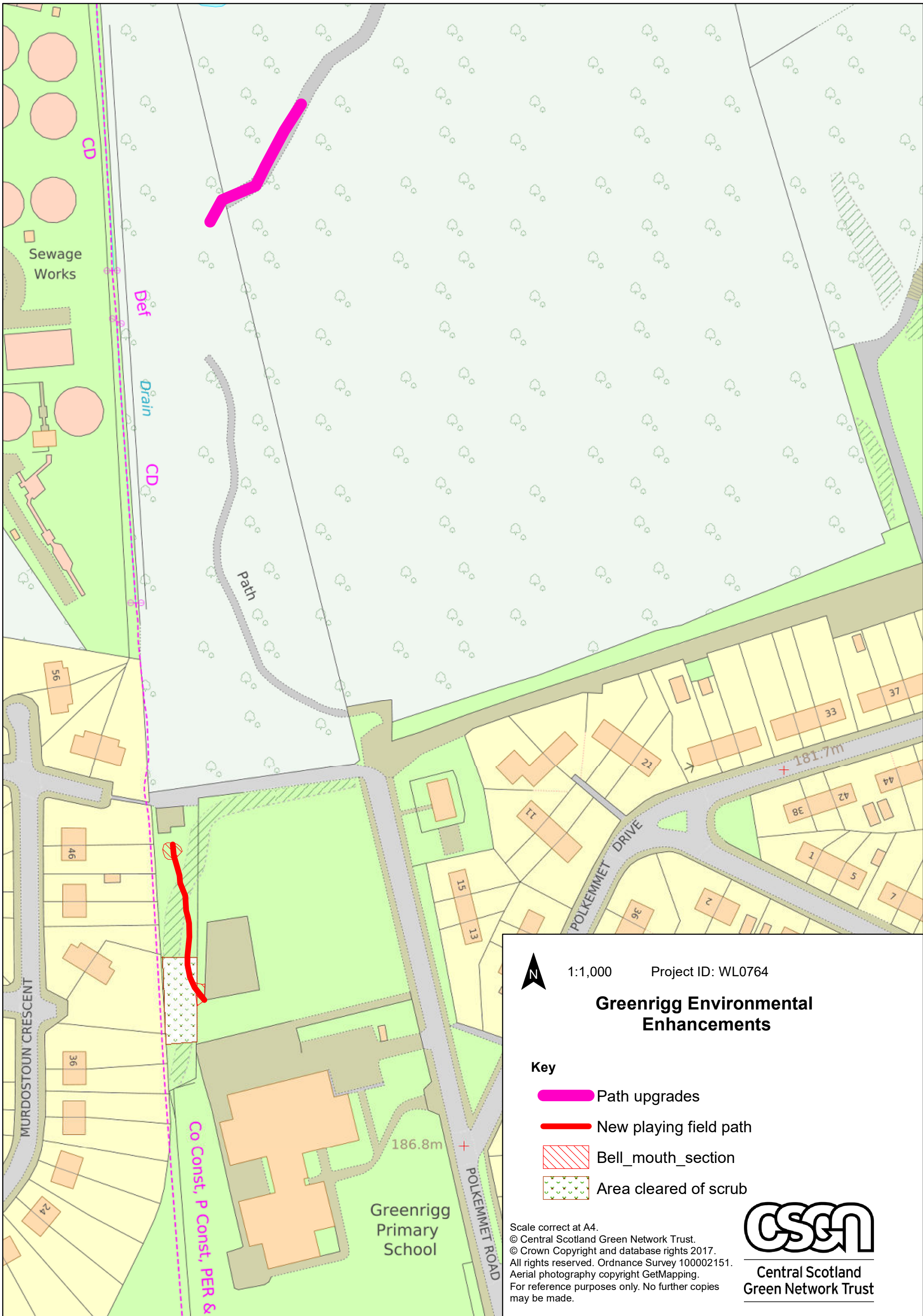
Name	Carol Campbell
Position	Development Officer
Organisation	Central Scotland Green Network Trust
Date	30.10.17

For postal applications, please send to:

