

MINUTE of MEETING of the LIVINGSTON NORTH LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE of WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL held within CONFERENCE ROOM 1, GROUND FLOOR, CIVIC CENTRE, on 11 SEPTEMBER 2014.

Present – Councillors Angela Moohan (Chair), Anne McMillan

Apologies – Councillor Robert De Bold, Andrew Miller

In Attendance

Jim Jack, Lead Officer, Livingston North Local Area Committee

Michelle Kirkbright, Community Regeneration Officer

Phyllis McFadyen, Housing Construction and Building Services

Linda Middlemist, Social Policy

Wendy McCorriston, Senior Planning Officer

James Melvin, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

Alan McMahon, Police Scotland

Donna McMaster, Inveralmond Community High School

Brian Johnston, Livingston Village Primary School

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

2. MINUTE

The Committee noted the minute of its meeting held on 12 June 2014.

3. INVERALMOND COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL - PRESENTATION BY HEADTEACHER

The Chair welcomed Donna McMaster, Head Teacher, Inveralmond Community High School, to the meeting. Ms McMaster had been invited to attend the meeting to provide an overview of the school's performance and levels of attainment.

Ms McMaster presented detailed information concerning the school, highlighting the school's strengths as follows:-

- Committed hard working staff
- Effective partnership working
- Strong areas of Learning and Teaching
- Positive Ethos
- School trips
- Personal Achievement

The presentation included statistical information relating to Standard Grade and Higher Grade performance and the Committee noted that there had been a significant improvement in attainment in comparison to previous years.

Ms McMaster responded to questions raised by members of the Committee, confirming that there had been an increase in the number of pupils from Livingston Village attending Inveralmond CHS.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair thanked Ms McMaster for her informative and uplifting presentation.

Decision

To note the presentation concerning Inveralmond Community High School.

4. LIVINGSTON NORTH MULTI-MEMBER WARD OPERATIONAL PLAN 2014-2017

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service inviting comments on the Livingston North Multi-member Ward Operational Plan 2014-2017, a copy of which was attached as an appendix to the report.

James Melvin, Station Manager, explained that multi-member ward operational plans for 2014-2017 were aligned to the key priorities of the Local Fire and Rescue Plan for West Lothian 2014-2017 which identified key priorities for SFRS activities within the local authority area.

Seven key priorities were outlined in the Local Fire and Rescue Plan for West Lothian which were assessed in relation to their impact within each ward area. The assessment process included a survey of the West Lothian Citizen's Panel, asking them for their perception of the impact that incidents relating to the key priorities had within the ward area in which they lived. The assessment established that within the ward area the following key priorities should be given priority in relation to SFRS activity:

Continuous Priority

- Local Risk Management and Preparedness

High Priority

- Reduction of Dwelling Fires;
- Reduction in Fire Fatalities and Casualties; and
- Reduction in Casualties from Non-Fire Emergencies.

Medium Priority

- Reduction of Deliberate Fire Setting;
- Reduction of Fires in Non-Domestic Property; and
- Reduction of Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals.

During the course of the discussion, the Committee heard details of the impending changes to the way the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service deployed its resources through a Resource Based Crewing (RBC) model.

The Chair suggested that the Divisional Manager be invited to attend a future meeting to explain the proposals and the impact the changes would have on the residents of Livingston North.

In response to a question raised by the Chair concerning Buchanan House, James Melvin undertook to circulate details of the number of instances of fire, and the severity of the fires, in the previous 6 months.

The Committee noted that the owners of Buchanan House were informed by SFRS of every incident attended.

Decision

To note the terms of the report; and

To agree to invite the Divisional Manager, SFRS to attend a future meeting as suggested by the Chair.

5. HOUSING, CONSTRUCTION AND BUILDING SERVICES

A report had been circulated by the Head of Housing, Construction and Building Services providing an overview of the service activities within Livingston North ward.

The report examined performance for Property Voids and Lets, for both mainstream and temporary tenancies for the three month period from April to June 2014.

The report contained a table showing the level of arrears and the number of tenants in arrears in the ward from end September 2013 at the start of the Rent Arrears Campaign and the level of arrears at the end June 2014.

