



Whitburn and Blackburn Local Area Committee

West Lothian Civic Centre
Howden South Road
LIVINGSTON
EH54 6FF

31 May 2021

A meeting of the **Whitburn and Blackburn Local Area Committee** of West Lothian Council will be held within the **Webex Virtual Meeting** on **Monday 7 June 2021** at **10:00am**.

For Chief Executive

BUSINESS

Public Session

1. Apologies for Absence.
2. Declarations of Interest - Members should declare any financial and non-financial interests they have in the items of business for consideration at the meeting, identifying the relevant agenda item and the nature of their interest
3. Order of Business, including notice of urgent business, declarations of interest in any urgent business and consideration of reports for information.

The Chair will invite members to identify any such reports they wish to have fully considered, which failing they will be taken as read and their recommendations approved.
4. Confirm Draft Minute of Meeting of the Committee held on 1 March 2021 (herewith).
5. Fire Service Ward Report - report by Scottish Fire & Rescue Service (herewith).
6. Police Scotland Ward Report - report by Police Scotland (herewith).
7. Service Update - Nets, Land and Countryside - report by Head of

DATA LABEL: Public

Operational Services (herewith).

8. Housing, Customer and Building Services - report by Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (herewith).
9. Community Regeneration Update - report by Head of Planning, Economic Development & Regeneration (herewith).
10. Proposed Timetable of Meetings 2021-2022 (herewith).
11. Workplan (herewith).

NOTE **For further information please contact Karen McMahon on 01506 281621 or email karen.mcmahon@westlothian.gov.uk**

CODE OF CONDUCT AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

This form is to help members. It is not a substitute for declaring interests at the meeting.

Members should look at every item and consider if they have an interest. If members have an interest they must consider if they have to declare it. If members declare an interest they must consider if they have to withdraw.

NAME	MEETING	DATE

AGENDA ITEM NO.	FINANCIAL (F) OR NON- FINANCIAL INTEREST (NF)	DETAIL ON THE REASON FOR YOUR DECLARATION (e.g. I am Chairperson of the Association)	REMAIN OR WITHDRAW

The objective test is whether a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard the interest as so significant that it is likely to prejudice your discussion or decision making in your role as a councillor.

Other key terminology appears on the reverse.

If you require assistance, please ask as early as possible. Contact Julie Whitelaw, Monitoring Officer, 01506 281626, julie.whitelaw@westlothian.gov.uk, James Millar, Governance Manager, 01506 281695, james.millar@westlothian.gov.uk, Carol Johnston, Chief Solicitor, 01506 281626, carol.johnston@westlothian.gov.uk, Committee Services Team, 01506 281604, 01506 281621 committee.services@westlothian.gov.uk

SUMMARY OF KEY TERMINOLOGY FROM REVISED CODE

The objective test

“...whether a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard the interest as so significant that it is likely to prejudice your discussion or decision making in your role as a councillor”

The General Exclusions

- As a council tax payer or rate payer or in relation to the council's public services which are offered to the public generally, as a recipient or non-recipient of those services
- In relation to setting the council tax.
- In relation to matters affecting councillors' remuneration, allowances, expenses, support services and pension.
- As a council house tenant, unless the matter is solely or mainly about your own tenancy, or you are in arrears of rent.

Particular Dispensations

- As a member of an outside body, either appointed by the council or later approved by the council
- Specific dispensation granted by Standards Commission
- Applies to positions on certain other public bodies (IJB, SEStran, City Region Deal)
- Allows participation, usually requires declaration but not always
- Does not apply to quasi-judicial or regulatory business

The Specific Exclusions

- As a member of an outside body, either appointed by the council or later approved by the council
- The position must be registered by you
- Not all outside bodies are covered and you should take advice if you are in any doubt.
- Allows participation, always requires declaration
- Does not apply to quasi-judicial or regulatory business

Categories of “other persons” for financial and non-financial interests of other people

- Spouse, a civil partner or a cohabitee
- Close relative, close friend or close associate
- Employer or a partner in a firm
- A body (or subsidiary or parent of a body) in which you are a remunerated member or director
- Someone from whom you have received a registrable gift or registrable hospitality
- Someone from whom you have received registrable election expenses

MINUTE of MEETING of the WHITBURN AND BLACKBURN LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE held within WEBEX VIRTUAL MEETING ROOM, on 1 MARCH 2021.

Present – Councillors George Paul (Chair), Bruce Fairbairn, Jim Dickson and Kirsteen Sullivan

In Attendance –

Ann Marie Carr, Lead Officer, West Lothian Council
Scott McKillop, Community Regeneration Officer, West Lothian Council
Stuart McNiven, Local Authority Liaison Officer, Scottish Fire & Rescue Service
PC Francis Sinnet, Police Scotland
Gary Stoddart, Housing Manager, West Lothian Council
Sarah Collings, Planner/Urban Designer, West Lothian Council

1. DECLARATIONS

There were no declarations of interest made.

2. ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chair agreed to bring forward agenda item 9 and hear it immediately after agenda item 4 to allow the Housing Manager to respond to actions required following an early morning house fire.

3. MINUTES

- (a) The Committee approved the draft Minute of its meeting held on 8th December 2020. The Minute was thereafter signed by the Chair.
- (b) The Committee approved the draft Minute of its meeting held on 21st December 2020. The Minute was thereafter signed by the Chair.

4. 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 Whitburn and Blackburn ward for the period 1st October to 31st December 2020.

The committee was invited to note the service activity as detailed in the ward report for the period 1st October to 31st December 2020.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

5. WEST LOTHIAN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN ACTION PROGRAMME

- FIRST REVIEW (2020) - UPDATE FOR WARD 7: WHITBURN AND BLACKBURN

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration informing ward members of the Local Development Plan (LDP) Action Programme First Review - 2020 as it related to the Whitburn and Blackburn ward.

It was recommended that the committee notes the contents of the report.

Decision

To note the content of the report

6. FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE WARD Q1 REPORT

The committee considered a report by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (copies of which had been circulated) providing an update on activity across the ward to 31 December 2020.

The committee requested that the report content be extended in future to contain additional ward related information which was contained within the services reports to the Services for the Community PDSP. In addition, Stuart McNiven agreed to include an overview of the other projects and work the Fire and Rescue Service were involved with.

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

Decision

To note the content of the report

7. POLICE WARD REPORT

The Committee considered a report by Police Scotland (copies of which had been circulated) which provided an update on performance, activities and issues across the ward for the period to 31st December 2020.

PC Sinnet undertook to feedback a number of suggestions to the Inspector which arose during the discussion including a breakdown of domestic violence within the ward including gender breakdown if possible, an overview of the impact of missing person/concern for calls on the service and information on the % of serious/organised crimes within the ward. Police Scotland were commended by the committee for their excellent work in raising awareness of the support available to domestic abuse victims during the pandemic.

The Committee was invited to note 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 November 2020 – 31 January 2021.

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 REPORT

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration which provided an update on regeneration activity within the ward.

It was recommended that committee note the content:-

- i. updates on activity within Blackburn regarding potential partnership projects being developed, progress with the Health and Wellbeing Group, the Food Group and Blackburn Community Choices;
- ii. updates on activity within Whitburn regarding Whitburn Services Group, the 'Whole Systems Approach' pilot project to Type 2 Diabetes in Whitburn and Whitburn town centre related matters;
- iii. the success of the local key community organisations of Community Action Blackburn and Whitburn Community Development Trust in securing funding through the council to enable them to deliver services during 2021/22; and
- iv. an update on the progress of developing Whitburn Partnership Centre.

The committee commended Whitburn Community Development Trust and Community Action Blackburn for their tremendous food work within the ward during the pandemic.

Decision

To note the content of the report

10. TOWN CENTRE FUND UPDATE 2019/20 & 2020/21

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration updating committee on progress of delivering the Town Centre Capital Projects agreed by the Local Area Committee on 3 October 2019, 7 December 2020 and 21 December 2020. A verbal update on projects in the Whitburn and East Whitburn areas was provided to members.

It was recommended that the committee notes the updates for Town Centre Fund 2019/2020 and 2020/21 projects for the ward.

Decision

To note the content of the report.

11. WORKPLAN

A copy of the workplan had been circulated for information

Decision

To note the workplan.

Data Label: Public



West Lothian
Council

WHITBURN AND BLACKBURN LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE

WHITBURN AND BLACKBURN MULTI-MEMBER WARD PERFORMANCE REPORT

REPORT BY SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update the Whitburn and Blackburn Local Area Committee on the activity within Whitburn and Blackburn Multi-Member Ward for the period up to 31st March 2021.

B. RECOMMENDATION

That Committee Members are invited to note and provide comment on the Whitburn and Blackburn Multi-member Ward Performance Report.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I Council Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Being honest, open and accountable• Focusing on our customers' needs• Making best use of our resources• Working in partnership
II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	Quarterly reports on the Multi-member Ward Operational Plans are being produced to ensure delivery of the Local Fire and Rescue Plan, which is a statutory requirement of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012.
III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None.
IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators	WL CPP SOA Performance indicators.
V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	SOA1304_13 Number of deliberate fires per 100,000 population SOA1304_14 Number of accidental dwelling fires per 100,000 population.
VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	The council contributes to directly and in partnership to the delivery of the Ward Plan
VII Consideration at PDSP	None
VIII Consultations	West Lothian Citizen's Panel Survey, July 2014.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 Background

Quarterly reports on the Multi-Member Ward Operational Plans have been produced by SFRS to ensure delivery of the Local Fire and Rescue Plan for West Lothian 2018, which is a requirement under the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012, Section 41E.

D.2 Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS Whitburn and Blackburn Multi-member Ward Quarterly Report

Following the publication of the Whitburn and Blackburn Multi-member Ward Operational Plan, the Local Senior Officer for Falkirk and West Lothian has produced a Performance Report detailing activity against the key priorities.

The seven key priorities within the Whitburn and Blackburn Ward area are as follows:

Continuous Priority

- Local Risk Management and Preparedness.

High Priority

- Reduction of Dwelling Fires
- Reduction in Fire Fatalities and Casualties
- Reduction of Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals

Medium Priority

- Reduction of Deliberate Fire Setting
- Reduction of Fires in Non-Domestic Property
- Reduction in Casualties from Special Services (excluding RTC's).
- Reduction in RTC Fatalities and Casualties

E. CONCLUSION

The Whitburn and Blackburn Multi-member Ward Performance Report aligns to the key priorities of the Local Fire and Rescue Plan for West Lothian 2018, the West Lothian Strategic Assessment of Community Safety and continues with the excellent partnership working on Community Safety, which is evident in West Lothian.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None.

Gordon McGuire

Station Manager, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

April 2021

Appendix 1 - Whitburn and Blackburn Multi-Member Ward Performance Report



West Lothian Council Area

Ward Performance Report

Quarter 4 20/21

Whitburn and Blackburn

DISCLAIMER

The figures included in this report are provisional and subject to change as a result of quality assurance and review. The statistics quoted are internal management information published in the interests of transparency and openness.

The Scottish government publishes Official Statistics each year which allow for comparisons to be made over longer periods of time.

Please ensure any external partners in receipt of these reports are aware of this.

