

MINUTE of MEETING of FAULDHOUSE AND THE BREICH VALLEY LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE of WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL held within CONFERENCE ROOM 3, WEST LOTHIAN CIVIC CENTRE, on 28 SEPTEMBER 2018.

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

In attendance

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

Laura Wilson, Regeneration Team Leader, WLC

David Cullen, NET's, Land and Countryside Services, WLC

Kenny Stewart, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

Sgt Vince Hughes, Police Scotland

Julie Calder, Head Teacher, West Calder High School

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Agenda Item 5: West Calder High School Presentation

Councillor Clark declared an interest as her children attended West Calder High School.

2. MINUTE

The committee approved the minute of its meeting held on 15 May 2018. The minute was then signed by the Chair.

3. WEST CALDER HIGH SCHOOL - PRESENTATION BY JULIE CALDER, HEAD TEACHER

The Chair welcomed Julie Calder, Head Teacher, West Calder High School, to the meeting. Ms Calder had been invited to provide an overview of the school's performance and levels of attainment.

Ms Calder advised that the new West Calder High School opened on 22 August 2018. Feedback received from pupils and parents has been positive. Pupils were experiencing a new and exciting journey with excellent facilities being available to support their improvement journey. A number of break out areas were available in school to allow small tutorial lessons to be given and also a number of small spaces where young people were able to work on their own. The school's values had also changed to reflect the new branding which was now 'Ambition, Respect and Equity – Working together to bring out the best in you'.

Members were advised that there was a recent drop in the school roll from 742 to 705. West Calder serves a large geographical area within West Lothian covering the following six cluster primary schools:

- Addiewell, East Calder, Kirknewton, Mid Calder, Parkhead and Woodmuir.

Excellence through raising attainment and achieving equity were priorities of the school which included improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy, and closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people. The school continued to review and strengthen its practice to ensure the needs of every learner was being met and supported improvements in children and young people's health and wellbeing.

A presentation slide contained details of the senior phase attainment levels for year groups S4, S5 and S6.

The Head Teacher advised that a number of new roles had been created in school with co-ordinators available to provide appropriate support for young people, particularly in literacy and numeracy. The school was also working to lead the way towards becoming a digital school. A refreshed curriculum was available with an increased range of opportunities for all young people and improved pupil pathways in the Senior Phase.

Finally, the Head Teacher responded to questions raised by LAC members.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair thanked the Head Teacher for her informative presentation and acknowledged the excellent work being carried out in school and the positive feedback received in relation to the new school environment.

Decision

To note the terms of the presentation.

4. POLICE SCOTLAND REPORT

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by Police Constable Philip Wilkin providing an update on performance, activities and issues across the ward for the period up to 31 July 2018.

Sergeant Vince Hughes presented the report on behalf of PC Wilkin.

The report contained statistical information relating to the six West Lothian priorities.

It was noted that there had been an increase in anti-social behaviour and youth calls over the summer months. Local police officers continued to conduct targeted high visibility patrols of known hot spot areas to engage with youths and the wider community to tackle these issues. Joint partnership working with West Lothian Council Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service has led to a fall in the number of youth calls.

The report also provided details of the work carried out to prevent violence and anti-social behaviour in the community, making our roads safer, tackling substance misuse and tackling acquisitive crime.

Incidents of note were highlighted within the report relating to West Calder, Polbeth, Fauldhouse, Stoneyburn and Addiewell & Loganlea.

During the course of the discussion it was noted that Polbeth Community Council were in the process of setting up a Neighbourhood Watch scheme. Sergeant Hughes was asked if a community police officer would be available to attend their next meeting to provide advice relating to this. Sergeant Hughes stated that police officers were happy to support the Neighbourhood Watch scheme and he would check if any community police officers were available to attend. Councillor Clark agreed to provide Sergeant Hughes with details of the contact numbers and date of Polbeth Community Council's next meeting. Details of Neighbourhood Watch Scotland's web site was also available within the report.

Finally, the committee acknowledged the excellent work carried out in the community by police officers.

Decision

1. To note the contents of the report; and
2. To note that Sergeant Hughes agreed to check if a community police officer was available to attend the next meeting of Polbeth Community Council to provide advice on the Neighbourhood Watch scheme.

5. FAULDHOUSE AND THE BREICH VALLEY MULTI-MEMBER WARD PERFORMANCE REPORT

A report 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 June 2018.

Kenny Stewart presented the report, providing statistical information in relation to the seven key priorities within the ward area.

It was reported that during the 2018-19 year to date reporting period, the service had dealt with 1 casualty due to fire in comparison to 2 during 2017-18 year to date reporting period.

The number of unwanted fire alarm signals (UFAS) incidents during the 2018-19 year to date reporting period was 19, compared to 12 during 2017-18 year to date reporting period. The service continued to engage with business partners to reduce demand from UFAS.

The number of deliberate fire incidents reported during 2018-19 year to date was 25 in comparison to 51 during 2017-18 year to date reporting period. In response to a question about the reason for there being such a significant reduction in the number of deliberate fire incidents reported, members were advised that the service continued to work with young people, engaging with schools, to educate children on the dangers of deliberate fire raising.

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

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

6. 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 for the period 1 April to 30 June 2018.

The report examined property void performance for both mainstream and temporary tenancies.