The Committee was informed that staff would continue to work with tenants in offering advice and assistance, for example, referrals for money, debt advice and where appropriate application for Discretionary Housing Benefits payments.

The report also contained information concerning New Build Council Houses Programme, Tenant Participation, Scottish Social Housing Charter, Homeless Housing Network, Good Neighbour Awards, and Safer Neighbourhood Team.

The Committee was asked to note Housing, Construction and Building Services activity as detailed in the ward report.

During discussion, the Housing Manager advised that, in relation to the level of arrears and the number of tenants in arrears, Livingston North

was not performing as well as other areas. A short briefing note examining the reasons for this would be prepared for LAC members.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

6. WARD 4: LIVINGSTON NORTH, UPDATE

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by Police Inspector Myles Marshall providing an update on performance, activities and issues across the ward for the period to 31st July 2014.

PC Alan McMahon presented the report on behalf of the Police Inspector, amplifying aspect of the information contained in the report.

The report contained statistics concerning Youth Calls, ASB Calls and Alcohol Related Incidents and each of the three categories reported an increase when compared to the same period in the previous year.

During discussion, the Chair asked that, prior to the next meeting, LAC members be provided with additional information as undernoted:-

1. Reasons for the considerable increase in incidents in the ward and details of any changes to community policing in the ward.
2. Details of the number of abstractions in the reporting period.

Decision

1. To note the terms of the report and that further information would be provided as requested by the Chair.
2. To agree that future reports should include abstraction figures.

7. SITE AT KIRKTON BUSINESS CENTRE, KIRK LANE, LIVINGSTON VILLAGE AND BUCHANAN HOUSE, KIRKTON NORTH ROAD, LIVINGSTON

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Planning and Economic Development providing an update on the progress with the current planning applications at Kirkton Business Centre and Buchanan House.

In relation to the Kirkton Business Centre site, the report recalled that the current planning application for Planning Permission in Principle for a 1.5 Ha residential development had been held in abeyance awaiting the outcome of feasibility work for increasing capacity at Livingston Village Primary School. The feasibility work had been completed and the applicant had agreed to enter into a legal agreement to fund the necessary extensions and transfer additional land into the overall school site boundary. On 4 June 2014, the Development Management

Committee had agreed to approve the applications, with a further condition to restrict the number of houses to 29. Legal Services officers had commenced the drafting of the legal agreement and the first draft would be sent to applicant.

The report went on to provide an update on progress in relation to the Buchanan House site. Following the meeting of the Development Management Committee in August 2013, discussions had taken place on the terms of the legal agreement. During these discussions, the applicant had indicated that the transfer of land to the council for affordable housing might result in the development being commercially unviable. The applicant and officers were currently exploring whether alternative solutions, such as a commuted sum, met the terms of the council's policy.

The Head of Planning and Economic Development concluded that planning applications for residential development on both sites had received positive decisions from the Development Management Committee. The processes for concluding the developer contribution/land transfer requirements for each site were ongoing and the details of the school feasibility work for Village Primary School feasibility study were being referred to the Education PDSP and Education Executive.

There followed a general discussion around the ongoing problems for residents and a number of suggestions were made. In particular, PC Alan McMahon undertook to make arrangements for PC Lorraine Jarvie to carry out a Crime Prevention Survey at Buchanan House and to make recommendations as appropriate.

In addition, it was agreed that the Police prepare a brief report on Police activity relating to both the Kirkton Business Centre site and the Buchanan House site.

Decision

To note the terms of the report and to agree that LAC members be provided with brief report on Police activity.

8. COMMUNITY HEALTH CHAMPIONS

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Deputy Chief Executive (Community Health and Care Partnership) providing a health profile to support Community Health Champions.

The Committee was informed that the Health Profiles were based on ward profiles produced by Community Regeneration in 2012 and had been updated where new information was available. There were indicators based on quality of life, key statistical information, health and population and benefits. The Citizen Panel Quality of Life survey in 2013 provided up to date information for quality of life indicators.

The Deputy Chief Executive concluded that the health profile had been developed to support the Local Area Committee to prioritise health issues and agree/develop actions to deliver local initiatives that would impact

positively on health. The next step in the community health champions approach was to recruit local people and groups to work towards identifying and addressing issues. Recruits would initially be involved in a shortened version of the Health Issues in the Community Course.

