

MINUTE of MEETING of BROXBURN, UPHALL AND WINCHBURGH LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE of WEST LoTHIAN COUNCIL held within the ADULT LEARNING ROOM, ENTRANCE B, STRATHBROCK COMMUNITY CENTRE, 189A WEST MAIN ST, BROXBURN EH52 5LH, on 21 SEPTEMBER 2018.

Present – Councillors Angela Doran (Chair), Chris Horne, Diane Calder and Janet Campbell

In attendance

Alan Bell, Lead Officer, West Lothian Council
Phyllis McFadyen, Area Housing Manager, West Lothian Council
Douglas Grierson, Community Regeneration Officer, West Lothian Council
Eirwen Hopwood, Park & Woodland Manager, West Lothian Council
Scott Williamson, Scottish Fire & Rescue Service
PC Neil Hunter, Police Scotland
PC Andrew Murray, Police Scotland
Greg McDowall, Acting Head Teacher, St Margaret's Academy

8 residents of Fivestanks Residents Group were in attendance.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

2. ORDER OF BUSINESS, INCLUDING NOTICE OF URGENT BUSINESS AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ANY URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair informed the committee that a request for a deputation had been made by Fivestanks Residents Group, who wished to address the meeting in relation to ongoing issues at Fivestanks Place, Broxburn.

The committee agreed that the deputation be heard. Pamela York, Chair of Fivestanks Residents Group, agreed to speak on behalf of the deputation.

The Chair then ruled that the order of business would be amended as follows:

- Scottish Fire and Rescue Service update to be considered as first item on agenda;
- Deputation from Fivestanks Residents Group;
- Presentation by St Margaret's Academy; and
- Remaining items to be considered as per the agenda.

3. MINUTE

The committee agreed the minute of its meeting held on 25 May 2018 as

being a correct record. The Chair thereafter signed the minute.

4. BROXBURN, UPHALL AND WINCHBURGH WARD PERFORMANCE UPDATE.

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service providing details of activity for the ward up to 30 June 2018.

The quarterly reports were produced to ensure delivery of the Local Fire and Rescue Plan for West Lothian 2018, which was a requirement under the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012, Section 41E. A list of the key priorities for the ward, against which performance had been monitored, was listed within the report

An appendix to the report provided members with a series of graphs showing details of accidental dwelling fires, fire casualties and fatalities; deliberate fires, fires in non-domestic properties, special services casualties (excluding RTC's), unwanted fire alarm signals and RTC casualties and fatalities for Scotland, West Lothian and the ward.

The Station Manager then responded to questions from members of the committee providing details of the initiatives taking place within the ward area to reduce the number of fire related incidents.

The report recommended that the committee notes and provides comment on the Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh Multi-member Ward Performance report.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

5. DEPUTATION BY FIVESTANKS RESIDENTS GROUP.

Pamela York, Chair of Fivestanks Residents Group, spoke on behalf of the residents of Fivestanks Place, Broxburn, advising that since the path was opened leading to the Lovell Homes in Broxburn a number of concerns have been highlighted in relation to the following issues:

- Flooding has been occurring in the area due to water running down from the Lovell Houses, which freezes in the winter months causing risks to residents and children;
- Danger and threats to children in the area caused by incidents of crime and road offences; and
- No slalom gates have been fitted to stop cars, vans and off-road motorcycles from using the pedestrian path. Residents would like slalom gates installed to close the pedestrian path to motor vehicles and off-road motorcycles.

Residents have requested a meeting with relevant people and an action plan to be implemented to assist them to resolve the issues identified.

The Chair thanked Ms York for her presentation. However, she advised that it was not within the remit of the LAC to instruct officers to organise a public meeting.

An update was then provided from PC Murray on issues relevant to Fivestanks Place, Broxburn. He advised that reports were received regarding the misuse of the footpath by vehicles leading from Fivestanks Place to Cunnigar Road. There were also reports of non-criminal ASB in the area and local police officers have engaged with the local community and partners in relation to this. He agreed to provide feedback from residents to the relevant police officer. Residents were encouraged to continue to report any anti-social behaviour issues.

The Housing Manager provided an update relating to the access path and excessive surface water run-off issues reported by Fivestanks residents. The areas which border the Fivestanks development had yet to receive its final landscaping treatments and planting. It was anticipated that excessive surface water run-off would be alleviated through the completion of all the remaining landscaping and planting.

The cycle path to the Fivestanks Estate and common land required to be landscaped and planted in accordance with the approved plans. All temporary HERAS fencing would also be removed. The main contractor has intimated that this work would commence within the next few weeks.