Community Regeneration
2nd Floor
St David House
Bathgate
EH48 1TT

Attachment checklist - as applicable	Please Indicate (x)
Constitution or Articles and Memorandum	X

Committee Members or Directors List	X
Bank Statements - three statements	
Annual accounts	X




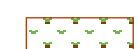


1:1,000

Project ID: WL0764

Greenrigg Environmental Enhancements

Key

-  Path upgrades
-  New playing field path
-  Bell_mouth_section
-  Area cleared of scrub

Scale correct at A4.
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Central Scotland
Green Network Trust

West Lothian Villages Improvement Fund

Application form

- Please refer to the guidance notes when completing this form
- Please complete in **BLOCK CAPITAL LETTERS** and use **black ink**
- No project should start or commit expenditure before receiving the approval of grant

1. Applicant Organisation Details

Organisation Name	Greenrigg Community Council
Project title	Dyke Road Park Entrance Fence
Contact person	Peter Kain
Position	Chairperson
Address	38 Dyke Road, Greenrigg, ML75QT
Telephone number	
Email Address	
Type of organisation	Community Council
What date was your organisation formed?	April 2015
Are you a charity, please quote your number	
What are the main activities of your organisation? (please answer in no more than 100 words)	To communicate with the residents and village groups to further the wishes and views to improve the village

Do you have an equal opportunities policy or statement? If yes please provide a copy	No
Does your organisation take account of equality issues around age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief?	Yes

Are you applying for other funding, if so, please detail Yes. WLC Housing Service has agreed to funding 50% of the project.	Approved
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------

2. Project details

Council Ward	Ward 7 Whitburn and Blackburn
Project location	Public foot path leading from Dyke Road to Polkemmet Drive
Project start date	Winter 2017
Project finish date	Winter 2017
Estimated Outcome	To have new fence erected

<p>Project description Describe fully the project for which grant is being sought (background and context of the project, description of works).</p> <p>To erect 2x37m long chain link fences to both sides of the public footpath leading from Dyke Road through the grassed area to Polkemmet Drive.</p> <p>This is a footpath used by many of the residents and children to use the grassed area and to reach the local school.</p> <p>The original erected fence, which has been there for many years, is in a very poor condition and also a danger to any person walking through this footpath.</p> <p>The new fence will enhance the look of the approach area to the public grass area.</p>

Partners involved (other local organisations you are working with)	West Lothian Council
---------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------

<p>Evidence of need</p> <p>What evidence is there that your project is needed? It is vital that you show that you have identified the need for your project, eg letters of support, or local survey.</p>
<p>As previously stated the danger of being injured whilst using this public footpath is very high.</p> <p>West Lothian Council representatives have been onsite to access the situation.</p>

<p>Outcomes</p> <p>Describe what your project will deliver.</p> <p>Village Improvements; e.g Number of sites improved Area of landscaping</p>
<p>A safer area when walking through the public footpath.</p>
<p>Community Facilities: e.g number of facilities improved -Projected usage</p>

3. Project Costs

Amount of funding requested	£2,184. 36
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Item of expenditure	Cost
G. Ross Contractors Ltd to manufacture and install chain link fence	

Project management

Describe how your project will be managed and administered including details of any:

- Design / plans
- Implementation arrangements e.g contract tenders
- Planning Approval

Planning approval has been granted by WLC. The works will be managed by G. Ross Contractors Ltd.

4. Declaration

We wish to apply for a Village Improvement Capital Grant. The above is an accurate outline of the proposed project. We have read and understood the guidance notes for applicants and agree to the conditions therein. We understand that the grant may be modified or withdrawn, if all the conditions are not adhered to. We are willing to co-operate in the monitoring of the grant scheme and to meet with their representatives if required to do so. We will acknowledge the support of the Fund in any related PR activities.