Introduction

Welcome to the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Ward Performance Report. This performance report is designed to provide citizens, stakeholders and partners with information relating to ward based activity undertaken by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

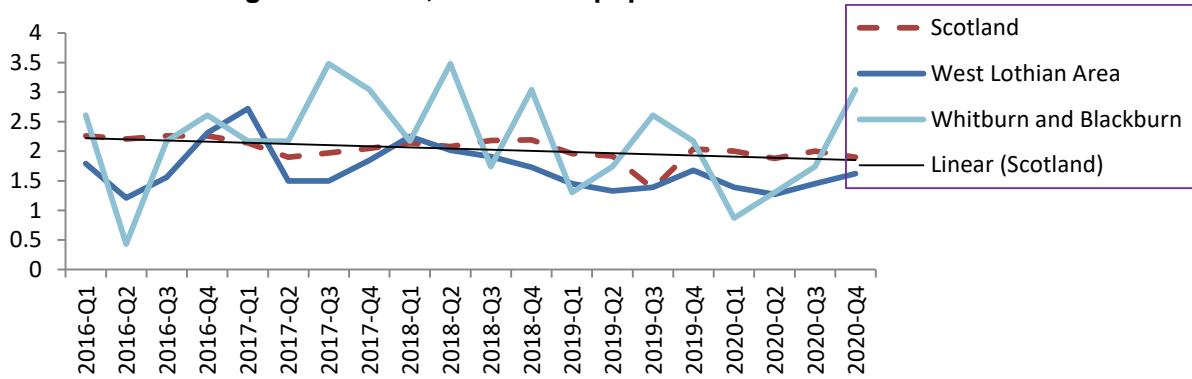
In addition to historical ward based activity, this performance report provides information on the historic activity in the West Lothian Council area and Scotland. To allow benchmarking to be undertaken, the units of measurement in the performance graphs in the report are based on incidents/events per head of population.

Whilst using historic statistical benchmarking data, consideration must be taken of the somewhat random nature of fire related incidents and events, and how this can pose difficulties in interpreting emerging patterns and trends. This is of specific relevance where ward level data is analysed due to the relatively small number of actual incidents/events that occur in ward areas.

However, regardless of statistical anomalies, emerging patterns and trends in fire related incidents and events can assist the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and Community Planning Partners plan and implement preventative intervention initiatives to target reducing fire related incidents and events.

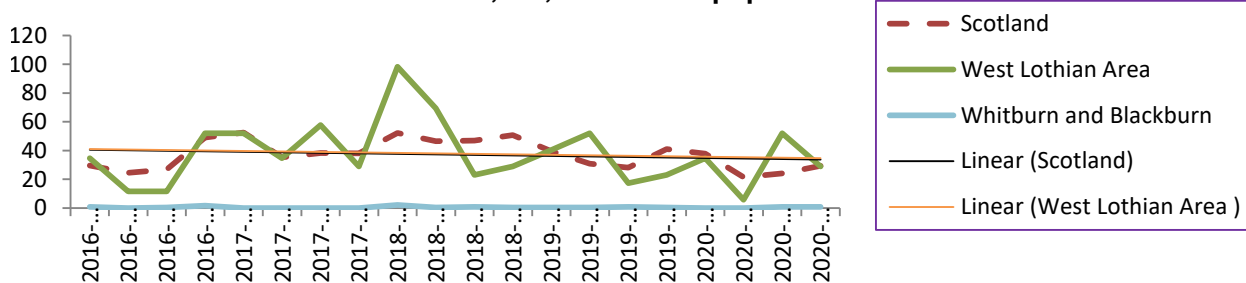
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Accidental Dwelling Fires Per 10,000 head of population



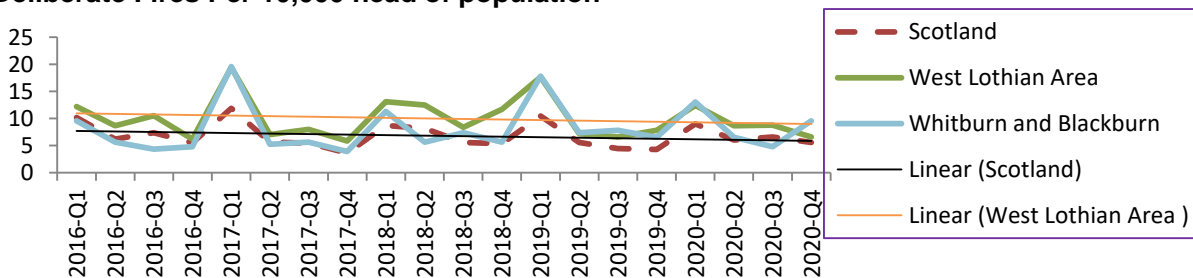
During the 2020-21 year to date reporting period SFRS have dealt with 7 accidental dwelling fires in comparison to 5 during 2019-20 year to date reporting period.

Fire Casualties and Fatalities Per 1,000,000 head of population



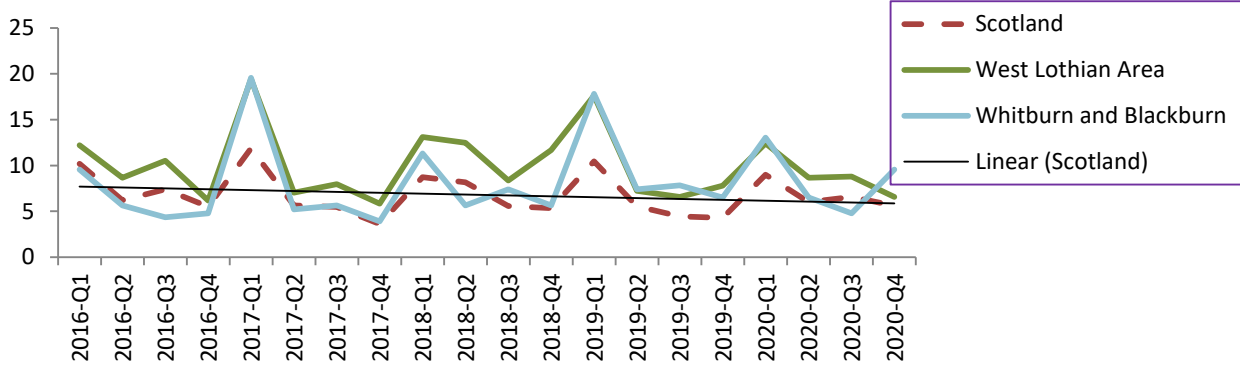
During the 2020-21 year to date reporting period SFRS have dealt with 2 Casualties and 0 Fatalities due to fire in comparison to 1 Casualty and 0 Fatalities during 2019-20 year to date reporting period.

Deliberate Fires Per 10,000 head of population



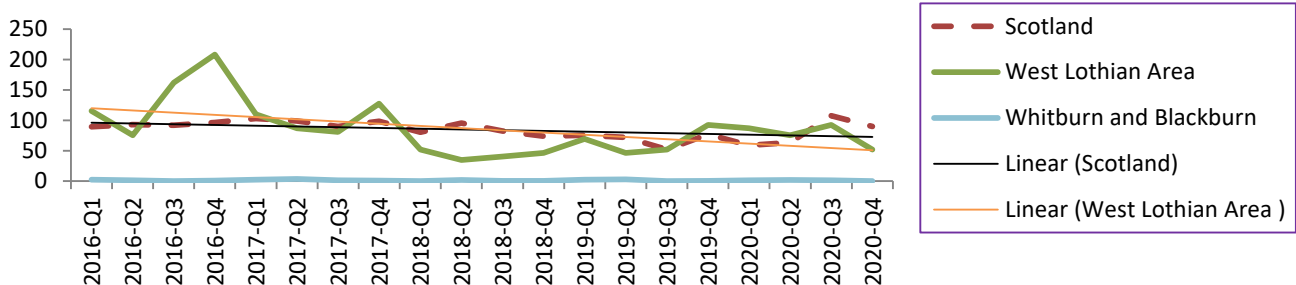
SFRS have dealt with 22 Deliberate fire incidents during 2020-21 year to date reporting period in comparison to 15 during 2019-20 year to date reporting period.

Fires In Non Domestic Property Per 10,000 head of population



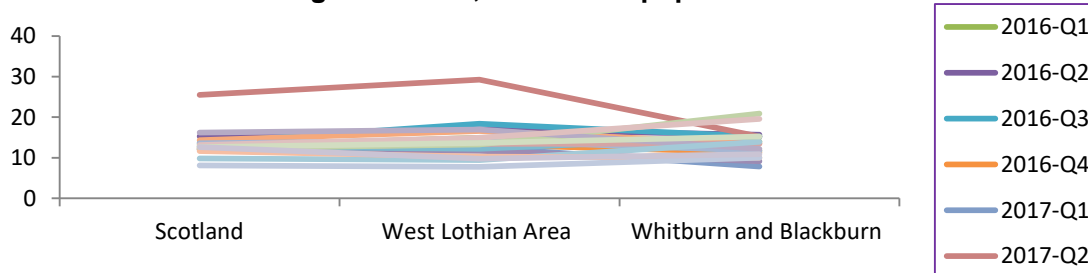
SFRS have dealt with 2 non domestic fires incidents during 2020-21 year to date reporting period in comparison to 4 during 2019-20 year to date reporting period.

Special Services Casualties (excluding RTC's) Per 1,000,000 head of population



SFRS have dealt with 3 casualties from Special Services during 2020-21 year to date reporting period in comparison to 2 during 2019-20 year to date reporting period.

Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals Per 10,000 head of population

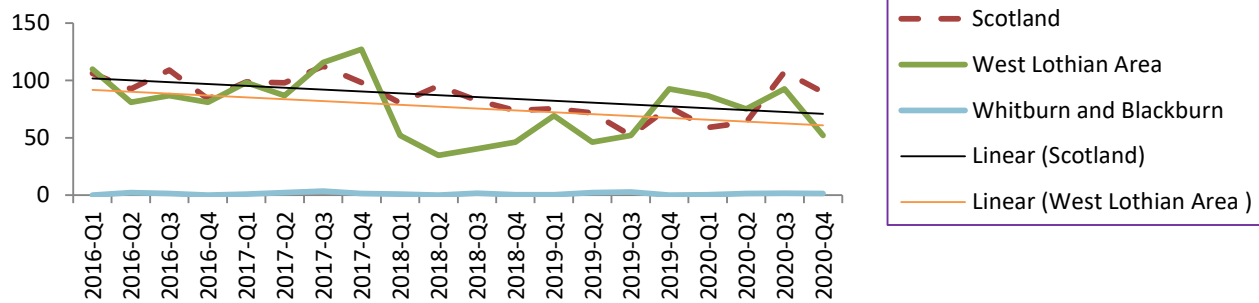


SFRS have dealt with 25 UFAS incidents during 2020-21 year to date reporting period in comparison to 22 during 2019-20 year to date reporting period.

Additional Comments

SFRS is committed to 'Working Together for a Safer Scotland' and to engage with business partners to reduce demand from Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS).