In relation to reports of persistent dog fouling and increased dropping of litter, the update from the NETS, Land and Countryside Officers was that three enquiries were received between 1 January and 5 September 2018 for this location in relation to dog fouling and none received for litter. Regular patrols were carried out between April & June 2018 and Enforcement Officers erected signs within the street itself. During the period of inspections there was minimal dog foul or littering found within the area and adjacent to Fivestanks Place. While in the area carrying out these patrols they arranged the removal of a couple of abandoned vehicles and had DVLA clamp a number of vehicles.

Elected members were then given the opportunity to ask questions, which were responded to by officers in attendance.

The Lead Officer advised that if the committee was in agreement he would liaise with the agencies involved to gather information and report back to the next meeting of the LAC.

Councillor Campbell raised her concerns about the time involved to bring this matter back to the next LAC meeting in December 2018 and supported a multi-agency public meeting with residents.

Councillor Calder supported Councillor Campbell's proposal.

The Lead Officer undertook to engage with relevant senior officers to

explore the option of a meeting being held and would update members of the LAC thereafter. If a decision was made to proceed with a public meeting the report submitted to the LAC in December would reflect the outcome of this meeting.

The Lead Officer was asked to include senior officers from Roads and Transportation Services when he was exploring the option of a meeting being held.

Decision

1. To note the deputation from residents of Fivestanks Residents Group;
2. To note the update from the Police Officers in attendance, the Housing Manager, and NETS, Land and Countryside Services;
3. To agree that the Lead Officer would gather information and report back to the next meeting of the LAC; and
4. To agree that the Lead Officer would liaise with senior officers, including officers from Roads and Transportation Services, to explore the option of a multi-agency meeting being held and to update members thereafter.

6. ST MARGARET'S ACADEMY

The Chair welcomed Greg McDowall, Acting Head Teacher, St Margaret's Academy to the meeting. Mr McDowall had been invited to present an overview of the school's performance and levels of attainment.

The presentation slides provided an overview of the school's vision and contained information in relation to attainment and achievements in the session 2017/2018.

The Head Teacher provided members with details of performance for S4 Attainment 2018 and explained the importance of these results as the gateway for students to further education, apprenticeships, etc. He then moved on to provide information on Higher Attainment 2018 and advised that 76% of students had achieved at least 1 Higher at Level 6 in 2017/18.

The presentation provided an overview of the school leaver destinations for 2016-17, noting that at least 86% of school leavers had entered a positive destination. Finally, the presentation covered the Advanced Higher results for 2018 although the Head Teacher pointed out that due to the changing nature of education, students also undertook HNC and Skills for Work Courses in their 6th year which were also high value qualifications recognised by employers.

The Head Teacher concluded his presentation by informing members of some of the initiatives carried out in school, which included the "Study Late" programme which had been welcomed by children in school. In relation to the wider achievements, more students were taking up HNC

programmes and were taking up volunteering roles within the community. Work was also being done to support mental health and health and wellbeing of children in school.

The Head Teacher then responded to questions from members of the committee.

The Chair, on behalf of the committee, thanked the Head Teacher for the informative presentation and for the excellent work being carried out in school. She also acknowledged the innovative work being done to support mental health and health and wellbeing in school and highlighted the importance of educating children in mental health issues within the classroom.

Decision

To note the terms of the presentation.

7. POLICE SCOTLAND UPDATE

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by PS Iain Wells providing details of the performance, activities and issues across the ward for the period up to 31 August 2018.

The report provided information for the reporting period relating to a number of themes and provided comparative figures for the same period in 2017.

PC Hunter and PC Murray attended the meeting and provided an update on the work carried out within the ward area. Issues and complaints of parking continued and Community Beat Officers conducted numerous mobile patrols throughout the “Hot Spot” areas engaging with drivers and members of the public. Robust enforcement action continued in relation to the anti-social use of quad bikes and off road bikes in the areas of Broxburn and Uphall. Mobile foot patrols have been carried out in an effort to prevent the use of these vehicles being driven on prohibited areas.

The committee was also advised that the Parksmart Scheme had been rolled out to schools within West Lothian. Acquisitive crimes and responses to drug related criminal activity in the area were outlined in the report and officers would continue to work hard, working with partners on a number of initiatives that were taking place within the ward area.

Details of police activity carried out in Broxburn, Uphall, Winchburgh, and Dechmont areas were detailed within the report.

PC Hunter and PC Murray then responded to questions from members of the committee. The committee was advised that community councils would be able to find details of community policing within their ward area via the link provided within the report to the LAC.

During the course of the discussion the committee congratulated

members of Broxburn Gala Day Committee for the excellent work carried out throughout the year, which led to the successful gala day held on 26 August 2018.

In response to comments from the committee relating to vehicles idling, police officers undertook to make enquiries and advise members of the name of the police officer to contact relating to this. An update would also be given to Karen McCubbin, Council Officer involved in the Parksmart Scheme. Members were also advised that if there were any “hot spot” areas reported then it might be possible for Environmental Health Officers to measure pollution levels.