Name	Peter Kain
Position	Chairperson
Organisation	Greenrigg Community Council
Date	12 th November 2017

Please send your completed forms to:

Community Regeneration Officer for your area in the first instance
(see guidance notes for contact details)

Or

Hazel Hay
Town Centre Manager

Economic Development
West Lothian Council
1st Floor North
West Lothian Civic Centre
Howden South Road
Livingston
EH54 6FF

Tel: 01506 283098

E-mail: Hazel.Hay@westlothian.gov.uk

Attachment checklist - as applicable	Please Indicate (x)
Constitution or Articles and Memorandum	
Committee Members or Directors List	
Bank Statements - three statements	
Annual accounts	



WHITBURN AND BLACKBURN LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE

COMMUNITY REGENERATION UPDATE

REPORT BY HEAD OF PLANNING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to update members on regeneration activity within the Whitburn and Blackburn ward.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that members note:

1. progress to date with the Placemaking in Whitburn initiative and developing a regeneration plan for the town;
2. updates on Whitburn town centre related matters;
3. an update on the progress of developing Whitburn Partnership Centre;
4. progress in Blackburn with regards to planning towards developing a regeneration plan for the area;
5. the success of Whitburn Community Development Trust and Community Action Blackburn in obtaining Aspiring Communities funding; and
6. updates on potential projects for the Villages Improvement Fund.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I Council Values	Focusing on our customers' needs. Being honest, open and accountable. Providing equality of opportunities. Making best use of our resources. Working in partnership.
II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	<p>Community regeneration reinforces the council's commitment to community planning at a local level.</p> <p>Local authorities have a statutory requirement for developing locality plans for targeted communities in their area. Regeneration Plans will fit this requirement for West Lothian.</p> <p>The projects set out do not require a strategic environmental assessment. The projects to different degrees seek to address health and equality issues.</p>
III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None.

IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators	Performance indicators relating to the activity within the plans are captured within the set of Regeneration key performance indicators.
V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We are better educated and have access to increased and better quality learning and employment opportunities. - We live in resilient, cohesive and safe communities. - We live longer, healthier lives and have reduced health inequalities. - We make the most efficient and effective use of resources by minimising our impact on the built and natural environment.
VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	The activities set out are funded from existing budgets and relevant external sources.
VII Consideration at PDSP	Annual updates on regeneration plans will be presented to PDSP.
VIII Other consultations	None.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D1 Background

The West Lothian Regeneration Framework, which was approved by Council Executive in February 2014, contains a commitment to develop regeneration plans in key areas of deprivation in West Lothian. Eight regeneration areas have been identified, based on the data zones within the bottom 20% of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. Whitburn and Blackburn are two of these eight communities.

Regeneration plans are being developed for these areas with the overarching aim of 'tackling inequalities'. A report was provided to the Local Area Committee in September 2016 outlining the background to developing regeneration plans, including the processes, structures, and timescales involved.

This report highlights the main regeneration activity within the ward. In Whitburn, the regeneration plan will build on the ongoing Placemaking in Whitburn initiative, whereas the plan in Blackburn will seek to build on the well-established partnership working there.

D2 Placemaking in Whitburn

The finalised Placemaking in Whitburn masterplan was reported to the Development and Transport PDSP in December 2015. The Whitburn Regeneration Group is one of two groups which are tasked with implementing actions from the Placemaking in Whitburn masterplan. Therefore, this part of the report should be read alongside the Whitburn Town Centre Update report to this meeting of the Local Area Committee which highlights the main actions relating to the town centre.

Progress continues in taking forward the outcomes contained within the Placemaking in Whitburn Masterplan. This is being developed through the Whitburn Regeneration Group (WRG) and the Whitburn Town Centre Management Group (TCMG). To date, since the last reporting, highlights include:

Whitburn 'Place-branding'

This project was a desire of the WRG, and in particular of the community groups, to see Whitburn promoted as an attractive place for people to do business, work and visit. Morrison Media have been the contractor for this work and, following meetings with officers and WRG, extensive consultation, supported by the Community Regeneration Officer, was carried out on draft proposed logos.

Representatives from the WRG will be meeting with Morrison Media to finalise the logo over coming weeks. In addition to the logo, Morrison Media will be providing templates for 'collateral' items i.e. badges, stickers, windows stickers, banners, social media templates, newsletter templates.

Officers are ensuring the contractor works alongside the Heartlands, who are also looking to commercially rebrand their development, to ensure that their marketing work complements this. We would also look to use this work to link in with opportunities to promote Polkemmet Country Park.