RTC Casualties and Fatalities Per 1,000,000 head of population

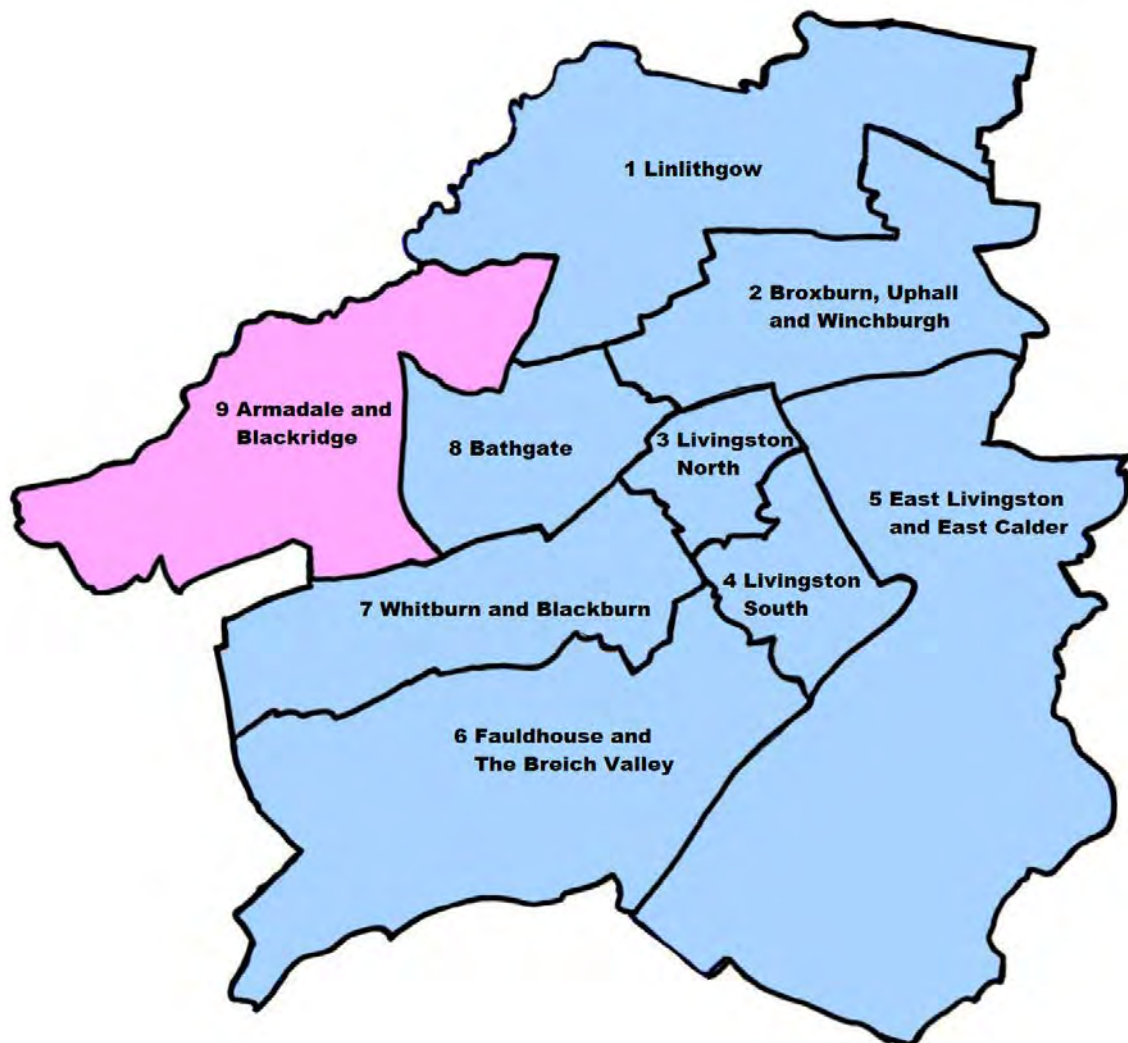


During the 2020-21 year to date reporting period SFRS have dealt with 0 Casualties and 0 Fatalities from RTC's in comparison to 1 Casualty and 0 Fatalities during 2019-20 year to date reporting period.



West Lothian Area Command

Lothian and Scottish Borders



Ward 7 Whitburn & Blackburn Multi Member Ward Report

Quarter 4 – 2020/2021

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide the Local Area Committee with an update on performance, activities and issues across the Ward for the period up to 29th March 2021.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Local Area Committee notes the content of the report.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	Council Values	Focusing on our customers' needs; being honest, open and accountable; making best use of our resources; and working in partnership
II	Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	None.
III	Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None.
IV	Impact on performance and performance Indicators	Performance relative to the same period in 2020; set out in the report.
V	Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	We live our lives free from crime, disorder and danger; we take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive society
VI	Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	None.
VII	Consideration at PDSP	None.
VIII	Other consultations	None.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

Introduction:

This document is intended to provide a summary of the performance of West Lothian Area Command for the reporting period of Quarter 4 2020/2021. The report references the police priorities within the Local Police Plan for West Lothian 2020-2023, namely:

- Protecting The Most Vulnerable People
- Reducing Violence and Anti-Social Behaviour
- Reducing Acquisitive Crime
- Improving Road Safety
- Tackling Serious and Organised Crime

The data provided in this report is for information purposes to allow Partnership Members to conduct their scrutiny responsibilities.

Armadale and Blackridge Community Engagement Priorities:

- Violence, Disorder and Anti-Social Behaviour
- Substance Misuse
- Acquisitive Crime
- Road Safety

Whitburn & Blackburn Community Officers

PC Carol-Ann Wilson

PC Barrie Kennedy

Executive Summary:

Officers in West Lothian have been focused to delivering, with our key partners, our Local Policing Priorities, and meeting our commitment to Keep People Safe.

- **Protecting the most vulnerable people**

Domestic abuse crimes is an area of focus in terms of providing confidence to report, undertaking professional investigations, providing victim support, pursuing perpetrators and managing offenders.

During 2020/2021, Operation Shoestack was established which increased solvency in respect of domestic and violent crimes. There has been an increase in domestic incidents reported during the year with many being historical incidents which have been identified by detectives engaging with victims, identifying previous partners and follow up enquiries to identify previously unreported crimes. We continued our use of Social Media to ensure the message of domestic violence being unacceptable is reiterated.

Significant demands are placed on the police when dealing with Mental Health concerns and missing persons enquiries, which can be hugely time consuming. In partnership with NHS we have access to the Acute Care and Support Team (ACAST) where officers can get direct contact with a Mental Health Nurse to seek direction and advice for persons suffering from a mental health or emotional episode. This was used on 12 occasions in March 2021 to ensure those people received the most appropriate support at source and also significantly reduced time officers spent in dealing with these issues.

We are continuing our work with St John's Hospital to refresh protocols relating to missing persons and deliver the Herbert Protocol to Care Homes, NHS and 3rd sector to help safeguard some of the most vulnerable people in areas from going missing, or maximising the likelihood of a swift and safe return.

Visits to the local young person's residential care homes continue when possible to engage with "cared for children" and build positive relationships. Visits have been well received by staff and young people and it is envisaged that this approach will improve safety through these positive relationships. In addition we have contributed to a request from Scottish Government to West Lothian Council around what each partner has been doing in relation to corporate parenting. Additionally local officers have contributed to the West Lothian Young Persons Champions board.

Officers have been establishing links with external agencies who can provide support to the most vulnerable in our community. The aim of this is to increase awareness of these agencies, to enable us to signpost vulnerable people and provide support to members of the community in an efforts to

reduce crime, break the cycle of behaviour and improve the life of the vulnerable person and the community they live in.

- **Reducing Violence and Anti-Social behaviour**

During Q4, the number of reported incidents of ASB has increased compared to the 2019/20 period. This can be attributed to the pressures of continuous on/off lockdown restrictions with frustrations and low tolerance, there has however been a reduction on vandalisms and fire-raising across West Lothian.

Neighbour disputes are included in the ASB figures with persons working from home, breaches to these restrictions are more likely to be observed causing tension and low tolerance levels. West Lothian officers continue to engage with the public and utilise the 4 E's – Engage, Explain, Encourage and Enforce with an overall good compliance level.

There is continued attention to public space anti-social behaviour and through the Community Safety Partnership, police work closely with partners to address repeat issues. This has resulted in several ASBOs being granted by the courts. We have also been proactive in looking at repeat offenders and are pro-active in providing follow up intervention visits.

There was an issue with a group gathering at Whitburn Cross in an apparent co-ordinated act. There were no identifiable leaders for officers to work with. The majority dispersed in comparatively quick time. Together with local partners, we are reviewing the circumstances to inform our policing approach should there be any incidents in the future.

We are working with partners in addressing youth ASB in the Whitburn and Blackburn area with various interventions having been carried out and subsequent decrease in reported issues.

Officers are seeing a rising trend across the division with the better weather and lighter nights attracting groups of youths. With the lack of places open or things to do the young people have been gathering in numbers and on occasions, alcohol use and secondary fires are apparent. That being said, it is important that we don't demonise our young people, our interactions with the majority youths have been in good spirit and they engage well.

The anti-social, illegal and dangerous use of motorbikes and other powered vehicles continues to be an issue across the division. There are a number of approaches in response including a high profile partnership approach, which has seen vehicles confiscated.

- **Reducing Acquisitive Crime**

Working to Protect People by reducing the impact of acquisitive crime on our community's remains a priority in West Lothian. The number of reported Crimes of Dishonesty has decreased, in particular domestic housebreakings being down about a quarter on the previous year. Following investigations into a series of thefts from motor vehicles, a number of local people have been reported for multiple offences.

As part of the "Made From Crime" Campaign, Community Officers worked alongside Trading Standards and SFRS to set up Crime Prevention packs regarding information and advice on bogus workmen, telephone/online scams and fire safety. These were thereafter distributed to vulnerable groups by West Lothian PSYV.

Furthermore, we posted a variety of Social Media posts offering online advice, in particular in relation to Rogue Traders (with Trading Standards colleagues), Bogus workmen and online/email scams. These continued online with further prevention activities planned as restrictions are relaxed.

With more people staying at home more often there is a greater awareness in communities of suspicious behaviour. Officers carry out high visibility patrols where possible to vulnerable business and domestic premises to deter acquisitive crime.

- **Improving Road Safety**

Officers in the West Lothian area work closely with partners to prevent collisions from occurring. During Q4, Roads Policing officers continued with Local and National Campaigns including Mobile Phone & Seatbelt Campaigns as well as a National Day of Speeding.

Through a proactive, intelligence led, targeted approach to priority locations throughout West Lothian, overall injuries in collisions have reduced by over 40%. In addition, there has been a significant increase of more than 30% in people reported for dangerous driving, speeding, disqualified driving, no driving licence and no insurance.

The slow return to schools has seen a rise in reports to police regarding parking near schools and the safety issues that inconsiderate drivers cause. The schools are encouraged to promote the PARK SMART scheme that they are all aware of to encourage parents to make sure they park sensibly and increase the safety of everyone in the area.

- **Tackling Serious and Organised Crime**

West Lothian officers continue to disrupt organised crime groups by targeting drugs supply offences, gathering intelligence and generate enforcement opportunities. This includes working with UK Border Agency to target those involved in online drug purchases. Due to this multi-agency approach, a substantial number of packages have been intercepted and investigations followed up.

During Q4, 13 MDA Warrants were issued and executed at various addresses within West Lothian and by the conclusion of 2020/2021, 61 MDA Warrants had been executed. We also explore all opportunities through Proceeds of Crime legislation with over £100,000 of cash and assets identified for restraint orders. A significant Cultivation was uncovered within West Lothian with an approximate value of £750,000, estimated to be the largest cultivation discovery of its kind in Scotland this year.