In relation to rent arrears, it was reported that the ward position for Q1 of 2018/19 was £308,577. This was an increase of £66,870 on last year's position. While there were 82 serious arrears cases, it was noted that 60% of cases were in the lower bands (£300 or less).

The report also provided details of the local area team activity, capital programme and new build council housing, tenant participation for the period April to June 2018 and details of the work carried out by the Safer Neighbourhood Team.

The Chair advised members that as there was no representative from Housing, Customer and Building Services in attendance at the meeting, any questions relating to the report should be directed to the Area Housing Manager.

The committee was asked to note Housing, Building and Customer Service activity as detailed in the ward report for the period 1 April to 30 June 2018.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

7. SERVICE UPDATE - NETS, LAND & COUNTRYSIDE

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

The report provided details of the routine works and enquiries relating to grounds maintenance, garden maintenance, cleaner communities, environmental community actions, parks and woodland services and open

space and cemeteries works carried out within the ward area.

It was reported that there was only one fixed penalty notice for littering and one fixed penalty notice for dog fouling issued in the reporting period. When asked why the figure was so low the Operational Services Manager advised that target areas were based on complaints received within the community. He undertook to forward this enquiry on to the Enforcement Officer to see if there were any trends reported which could be monitored.

Members were advised that if any complaints were received from constituents relating to “hot spot” areas for dog fouling, they should report this to the Enforcement Officer.

Finally, members were advised that good progress had been made with most ground maintenance tasks due to the good weather experienced for most of the reporting period. The Enforcement Officers were involved in a number of community projects within the ward, with the aim of raising awareness of environmental issues.

The Ranger Service took their popular mini environment fair ‘Wild Wednesday’ to Burngrange Park in West Calder for the first time, where over 100 people attended.

The Chair, on behalf of the Committee, acknowledged the excellent work carried out in the area and the good news stories reported and asked that their thanks be given to staff for their hard work.

Members were asked to:

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

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

8. CARRIAGEWAY REINSTATEMENTS TO SCOTTISH POWER ENERGY NETWORKS CABLING WORKS IN THE HARBURN AREA - UPDATE

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Operational Services providing an update on Scottish Power Energy Networks (SPEN) remedial works to reinstatements, resulting from cabling works in the Harburn area.

The report recalled that utility works associated with the Pate’s Hill, Pearie Law and Harburnhead windfarms were carried out by contractors working on behalf of Scottish Power Energy Networks over the last 8-9 years. Concerns about the standard of these reinstatements were discussed at the LAC meeting held on 27 February 2018. Prior to the LAC meeting in February, a joint inspection of the site took place. Outstanding defects were highlighted and agreed on site, then recorded on the Scottish Road

Works Register. Verge and carriageway remedial works were subsequently carried out and completed on Friday 27 April.

Works associated with carriageway reinstatement following extensive cabling works in the Harburn area have been carried out within the nationally agreed defect inspection regime and were now complete.

During the course of the discussion it was noted that there was a request made by residents of the community for a final meeting to be held with SPEN representatives for assurances to be given that all matters had been completed satisfactorily. The Regeneration Team Leader undertook to forward this request on to the Public Utilities and Road Works Officer.

It was recommended that the committee notes that carriageway reinstatements and associated defects have been completed to the satisfaction of Roads and Transportation's Public Utilities Team and that no complaints have subsequently been received from members of the community.

Decision

1. To note the contents of the report; and
2. To note that the Regeneration Team Leader undertook to contact the Public Utilities and Road Works Officer to request a final meeting between residents of the community and SPEN representatives.

9. 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 Fauldhouse and the Breich Valley 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 sixteen application forms were issued to groups across the ward, with eight returned to date. The intention was to support all sixteen 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.

During the course of the discussion the Chair advised that she had received notification that the number of beneficiaries for West Calder Community Centre Management Committee was 90 and not 40 as recorded in the report. The Regeneration Team Leader agreed to check this out to ensure that an accurate figure was provided.

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

Decision

1. To note the contents of the report; and
2. To agree that the Regeneration Team Leader would confirm the exact number of beneficiaries within West Calder Community Centre Management Committee.

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, providing details of the progress made towards developing regeneration plans within the ward, and other ward activity.

The Regeneration Team Leader advised that good progress continued to be made in developing regeneration plans within the Fauldhouse and the Breich Valley ward area. A draft plan was now available for Fauldhouse, Stoneyburn and Polbeth, which were attached as appendices to the report.

The template for each plan was broadly the same, but the actions within the plans were specific to each area and were developed using the engagement information gathered, the views of the local steering group and the statistical information for the area. The Fauldhouse plan also incorporated the charrette findings from 2016.

The overarching themes for each of the regeneration plans were outlined within the report. A number of pages within the plans still required content to be added and this process was ongoing. Members were advised that all four area plans would be finalised and published by the end of 2018.

The Regeneration Team Leader then responded to questions from members of the committee.

The Chair, on behalf of the committee, acknowledged the excellent work

being carried out in the community.

It was recommended that the Local Area Committee:

1. Notes that draft plans were ready for Stoneyburn, Fauldhouse and Polbeth;
2. Reviews and provides feedback on the draft plans; and
3. Notes that a draft Addiewell plan would be available in October.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

11. WORKPLAN

A copy of the workplan had been circulated for information.

Decision

To note the workplan.