Heritage Trail

Whitburn Community Development Trust, on behalf of the heritage trail sub-group, will shortly be submitting the Project Enquiry Form to the Heritage Lottery Fund to enable further HLF support in the development of that proposal.

Consultation undertaken by the group earlier this year suggested support for a working model around the trail connecting a loop of sites/features around the town centre with Polkemmet Country Park, where there is enough heritage to develop a loop itself. These will be further explored with HLF, pending approval of the project enquiry form.

Whitburn Network

A Whitburn Network event was held across afternoon and evening sessions on Wednesday 1 November. The idea for this was developed through the Whitburn Regeneration Group and aimed at services and community groups in Whitburn, particularly those who are not engaged in the close partnership working in the town at present. Services and groups had suggested a meeting and the format for this was informal, using interactive display of all updates and plans in the art room in Whitburn Community Centre.

The purpose of the event was to identify and share the activity of all services and groups in the town, to help identify opportunities for partnership working and to promote the activity to the wider community.

Almost forty representatives attended this and feedback on the format has been very positive. A write-up of the event with all updates provided is being collated and will be shared with members.

Regeneration Plan

In line with the other seven identified regeneration areas in West Lothian, the first version of a regeneration plan will be developed for Whitburn over the coming months.

This will look to build on the previous placemaking/'charrette' work, with more of a focus on reducing inequalities going forward. At present, the masterplan is being reviewed to assess the extent to which the individual actions have been achieved, and to consider which actions require to be carried forward and if any are less relevant now due to changing circumstances i.e. funding opportunities.

Town Centre Shopfront Improvement

Whitburn town centre traders and businesses continue to be eligible to apply for grant assistance through the Shopfront Improvement Scheme, to assist in costs associated with any external frontage improvements. Since the inception of the current operational scheme in autumn 2012, and at the time of writing this report, there have been a total of twenty-seven approved grants and awards made. There remain a number of enquiries with formal applications awaited and/or completion of works to be verified. The Shopfront Improvement Scheme is funded through the budget allocation from the council's Whitburn Town Centre Improvement Fund.

There is similar grant assistance available to local indigenous retail businesses that are situated out with the prescribed town centre boundary, but are located within the settlement boundary of the town of Whitburn. To date, despite a number of enquiries there have been no applications received or grants awarded in Whitburn, although it is reported that eight awards in total have been made elsewhere in the ward; in East Whitburn and Blackburn. This particular shop front scheme element is funded through the budget allocation from the council's Village Improvement Fund.

Twin Town Initiative

As part of the Whitburn Traders and Whitburn & District Community Council twinning with Oswaldtwistle in Lancashire, the Carnegie Trust UK Twin Town initiative is now progressing the Stage 2 award aspects of the twinning (e.g. local action plan) and looking at how these groups can continue to be supported, and support/learn from each other (and partners) to implement positive community initiatives. Only six of the ten participating towns are through to Stage 2. This is an 18 month project, which commenced with the phase 1 work (initial hosting of exchange familiarisation trips from both towns) in March 2017. At time of writing, the Draft Action Plan had been submitted, reviewed by Carnegie Trust UK and their external panel, and refined to identify three main projects for Whitburn. The Whitburn community representatives are due to attend the Twin Town Conference in Manchester on 17/18 November 2017.

Whitburn Traders

Support continues to be provided to Whitburn Traders and facilitation of identified town centre enhancement projects. This includes additional officer support for their successful grant award from the Council's 'Grassroots 2' Public Art Grant 2017/18, for their planned Shop Shutters Public Art initiative. The project is at early stages with the steering group having met once initially, and we will likely thus see further progress over the coming months. This project is also receiving financial support through the Whitburn Town Centre Improvement Fund.

Farmers Market

Whitburn Traders, with the support of Council officers from within Economic Development and Regeneration, will be organising and holding a 'pilot' Artisan Farmers Market on Saturday 18 November 2017 at West Main Street, outside the Public Library. It will run from 9am until 1pm with a range of stalls and suppliers, and other entertainment available on the day. The success of the event will be assessed afterward with the aspiration being to develop the market concept and run it on a more frequent basis throughout 2018.