During discussion, the Committee noted the figures relating to 'the percentage of the ward population aged 16-64 claiming ESA'. On this issue, officers agreed to consider providing a breakdown of ESA figures to specific areas in the Livingston North Data Zone areas.

It was also noted that the report did not include information on low birth weights in the ward and that officers would draw on existing information to examine this risk factor.

The Committee was asked to note the Ward Health Profile with information in the profile to be used to develop ward priorities.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

9. COMMUNITY REGENERATION UPDATE

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Area Services updating members on progress with community regeneration activity in the Livingston North ward.

The report provided detailed information in the relation to:-

- Eliburn Park Clean Up – Employee Supported Volunteer Project (ESV)
- Livingston Station Summer Programme
- Mosswood Summer Programme
- The Vennie
- Knightsridge Community Garden Open Day
- The Vennie Community BBQ and Fun Day
- The Queens Baton Relay

The actions detailed in the report contributed to the Livingston North Ward Action Plan and enabled Community Planning Partners to contribute to the Single Outcome Agreement at a local level.

Decision

1. To note the terms of the report; and
2. To agree that information on Adult CLD work in the ward be included in future reports.

10, PENSIONERS' GROUPS CHRISTMAS FUND PROVISIONAL ALLOCATIONS 2014

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Area Services informing the Committee of the provisional allocations made from the Pensioners' Groups Christmas Fund 2014 to groups in the Livingston North ward, Livingston-wide groups and West Lothian-wide groups.

Appendix 1 to the report showed the organisations in the Livingston North ward to be supported and the provisional allocation to each (totalling £1,700.90).

Appendix 2 to the report showed the Livingston-wide and West Lothian-wide organisations and the provisional allocation to each.

A number of organisations had not yet applied in 2014, and these were identified in the report. These organisations would be contacted to determine if they were going to apply.

The Committee was asked to note the groups within Livingston North Ward that had applied to the fund and would be supported.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

11. ALCOHOL DIVERSIONARY ACTIVITIES FUND

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Area Services informing the Committee of the outcomes of the Skateboarding Project funded by the Strategy for Tackling Underage Drinking – Diversionary Activities for Young People Fund.

The report provided a project outline and informed the Committee that staff from the WWYP team and the Vennie worked together to jointly plan and deliver the project, utilising the skills and experiences of staff as well as the Vennie and Mosswood Community Centre facilities.

The report went on to advise that the project ran for eight weeks on Saturday evenings from 22 March to 17 May 2014 and was attended by from 14 to 35 young people per week. Overall, 187 young people had participated in the project.

The pilot had highlighted that the offer of specific themed skilled based learning opportunities could be popular, attracting and engaging with you people; and this approach could be developed further through the Livingston North Youth Providers Group.

The Head of Area Services concluded that partners had made some progress towards joint planning of provision and the sharing of resources. Partnership working could be developed further to meet local needs, maximise resources, improve provision and the range of opportunities for young people enhancing their life chances and building resilient, cohesive and safe communities.

It was recommended that the panel note:-

1. The contribution and progress made by partners to improve provision planning and joint working in the area to meet the needs of local young people.
2. The levels of engagement and outcomes achieved from offering a specifically themed short term intervention for young people.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

12. OPERATIONAL SERVICES UPDATE REPORT

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Operational Services appraising members of the Operational Services activities for Livingston North from 1 May to 31 July 2014.

The report contained details of the planned and completed play area, carriageway and street lighting improvements for the area.

During discussion, the Committee praised the work undertaken by Street Cleansing crews. The Chair then referred to a meeting held in the ward attended by officers from NETs and Land Services. The meeting had been organised by The Riggs Association and council officers had provided some excellent advice.

Decision

1. To note the terms of the report.
2. To record the Committee's appreciation of the work undertaken by Street Cleansing crews; and
3. To thank officers for their attendance at the meeting of The Riggs Association and to convey the Committee's appreciation.

13. WORKPLAN

A copy of the workplan had been circulated for information.

Decision

To note the workplan.