

MINUTE of MEETING of the BROXBURN, UPHALL AND WINCHBURGH LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE held within WEBEX VIRTUAL MEETING ROOM, on 6 NOVEMBER 2020.

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

In Attendance

Craig McCorriston, Lead Officer, West Lothian Council

Dougie Grierson, Community Regeneration Officer, West Lothian Council

Sergeant Iain Wells, Police Scotland

Stuart McNiven, Scottish Fire & Rescue Service

Phyllis McFadyen, Housing Manager, West Lothian Council

Eirwen Hopwood, Nets, Land & Countryside Services, West Lothian Council

Keith McLeod (Broxburn Community Council)

Irene Bishop (Uphall Community Council)

Pete Nisbet (Winchburgh Community Council)

Lynda McGirven (Dechmont Community Council)

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Janet Campbell declared an interest in that she was a paid employee of NHS Lothian but would participate in all items of business on the agenda.

2. ORDER OF BUSINESS

The committee agreed to hear a deputation request received from Alan Russell, Winchburgh Community Development Trust, in relation to Agenda Item 10 (Partnership Facilities in Winchburgh).

The Chair then ruled in terms of Standing Order 11 that she would move Agenda Item 10 to the top of the meeting to facilitate Mr Russell's attendance.

3. MINUTE

The committee approved the minute of its meeting held on 6 March 2020. The minute was thereafter signed by the Chair.

4. PARTNERSHIP FACILITIES IN WINCHBURGH

Deputation from Mr Alan Russell, Winchburgh Community Development Trust

The committee heard Mr Alan Russell express his disappointment that the council had removed its commitment to a partnership centre in Winchburgh from its capital programme and that the local community had not been informed of this decision. However, Mr Russell accepted that

things had to move forward and that it was important that the council continued to work with the community to deliver benefits from existing resources and that this should include making best use of the secondary school facilities out with school hours.

On a final note Mr Russell re-iterated that it was vital that the local community was kept fully involved in all decisions relating to community facilities.

Mr Russell then responded to questions from committee members,

The Chair thanked for Mr Russell for his presentation.

Report by Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration providing an update on the delivery of community and partnership facilities in Winchburgh. The Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration also took the opportunity to respond to a number of points raised in the deputation.

The report outlined the position in relation to the Developer Obligation signed as part of the planning permission back in 2012 and which required the developer to make land available for a partnership centre should one be required by partners. Since 2012 there had been significant changes to the organisational arrangements for potential partners (mainly Police Scotland and NHS Lothian) and also the way in which services were delivered.

The Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration continued by advising that as the council was not in control of investment decisions of partners and that as any partnership centre was likely to be driven by NHS Lothian as the biggest user, partnership activities on the site were very much dependent on a commitment by NHS Lothian.

The report concluded that the council would continue to monitor investment decisions of partners in so far as these impacted on the council's own investment decisions. However, given the lack of certainty over the level and timing of any such investment by partners the council would continue to look at options for the provision of services in the expanded village.

The Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration then responded to a number of questions from committee members.

It was for the local area committee to: -

1. Note the terms of the Developer Obligation (Section 75 Agreement) with respect to partnership facilities;

2. Note current arrangements for delivery of partnership and community facilities in Winchburgh; and
3. Note the current position with development and delivery of services and facilities by partners.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

Councillor Janet Campbell wished to record her dissent to the contents of the report.

5. POLICE WARD UPDATE

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by Police Scotland providing an update on performance, activities and issues across the ward up to the end of October 2020.

Sergeant Wells proceeded to provide the committee with an overview of the activity in relation to Covid-19 that had seen an increase in calls to the police particularly in relation to breaches of the regulations governing Covid-19 safety measures. It was also to be noted that the vast majority of hate incidents related to verbal abuse with a common thread appearing to be general frustration amongst communities manifesting itself as intolerance and abuse.

Sergeant Wells continued to provide an update in relation to the Bangour site, Greendykes bing and general road safety measures which also included the start of mobile drug testing of drivers.

Sergeant Wells concluded the presentation by advising committee that it would not be possible for the foreseeable future to provide statistics at ward level as there was still no partnership analyst in place. He also urged communities to help the police, where possible, in identifying repeat offenders who were usually well-known in the local community and that they could report incidents to the Youth Crime Stopper line.

The committee was asked to note the update from Police Scotland

Decision

To note the contents 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 on recent activity of the Nets, Land and Countryside Service teams for the period 1 February to 30 September 2020.

Committee explored a number of themes contained in the report including hanging and over-grown trees obstructing road signage, a lack of waste bins in Almondell Country Park, costs associated with flytipping, removal of trees due to Ash Dieback Disease and the purchase of litter picking equipment for use by volunteer groups in the community.

Committee noted that in relation to fly-tipping costs associated with this particular activity had been previously requested but was not included in the report. Officers undertook to ensure that this would be included in future reports.

Members were asked to note the work carried out to date, future planned work and to advise of any areas that required further investigation or inclusion in future work plans.

Decision

1. To note the contents of the report; and
2. To agree that costs associated with fly-tipping be included in future reports to the local area committee.

7. 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.

In presenting the report the Housing Manager advised committee that the SNT Service had recently remobilised which allowed for greater engagement with communities with a blended approach of community work and home working. This approach had been in accordance with the Covid-19 Route Map as provided by the Scottish Government.

The local area committee was asked to note Housing, Customer and Building Service activity as detailed in the ward report for the period Quarter 1 and 2, 1 April to 30 September 2020.

Decision

To note the contents of the report

8. SCOTTISH FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE QUARTER 1 AND QUARTER 2 2020/21 PERFORMANCE

Committee agreed that Agenda Item 8 and 9 would be considered together as they were fundamentally the same item of business.

The committee considered two report (copies of which had been circulated) by Scottish Fire and Rescue one of which concerned performance for the period up to 30 June 2020 and the second which

concerned performance up to 30 September 2020.

Attached to the reports were a series of graphs showing activity across a number of priorities and included comparisons with previous years.

The Fire Officer, Stuart McNiven, then proceeded to provide the committee with a brief overview of recent activity surrounding Bonfire Night noting that whilst overall the number of calls did appear to be down on previous years nonetheless there had been two attacks on fire crews; one in the Blackburn area and the second in the Craigshill area.

Committee wished to record its concern and thanks to all the crews involved in keeping local communities safe particularly at this time of year.

Committee then took the opportunity to explore a number of themes with Mr McNiven including new legislation coming into force in February 2022 on the issue of smoke alarms and where responsibilities lay for monitoring this amongst homeowners and looking after the more vulnerable members of the community particularly at this time when the undertaking of home visits was restricted due to Covid-19 regulations.

In relation to getting well-being and safety messages out to communities, colleagues from the community councils represented at the meeting suggested that fire colleagues share as much information as possible with them so they could assist in getting that message out to local communities. Mr McNiven undertook to contact community councils in due course to take this action forward.

The local area committee was asked to note the content of the two reports.

Decision

1. To note the content of the two reports both of which concerned fire performance and activity across the whole ward; and
2. To note that Community Council's would assist fire colleagues in getting essential safety messages out to communities.

9. WORKPLAN

The committee considered the contents of the workplan.

Decision

1. To note the contents of the current workplan; and
2. To agree to include the following items on the workplan :-
 - Partnership facilities in Winchburgh; and
 - Progress with development at the Bangour hospital site