Harrison Hut

Whitburn Traders and Whitburn Community Council have been awarded £2,500 from the council's Community Development and Enterprise Fund. This is to support the activity of the facility over the next 12 months as a number of groups will begin using the building as part of the decant from the Burgh Halls as well as other and new user groups.

The project has received in-kind support from local tradespeople and suppliers, and

has been working hard to provide remedial works to get the building into a suitable condition.

Town Centre Opportunity Sites

Council officers continue to engage with the relevant owners (and monitor the prospective actions) of vacant and under-utilised sites on West Main Street to establish future use intentions and entice physical improvement and bringing back to active economic or social use.

D3 Whitburn Partnership Centre

Planning permission has been received for Whitburn Partnership Centre (PC). The project is now working towards achieving the building warrant and the design is near finalised.

The decant of staff is planned with members of staff being relocated to Whitburn Library and Blackburn Connected. All plans are in place to support the moves when Blackburn Connected is vacated as part of the Blackburn Partnership Centre project.

Officers are working with local partner organisations to ensure current Burgh Halls users will be suitably accommodated within the town. Officers are supporting the refurbishment and subsequent use of the Harrison Hall by recycling some old furniture.

The self-service cash kiosk has been installed in Whitburn Library and will be configured soon.

Partners are kept informed of progress through the key community organisations group which is due to meet later in November.

D4 Blackburn Regeneration Planning

Since the last Local Area Committee, Blackburn Regeneration Group has met once with attendees from local organisations and key partners.

As part of identifying what the plan should focus on, various engagement activities have been undertaken in the area. These methods are:

- a) The traditional 'H-diagram' method which is based on asking open ended questions about what the things are that people see as positive/assets which can be built on/celebrated and the things they think could be improved in their community.
- b) The 'Place Standard' engagement tool, which is now common practice across Scotland, asks people set questions about various elements of their community such as 'natural space', social interaction', 'influence and sense of control' and 'work and local economy' for example.

Engagement activity has included:

- Parents' evenings at both Murrayfield and Our Lady of Lourdes Primary Schools.
- Short face-to-face interviews with member of the public in The Mill Centre.
- Ongoing work with the 'Change in Blackburn' group which is made up of ten 12-14 year olds from Bathgate Academy and St Kentigern's Academy. The group have been working through the Place Standard for five weeks and have undertaken a walkabout to look at some of the priorities that they had identified from the desktop sessions. A further walkabout will be organised by the group. This work is being supported by Community Action Blackburn (CAB) and the

Youth Inclusion Project.

- Ongoing work with the Women's Social Service Club (WSSC) group who are supported by CAB. This group of almost thirty ladies meet once a week in Blackburn Community Centre and have a full diary of activities and guest speakers.
- Over 350 people in Blackburn have participated in face-to-face short-interviews using the 'H-diagram' method. From the completed data gathered the statistical break up of demographics shows that there is a good split of ages and gender, and that 53% of respondents are living in an area that is within the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation most deprived 20% in West Lothian.

As with all regeneration areas, the above activity is contributing to shaping priorities for the community. Further work with all partners and members of the community will continue to develop a draft regeneration plan. As elsewhere, this will include an action plan addressing the main priorities identified from the consultation.

Community Action Blackburn

Partnership working has been integral in the regeneration planning process to date and, as such, CAB have asked for a presentation to be given by the Community Regeneration Officer at their Annual General Meeting. This will be held on 20 November at Blackburn United Football Club Pavilion.

West Lothian Alcohol and Drug Partnership – Youth Alcohol Diversionary Fund

West Lothian Youth Action Project's application to this fund has now been approved by Council Executive. This was to obtain funding of £11,730 which will fund:

- A weekly drop-in session within the new Partnership Centre where targeted diversionary activities will be offered and, where necessary, individual support to young people.
- The delivery of two intensive support programmes for identified young people who are struggling with mainstream education, and employment.

Blackburn Partnership Centre

Please see the specific report on this subject which is being provided to this meeting of the Local Area Committee.

