

MINUTE of MEETING of the BATHGATE LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE held within CONFERENCE ROOM 14/15, BATHGATE PARTNERSHIP CENTRE, SOUTH BRIDGE STREET, BATHGATE, on 9 MARCH 2020.

Present – Councillors Charles Kennedy (Chair) and John McGinty

Apologies – Councillors Willie Boyle and Harry Cartmill

In attendance -

Marjory Mackie, Lead Officer, West Lothian Council  
Nairn Pearson, BID & Town Centre Manager, West Lothian Council  
PC Francis Sinnett, Police Scotland  
Douglas Tait, Station Manager, Scottish Fire & Rescue Service  
Tony Fleming, Grounds Maintenance Manager, West Lothian Council  
Ronnie McLeod, Bathgate Community Council  
Donald Stavert, Bathgate Community Council

1. CHAIR

In the absence of the Chair, Vice-Chair Councillor Kennedy chaired the meeting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

3. MINUTE

The Committee approved the minute of its meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> August 2019. The minute was thereafter signed by the Chair.

Councillor McGinty expressed concerned that the Bathgate Regeneration Plan had not be incorporated into the workplan as agreed at the last meeting. The BIDS/Town Centre Manager undertook to issue the regeneration plan to ward members and to include regular updates in future workplans.

4. PRESENTATION – ST. KENTIGERN'S ACADEMY

The committee received a presentation from Andrew Sharkey, Head Teacher at St. Kentigern's Academy (copies of which had been circulated) providing an update on the school's performance and levels of attainment.

The presentation gave an overview of the school context in relation to pupil numbers, the numbers who travelled to school by bus, the number of different primary schools where S1 pupils had transitioned from during 2019/20 and the schools SIMD ranking and alternative learning provisions offered within the school.

Details of the school's vision and values were highlighted along with a breakdown of the student numbers and those with additional needs. The presentation then provided a summary of the school senior phase exam results for year groups S4, S5 and S6 with comparator figures for the period 2010 to 2019.

The committee noted that the number of days lost to exclusion had dramatically decreased in recent years and that attendance figures were above the West Lothian average. The school continued to be the only secondary school in West Lothian involved in the Scottish Attainment Challenge. Students continued to have very strong positive destinations as set out in the slide. The presentation concluded with information on other items of note within the school and its priorities for the future, all of which were underpinned by their Scottish Attainment Challenge Plans to ensure ongoing equity and equality for all learners.

On behalf of the committee, the Chair thanked Mr Sharkey for his presentation and everyone at the school for their excellent work.

#### Decision

To note the terms of the presentation.

### 6. FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE REPORT

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) providing an update on the activity within Bathgate Multi-Member Ward for the period up to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019 which was accompanied by an appendix containing tables which set out the number of recorded incidents in the ward against Scotland and West Lothian wide figures.

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

Station Manager Tait undertook to arrange for details on the type of premise affected by the non-domestic fire during the reporting period to be shared with ward members and for details of this nature to be included in future reports.

#### Decision

To note the terms of the report.

### 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 for the period 1 October to 31 December 2019.

Arising from discussion, it was agreed to request that the Housing

Manager provide additional information in the next report to committee on the full impact of Universal Credit on rent arrears in the ward and on the work being carried out by officers to manage and support the small number of tenants who had high levels of rents arrears within the ward. The committee also sought an update on the number of new houses that had been handed over at Wester Inch.

The committee was invited to note the terms of the report.

#### Decision

To note the terms of the report.

### 8. SERVICE UPDATE – NETS, LAND & 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 NET's, Land and Countryside teams for the period 1 October to 31 December 2019.

In response to questions, the Grounds Maintenance Manager undertook establish the frequency of roadside verge cleaning at the Balmuir Road area to allow local residents to determine whether they wished to arrange a community clean up. He also agreed to feed back the request to have the potholes at the Glasgow Road Cemetery repaired sooner than 6 months due to the number of constituent complaints.

It was recommended that the Committee:

1. Notes the work carried out by the service within the local area; and
2. Advise of any areas that required further information or investigation.

#### 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 Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration informing the committee of progress towards regeneration planning and other associated activities within the ward.

In response to continued discussions on the Bathgate Regeneration Plan, the BIDS/Town Centre Manager agreed to provide clarity for ward members on where authority for the actions included in the plan had been vested.

The committee was invited to note the report and advise of any areas that required further investigation.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

10. TOWN CENTRE FUND 2019/20

The Committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Planning, Economic Development & Regeneration providing an updated on the progress of delivering the Town Centre Fund 2019/20 capital projects agreed by Council Executive on 22 October 2019.

The report recommended that the Committee:-

- (a) Notes that 7 projects had been agreed within the Bathgate ward;
- (b) Notes that officers were working with the applicants to agree the final details and support the delivery of the projects;
- (c) That the Scottish Government has advised local authorities that they had extended the expenditure deadline for all projects to 31 March 2021 and the completion date for all projects to 30 September 2021; and
- (d) That further progress updates would be brought to committee.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

11. TIMETABLE OF MEETINGS 2020/2021

The Committee noted the proposed timetable of meetings for the period August 2020 to June 2021 (copies of which had been circulated).

Decision

To endorse the proposed timetable of meetings which would be presented to Council Executive for approval as part of the council's calendar of meetings 2020-2021.

12. WORKPLAN

A copy of the Workplan had been circulated for information.

Decision

To note the Workplan subject to including regular updates on the Locality Regeneration Plan.