We continue to develop drugs intelligence from the local community. Drugs enforcement requires information from sources to build a picture and fill in the pieces of the jigsaw and the use of community intelligence in this cannot be underestimated.

Reporting Period April 2020 – March 2021			
Whitburn & Blackburn	Recorded		
Crime Type	YTD	LYTD	% Diff
Robbery	5	7	-28.5%
Serious Assault	16	15	+6.6%
Sexual Crimes	66	52	+26.9%
Housebreaking dwelling	17	23	-26.0%
Housebreaking non-dwelling (sheds/garages)	7	9	-22.2%
Housebreaking Other Premises	11	13	-15.3%
Theft of motor vehicle	31	46	-32.6%
Theft from motor vehicle (OLP)	12	28	-57.1%
Vandalism	182	246	-26.0%
Total drugs supply	13	12	+8.3%
Possession of Drugs	91	82	+10.9%
Common Assault	305	247	+23.4%
Common Assault - emergency worker	20	10	+100.0%
Total Crimes and Other Offences	1961	1842	+6.4%

Note: The above figures cover the period to Week 52. These are not end-of-year figures as these are not due to be released until Mid May.

Through local engagement we will continue to work with communities and partners to deliver a quality service which responds to their needs.

Together we can increase community resilience and prevent crime.

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC



WHITBURN & BLACKBURN LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE

SERVICE UPDATE – NETS, LAND & COUNTRYSIDE

REPORT BY HEAD OF OPERATIONAL SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise members of the recent activity of the NETs Land & Countryside Services' teams for the period 1 February 2021 – 30 April 2021.

B. RECOMMENDATION

The Local Area Committee is asked to:

1. Note the work carried out by the service within the local area.
2. Advise of any areas that require further information or investigation.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	Council Values	Focusing on our customers' needs; making best use of our resources; working in partnership
II	Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	None
III	Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None
IV	Impact on performance and performance Indicators	None
V	Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	We make the most efficient and effective use of resources by minimising our impact on the built and natural environment
VI	Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	In line with available revenue and capital budgets
VII	Consideration at PDSP	None
VIII	Other consultations	None

D1 TERMS OF REPORT

The report covers the activity for the period 1 February 2021 – 30 April 2021.

D2 Grounds Maintenance Routine Works

The annual hedges and shrub bed maintenance was completed in early March.

Open space grass cutting in the ward started on Tuesday 6 April and presently on the third cycle.

Due to the weather our routine spraying has been put back to mid-May - four weeks behind.

With the schools requesting sports and athletic marking for their school curriculum along with the resumption of football matches, we are struggling to keep with demand for line marking.

Fly tipping and the lifting of refuse sacks generated by West Lothian Litter pickers are also putting pressure on our NETs Teams.

Grounds Maintenance Enquiries

In total there were 38 grounds maintenance related enquiries received and dealt with during this reporting period in 2021.

	2021	2020
Ball Game Enquiries	2	0
Bench or Seat Enquiries	2	0
Burns or Watercourses	0	1
Complaint Grounds Maintenance	3	0
Drainage Flooding Grass Areas	1	2
Enforcement Officer Enquiries	1	2
Fencing Enquiries	5	3
GalaDay Public Event Enquiries	1	0
Grass Area Damaged	2	1
Grass Highway Verges	1	0
Ground Ownership Enquiries	2	0
Grounds Property Vandalised	7	2
Hedge Cutting Enquiries	1	1
Public Park Enquiries	6	2
School Grounds Enquiries	0	1
Shrub Bed Enquiries	1	1
Shrub Bed Overhanging Path	2	1
Weeds on Paths or Roads	1	0
Total	38	17

D3 Garden Maintenance Routine Works

The Garden Maintenance Scheme started on the 6 April, and we are presently on the third cycle.

Garden Maintenance Enquiries

In total there were 16 garden maintenance related enquiries received and dealt with during this reporting period in 2021.

	2021	2020
Complaint Garden Maintenance	2	0
Garden Maintenance Change of Address	1	0
Garden Maintenance General Enquiries	7	1
Garden Maintenance Grass Not Cut	5	0
Garden Maintenance Standard of Cut	1	0
Total	16	1

D4 Cleaner Communities Routine Works

The Street Cleansing Teams have been reduced in size to comply with social distancing guidelines over the period 1 February – 30 April.

During this period staff have continued to empty street litter and dog waste bins on a regular basis and carry out routine works in the area. Also, litter picking footpaths/ open spaces and road verges and dealing with enquiries as they arise. The street orderly has also continued with their duties over the period clearing litter and emptying litter bins in and around the town centre.

The compact mechanical street sweeper has continued to sweep footpaths and kerb edges and we have two HGV sweepers that are used to clean roads and channels during this time.

Resources have been redirected when required during this period to deal with leaf fall.

We continue to have lots of volunteer's litter picking in the Ward and we have assisted with the uplift of bags and debris that have been collected.

Due to Covid-19 and Street Cleansing Staff assisting other Council Services during the pandemic, a tender had been awarded for a contractor to carry out road sweeping of A, B & C roads. This work was completed on 28 March 2021.

Cleaner Communities Enquiries

In total 222 cleaner communities related enquiries were received and dealt with during this reporting period in 2021.

	2021	2020
Complaint Street Cleansing	1	0
Dead Animals	3	9
Dog Bin New Request for Bin	1	1
Dog Bin Overflowing	0	1
Dog Fouled Grass Open Space	3	1
Dog Fouling on Paths Roads	15	9
Dog No Fouling Sign Request	0	1
Fly Posting	7	1
Fly Tipping Dumping	88	66
Glass on Paths or Open Spaces	3	2
Graffiti Non-Offensive	5	0
Graffiti Racist or Offensive	14	1

Litter Bin Burnt Damaged	1	0
Litter Bin New Request for Bin	1	2
Litter Bin Overflowing	3	0
Litter General Enquiries	13	7
Litter in Grass Open Space	1	1
Litter Paths Road Verges	23	11
Needles/Syringes Abandoned	0	2
Street Sweeping Enquiries	14	3
Trolleys Abandoned/Dumped	4	0
Vehicle Abandoned	22	16
Total	222	134

Fly Tipping Enquiries (Full Year)

	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Illegal Fly Tipping/Dumping	261	316	375	276	184

Enforcement Community Action

The Education, Engagement and Enforcement team have continued to deal with enquiries as they are logged following COVID-19 guidance.

Officers continue to deal with enquiries relating to fly tipping, littering, dog fouling, abandoned vehicles and general enquiries. There have been 88 enquiries in relation to fly tipping for the period compared to 66 for the same period in 2020.

In dealing with abandoned vehicles, Officers have gained compliance from vehicle owners with said vehicles getting removed from the streets and where appropriate, requests have been sent to WLC contractors for removal.

Throughout West Lothian, Officers continue to engage with volunteering groups, attend regeneration group meetings and render the necessary assistance needed to encourage the exercise they currently perform.

There has been an increase in the amount of equipment supplied to facilitate litter picking volunteers, which has increased in line with activity.

There was one Fixed Penalty Notice issued in Ward 7 for the period of 1 February 2021 – 30 April 2021. For the same period in 2020 there were two Fixed Penalty Notices issued within the Ward.

Costs for fly tipping for the period 1 February 2021 – 30 April 2021

Fly tipping is covered by the NETs teams who also carry out other non-routine works for Grounds. We are unable to split costs over specific ward areas or from the other works they carry out, but can give the yearly cost for the NETs teams with an estimate of their time spent on fly tipping which we currently estimate as 80% of their time. For 2020 the estimate was 70% of their time.

Weights for fly tipping brought into the transfer station are provided as a weekly total Monday – Sunday.

Fly tipping costs:

1 February 2021 – 30 April 2021	105.46 tonnes
Cost of disposal including costs for NETs team/vehicles, October-December	£69,494.95
Contractor removal of fly tipping	£0.00
Removal of asbestos	£0.00
TOTAL	£69,494.95

The number of enquiries received between 1 February 2021 – 30 April 2021 for the Ward was 88 out of 881 enquiries for the whole of West Lothian equating to 10.0% of fly tipping enquiries relating to Ward 7.

Percentage wise this would equate to an approximate cost for the Ward of £6,941.51 for disposal of fly tipping between 1 February 2021 and 30 April 2021 including cost for Staff/vehicles. (This does not include the removal of asbestos by the Councils asbestos team).

Costs for fly tipping for the period 1 February 2020 – 30 April 2020

1 February 2020 – 30 April 2020	56.14 tonne
Cost of disposal including estimated costs for NETs team/vehicles	£36,994.56
Contractor removal of fly tipping	£0.00
Removal of asbestos	£0.00
TOTAL	£36,994.56

The number of enquiries received between 1 February 2020 – 30 April 2020 for the Ward was 66 out of 543 enquiries for the whole of West Lothian equating to 12.2% of fly tipping enquiries relating to Ward 7.

Percentage wise this would equate to an approximate cost for the ward of £4,496.58 for disposal of fly tipping between 1 February 2020 and 30 April 2020 including cost for Staff/vehicles. (This does not include the removal of asbestos by the Councils asbestos team). The removal of fly tipping by contractor was not within Ward 7

D5 Parks and Woodland

Tree & Woodland Enquiries

In total 22 Parks and Woodland related enquiries were received during this reporting period.

	2021	2020
Tree Advice or Consultations	3	0
Tree Affecting Public Utility	1	0
Tree Blocking Light	1	0
Tree Branches Overhanging	4	0
Tree Broken/Damaged or Dead	0	2
Tree Dangerous or Unsafe	0	3
Tree Enquiries General	13	8
Tree Planting Requests	0	2
Total	22	15

	2021	2020
Access Rights Way Core Paths	7	1
Complaint Country Parks/ Trees	2	0
Country Park General Enquiries	1	0
Country Park Golf Enquiries	0	1
Ranger Service Polkemmet	2	0
Total	12	2

Ranger Service Update

No. Rights Of Way / Core Path / Patrols carried out (hours)	62
No. Access Enquiries	16

The West Lothian planning portal is being monitored weekly to identify applications that have an access or biodiversity impact. A number of planning applications have been commented on regarding access and biodiversity including windfarm applications, housing developments at East Calder, Clappertonhall and Pumpherston and development at Seafeld.

The Parks & Woodland team had a meeting with Police Scotland's Rural Crime and Community Liaison Officers to look at closer working relationships and how we can work together to solve some of the anti-social and criminal issues affecting the country parks and wider countryside.

The Ranger Service is getting the first tentative enquiries from schools in regards to a resumption of outdoor education sessions. But given the current surge in access work/enquiries and the doubling of visitor numbers to Parks & Woodlands sites since Covid, (especially the country parks), we don't expect to be able to offer such visits this side of the summer holidays. The Ranger Service met with some school representatives from the Skills Centre and Connolly School to advise on how to better integrate outdoor education into their day-to-day learning.

The Country Parks have been very busy, with car parks filling up by mid-morning on the nicer weekends. Rangers had to log a call to Police Scotland about the irresponsible parking at Balvormie (Beecraigs).

Covid restrictions eased on 26 April, and visitor centres and other facilities at the country parks all reopened. Rangers have been inspecting facilities prior to reopening at the three parks, and assisting with duties at Beecraigs reception and caravan & camping site.

