

MINUTE of MEETING of the SERVICES FOR THE COMMUNITY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL held within WEBEX VIRTUAL MEETING, on 1 JUNE 2021.

Present – Councillors George Paul (Chair), Andrew McGuire, Alison Adamson, Frank Anderson, Lawrence Fitzpatrick and John McGinty

Apologies – Councillor Peter Heggie

In Attendance

Chief Inspector Alun Williams, Police Scotland
John McKenzie, Divisional Commander, Police Scotland
David Sharp, Local Senior Officer, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Brian Robertson, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
AnnMarie Carr, Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services
Sarah Kelly, West Lothian Council
Katy McBride, West Lothian Council
Alison Smith, West Lothian Council
Marjory Mackie, West Lothian Council
John Sives, Joint Forum of Community Councils
Jessie Duncan, Tenants Panel Representative
Pat Tedford, Trade Unions Representative

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Agenda Item 10 - Affordable Housing Delivery Update

Councillor Andrew McGuire declared an interest in that he was a paid employee of Dunedin Canmore, which was part of the Wheatley Group.

2 ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chair ruled that agenda items would be considered in the following order: 7, 13, 5, 8, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 14.

3 MINUTES

The panel confirmed the Minute of its meeting held on 30 March 2021 as a correct record.

4 PERFORMANCE REPORTING

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services providing an update on the current levels of performance for Housing, Customer and Building Services via the indicators that were the responsibility of the Services for the Community Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel.

It was recommended that the panel note the current performance on Housing, Customer and Building Services key performance indicators and determine if further action or enquiry is necessary.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

5 HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES MANAGEMENT PLAN 2021/22

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services introducing the 2021/22 Management Plan for Housing, Customer, and Building Services, which was provided as an appendix.

It was recommended that the panel consider the plan and provide comment as appropriate.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

6 SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE LOCAL PLAN PERFORMANCE REPORT

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services providing an update on the Local Plan Performance for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service in West Lothian for the period 1 January 2021 – 31 March 2021.

It was recommended that the panel note the contents of the report.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

7 SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD PERFORMANCE

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services providing performance information on the Safer Neighbourhood Teams.

It was recommended that the panel note the performance information detailed for the Safer Neighbourhood Team.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

8 SCRUTINY OF POLICE SCOTLAND PERFORMANCE IN WEST
LOTHIAN

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services providing an update on the Performance of Police Scotland in West Lothian for the period 1 January 2021 – 31 March 2021.

It was recommended that the panel note the contents of the report covering the period 1 January 2021 – 31 March 2021.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

9 WEST LOTHIAN LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY 2017 - 2022 UPDATE

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services providing an update on progress with the actions in the West Lothian Local Housing Strategy 2017–2022.

It was recommended that the panel note and consider the following recommendations which were intended to be submitted to Council Executive for approval:

1. Note that good progress was being made implementing the Local Housing Strategy;
2. Note the COVID pandemic had presented a challenging situation particularly in relation to homelessness, new build completions and meeting ESSH;
3. Note the development of net zero carbon targets would be included in the LHS going forward; and
4. Note that a new Local Housing Strategy would be developed during 2021 and 2022, and a further report with progress on this will be brought forward in early 2022.

Decision

1. To note the terms of the report.
2. To agree the recommendations which were intended to be submitted to a future meeting of the Council Executive for approval.

10 AFFORDABLE HOUSING DELIVERY UPDATE

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services providing an

update on various initiatives to increase the supply of affordable housing in West Lothian. The report also provided an update on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on both the timescale for delivery & completion of the Council's 3,000 Affordable Houses programme.

It was recommended that the panel note and consider the following recommendations which are intended to be submitted to Council Executive for approval:

1. Note the progress being made on delivering 3,000 affordable homes in West Lothian over the period 2012-2022;
2. Note the impact on the construction of the new build houses due to the COVID 19 pandemic; and
3. Note projected delivery estimated at 90% of the overall programme by March 2022.

Decision

1. To note the terms of the report.
2. To agree the recommendations which were intended to be submitted to a future meeting of the Council Executive for approval.

11 UPDATE ON HOME ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAMMES FOR SCOTLAND: AREA BASED SCHEMES (HEEPS:ABS) 2019/20 AND 2020/21

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services providing an update on the progress made on the 2020/21 HEEPS:ABS programme of External Wall Insulation and providing details of the proposed 2021/22 programme.

It was recommended that the panel note and consider the following recommendations which were intended to be submitted to Council Executive for approval:

1. Note that the final funding allocation for the 2020/21 HEEPS:ABS programme was £755,048;
2. Note the proposal to continue to provide HEEPS:ABS funding to homeowners in the Dedridge area as part of the 2021/22 programme;
3. Note the recommendation for the continuation of delegated powers to the Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services for non-substantive changes following approval of the 2021/22 programme by Council Executive; and
4. Note that the views of the panel would be reported to Council Executive when it was asked to consider the proposed approach; for future purposes, it was recommended a direct report to the

panel would be sufficient, unless a specific decision was sought.

Decision

1. To note the terms of the report.
2. To agree the recommendations which were intended to be submitted to a future meeting of the Council Executive for approval.

12 PROPERTY TURNOVER JANUARY TO MARCH 2021

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services informing members of inform the panel of property turnover for Quarter 4 of 2020/21 (January to March 2021).

It was recommended that the panel note the current levels of activity relating to property turnover for the fourth quarter of 2020/21, and in particular to note:

1. The decrease in property lets for Quarter 4 2020/21 compared to the same period in the previous year;
2. Of the 48 communities in West Lothian, 20 had had no properties available for let throughout Quarter 4 of 2020/21; and
3. 67% of lets had been allocated to people who were homeless throughout the quarter.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

13 WORKPLAN

A workplan had been circulated for information.

Decision

To note the workplan.