

MINUTE of MEETING of the BATHGATE LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE of WEST Lothian Council held within BATHGATE PARTNERSHIP CENTRE, on 9 FEBRUARY 2015.

Present – Councillors Harry Cartmill (Chair), John McGinty, William Boyle, Jim Walker

In attendance – Andrew Blake, Lead Officer, Douglas Benson, Community Regeneration Officer, David Lees, NETs, Land & Countryside Services, Jim Saunders, Bathgate Partnership Centre Manager, Kate Ward, Housing Services Manager, Sergeant John Flemming, Police Scotland, Alex Hume, Fire & Rescue Service, Aileen Alland and Sheila Mutch, Alzheimer Scotland

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

2. MINUTE

The committee confirmed the minute of its meeting held on 10 November 2014 as a correct record. The minute was thereafter signed by the Chair.

3. PRESENTATION ON ALZHEIMER'S SCOTLAND BY AILEEN ALLAND AND SHEILA MUTCH.

There was a presentation by Aileen Alland and Sheila Mutch from Alzheimer Scotland advising of the Raise Dementia Awareness project in the Bathgate Area.

Aileen and Sheila advised that the project would include visiting businesses within Bathgate to discuss the issues of dementia and how they could help by signing up to an action plan to become dementia aware. The project would also offer staff training in an effort to raise awareness of dementia.

Consultation had taken place with carers to build up a picture of the issues that were affecting dementia sufferers in the Bathgate area. These issues would be raised at the visits with businesses in an effort to encourage visitors to Bathgate by making it a better experience.

The committee thanked Aileen and Sheila for their presentation and advised they would be happy to undergo training and promote the work of the project.

Decision

To note the presentation.

#### 4. PRESENTATION ON BATHGATE PARTNERSHIP CENTRE

The committee considered a presentation by Jim Saunders, Bathgate Partnership Centre which provided an update of plans for 2015 and the business and partnership opportunities that had developed since the opening of the centre.

The committee was advised that the Partnership Centre opened to the public in September 2011 with the coming together in a community hub arrangement, which brought Bathgate Library, Customer Information Services, The Advice Shop, Bathgate Community Centre, Registration Service, Adult Basic Education and most recently Housing Services and Access 2 Employment teams.

The Partnership Centre had an excellent customer focused team and were trained in all aspects of frontline services.

It was noted that there were very few maintenance issues since opening but it was recognised that the main external customer entrance required a clean, and that contractors had been arranged to do pressure washing and painting of main door.

In conclusion the committee was advised that the Partnership Centre continued to serve the Bathgate and surrounding populations and customer demand for services would be closely monitored to ensure best possible experience for all customers.

##### Decision

To note the presentation

#### 5. BATHGATE 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 31 December 2014.

The committee was advised that following the publication of the Bathgate 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 detailed in the report.

Attached to the report, at Appendix 1, was a summary report that provided a series of graphs showing details 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 Bathgate Multi-member Ward Quarterly Performance

Report.

Decision

To note the contents of the report

6. POLICE WARD REPORT

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by Police Inspector Andrew Elliot updating the committee on performance, activities and issues across the ward for the period up to 31 January 2015.

Contained within the report was a series of tables detailing recorded crime in the ward and for the whole of West Lothian with a comparison for the same period the previous years; it covered crimes including youth calls, all ASB calls, hate crime, vandalism & reckless conduct, fire-raising, alcohol related incidents and public space assaults.

The Inspector then provided an update with regards to prevention and enforcement activity in the ward. It was noted that during the period the team had carried out proactive licensed premises visits and utilised additional resources to provide a visible presence in the Town Centre at key times.

It was recommended that the local area committee note the contents of the report.

Decision

To note the contents of the report

7. REPORT ON RECENT SUCCESSES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT IN BATHGATE ACADEMY

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head Teacher, Bathgate Academy providing an update on the on-going work and life of Bathgate Academy.

The report advised that Bathgate Academy was a six-year comprehensive school offering 850 students a relevant, inspiring challenging and ultimately enjoyable curriculum with opportunities for personalisation and choice.

The school offered the full range of National Qualifications and had started presenting new qualifications during this academic year which brought it in line with all other schools in the county.

It was advised that the school had good facilities within an original building that was 50 years old. An extensive refurbishment was completed in 2003 and more work had been carried out since then.

The report went on to advise that a range of data indicated a changing

catchment and improving destination figures even though challenges continued to exist.

In conclusion the report advised that Bathgate Academy was a school making good progress and significant strengths. It was well respected within the community and had a capacity to continually improve based on the hard work and enthusiasm of staff and a learner population willing to work hard and aspire to do the best they can.

#### Decision

To note the contents of the report.

### 8. HOUSING, CONSTRUCTION AND BUILDING SERVICES

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Housing, Construction and Building Service providing an overview of the service activities within the Bathgate Ward area.

The report provided information concerning property void and let performance for both mainstream and temporary tenancies. There were a total of 25 Policy Voids in the ward for reasons such as Health and Safety, Winter decants or being held for decant purposes at Rosemount Court.

The Head of Housing, Construction and Building Services also provided an update on arrears performance noting that for 2014-15 the Arrears Task Group had agreed, as an interim measure, to monitor against a £1m target. This would allow time for some actions from the Rent Strategy to be in place so the target could be subject to change later in the year.

Further information was also contained in the report and included the following :-

- Bathgate Area Team Activity;
- Capital Programme and New Build Council Housing;
- Tenant Participation Update; and
- Safer Neighbourhood Council Officer Ward Information.

The Housing Manager then responded to questions from the members.

It was recommended that the local area committee note the content of the Housing, Construction and Building Services activity.

#### Decision

To note the contents of the report

### 9.. UPDATE FROM NET'S, LAND AND COUNTRYSIDE SERVICES – 25 October 2014 TO 22 JANUARY 2015

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Operational Services providing details of recent activity of NETS, Land and Countryside Services for the period 25 October 2014 to 22 January 2015.

The report provided details of the work carried out by the Grounds Maintenance, Street Cleansing Team and Garden Maintenance noting that with regards to the garden maintenance service this had now been completed for the year and would recommence in March 2015.

A summary of the issues dealt with by Environmental Wardens were also detailed in the report.

It was recommended that the local area committee note the work carried out to date and future planned work.

#### Decision

To note the contents of the report.

### 10. COMMUNITY REGENERATION REPORT

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Area Services advising of progress made against the targets set in the Bathgate Ward Action Plan for 2013-15 and highlighting the main developments since the last local area committee meeting.

The report advised that a number of activities had taken place in the Bathgate Ward since the committee last met and these were summarised in the report, and included Kirkton Park, Bathgate Music Festival, Boghall Community Wing, Bathgate Partnership Centre and Bathgate Town Centre upgrade.

The report also advised that as part of the Sustrans/Transport Scotland Community Links programme in 2014/15, West Lothian Council was successful in attracting funding to construct a new off-road pedestrian and cycleway along the A779, filling a missing link to connect the existing cycleways on the A89 and A779.

In conclusion the report reflected on achievements to date against planned activity from the Regeneration and Employability Service and its partners, with the aim to make a significant contribution to improving the quality of life of citizens in the ward.

It was recommended that the local area committee note the progress made to date.

#### Decision

To note the contents of the report.

11. WORKPLAN

The committee considered the Work Plan (copies of which had been circulated) by the Lead Officer for the local area committee.

Decision

To note the contents of the workplan.