D5 Aspiring Communities Fund

A consortium of voluntary organisations within five regeneration areas in West Lothian (from the wider West Lothian Key Community Organisations Network) including Whitburn Community Development Trust (WCDDT) and Community Action Blackburn (CAB) have successfully obtained funding from the Scottish Government's Aspiring Communities fund. The consortium has been closely supported by the Regeneration Team. This funding will allow both groups to employ a development worker to increase their own organisational capacity, work with other groups in the community to increase community capacity, and look to develop projects/initiatives over the next 16 months.

D6 Villages Improvement Fund

The Community Regeneration Officer has continued to encourage and, where possible, support groups in the eligible areas to develop projects and applications to utilise this fund.

Blackburn

Blackburn Community Council previously applied for £30,000 from the Villages Improvement Fund for the relocation of the public toilet which was approved. This was to be undertaken on completion of the new partnership centre, as it was assumed that the existing location of the toilet would be unsuitable once the new square outside the front of the partnership centre was in place. Now that the partnership centre project has completed, the community council has changed its mind on the need for this and are happy that the existing location of the toilet does not impede negatively on the area.

Officers await formal notification of this. This would mean that the £30,000 allocation to them will now become available for other purposes. Concurrent to this, Community Action Blackburn are intending on applying to utilise this remaining funding to create a community garden in the open space within the grounds of the partnership centre, to the east of the building.

East Whitburn

Officers from Planning Services are developing a proposal with the Woodland Trust and Central Scotland Green Network Trust to make woodland improvements to East Whitburn end of the Blaeberry Woods. This is planned to be taken to community groups in the village before any application submitted, which would subsequently come to the Local Area Committee.

Greenrigg

To complement the proposed works as part of the Woodland Improvements Project – contained in the VIF application to this LAC – Greenrigg Community Council are keen to pursue the purchase of an installation of a fence along around the initial part of the woodland area in order to prevent further instances of fly-tipping here.

Seafield

CSGNT are considering developing a proposal for the Easter Breich woodland area.

E. CONCLUSION

The process for developing regeneration plans is underway within the Whitburn and Blackburn ward. Local action groups have been established and have begun the process of evidence gathering and community engagement. In Whitburn, the Placemaking in Whitburn work provides the basis for regeneration planning.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

Placemaking in Whitburn masterplan available on
<https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/whitburn>

West Lothian Regeneration Framework 2014-2034

Appendices/Attachments: None.

Contact Person: Scott McKillop, Community Regeneration Officer, 01506 281092,
scott.mckillop@westlothian.gov.uk

Craig McCorriston, Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration
27 November 2017



WHITBURN AND BLACKBURN LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE

PENSIONERS' GROUPS CHRISTMAS FUND ALLOCATIONS 2017

REPORT BY HEAD OF PLANNING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to inform the Local Area Committee of the allocations made from the Pensioners' Groups Christmas Fund 2017 to groups in Whitburn and Blackburn ward, Livingston-wide groups and West Lothian-wide groups.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the committee notes that eight groups within Whitburn and Blackburn ward applied to the fund and have been supported.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I Council Values	Being honest, open and accountable. Focussing on our customers' needs. Making best use of resources. Working in partnership.
II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	The duty of Best Value is set out in the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003.
III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	The Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration has the delegated authority to make the final allocations and payments.
IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators	None.
V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	SOA 5 - Older people are able to live independently in the community with an improved quality of life.
VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	Total fund of £28,767.00 agreed by the council. £2,415.00 will be distributed in the Whitburn and Blackburn ward.
VII Consideration at PDSP	Following consideration at all nine Local Area Committees, an update will be prepared for the Voluntary Organisations PDSP.

VIII Other consultations

Similar reports will be prepared for the other eight Local Area Committees.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D1 Background

Council approves the Pensioners' Groups Christmas Fund each year. In 2017 the total fund amounts to £28,767.00 (£29,093.00 in 2016). The fund is divided by the total number of beneficiaries which, in 2017, is 5,004 (4,659 in 2016). By using that number the provisional global unit cost for 2017 is £5.75 (£6.24 in 2016) per beneficiary (£28,767.00 / 5,004). In Whitburn and Blackburn ward there are 420 beneficiaries and an allocation of £2,415.00. A full report on the final allocations will be made to the Voluntary Organisation PDSP later in the year. Letters were issued to groups in late October advising them of the amount of funding they will receive and payments made directly to the bank accounts of groups during November via PECOS.

