

MINUTE of MEETING of the ENVIRONMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL held within MS TEAMS VIRTUAL MEETING ROOM, on 18 OCTOBER 2021.

Present – Councillors Tom Conn (Chair), Alison Adamson, Diane Calder, David Dodds (substituting for Cathy Muldoon), Chris Horne, Andrew McGuire, George Paul and Andrew McGuire

Apologies – Councillor Cathy Muldoon

In Attendance – Pippa Plevin (Joint Forum of Community Councils Representative)

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

2. ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chair ruled that he would be changing the order of the agenda so that it would be agenda item 5, followed by 4 and 6 as these were of a similar subject matter.

3. LICENSING OF SHORT TERM LETS - CALL FOR VIEWS BY THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Corporate Services advising of the Scottish Parliaments call for view on the proposed Short Term Lets licensing scheme to and invite the Panel to consider the response attached to the report at Appendix 1.

It was recommended that the Panel agrees to recommend to the Council Executive that the proposed response to the call for views on the proposed licensing scheme was considered and approved.

Decision

1. To note the content of the report and the proposed response to the call for views on the short-term lets licensing scheme;
2. To note the Panel's request for more information on the number of properties likely to be affected in in West Lothian and the number of complaints that had been received by the council in respect of short term lets; and
3. To note the Panel's concerns in the following areas in respect of the council's proposed response: -
 - The response should provide a definition of what it considered to be a "short-term let";
 - The response should address whether or not the licensing scheme should be mandatory across Scotland or not;

- The response should explore alternatives to the proposed licensing scheme in light of it being considered as no threat to public safety;
- To review the last paragraph which makes much reference to Covid-19/pandemic when it needs to address the situation going forward and post-pandemic;
- To include in the response the complexity of the proposed system for those applying for a short-term let licence; and
- To ensure reference is included in the response to the way in which neighbours/objectors could engage in the process.

4. WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration presenting the proposed West Lothian Council Climate Change Strategy 2021-2028 for discussion and comment.

It was recommended that the Panel

1. Not the content of the report and the strategy attached as Appendix 1
2. Considers the contents of the draft Climate Change Strategy, providing comments and feedback;
3. Notes that officers will report back to the Panel with any changes required following COP26; and
4. Notes that the Climate Change Strategy will be presented to Council Executive for approval on 26 October 2021.

Decision

1. To note the content of the report and the draft Climate Change Strategy;
2. To note the Panel's comment in that he would helpful to see greater emphasis in the document in respect of connectivity to economic regeneration; and
3. To agree that the Climate Change Strategy be presented to Council Executive on 26 October 2021 for approval.

5. WEST LOTHIAN CLIMATE EMERGENCY FUND - UPDATE ON CARBON SEQUESTRATION PROJECTS

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) updating the panel on the various "Climate Emergency" projects considered at the June 2021 meeting and approved by a subsequent meeting of Council Executive and being funded from the council's Climate

Emergency Projects fund.

It was recommended that the Panel notes the following recommendations which would be presented to a future meeting of Council Executive: -

1. Notes the update on progressing the agree lists of projects outlined in Section D3 of the report; and
2. Notes that further update on delivery will be provided to Council Executive and the Environment PDSP on a regular basis as part of the wider Climate Emergency update reports.

Decision

To note the content of the report