

MINUTE of MEETING of the VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL held within WEBEX VIRTUAL MEETING ROOM, on 19 NOVEMBER 2020.

Present – Councillors Kirsteen Sullivan (Chair), Andrew McGuire, David Dodds, Bruce Fairbairn, Chris Horne and Moira Shemilt

Apologies – Councillor Tom Conn

In attendance – Craig McCorriston (Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration), Eleanor Blair (West Lothian Joint Forum of Community Councils), Raymond Branton (Third Sector Strategy Group Representative), Diane Cameron (West Lothian Social Enterprise Network), Fraser Falconer (Planning & Information Assistant), Douglas Grierson (Regeneration and Employability Team Leader), Alan McCloskey (Voluntary Sector Gateway), Alice Mitchell (Economic Development Manager)

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Chris Horne declared an interest in agenda item 5 (Linlithgow Community Development Trust Presentation) as a member of the Linlithgow Community Development Trust. As no decisions would be made, he would take part in the item of business.

2 ORDER OF BUSINESS

Agenda item 5 (*Linlithgow CDT Presentation*) was considered after agenda item 7 (*Third Sector Support Fund 2021/22*).

3 MINUTES

The panel approved the minute of its meeting held on 24 September 2020 as a correct record. The minute was thereafter signed by the Chair.

4 KICK START

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration providing an overview of the UK Government's Kick Start programme and highlighting the opportunities that would be made available in West Lothian.

It was recommended that the panel note the introduction of the Kick Start programme and note the opportunities that would be made available to the public, private and Voluntary Sector in West Lothian.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

5 THIRD SECTOR SUPPORT FUND 2021/22

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration providing an update on the application process for the £400,000 Third Sector Support Fund 2021/22 and the timescales involved in the decision-making process.

It was recommended that the panel note that at the deadline of noon on Wednesday, 11 November 2020:

1. 35 applications had been received;
2. The total funding requested was £1,104,094.60; and
3. That applications would be assessed by a panel, who would make recommendations to the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration, and applicants informed of the outcome in December.

Decision

1. To note the terms of the report.
2. To note typographical error in section E of the report: '20 applications' should read '35 applications'.

6 LINLITHGOW COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TRUST PRESENTATION

The panel considered a presentation by the Linlithgow Community Development Trust, providing an update on the Trust's activities.

During discussion, It was suggested that interested organisations/groups could contact Development Trusts Association Scotland (DTAS) for best practice guidance and advice via council officers or Linlithgow CDT.

Decision

To note the presentation.

7 VOLUNTARY SECTOR GATEWAY WEST LOTHIAN UPDATE

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration providing an update on the current activities being undertaken by Voluntary Sector Gateway West Lothian in providing an effective single point of access for support and advice and representing the interests of voluntary and community groups within West Lothian.

It was recommended that the panel note the positive outcomes in regard to the work undertaken by Voluntary Sector Gateway West Lothian in

supporting and representing the interests of voluntary and community groups within West Lothian.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

8 WEST LOTHIAN SOCIAL ENTERPRISE NETWORK UPDATE

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration providing an update on the current activities being undertaken by West Lothian Social Enterprise Network (WLSSEN) in providing an effective single point of access for support and advice and representing the interests of social enterprises within West Lothian.

It was recommended that the panel note the positive outcomes in regard to the work undertaken by West Lothian Social Enterprise Network in supporting and representing the interests of the social enterprise sector within West Lothian.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

9 MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING AND THE RESPONSE TO COVID-19

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration informing members of the work done to support communities to address the mental health and wellbeing of their communities across West Lothian during the COVID-19 crisis.

It was recommended that the panel note:

1. The role and partnership work carried out between West Lothian Council and the Third Sector to support our communities through COVID-19; and
2. The opportunities to build on this partnership working in the future.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

10 THIRD SECTOR AND WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT STRUCTURE

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration asking

members to consider the structure and content of the Annual Report agreed at the September meeting which committed to developing an annual report to be produced with the Voluntary Sector Gateway West Lothian.

It was recommended that panel:

1. Note the contents of the report;
2. Considers what information members would find useful in any future report; and
3. Agree the timeline as recommended.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

11 PENSIONERS' GROUPS CHRISTMAS FUND ALLOCATION 2021/21

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration informing members of the final allocations that would be made to groups from the Pensioners' Groups Christmas Fund 2021–21. The panel was asked to note the impact that COVID-19 had had on the application and allocation process regarding the fund. The panel was also asked to note the additional option developed to provide a pre-prepared meal to groups who had indicated their interest.

During discussion, it was noted that advice to volunteers could be provided if required regarding safe food delivery in the context of the pandemic.

It was recommended that the panel note:

1. The effect of COVID-19 on the arrangements regarding the Pensioners Groups Christmas Fund in 2020-21;
2. The inclusion of a meal option; and
3. That 49 groups would be supported through the Pensioners Christmas Fund in 2020-21.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

12 WORKPLAN

A workplan had been circulated for information.

Decision

To note the workplan.