D2 Applications 2017: Whitburn and Blackburn ward

Eight application forms were issued to groups across Whitburn and Blackburn ward, with all eight being returned. All eight groups have been supported. One new group, Brucefield House Tenants Association, was added to the list. Appendix one shows the groups supported and the allocation to each.

D3 Applications 2017: Livingston-wide & West Lothian-wide organisations

One application was sent to a Livingston-wide group. This application has been returned and the group supported. Three applications were issued to West Lothian-wide groups. All applications have been returned and the groups supported. Appendix two shows the groups and the allocation to each.

E. CONCLUSION

The report advises of the allocations that are to be made from the Pensioners' Groups Christmas Fund 2017 to groups in Whitburn and Blackburn ward, Livingston-wide groups and West Lothian-wide groups.

A full report on the final allocations will be made to the Voluntary Organisation PDSP later in the year. Letters were issued to groups in late October advising them of the amount of funding they will receive, and payments made directly to the bank accounts of groups during November via PECOS.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

Voluntary Organisations Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel, Review of the Pensioners' Groups Christmas Fund Process 2011, Report By Head Of Area Services.

Appendices/Attachments: Two

Appendix 1: Final Allocations 2017 Whitburn and Blackburn Ward

Appendix 2: Final Allocations 2017 Livingston-wide and West Lothian-wide Organisations

Contact Person: Laura Wilson, Regeneration Team Leader, Laura.wilson2@westlothian.gov.uk

Craig McCorriston

Head of Planning Economic Development and Regeneration

27 November 2017

WHITBURN AND BLACKBURN LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE

PENSIONERS' GROUPS CHRISTMAS FUND ALLOCATIONS 2017

REPORT BY HEAD OF PLANNING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION

Appendix 1: Allocations 2017 Whitburn and Blackburn Ward

Group	Number of Beneficiaries	Amount
Blackburn Women's Social Services Club (WSSC)	30	£172.50
Brucefield House Tenants Association	37	£212.75
East Whitburn & Redmill OAP	46	£264.50
Scottish Pensioners Association Whitburn No1 Branch	16	£92.00
Seafield Senior Citizens	76	£437.00
Society of St. Vincent de Paul	130	£747.50
Weavers Court Tenants Group	40	£230.00
Young at Heart	45	£258.75
Totals	420	£2,415.00

Note: One new group, Brucefield House Tenants Association, was added to the list in 2017.

WHITBURN AND BLACKBURN LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE

PENSIONERS' GROUPS CHRISTMAS FUND ALLOCATIONS 2017

REPORT BY HEAD OF PLANNING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION

Appendix 2: Allocations 2017: Livingston-Wide & West Lothian-Wide Organisations

Group	Number of Beneficiaries	Amount
Braid House Day Centre	160	£920.00
Total	160	£920.00

Group	Number of Beneficiaries	Amount
West Lothian Visually Impaired Club	10	£57.50
West Lothian 50+ Network	204	£1,173.00
West Lothian Financial Inclusion Network	150	£862.50
Total	364	£2,093.00

WHITBURN AND BLACKBURN LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE WORKPLAN – AS OF NOVEMBER 2017

No.	Subject	Purpose	Lead Officer	Date
1	Housing Report	Quarterly update on housing issues	Gary Stoddart	February 2018
2	Police Report	Quarterly update on police/NRT activity	Insp. Gregor Forbes	February 2018
3	Economic Development and Regeneration Report	To update local members on Economic Development and Regeneration service activity in the ward.	Craig McCorriston	February 2018
4	Fire and Rescue Report	Quarterly report on activity	Desmond Donnelly	February 2018
5	Operational Services Report	Quarterly report on activity	Tony Fleming	February 2018
6	Pensioners Christmas Fund	To present	Laura Wilson	August/November 2018
7	Villages improvement Fund	To present any applications	Craig McCorriston	Ongoing