The committee acknowledged the excellent work carried out by police officers in the ward area.

It was recommended that the Local Area Committee notes the contents of the report.

Decision

To note the contents of the report and the update from PC Hunter and PC Murray.

8. 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 update on the housing service activities for the ward for the period 1st April to 30 June 2018.

The report provided an overview of the activities of Housing, Customer and Building Services, specific to the Broxburn, Uphall & Winchburgh ward for the first quarter of 2018/2019 and examined property void and let performance for both mainstream and temporary properties for the reporting period, confirming that there were 27 policy voids in the ward for this period.

The report continued by providing details of rent arrears for the ward noting that for Quarter 1 of 2018/2019 the arrears were £181,033, which was an increase of £32,176 on the previous year's position. The committee noted that the increased arrears were as a result of Full Service Universal Credit being introduced in West Lothian from May 2018, along with other Welfare Benefit reforms and the current economic climate.

Details of the capital programme and new build council housing were provided as well as information relating to local capital upgrades, tenant participation and safer neighbourhood council officer ward information.

The Housing Manager then responded to questions from members of the committee. In response to a question relating to the work carried out at Almondell Road, Broxburn, the Area Housing Manager advised that a visit to the site would be arranged for LAC members once the work was

completed.

During the course of the discussion the Housing Manager was asked if training was available to tenants on the process for applying for Universal Credit. The Area Housing Manager undertook to feedback this suggestion to officers within the Advice Shop.

In relation to the number of policy voids in the ward, the Area Housing Manager was asked if it would be possible to carry out early surveying of properties being re-let to help reduce the number of property voids. Members were advised that that this could be difficult however, it was agreed that further discussion would be held with colleagues relating to this.

It was recommended that the committee notes the Housing, Customer and Building Services activity as detailed in the ward report for the period 1st April to 30th June 2018.

Decision

1. To note the contents of the report; and
2. To note that a visit to the Almondell Road site would be arranged once the work was completed;
3. To note that the Area Housing Manager undertook to feedback details of the suggestions by the committee to colleagues relating to training for tenants applying for Universal Credit and early surveying of properties being re-let.

9. SERVICE UPDATE - NETS, LAND & COUNTRYSIDE

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Operational Services providing details of the NETs, Land and Countryside service activity for the period 1 May to 31 July 2018.

The report provided a summary of works carried out and enquiries received in relation to grounds maintenance, garden maintenance and cleaner communities.

Enforcement Officers dealt with enquiries in relation to various environmental issues and were involved in a number of community projects within the ward, with the aim of raising awareness of environmental issues. Details of the Parks and Woodland enquiries and Open Space and Cemeteries enquiries were also provided.

Members were advised that good progress had been made with ground maintenance tasks due to the good weather experienced for most of the reporting period.

Central Scotland Green Network Trust was appointed to draw up plans for the creation of a neighbourhood park at Cleghorn Drive/Wyndford Avenue and to improve access into/around Broxburn Community Woodland.

In response to a number of questions asked by elected members, the Park and Woodland Manager agreed to forward these on to her colleagues to provide a response following the meeting. These included:

1. Within the review of the litter bin strategy, was it the intention of officers to target areas where bins were not available?
2. How were dog waste bins being monitored to ensure they were being emptied regularly?
3. Could consideration be given to stencilling being used in areas problematic for dog fouling and would it be possible to include school children by allowing them to design posters, etc?
4. How much was fly tipping costing the council and what types of items were being fly tipped? Could statistics be provided giving comparisons between this year and the previous financial year?
5. Why was no figure recorded against Illegal Fly Posting for 2018?

Finally, the committee was advised that the Enforcement Officers were involved in a number of community projects within the ward, with the aim of raising awareness of environmental issues.

It was recommended that the committee notes the work carried out to date and future planned work and advise of any areas that required further investigation or inclusion in future work plans.

Decision

- To note the contents of the report; and
- To note that the questions from members outlined above would be forwarded to officers within NETS, Land & Countryside Services for a response to be provided.

10. 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 providing details of the applications received from within the ward area seeking funding from the West Lothian Villages Improvement Fund in 2018/19.

The report recalled that in 2012 Council Executive agreed the eligibility criteria for a West Lothian Villages Improvement Fund. Funding of £1.6m was available to support eligible schemes with the funding phased over five years. Three villages within the Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh ward were eligible to apply to the Villages Improvement Fund.

The following two applications were received for this round of funding:

1. Winchburgh Community Development Trust - £2,050
2. Winchburgh Community Council - £2,310

Both applications received met the eligibility criteria of the fund and the committee was asked to support them.

During the course of the discussion elected members confirmed that they supported the two funding applications. However, comments were made relating to the ambiguity of the criteria for applying to the Villages Improvement Fund, particularly in relation to a new football team in the area. It was suggested that the Active Schools and Community Sport Manager be invited to attend the next meeting of the LAC to provide an update on the Sporting Grant Scheme.

