

MINUTE of MEETING of the FAULDHUSE AND THE BREICH VALLEY LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE of WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL held within COUNCIL CHAMBERS, WEST LOTHIAN CIVIC CENTRE, on 21 NOVEMBER 2017.

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

In Attendance –

Alice Mitchell, Lead Officer, Fauldhouse and the Breich Valley LAC

Kate Ward, Housing, Construction and Building Services, WLC

Tony Fleming NETs, Land and Countryside Services, WLC

Chris Nelson, Advice Shop, WLC

Desmond Donnelly, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

2. MINUTE

The Fauldhouse and the Breich Valley Local Area Committee approved the minute of its meeting held on 5 September 2017. The minute was then signed by the Chair.

3. POLICE SCOTLAND REPORT - REPORT BY POLICE INSPECTOR GREGOR FORBES

Police Scotland had given apologies on behalf of Inspector Forbes and had explained that it had not been possible for a representative to attend the meeting.

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by Police Inspector Gregor Forbes providing an update on performance, activities and issues across the ward for the period up to 31 October 2017.

The report provided statistical information relating to crime groups 1 to 5. It was noted that Anti Social Behaviour calls showed a 50% rise in the year to date.

The report went on to provide details of initiatives aimed at reducing anti social behaviour

Finally, the report invited members to access the Police Scotland website and submit view to shape the future of local policing plans.

The Committee was asked to note the contents of the report.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

4. FAULDHOUSE AND THE BREICH VALLEY MULTI-MEMBER WARD PERFORMANCE REPORT - REPORT BY SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES

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

The report provided statistical information in relation to the seven key priorities within the ward area.

It was reported that during the 2017-18 year to date reporting period, the service had dealt with 2 accidental dwelling fires in comparison to 3 during 2016-17 year to date reporting period.

The number of unwanted fire alarm signals (UFAS) incidents during the 2017-18 year to date reporting period was up to 41, compared to 29 in the reporting period in the previous year.

In response to a question raised, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service representative informed the Committee that safety visits continued to be offered by the service.

The Committee was asked to note the content of the report.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

5. HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES UPDATE

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

The report examined property void performance for both mainstream and temporary tenancies. It was noted that there were currently 15 Policy Voids in the ward and the reasons included properties unable to let due to Health and Safety reasons and being held to assist with decants due to remedial works.

In relation to rent arrears, it was reported that the ward position for Q2 of 2017/18 was £277,007. This was an increase of £3,857 on the previous year's position. While there were 64 serious arrears cases, it was noted that 61% of cases were in the lower bands (£300 or less).

The report provided an update in relation to the Lanrigg, Fauldhouse works and the upgrading work at Cuthill Crescent, Stoneyburn.

The Committee was asked to note Housing, Building and Customer Service activity as detailed in the ward report for the period 1 July to 30 September 2017.

#### Decision

To note the terms of the report.

### 6. SERVICE UPDATE - NETS, LAND AND COUNTRYSIDE

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Operational Services updating members of the recent activity of the NETs, Land and Countryside Services teams for the period 1 August to 10 October 2017.

It was reported that routine grass cutting had been completed for the year, and the second weed control application had also been completed. In relation to the weed control trial, it was noted that the trial had finished, with the results scheduled to be reported to PDSP in December.

The report went on to examine activity in relation to Grounds Maintenance Enquiries, Garden Maintenance Routine Works, Cleaner Communities Routine Works, Parks and Woodland, and Open Space and Cemeteries.

The Committee raised questions and noted concerns about dog fouling at the lower part of the new cemetery and that it had become worse since the removal of the bollards in that area. Officers undertook to provide LAC members with an update and to keep members advised of any plans for the area.

Finally, it was noted that abandoned vehicles and fly-tipping was becoming a major issue within the ward and across the local authority area. A strategy and LPAP were being developed to address the issue and would be presented to PDSP in November 2017.

Members were invited to:-

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

#### Decision

To note the terms of the report.

### 7. ADVICE SHOP SERVICE UPDATE

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Finance and Property Services informing LAC members of the work undertaken by the Advice Shop Service from April 2016 to March

2017.

Appendix 1 to the report showed the number of people the service had worked with in 2016/17 in the Fauldhouse and the Breich Valley area. This included a breakdown of gender and age of Advice Shop client.

Appendix 2 to the report showed the wider work of the Advice Shop and the specific campaigns which were delivered across West Lothian alongside a range of projects which were provided in partnership with key agencies to target the most vulnerable in communities.