The Ranger Service put out two 'Responsible Access' posts on the Council Facebook page in advance of the good weather weekends, and both were well received, with a massive online reach of around 60,000 users per post. Educational posters encouraging responsible access in West Lothian to help avoid conflict with land management operations, have been completed in partnership with local landowners/residents.

Rangers have applied to Nature Scots "Better Places Green Recovery Fund 2" for four assistant rangers and two assistant operatives to help deal with the increased visitor numbers expected over the next few months at the Country Parks and other hotspots around the county.

Ranger Service received the go-ahead from WLC Regeneration Team to spend surplus from Greenrigg Community Council Town Centre Fund on replacement bench for Greenrigg play area. Orders placed and awaiting delivery / installation.

Access

An application was made and has since been awarded to improve Core Paths WL19 East Whitburn to Stoneyburn in partnership with various Community groups. The Ranger Service have met with the Woodland Trust (who own a section of this route) to coordinate works on Foulshiels Bing. Quotes have been received and the projects have been awarded to a contractor and works started on 15 April to upgrade core path WL19 from East Whitburn to Mid Seat Cottage (Hen's Nest Road). We haven't made it all the way through to Stoneyburn just now but we are still planning to return before the end of August to finish the remaining section. This is because we still need to resolve a couple of land owner issues which have pushed timescales slightly. Unfortunately, in the short time the path has been completed a horse rider has cantered down a section which will now need remedial work done. Posts have been put out on social media to say that although horse riders are allowed to use the route but we would ask that they let the path bed in for a few weeks and also that they keep their speed down to a walk or trot – not just for the sake of the path but also for the safety of other users. The Ranger Service will also put up some signs short term to hopefully prevent this occurring again.

Two separate public enquiries have been received from Easter Breich, on core path WL37. One concern was about two new very large and deep drainage ditches close to the path, and the other concern was the boardwalk area just up from the Seafield bridge over the Almond (being impassable to horses). The Ranger service met local resident on site to investigate, with a view to following up the various access issues with the relevant landowner.

We provided additional advice to Easter Breich Wood Community Group in regards to path maintenance along core path WL40, and possible funding options in the future, and patrolled the length of WL37 while we were there to assess maintenance requirements.

We continue to monitor the drainage situation along core path WL37 at Easter Breich / Seafield, with site visits every couple of weeks. A site visit was undertaken on 8 April, when it was noted that pipes were on site ready for work to commence. We received an enquiry on 21 April, which said pipes had been installed but appeared to be draining the field into the wet area at the boardwalk. We made a further site visit on 27 April – the pipe was dry and is possibly draining into the field. So, we are following this up with the landowner to confirm.

Access problems reported on ROW LW52 between Five Sisters bing and Cleughbrae. Ranger attended site to inspect. Found ROW in fairly poor condition due to drainage and erosion. Following up with local landowner and re-scored the path against other West Lothian access priorities.

A number of enquiries have been received regarding Peatland Restoration work at Easter Inch Moss. The work has included peat inversion and plastic dam installation. The peat inversion looks particularly shocking as it removes existing trees and vegetation, but is necessary for the improvement of the peatland habitat. All work has been overseen by an officer from NatureScot as well as a dedicated Ecologist to make sure the project is having as small an impact as possible on existing flora and fauna, and that appropriate mitigation is in place. The contractor is now off site and the area should recover fairly quickly as we move through Spring/Summer.

Polkemmet Country Park

An enquiry came in regarding Polkemmet Country Park about litter and bins overflowing in the Play Area. The enquirer had helpfully picked up the litter and left the bags next to a bin. Staff were due to attend the same day to remove the collected litter when emptying the bins.

Work has started on the road bridge at Polkemmet Country Park. This work is due to be completed by early June. The Park, facilities and businesses are all running as usual throughout the work except for 2-4 June where resurfacing works will require the bridge to be closed to all traffic. During this time, there will be no vehicular access across the river to the Visitor Centre, toilets, golf/driving range, play area, Owl Centre, Courtyard Café or Polkemmet Nursery. The south car park will still be available during this time.

D6 Open Space and Cemeteries

Open Space Capital Programme

Polkemmet Country Park Play Area, Whitburn. Works to install additional drainage measures are complete. Play area will be refurbished and upgraded in Summer/Autumn 2021. This will include replacing the sand play area, replacing swings, and replacing park furniture. New inclusive toddler play equipment will also be added (Town Centre Fund).

Seafield Green Play Area, Seafield. The cableway has been replaced (Town Centre Fund).

Open Space Enquiries

There were three Open Space enquiries for this reporting period in 2021.

	2021	2020
Childrens Play Enquiries	3	0
Total	3	0

Cemeteries Routine Works

Whitburn Cemeteries

Routine grass cutting and weed control tasks have been completed. Seasonal maintenance works and lair reinstatement and burial duties are ongoing across the cemetery estates.

Cemeteries Enquiries

There were 102 Cemeteries enquiries for this reporting period in 2021.

	2021	2020
Cemeteries General Enquiries	8	3
Cemetery Property Vandalised	1	0
Complaint Cemeteries & Burials	1	0
Lair Enquiries	2	4
Memorial/ Headstone Works	32	4
New Interment Booking	37	26
Purchase of Interment Lair	21	6
Total	102	43

E. CONCLUSION

The Education, Engagement and Enforcement team have continued to deal with enquiries as they are logged following COVID-19 guidance.

The Open Space Capital Programme is progressing as scheduled.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

Open Space Strategy

Capital Programme

Appendices/Attachments: None

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Jim Jack
Head of Operational Services
7 June 2021

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC



WHITBURN AND BLACKBURN LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE

HOUSING CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES

REPORT BY HEAD OF HOUSING CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide the Local Area Committee with an overview of the service activities within the Whitburn and Blackburn ward.

B. RECOMMENDATION

The Local Area Committee is asked to note Housing, Customer and Building Service activity as detailed in the ward report for the period Quarter 4 - 1st January to 31st March 2021.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I Council Values	Focusing on our customers' needs. Being honest, open and accountable. Providing equality of opportunities. Making best use of our resources. Working in partnership.
II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 Housing (Scotland) Act 2010
III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None
IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators	There is no impact
V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	There are positive impact on the following SOA indicators: SOA4 – we live in resilient, cohesive and safe communities SOA8 – we make the most effective use of resources by minimising our impact on the built and natural environment
VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	None
VII Consideration at PDSP	Yes
VIII Other consultations	N/A

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D1. Housing Performance Information

The purpose of this report is to provide the Local Area Committee with an overview of the activities of Housing, Customer and Building Services, specific to the Whitburn and Blackburn ward.

Housing staff have been working from home as a result of the Covid19 measures, however we have deployed a small number of officers who have been working alongside our central void team in order to ensure that our properties were being relet and ensuring that we were meeting our duty under homeless legislation in providing temporary accommodation.

Property Void & Let Performance: Mainstream Tenancies

Void Period	Jan 2021	%	Feb 2021	%	March 2021	%	WL Target %
0-2 weeks	2	25%	4	24%	2	22%	55%
2-4 weeks	0	0%	0	0%	1	11%	30%
4+ weeks	6	75%	13	76%	6	67%	15%
Total Lets	8	100%	17	100%	9	100%	100%

Property Void & Let Performance: Temporary Tenancies

Void Period	Jan 2021	%	Feb 2021	%	March 2021	%	WL Target %
0-2 weeks	1	20%	1	17%	2	26%	55%
2-4 weeks	1	20%	4	66%	3	37%	30%
4+ weeks	3	60%	1	17%	3	37%	15%
Total Lets	5	100%	6	100%	8	100%	100%

Delays in re-letting can occur for a variety of reasons. The type or location of the property the completion of void work or the identification of additional works not visible during the initial inspection. Ensuring that vulnerable persons are appropriately supported through the viewing and sign up process can also add to timeframes. Some of our applicants have specific support requirements which require detailed planning and co-ordination by both social work and housing services prior to tenancy commencement.

There were 18 policy voids in the ward for this period a reduction in last reporting period.

Void period	Number of properties	PV reasons
<4 weeks	3	Structural & electrical
4 – 12 weeks	6	Structural & Electrical
13 – 16 weeks	2	Structural & Electrical
26+ weeks	7	Used for decant purposes

D2. Financial Summary

For the Whitburn ward the collection rate for the YTD in Q4 remains excellent at 98.9%. Whitburn has collected £10,840,028 vs a charge of £10,965,009.

The overall increased arrears in comparison to last year are as a result of Full-Service Universal Credit being introduced in West Lothian from May 2018, along with other Welfare Benefit reforms and the current economic climate.

In the same week last year Whitburn ward had 437 Universal Credit (UC) households. Since then the number of UC households has decreased by 2.5%.

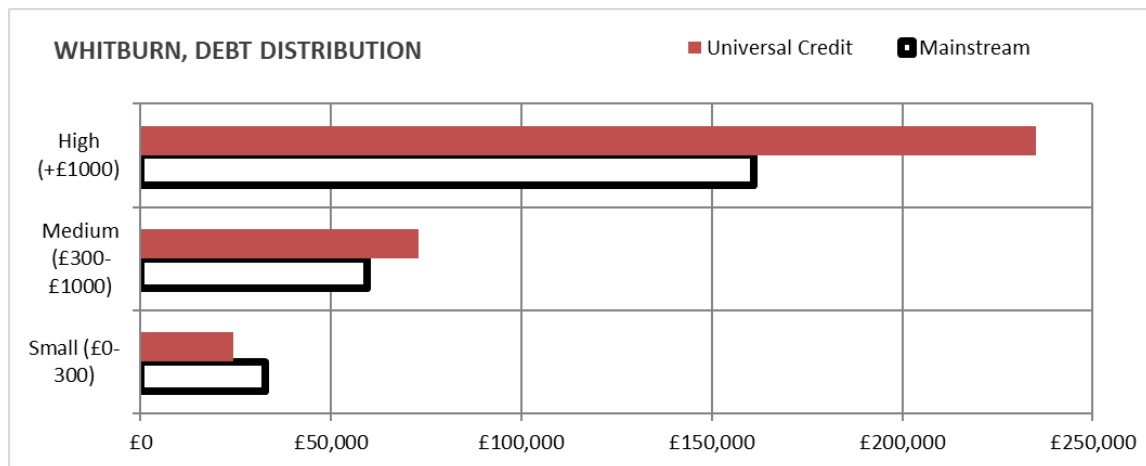
The number of tenancies in arrears in this ward has decreased by 22 since last year. Small debt cases (£300 or less), account for 51.4% of households.

There are 192 serious arrears cases (+£1000 in arrears). These cases are 21.4% of all households in arrears in this area, containing 67.6% of the debt.