It was recommended that the Local Area Committee:

1. Notes that two applications have been received for funding;
2. Notes that the proposals met 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.

Decision

- To agree the recommendation in the report; and
- To note that the Active Schools and Community Sport Manager be invited to attend the next meeting to provide an update on the Sporting Grant Scheme.

11. DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS TOWN AND VILLAGE IMPROVEMENTS IN CORE DEVELOPMENT AREAS - APPLICATIONS

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Planning, Economic Development & Regeneration providing details of the applications received from within the ward area seeking funding from the West Lothian Town and Villages Core Development Areas Fund (WLCDAF).

The report explained that the West Lothian Local Plan required developers within core development areas (CDAs) to contribute £250 per house towards town and village centre improvements within the CDA in which they were operating. Developers have the option to propose a package of equivalent value improvements or to make a financial contribution of £250 into an improvement fund, with that fund being administered by the council.

In February 2017 the Council Executive agreed the eligibility criteria for a West Lothian Town and Villages Core Development Areas Fund (WLVDAF). The report advised that current contributions of £147,000 were available to support eligible schemes within the Winchburgh area, although £50,000 had been ring-fenced for kerbing in the town centre. Additional funding would become available as the development progressed.

At the Local Area Committee meeting on 8 June 2017 it was agreed to support an application for funding from Winchburgh Community Development Trust (CDT) for £9,750 to engage consultants to produce and agree with the community a Village Improvement Design Guide. Winchburgh CDT indicated that for various reasons, including an earlier tendering process which saw no tenders submitted, it was not possible to progress the work at that time but were now in a position to appoint a preferred consultant. However, the cost was above the value of the grant awarded in June 2017 and additional funding of £2,350 was now requested. This would cover the additional consultant costs of £1,600 and additional funding of £759 to cover the hire of halls. This would bring the overall award to £12,100.

If agreed, the consultant and Winchburgh CDT would produce the framework by the end of 2018. Further updates would be provided to the LAC in more detail on the emerging framework at the December meeting. Any funding not utilised as part of the project would be returned to the overall pot.

The Community Regeneration Officer (CRO) then responded to questions from members of the committee. In response to a question about the eligibility criteria to apply for funding from the WLCDAF, the CRO advised that the Design Guide would provide details of the developer funding and would highlight the type of work suitable for funding. An update would be provided to the next meeting of the LAC.

During the course of the discussion the committee agreed to support the additional funding required for the Winchburgh Town and Village Plan project. However, a question was raised about the £50,000 ring-fenced from developer funding to repair kerbing in the town centre. As this damage was caused by the contractors should they not be responsible to repair this? The CRO agreed to pass this comment on to the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration.

It was recommended that the Local Area Committee:

1. Notes the update on current progress;
2. Supports the additional funding for the Winchburgh Town and Village Plan project;
3. Agrees that the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration should make an offer of funding as per the details set out in the report; and

4. Agrees that an update on progress of the Winchburgh project was brought to the next Local Area Committee.

Decision

- To agree the recommendation in the report; and
- To note that the Community Regeneration Officer agreed to pass elected members comments on to the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration.

12. PENSIONERS' GROUPS CHRISTMAS FUND ALLOCATIONS 2018

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration advising of the groups that were invited to apply for the Pensioners' Groups Christmas Fund 2018 in the Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh ward area, Livingston-wide groups and West Lothian-wide groups.

In 2018 the total fund amounted to £29,054. The fund was divided equally by the total number of beneficiaries. Groups were asked to respond by 29 September 2018. Letters would be issued to groups in October advising them of the amount of funding they would receive and payments would be made directly to the bank accounts of groups during November 2018 via PECOS.

The Committee was informed that ten application forms had been issued to groups across the ward, with one having been returned to date. The intention was to support all ten groups upon submission of their applications. Appendix one in the report showed the groups to be supported and the approximate number of beneficiaries in each.

One application had been sent to a Livingston-wide group. This application has been returned and would be supported. Three applications were issued to West Lothian-wide groups with one returned to date. The intention was to support all three groups upon submission of their applications. Appendix two in the report showed the groups and the approximate number of beneficiaries in each.

A full report on the final allocations would be made to the Voluntary Organisations PDSP later in the year.

It was recommended that the Local Area Committee notes that ten groups within the ward area were invited to apply and applications were awaited.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

13. WORKPLAN 2018-2019

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

It was recommended that the following items be included on the workplan:

1. Update report to be provided to the next meeting of the LAC on issues relating to Fivestanks Place, Broxburn;
2. Development Contributions Towards Town and Village Improvements in Core Development Areas – Update; and
3. Update to be provided on the Sports Grant by the Active Schools and Community Sport Manager.

Decision

To note the workplan subject to including the items outlined above.