Questions raised by members were dealt with by the Senior Advisor - Income Maximisation Team. In particular, he spoke of the impact of the roll out of Universal Credit and the work being carried out by council staff to provide support and advice.

The Committee was asked to:-

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

#### Decision

To note the terms of the report.

### 8. PENSIONERS' GROUPS CHRISTMAS FUND ALLOCATIONS 2017

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration informing members of the allocations made from the Pensioners' Groups Christmas Fund 2017 to groups in Fauldhouse and the Breich Valley ward, Livingston-wide groups and West Lothian-wide groups.

It was reported that fifteen applications forms were issued in the ward, with all fifteen being returned. Appendix 1 to the report showed the groups supported and the allocation to each.

It was noted that one application had been sent to a Livingston-wide group and the group supported. Three applications had been issued to West Lothian-wide groups and all had been returned and the groups supported. Appendix 2 to the report showed the groups and the allocation to each.

The Committee was asked to note that fifteen groups within the ward had applied to the fund and had been supported.

#### Decision

To note the terms of the report.

## 9. WEST LOTHIAN VILLAGES IMPROVEMENT FUND - APPLICATIONS

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration advising of three applications received from within the ward seeking funding from the West Lothian Villages Improvement Fund (WLVIF) in 2017/18.

Copies of the applications were attached as appendices to the report and were summarised within the report as undernoted:-

The Pitstop External Improvements – To allow the Pitstop to replace the external cladding around the top of the building and to repair the stonework at the front steps. The new cladding would significantly improve the look of the building, and in turn improve the look of a key area of the village. The steps at the front entrance to the Pitstop were in a poor state of repair and a potential health and safety issue. Total funding requested was **£5,955**.

Fauldhouse Mining Tribute –The was a regeneration project with Fauldhouse Community Trust as the lead partner. The application would allow for the design and creation of an installation on the village green. Total funding requested was **£24,000**.

Polbeth Access and Viewing Platform – To allow CSGNT to replace the viewing platform at Limefield Falls; remove dead vegetation and clear the site around the falls; create an extra pathway linking to the existing network; create a seating area; and install story boards to inform visitors to the site of its history. Total funding requested was **£17,300** towards a total project cost of £29,300.

It was recommended that the Local Area Committee:-

1. note that three applications had been received for funding;
2. note that the proposals met the eligibility criteria for supported projects;
3. support funding for the projects;
4. agree that the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration should make an offer of funding as per the details set out in the report.

During discussion, it was noted that substantial amounts remained for allocation and the Lead Officer would seek clarification on unspent funds at the year end.

### Decision

1. To note that three applications had been received for funding;
2. To note that the proposals met the eligibility criteria for supported

projects;

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

## 10. REPORT ON PROGRESS OF REGENERATION PLANNING

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

It had previously been reported to the Local Area Committee that a decision had been taken by the Fauldhouse and the Breich Valley Local Action Group that meetings be held at individual village level. The villages were:- Addiewell, Stoneyburn, Fauldhouse and Polbeth.

The report contained details of progress in each of the four villages.

In addition, it was reported that West Calder & Harburn Community Development Trust was the lead partner in a consortium of voluntary organisations within five regeneration areas in West Lothian who, with support from the Regeneration Team, had applied for funding from the Scottish Government's Aspiring Communities fund. The funding application had been approved and the consortium had been awarded £248,000. This would allow WC&HCDDT to employ a development worker to work in Polbeth. The new development worker would work closely with the regeneration officer to support regeneration planning and work with the Polbeth Steering Group.

The Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration concluded that good progress continued to be made in developing regeneration plans within the ward area. Local action groups had been established and had begun the process of evidence gathering and statistical analysis. A programme of community engagement was almost complete and the information gathered from this would help to inform the plans.

It was recommended that the Local area Committee note:-

1. that four local regeneration groups had been established and were active;
2. community engagement was underway in all regeneration areas; and
3. that five key community organisations had successfully secured £248,000 from the Aspiring Communities Fund.

### Decision

To note the terms of the report.

11. WORKPLAN

A copy of the Workplan had been circulated for information.

Decision

To note the Workplan.

12. TIMETABLE 2017/18

As a result of a decision by West Lothian Council in September 2017, it had been necessary to change the start times for meetings of the Fauldhouse and the Breich Valley Local Area Committee.

A paper had been circulated showing meeting dates and times for the Fauldhouse and the Breich Valley Local Area Committee for the period to end June 2018.

Decision

To agree meeting dates/times for the Fauldhouse and the Breich Valley Local Area Committee as undernoted:-

- Tuesday 27 February 2018 at 9.30 am
- Tuesday 15 May 2018 at 12 noon.