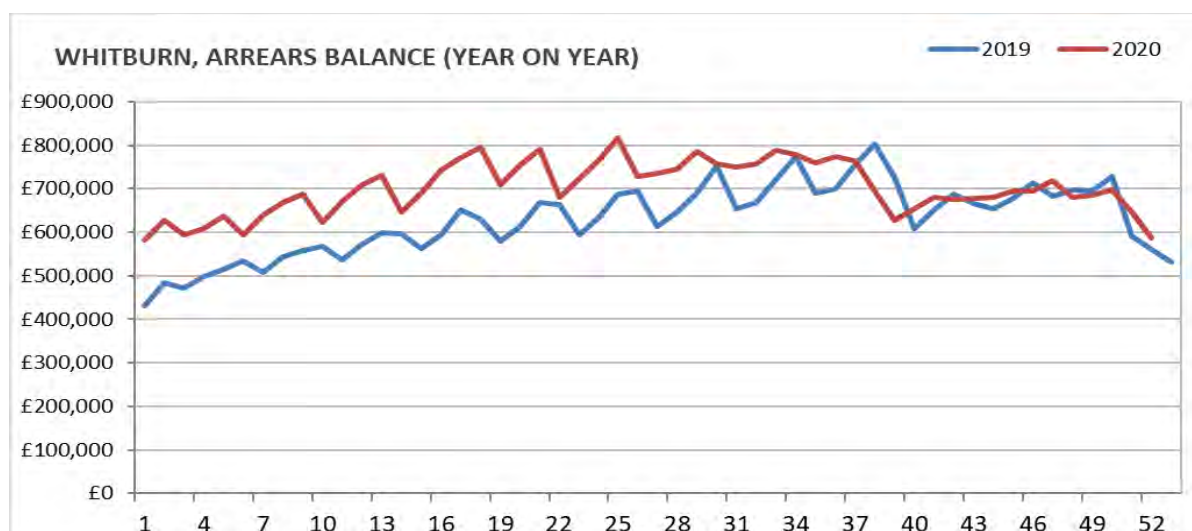
The arrears position for Whitburn Q4 is £585,684. This is an increase of £55,131 on last year's position. The West Lothian overall position is currently £2,978,530.

During the course of this year we plan to focus on the following:

- Making best use of resources by considering communicating more with customers through SMS, email and telephone
- Benchmarking with other local authorities to ensure we identify and consider implementing any best practice
- Performance Monitoring and Reporting will be reviewed and where appropriate streamlined to ensure information is meaningful and robust to assist with improving rent arrears due.
- Promote Alternative payment methods, particularly the Tenant's Self-Service Portal



Arrears Banding	2019/20 (WK53)				2020/21 (WK52)			
	Mainstream		UC		Mainstream		UC	
	Balance	Cases	Balance	Cases	Balance	Cases	Balance	Cases
£0.01 to £99.99	£5,730	128	£2,278	44	£6,609	147	£3,393	68
£100.00 to £299.99	£27,794	149	£22,481	111	£26,308	140	£21,063	107
£300.00 to £499.99	£32,381	84	£21,545	54	£21,159	53	£24,352	64
£500.00 to £749.99	£29,800	48	£45,505	74	£22,203	37	£31,249	51
£750.00 to £999.99	£20,653	24	£38,508	45	£16,055	19	£17,349	20
£1000.00 to £1999.99	£54,729	40	£107,155	77	£62,435	44	£100,595	72
£2000+	£30,255	10	£91,739	32	£98,461	32	£134,453	44
Group Total	£201,343	483	£329,211	437	£253,230	472	£332,454	426
Movement					(+) £51,888	(-) 11	(+) £3,243	(-) 11
Overall Total			£530,554	920			£585,684	898
Overall Movement							(+) £55,131	(-) 22



D4 Whitburn Area Team Activity

Officers in the team have over the period Q4 been working from home as a result of lockdown measures with two officers from the Whitburn team seconded to the Central Void Team. Officers continue to contact as many tenants as possible to offer advice and assistance to ensure that any support and guidance was given and signposting to other services such as Advice Shop and Foodbank.

The focus on rent arrears activity has continued to be a weekly priority task for the team and will continue to work with all our tenants in offering the support, advice and assistance. Such assistance includes referrals for money and debt advice, benefit health checks, completion of income and expenditure to help set up a sustainable payment plan and where appropriate, assist with applications for Discretionary Housing Payments. Officers have also been doing targeted work to encourage tenants to update their universal credit journals as many have not updated their housing costs in April following the rent increase meaning they are losing out on money they are entitled to.

We have continued in the main with home working for staff, we have required to mobilise more officers in order to progress requests for mutual exchanges and other essential housing management tasks which has required a presence within the office/community, whilst adhering to health and safety measures. This has been a challenging time for the service and we have worked with our Health & Safety advisers and Trade Unions to ensure we have safe operating systems, risk assessments and personal protection equipment so that we are safe guarding our staff whilst undertaking key essential tasks at this time

D5. Capital Programme and New Build Council Housing

WLC New Build Activity	Site	No of units	Site Start	No. of Houses Handed Over	Site Completion
WLC	Redhouse	100	Jul-16	100	Sep-2018
RSL Build Activity	Site	No of units	Site Start	No. of Houses Handed Over	Site Completion
West Lothian Housing Partnership	Dixon Terrace	85	Mar-18	85	Mar-20

Whitburn	The Loch Scheme	Structural roof works: Stairs and balcony repairs: Insulation: render	2%	Council's revised scheme of assistance. It is a Multiple Year project with Year 1 commenced in September 2019.
Whitburn	Glebe Road, Union Road, Armadale Road, Manse Avenue, Griffith Drive, Dick Gardens	Roofs & Roughcast to all: Heating upgrades and chimney removal	89%	Year 5 of the programme which is progressing well and nearing completion.

D6. Tenant Participation

During the winter months, the TP Team continued to carry out the schedule of meetings with tenants using online resources to ensure TP continues in all aspects of service delivery.

Tenants Panel

Tenant members continued to take part in monthly meetings with senior managers and the Head of Service, discussing service improvements and developments as well as receiving updates from each service area on implementing the changes imposed by the pandemic to deliver services and changes to working protocols. Members have also been involved in performance scrutiny, questioning information and results over this period.

Capital & Repairs Working Group (CaRs)

Managers from Building Services and the Strategy & Development Team met with tenant members to discuss major improvement works, update them on the various projects being carried out and share benchmark information. Building Services provided an overview of Complaints, Processes & Analysis at the January meeting and the Central Void Team (CVT) pilot in March; tenant representatives were very impressed with the way the CVT are processing void properties.

These meetings ensure that tenants views are taken onboard and offers another method of scrutinising service delivery.

Tenant Participation Development Working Group (TPDWG)

Members meet to ensure TP stays high on the services agenda, looking at ways of engaging with more tenants. They have also been reviewing the current TP Strategy with an emphasise on digital engagement and inclusion. The TP Team have carried out a review of the roles and remit of each group and discussed this with members for their understanding and approval.

Editorial Panel

With the use of Adobe Reader, members are now able to review publications and propose changes online prior to meeting. This was carried out with them in February/March for the spring edition of Tenants News, which will be solely published online on the council website in April 2021. The Editorial Panel have also been involved in reviewing letters and online information intended for tenants, with regard to the new Housing Allocations Policy

Consultations

Tenants were supported by staff from Housing, Strategy & Development and the TP Team to complete two consultation in January and February. The first from the Scottish Housing Regulator on the EESSH" Indicators for the Annual Return on the Charter and the second on New Build Heat Standard Consultation. These were completed, agreed and submitted online during the course of the meetings.

TP Facebook Group

The TP team continue to see a steady rise in the number of tenants following posts on the TP Facebook Group Page. The team post useful information from various sources such as Scottish Government, NHS and the Council's Corporate websites as well as queries from tenants and light-hearted quotes and phrases. The team are working with the Tenant Participation Development Working Group to ensure they have a method of communicating with fellow tenants.

Tenants Panel New Build Planning & Progress Meeting

Housing, Strategy and Development met with the members of the Tenants Panel to provide an update on the progress and planning of current and future new build sites. The Panel will meet six monthly for updates on these projects.

Tenants Learning & Development Sessions

A session was held in March on the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan to update tenants on progress made against the plan and to discuss future planning. Further virtual sessions have been planned on various topics up to July this year.

D7. Safer Neighbourhood Council Officer Ward Information

The Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) officers continue to work across the nine multi member ward areas as an integral part of the Community Safety Unit. In all the wards, partnership working involves the local housing team, council officer with the SNT and officers from Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service all working together to tackle antisocial behaviour. When necessary, the partners will liaise with partners from the voluntary organisations including West Lothian Youth Action Project, Mental Health advisory workers and private landlords in order to reduce antisocial behaviour.

COVID

Following a Hogmanay party, police attended and broke the party up and gave advice re breaching COVID legislation. The SNT followed up with a warning on the tenant. No further issues have been reported since.

Letter Drops

Complaint of noise in a block of flats in Whitburn have been received. A letter drop was completed and no further incidents have been reported.

A complaint of noise and drug dealing from a property in Whitburn was received. Information regarding the drug dealing was passed to police. A letter drop was completed to the surrounding properties re noise issues. No further complaints received.

Housing

A case in Whitburn was closed after the tenancy was ended due to abandonment of the property by the tenant. Initially SNT received complaints from one neighbour regarding parties and disturbances at the property. Following a letter drop, other neighbours came forward and a 1st Warning was served. The tenant refused to engage with the service, but SNT did have contact with Housing Officer and Support Workers. Following further incidents, a 2nd, then a final warning was served. The property appeared to be getting used as a party house, with the tenant unable to control who entered. Following information from neighbours, an abandonment was served, and the property was taken back when no response was received.

Joint Working

A new case in Seafield was opened dealing with several households complaining about each other. SNT carried out a joint visit with Community Police to all parties and is currently being monitored.

Within the Whitburn and Blackburn ward there is 1 live and 1 interim ASBO.

INCIDENTS				
No of All ASB Incidents		Oct	Nov	Dec
Whitburn, Blackburn, Seafield and Greenrigg		79	63	93
Count of Case/ Ward - new cases opened		Oct	Nov	Dec
Whitburn, Blackburn, Seafield and Greenrigg		5	3	8

E. CONCLUSION

This has been a challenging period where officers have been adapting to a blended approach to working from home and within the office/community, embracing new ways of working and change.

Officers have been providing advice and assistance to tenants and customers and working with colleagues in other services areas to ensure that service delivery continued as far as possible.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None

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Tel: 07776164538

Date: 7th June 2021

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC



WHITBURN AND BLACKBURN LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE

COMMUNITY REGENERATION UPDATE

REPORT BY REPORT BY HEAD OF PLANNING, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & REGENERATION

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to update members on regeneration activity within the ward.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that members note:

1. updates on activity within Blackburn regarding potential partnership projects being developed, progress with the Health and Wellbeing Group, the Food Group and Blackburn Community Choices;
2. updates on activity within Whitburn regarding Whitburn Services Group, the 'Whole Systems Approach' pilot project to Type 2 Diabetes in Whitburn and Whitburn town centre related matters;
3. details on the proposed timescale for rollout of the Heartlands Developer Contributions Scheme in Whitburn;
4. the update on progress of developing Whitburn Partnership Centre;
5. update on progress with the outstanding Scottish Government's Town Centre Fund projects within the ward; and
6. the update on activity of the council's Employability Team with the ward.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

- | | |
|---|--|
| I Council Values | Focusing on our customers' needs.
Being honest, open and accountable.
Providing equality of opportunities.
Making best use of our resources.
Working in partnership. |
| II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment) | Community regeneration reinforces the council's commitment to community planning at a local level.

Local authorities have a statutory requirement for developing locality plans for targeted communities in their area. Regeneration Plans fit this requirement for West Lothian. |

The projects set out do not require a strategic

environmental assessment. The projects to different degrees seek to address health and equality issues.

