

MINUTE of MEETING of the FAULDHUSE AND THE BREICH VALLEY LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE of WEST LoTHIAN COUNCIL held within COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CIVIC CENTRE, LIVINGSTON, on 9 AUGUST 2016.

Present – Councillors David Dodds (Chair), Cathy Muldoon, Greg McCarra

In Attendance

Alice Mitchell, Lead Officer, Fauldhouse and the Breich Valley LAC
Laura Wilson, Community Regeneration Officer, West Lothian Council
Lorraine Donnelly, Housing Services, West Lothian Council
Sergeant John Fleming, Police Scotland
Scott Williamson and Nicky Barr, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

2. MINUTE

The Local Area Committee approved the minute of its meeting held on 7 June 2016. The minute was then signed by the Chair.

3. MULTI-MEMBER WARD PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service updating the Committee on the activity within the ward for the period April to June 2016.

Scott Williamson (SFRS) presented the report, highlighting a number of improvements across the key priorities within the ward.

The Committee was informed that there had been 36 deliberate fires incidents during 2016-17 year to date reporting period, compared to 33 during 2015-16 year to date reporting period. On this matter, the Committee heard that action was ongoing to reduce this figure and that plans were in place to target all high schools in West Lothian.

In relation to Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS), 35 incidents were reported during 2016-17 year to date reporting period, compared to 34 during 2015-16 year to date reporting period. Work was ongoing to engage with business partners to reduce demand from Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals.

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

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

4. POLICE SCOTLAND REPORT

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 July 2016.

Sergeant John Fleming presented the report on behalf of Inspector Forbes, highlighting a number of improvements across Crime Groups 1 to 5.

It was noted that there had been an increase in the number of incidents of Hate Crime, with 8 incidents reported to the end of June 2016, compared to 5 in the same period in the previous year.

Councillor Muldoon referred to the previous Local Area Committee meeting when it had been noted that arrangements would be made for an informal meeting with Network Rail concerning the Shotts line electrification project which affected the A71 at West Calder. Inspector Gregor Forbes had indicated that he wished to attend the informal meeting and Councillor Muldoon now asked if Network Rail had contacted the Inspector. Sergeant Fleming undertook to look into this and to respond to Councillor Muldoon outwith the meeting.

The Committee was asked to note the update on performance, activities and issues across the ward for the period up to 31 July 2016.

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 Fauldhouse and the Breich Valley ward.

The report provided details of the property void and let performance for both mainstream tenancies and temporary tenancies.

There were currently 16 Policy Voids in the ward. 12 of these were being held for modernisation, 1 held for decant and 3 were awaiting/undergoing major works.

The report also examined the ward arrears position and provided a table showing the number of tenants in arrears for the first quarter of 2016/17.

In relation to the capital programme, the refurbishment and extension of the Garibaldi Row at Main Street, Fauldhouse was well advanced and works were expected to be completed in September 2016.

In response to a question by the Chair concerning work being undertaken

in Sheephousehill in Fauldhouse, the Area Housing Manager undertook to determine whether or not this was planned council work, and to respond to the Chair outwith the meeting.

The report went on to provide an update on Tenant Participation and Safer Neighbourhood Team activity.

The Committee was asked to note the Housing, Building and Customer Service activity as detailed in the report for the period 1 April – 30 June 2016.

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 advising members of the recent activity of the NETs, Land and Countryside Services teams for the period 1 February to 31 May 2016.

The report provided statistical information in relation to Grounds Maintenance, Garden Maintenance, Street Cleansing, Parks and Woodland, and Open Space and Cemeteries.

There was no officer from the service in attendance at the meeting and any concerns or questions raised by the Committee would be conveyed by the Lead Officer to the service. Councillor McCarra indicated that he would contact the service direct concerning incidents of fly tipping in Breich.

The Committee was asked to:-

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

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

7. PLACEMAKING IN FAULDHOUSE

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration informing the Committee of the progress to date of the charrette in Fauldhouse.

It was noted that, since the last meeting of the Local Area Committee, a feedback session had been held throughout the day in Fauldhouse

Partnership Centre, Fauldhouse Community Development Trust Hub and the village green, where information had been given to the local community on the progress already made on some projects, along with displays showing how some of the other suggestions could take shape.

The report listed some potential projects that had been identified during the charrette.

The feedback sessions had provided another opportunity for the community to have their say on the options that they thought would best shape the future of Fauldhouse. A total of 74 local people engaged with the consultants during these sessions.

It was recommended that members note that:-

- All community engagement associated with the charrette had now been carried out; and
- A full report detailing the findings from the charrette was currently being collated by the consultants.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

8. COMMUNITY REGENERATION

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration informing the Committee of the process for developing and implementing regeneration plans.

The report explained that the Regeneration Framework, which had been approved by Council Executive in February 2014, contained a commitment to develop regeneration plans in key areas of deprivation in West Lothian. Eight regeneration areas had been identified, based on the data zones within the bottom 20% of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. The areas were listed in the report.

The Regeneration Framework provided a long-term plan for targeted action to improve the life chances of people living in the most disadvantaged communities in West Lothian. It gave fresh impetus and greater clarity to the targeting of intervention to address deprivation and economic exclusion within specific areas. Not all interventions would apply in every area. Plans would be developed dependent on the needs of each target area, and the assets available.

The process and timescales to develop the regeneration plans were outlined in the report.

The report went on to provide details of the structure of steering groups, mapping exercises and the statistical analysis that would be undertaken for each regeneration area. Regeneration plans would be live documents.

Their format would reflect the need for long term transformation change and as such, would allow for short, medium and long term processes, actions and target to be detailed within the plans.

Finally, the report provided details of the performance monitoring and reporting arrangements. It was noted that quarterly update reports would be presented to Local Area Committees, and an annual report would be prepared for Partnership and Resources PDSP. Updates would also be presented to the Community Planning Board annually.

It was recommended that the Local Area Committee:-

1. note that regeneration plans would be developed in eight targeted West Lothian communities; and
2. the timescales for implementation of the plans.

During discussion, a concern was raised that some communities had no active Community Councils and that statutory rights to be consulted applied to Community Councils, and not to other community groups. In response, officers undertook to look at this issue and to explore mechanisms for engaging with such groups.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

9. PENSIONERS' GROUPS CHRISTMAS FUND PROVISIONAL ALLOCATIONS 2016

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Planning Economic Development and Regeneration concerning the Pensioners' Groups Christmas Fund 2016.

The Committee was informed that that total fund for 2016 was £29,106.54.

In relation to the Fauldhouse and the Breich Valley ward, eleven application forms had been issued to groups across the ward, with two returned to date. The intention was that both groups would be supported. The remaining nine applications would be followed up. Appendix 1 showed the organisations to be supported and the provision allocation to each. Appendix 2 to the report showed the organisations and the provisional allocation to Livingston-wide and West Lothian-wide organisations.

A full report on the final allocations would be made to the Voluntary Organisations PDSP later in the year. Letters would be issued to groups in late 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 via PECOS.

It was recommended that the committee note that two groups within

Fauldhouse and the Breich Valley ward had applied to the fund and would be supported.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

10. WORKPLAN

A copy of the workplan had been circulated for information.

Decision

To note the workplan and to agree that officers consider re-arranging some of the items of business scheduled for the November 2016 meeting to enable the meeting to finish by 10.00 am.