III	Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None.
IV	Impact on performance and performance Indicators	Performance indicators relating to the activity within the plans are captured within the set of Regeneration key performance indicators.
V	Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We are better educated and have access to increased and better quality learning and employment opportunities. - We live in resilient, cohesive and safe communities. - We live longer, healthier lives and have reduced health inequalities. - We make the most efficient and effective use of resources by minimising our impact on the built and natural environment.
VI	Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The activities set out are funded from existing budgets and relevant external sources. - Town Centres Budget 2019/20: £310,131 allocated to ward. - Town Centres Budget 2020/21: £110,845 allocated to ward.
VII	Consideration at PDSP	Annual updates on regeneration plans will be presented to the Community planning Partnership.
VIII	Other consultations	None.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D1 Background

The report updates the committee on the work of the Community Planning and Regeneration Team and its partners to support communities in the Whitburn and Blackburn ward with a particular focus on the towns of Whitburn and Blackburn. These are two of 13 areas covered by the local plans required by the Scottish Government as part of their Community Empowerment approach and reported through the Community Planning Partnership.

These areas were identified as priority areas due to being within the bottom 20% of data zones in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation.

D2 Blackburn Regeneration Updates

Support to community organisations and groups by the Community Regeneration Officer continues to be provided via online virtual platforms ensuring that the strong relationships that were forged at the start of the pandemic continue.

Unfortunately, the Corra Foundation application to support homeless people in the

area that was submitted in partnership between The Larder and Community Action Blackburn was not successful.

D2.1 Blackburn Family Centre

The Family Centre were successful in gaining funding from the Adapt and Thrive fund. This funding will enable them to employ a part-time Project Development Manager. The job advert has been posted on the Goodmoves site with the expectation that short listing and interviews will be carried out in June. The new post will support organisational change and help the Family Centre to become more sustainable in future years to allow a vital service to the community to continue to be provided.

D2.2 Blackburn's Future Group (BFG)

The overarching BFG met in March and have agreed that due to the progress of the subgroups and the frequency of those meeting, the BFG will meet twice a year. This will allow reports from the subgroups to be discussed in the larger over-arching group keeping key strategic partners updated. There are currently three active subgroups all feeding into the larger BFG. These are Blackburn's Health and Wellbeing Group (BH&WB), Blackburn's Bonfire Night Action Group (BBNAG) and Blackburn's Play, Leisure and Recreation Group (BPLR). Two of these sub-groups are just resuming meetings, BBNAG and BPLR with the BH&WB continuing to meeting monthly.

BH&WB continue to address and support a range of health and wellbeing projects. It has been central to the delivery of the local Community Choices pilot. Community Choices is a process that enables local communities to decide how public funding is spent with the theme being health and wellbeing of individuals and families in Blackburn. This theme was identified from the Blackburn's Future Plan and as such the subgroup of BH&WB has taken a leading role in this process. There were 11 projects who came forward for funding from the £25,000 pot of money with 8 of these receiving full funding and 1 receiving part-funding. Support to the 2 groups who did not receive funding has been offered to help identify additional resources/funding. The decision to fund was made by residents of Blackburn who voted using an online voting tool, a telephone voting option was included for the last week. The telephone voting option allowed for those residents who were unable to vote online to be included in the process therefore reducing barriers to participation. The online voting platform was open for 3 weeks and a total of 224 votes were registered, 7 votes were made via the telephone option. The process of the Community Choices is currently going through an evaluation that will involve applicants, partners and members of the community to enable for a transparent methodical process to be followed.

Partnership working between a number of organisations has ensured that the food and dignity project continues to provide support to families and individuals in Blackburn who are in need. The project continues to operate from Blackburn United Community Football Club every Friday afternoon. A voluntary contribution of £3 per bag of produce has been introduced. This contribution will help to sustain the project going forward with the contributions being used to purchase products.

The council's Youth Services will be delivering a Street Hero course in Bathgate Academy from the 8 to the 10 of June. This 3-day course targets young people identified as at risk of risk-taking behaviours and works with them on issues including sex, alcohol, substance abuse, smoking and mental health. The course aims to make those who attend more aware of the dangers and less likely to get involved.

D2.3 Play, Leisure and Recreation

Due to issues raised at the BH&WB subgroup a meeting relating to a potential gap in provision for parent and toddlers it was agreed that the Play, Leisure and Recreation subgroup should be re-established. This subgroup will also identify and work towards holiday activity provision within Blackburn allowing collaboration between partner organisations to avoid duplication, share knowledge and pool resources ensuring that the needs met for the community.

D2.4 Future engagement

The Blackburn's Future Plan was developed using statistical data from Scottish Public Health Observatory (Scotpho) and Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD). This data was produced in 2017. New updated data is now available and as such this will be incorporated into the plan. A community online survey will be going live on 1 June with the link being shared widely by partners to encourage people to complete. This will help ensure that the priorities within the plan are still those that meet the needs of the community. It is hoped that face to face engagement can take place later in the year to again strengthen the evidence for the priorities.

D.3 Whitburn Regeneration Updates

D3.1 Whitburn Community Development Trust (WCDDT) - Funding

Further to the award of £31,174 from the council's Third Sector Community Support Fund 2021/22, WCDDT has received a further £10,000 from the council as part of the £285,000 of 'one-off' funding that the Council Executive approved on 9 February 2021. The purpose of this additional funding is to support the organisation's core costs and help them utilise a greater proportion of their initial grant to service/project delivery.

At least twenty-five households in Whitburn will benefit from free IT devices and free Wi-Fi for devices. These will be provided through Connecting Scotland. This is a Scottish Government initiative which is being managed by the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO). The initiative provides either tablets or Chromebooks to people and/or 'Mi-Fi' devices which provided free Wi-Fi access for devices for 24 months. Given some people may not need both a device and Mi-Fi, this means potentially more households can benefit.

WCDDT successfully applied to the 'families with children and/or care leavers' stream of this initiative. This is to provide devices and support to residents in need within Whitburn. As a result, twenty-five devices are being made available to families in Whitburn.

In terms of progress over recent months, the Community Fridge has now had 400 members sign up since it moved to its own premises at 57 West Main Street. Since August 2020, the number of beneficiaries from the Fridge is 633 adults and 294 children. They have distributed 21 tonnes of food in that time. The service is supported by around 15-20 active volunteers.

The free brunch club service is coming to an end at the end of May due to the end of the funding term. This has benefited between 250-300 people to a two-course cooked meal across Whitburn, East Whitburn, Blackburn, Blackridge, Armadale, and Greenrigg/ Harthill.

West Lothian Citizens Advice Bureau, are continuing to provide a dedicated

Whitburn service. Normally this is via WCDT's premises on 61 West Main Street, however, due to the remaining Covid-19 related restrictions, this service is working remotely at present.

D3.2 Whitburn Summer Youth Provision

Regeneration, CLD Youth Services and Whitburn Community Development Trust are developing plans for a summer programme for young people in Whitburn.

This is being planned following the availability of funding via the Scottish Government's 'Summer of Play' initiative which is to be used to support the targeted provision of activities for children and young people during the 2021 school holidays.

It is expected that the programme will run for two hours per week during the six weeks of the school holidays. Discussions are underway with the management committee at Whitburn Community Centre to see if the building is able to provide the base for the programme given its part-closure due to the roofing issues.

D3.3 Whole Systems Approach Pilot – Type 2 Diabetes, Whitburn

The initial workshops for this pilot were held online on Tuesday 11 and Wednesday 12 May. There was a total attendance of 23 participants across the two sessions. This included representation from a range of services, particularly from local health practitioners, education staff, other council services, local members and West Lothian Leisure.

The workshops provided participants with the background to the Whole Systems Approach (WSA) and the reasons why Whitburn had been chosen as the pilot area for this by the West Lothian Community Planning Partnership, both negative and positive.

The breakout exercises aimed to get participants thinking about the underlying causes and influences which contribute towards Type 2 diabetes, being mindful of the context of the town. The output from these exercises from the various breakout groups over the sessions will contribute towards a wider 'causal map' for the town. This will provide the basis for planning responses to this which will be covered in the second round of workshops which will be held in July.

It was highlighted that £60,000 of external grant funding has been made available for this project to support and enable some actions to be undertaken. Additional resources will be made available to each pilot and collectively in the East Region. However, local commitment and resource is also required and there is a strong emphasis on partnership working and joint responsibility across multiple partners and stakeholders.

Whilst the focus of this pilot project will be on Type 2 Diabetes, it is expected that there will be other opportunities for partnership working in the town identified which will support wider public health and community regeneration, particularly given the obvious impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on these.

D3.4 Whitburn Town Centre

Whitburn Town Centre Management Group (TCMG) has continued to meet on a monthly basis by means of virtual discussion since Autumn 2020. At the April 2021 meeting, it was agreed that in focusing on identifying potential new projects, and to help stimulate such discussion, that reference should be made to the approved

Whitburn Public Realm Design Guide and the more recent Review documentation prepared by Council officers and considered at the Council's Development & Transport PDSP on 1 December 2020.

Town Centre Occupancy - the town centre is subject to a quarterly occupancy and vacancy survey, as one measure of its relative vitality and viability. In April 2021, a vacancy rate of 9.9%, was noted, although this does not take account of properties subject to refurbishment at the time of survey. The figures have also required to take account of any COVID-19 temporary restrictions that may have continued to be in place at the day/time of survey. To provide some context, the Whitburn figure remains relatively favourable in comparison to the national averages for Scotland (10.6%) and UK (11.5%) as based on the published Springboard national vacancy survey research. It should be observed that this is a gradual improvement from the Whitburn peak vacancy of 16.2% back in January 2017.

Whitburn town centre continues to make positive steps forward in terms of the commercial/retail offering and level of vacancies. We have more recently seen longer-term vacant units be returned to active economic/commercial use, either through occupation and/or redevelopment. These include, for example, the former RBS at Manse Road (sub-division and redevelopment); the former 'Direct Flooring' shop at 47-49 West Main Street (redeveloped and occupied), and two adjacent shops at 4-6 West Main Street (including West Lothian Foodbank shop). These have each brought welcome improvement to the visual streetscape and town centre environment.

Whitburn Partnership Centre Public Art – as per update on Partnership Centre below, the public art element of Whitburn Partnership Centre development, is being part funded by the Council's Whitburn Town Centre Improvement Fund (£15,000 contribution as part of overall budget of £30,000).

WW1 Educational Banner Project - the '1921' annual banners have now been displayed. It is recognised that community members have been fully involved and committed many hours to this legacy educational community project.

Gap sites - there is open dialogue and engagement through Council officers and services with respective landowners and interested third parties, in relation to a number of potential town centre opportunity sites and properties within Whitburn. These include, albeit not exclusively, the former Whitburn Miners Welfare club, and the building commonly referred to as Old Labour club at 104-108 West Main Street, both located on West Main Street.

Firstly, the building commonly referred to as the Old Labour club remains in private ownership and dialogue with the owner to ascertain future plans reveals no change in their intentions for the site. The owner has intimated that the site is being actively marketed for sale, with the aspiration that any future acquisition will result in site redevelopment.

Secondly, the site of the former Miners welfare at 111-113 West Main Street is understood to have recently been subject to a change in individual private ownership. The site has been demolished and cleared now for a number of years. In December 2020, Council approved an application for planning permission in principle (Ref. 0647/P/19) for residential use. In both these instances Council officers monitor activity and will continue to liaise as appropriate with the relevant landowners going forward.

D4 Heartlands Developer Contributions – Town Centre Improvements

In October 2020, Council Executive approved the approach for distributing the funds that are available for town and village centre improvements in Whitburn Fauldhouse and. a result of developer obligations relating to the Heartlands development site. This concerned what the funding can be used for, largely instructed by the Section 75 Agreement, as well as the application process.

The overall fund of £59,740.25 has been split between the two towns on a per capita basis, with an allocation of £18,938 for Fauldhouse and £40,802 available to Whitburn.

The Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration has been delegated to make awards from the fund following consultation with the Polkemmet Community Liaison Group, councillors representing the wards of Whitburn and Fauldhouse and the clergy of churches within Whitburn and Fauldhouse.

At present, officers are pulling together the application materials for the fund as well as the timescales for the application process. Following the application deadline, officers will consider which projects are deemed eligible for consideration. Meetings of the stakeholders group(s) are then required to provide feedback on the eligible applications prior to proposals for awards being developed and considered by them.

Following this, proposals will be presented to the respective Local Area Committees. Due to the length of time required to progress through the above stages, it is anticipated officers will present these proposals at the next meetings of the Local Area Committees in September (Whitburn and Blackburn) and October (Fauldhouse and Breich Valley).

Table 1: Proposed timescale for implementation of fund (meetings in grey shade)

Stage of Process	Timescale	Time between each stage
Opening/Launch (need to have forms/guidance in place and webpage ready to go)	Early June	
Closing deadline	w/c 5 July	
Officers assess applications, filter out those that are ineligible or duplicate projects elsewhere send out eligible applications	w/c 19 July	2 weeks
Hold post-application deadline stakeholders consultation meeting	w/c 2 August	2 weeks
Head of Service consider then makes proposals Send out proposals	w/c 16 August	2 weeks
Hold proposals stakeholders consultation meeting regarding Head of Service proposals	w/c 30 August	2 weeks
Deadline for LAC report for agenda-setting purposes	Between late August-mid September	
Committee Services deadline	LAC date minus 1 week	1/2 weeks
Proposals considered at Local Area Committee meeting	27/9/21 (Whitburn) 19/10/21 Fauldhouse*	1 week
Head of Service makes decision on awards Award letters out	Week after	

*The Fauldhouse and The Breich Valley LAC considered the above timescale at their recent meeting in May. They asked officers to enquire if the Fauldhouse part of the fund could be delayed but without affecting the Whitburn part of the fund. Officers have confirmed that this is possible.

D5 Whitburn Partnership Centre Update

The concrete foundations are complete and the steel frame for the new extension is fully erected with the steel decks now installed for the first floor and roof slabs in place ready for concrete to be poured. Pre-cast concrete stair units were craned in as part of the steel erection process and the contractor has started the sub-floor blockwork walls.

Work to the existing building is also underway with supporting steelwork now in place to the west side of the building. Scaffolding is in place to the perimeter allowing the roofing work to proceed. The re-slating and leadwork repairs and replacement to the clock tower are currently the focus of the roofing work. Stone replacements and repairs to the existing building have also re-commenced.

The key community organisation meetings are continuing to meet and are joined by the council's Project Manager and Maxi Construction's Site Manager. Project communications are a joint venture between the Whitburn Community Development Trust, Maxi Contractors, council media and colleagues to ensure the wider community is kept up to date.

The Design Team, council and Maxi Construction are continuing to work together to achieve completion in spring 2022.

Both the Museum Development and Public Art Groups continue to meet to develop their respective contributions to the project.

Regarding the public art element, a small commissioning group – involving community members and Council officers, led by Community Arts, has been established to oversee recruitment and project delivery. Artist recruitment is advanced with appointment currently envisaged during June 2021. It is anticipated, that the successful artist will carry out relevant consultation and engagement with local community groups and schools.

D6 Town Centre Fund Updates

Updates to projects which were still outstanding at the time of the last update to the Local Area Committee, in March 2021, and for which an update is available has been provided below.

D6.1 Whitburn

WHI02/ WHI20-03 – Whitburn Community Development Trust – Whitburn Community Garden: Construction of the site has begun. The perimeter fence is now in place as well as the electricity supply to the area. The shed has been installed within the garden area and volunteer days were arranged for 30 May and 6 June to help install pathwork and build the raised beds.

A local volunteer with a background in electrical engineering has been giving hands-on support to the development of the site.

The Trust will be working with The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) and West Lothian Youth Action Project to get groups of young people involved in completing some of the pathwork, raised beds and other maintenance tasks. WCDT hope these groups will continue to be involved in the ongoing development of the project.

WCDT will be then looking develop the longer-term activity for the area in

partnership with local schools and community groups with the ultimate aim of having a core group of volunteers taking responsibility for the day to day maintenance and running of the garden.

WHI05 – Whitburn Community Education Centre – Modify Reception of Community Centre and CCTV: The Whitburn Reception Desk and CCTV has been installed and the funding provided from the Town Centre Fund to this project has been fully utilised.

The management committee has provided some additional funding to obtain additional furniture for the area for which they are liaising with Customer and Community Services for.

WHI06 – Museum Services, WLC – ‘Whitburn – Our Community Museum’: As the timescale for completion of the Partnership Centre extends beyond the timescales for this fund, officers have contracted a separate cabinet display place to be constructed off-site and put in storage, in order to meet the timescales and other requirements for the fund. The units have not been constructed as yet but Construction Services have advised they will be constructed and invoiced for by end of September, as per funding requirements.

WHI20-01 – Whitburn Juniors - Ground Improvements: these works have been completed and the project has been signed off. The funded items included obtaining grass-cutting equipment, purchase and installation of a portacabin and slabbing work to a section of the perimeter of the pitch.

WHI20-02 Open Spaces, WLC - Whitburn Inclusive toddler Play: the projected start date for the installation of equipment is 8 June.

D6.2 East Whitburn

EWH01 – East Whitburn Community Centre Management Committee – Signage: following the update to the LAC in March, the management committee advised they intended to continue with this project. The management committee advised council officers that an order for the fingerpost signage was placed by end of March, within the timescales for doing so.

However, the management committee have advised that the cost of installing the fingerposts has not yet been secured which officers are engaging with committee members over in an attempt to resolve.

Roads and Transportation have purchased and installed road signage to indicate where the community centre is to road users on the A705 and to indicate where the entrance to Redmill Park is to A705 road users come from the west.

EWH20-01 – WLC Ranger Services - Improving Core Path WL19 East Whitburn to Stoneyburn: As reported to the previous meeting of the LAC, additional funding has been provided to this project due to the reallocation of funds. The funds were reallocated from the EWH03 ‘Brushcutting’ project.

The surface works for the East Whitburn to Mid Seat Cottage element of the project – which the East Whitburn allocation of the fund was used for – have now been completed. Perch seats which be installed along the path are still to be received from the seller.

D6.3 Greenrigg

GRE20-01 – Greenrigg Community Council – Village Entrance Signs Plus Hanging Basket Poles: The Community Council recently obtained the fifth planning approval for this project, relating to the different sites that installations will be made.

They have been advised that they are required to obtain S.56 Road Opening permit(s) in order for the installation contractor to carry out their works. The group have advised that they do not have the funds to pay for this, particularly if the sites need to be treated separately which would require eight applications with the associated cost for these.

D6.4 Seafield

SEA03/ SEA20-02 - Seafield Community Centre Management Committee – Island Landscaping: The management committee obtained additional funding from the Levenseat Trust for this, as had been outlined in their application to the council. Their designs for the area was approved by NETs and Land Services, as per funding condition for the award.

The contractor appointed for these works has advised that the works will be undertaken in early July.

SEA20-01 - Seafield Community Centre Management Committee – Seafield Cableway: this project has been completed.

D6.5 Employability Team

Access2employment provides employability support to residents throughout West Lothian. Support is provided to residents who are unemployed and who are in employment but are in uncertain employment or are struggling financially to make ends meet. Support is provided via 1 to 1's with individual clients and through the delivery of a range of courses including one day specific courses to 6 week personal development and employability courses, Women n2 Work and Men n2 Work. Advisers will work with clients until they have met their individual goals to secure sustainable employment including better paid employment and education opportunities.

In 2020/ 21 the service moved supported remotely during the pandemic with 1 to 1 support and courses being delivered remotely via video calls, web based platforms, emails and the telephone. The service was expanded to provide support in the evenings and weekends to meet the needs of clients whose life circumstances had changed as a result of the pandemic. The service developed a weekly bulletin that contain information on the latest local vacancies for West Lothian Job seekers. This is sent weekly to job seekers and services supporting clients. The service also introduced a service offer to support parents who are currently unemployed or in work but in insecure employment or financially struggling.

Despite the pandemic and the impact this has had on West Lothian residents the engagement by clients has been high. The service delivered the following during 2020/21:

- 814 new clients registered with the service
- 1645 existing clients received support during the year
- 264 clients were supported into a positive destination including finding work or starting further or higher education
- 41 short employment skills workshops, which focused on topics such as CV

building, interview skills and applying for vacancies, were delivered with 161 participants attending

- 7 well-being workshops were delivered which focused on health and well-being with 45 participants attending
- Women n2 Work delivered 5 six week courses and Men n2 Work delivered 1 six week course, in total 31 clients attended
- A weekly vacancy bulletin was created which is sent to 850 clients directly and 155 individuals within community groups, council services and schools each week
- The service introduced a project to support parents both who are unemployed and underemployed
- The service introduced additional support for young people through the introduction of Kick Start and the Young Person's Guarantee

In the Whitburn and Blackburn Ward 131 new residents registered with the service, with 40 being supported into employment, education or training.

E. CONCLUSION

Members are asked to note the range of activities taking place across the ward and, in particular, the work to support regeneration within the Whitburn and Blackburn areas.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None.

Appendices/Attachments: None.

Contacts:

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Scott McKillop, Community Regeneration Officer (rest of ward), 07500 816862, scott.mckillop@westlothian.gov.uk

Craig McCorriston, Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration
7 June 2021.

DATA LABEL: Public

WHITBURN LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE

TIMETABLE OF MEETINGS 2021-2022

Finalised Reports to committee officer by 12 noon	Final Agenda Issue	Meeting Date	Venue
Monday 20 September 2021	Tuesday 21 September 2021	Monday 27 September 2021	TBC
Monday 29 November 2021	Tuesday 30 November 2021	Monday 6 December 2021	TBC
Monday 21 February 2022	Tuesday 22 February 2022	Monday 28 February 2022	TBC
Monday 30 May 2022	Tuesday 31 May 2022	Monday 6 June 2022	TBC

All meetings will be held at 10.00 am unless otherwise advised – Venue to be advised in due course



WHITBURN AND BLACKBURN LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE WORKPLAN – 7 JUNE 2021

No.	Subject	Purpose	Lead Officer	Date
1	Housing Report	Quarterly update on housing issues	Ann Marie Carr	27 Sept 2021
2	Police Report	Quarterly update on police/NRT activity	Sgt. Keith Jack	27 Sept 2021
3	Economic Development and Regeneration Report	To update local members on Economic Development and Regeneration service activity in the ward.	Craig McCorriston	27 Sept 2021
4	Fire and Rescue Report	Quarterly report on activity	Stuart McNiven	27 Sept 2021
5	Operational Services Report	Quarterly report on activity	Jim Jack	27 Sept 2021