

MINUTE of MEETING of the LIVINGSTON SOUTH LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE held within COUNCIL CHAMBERS, WEST LOTHIAN CIVIC CENTRE, LIVINGSTON, on 10 NOVEMBER 2022.

Present – Councillors Lawrence Fitzpatrick (Chair), Peter Heggie and Moira McKee Shemilt

Apologies – Councillor Maria MacAulay and Community Council Representative Diane Loughlin (Livingston Village)

In Attendance

Greg Welsh, Lead Officer, West Lothian Council
Lesley Keirnan, Community Regeneration Officer, West Lothian Council
Isla Wright, Head Teacher, St Margaret's Academy
Sergeant Lee Brodie, Police Scotland
Paul Harvey, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Sandy Ross, Area Housing Manager, West Lothian Council
David Lees, Operational Services, West Lothian Council
Christopher Nelson, Accountant, West Lothian Council
Mike Duncan, Dedridge Community Council Representative

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Item 5 - St Margaret's Academy - Attainment and Achievements

Councillor Moira McKee Shemilt stated a connection in that she had two grandchildren at St Margaret's Academy.

2. ORDER OF BUSINESS

In terms of Standing Orders 7 and 11 the Chair ruled that information received from Public Transport was considered urgent and would be dealt with at this stage.

The Chair advised that the Traffic Commissioner had granted McGill's Eastern Scottish short notice changes to take effect from Monday 21 November 2022. This was in response to network adjustments, made by Lothian Country, resulting in both time and route alterations to a number of McGill's services including in the Dedridge West area. Public Transport Services would be asked to provide members of the committee with details of the timetable and route maps.

3. MINUTES

The committee confirmed the Minute of its meeting held on Thursday 1 September 2022 as a correct record. The Minute was thereafter signed by the Chair.

4. ST MARGARET'S ACADEMY - ATTAINMENT AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The committee were provided with a presentation (copies of which had been circulated) by Isla Wright, Head Teacher at St Margaret's Academy, the content of which included information on; attainment, achievements and school improvement planning.

The presentation commenced with the Head Teacher expanding on the attainment results detailed within the presentation. The committee were advised that the outcomes were considered a success, given that they were the first results post pandemic, and were testament to the commitment of staff and pupils which had enabled every young person to achieve their full potential.

Moving on to the achievements in 2021/22, members were informed that the pilot School for Construction qualification had proved really successful, leading to a pathway into the construction sector and making young people more marketable for local careers. Highlighting the Languages for Life and Work Polish language opportunity, it was advised that the school was the first in West Lothian to introduce the qualification. Including this as part of the curriculum enabled the additional skill of the wide Polish community to be celebrated and resulted in the school becoming more accessible for the young people and their families.

Mrs Wright continued and presented the school improvement planning for 2022/23, explaining that the whole school approach now was to learn the lessons of the pandemic and align them with the more traditional school picture.

The presentation concluded with members advised that the school prioritised excellence in attainment, high expectations and the equity and dignity of every young person. Committee were then given the opportunity to ask questions and provide comment.

Decision

To note the contents of the presentation.

5. POLICE WARD REPORT

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by Police Scotland providing an update on performance, activities and issues across the ward for the period up to 1 October 2022.

Clarification was sought with regards to domestic abuse crimes figures and whether they related to reporting of historic cases which had been a contributing factor in the past. Police Scotland advised they worked closely with DASAT and other organisations with high confidence in reporting in West Lothian. A breakdown of the figures would be obtained and circulated to committee members.

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

Decision

1. To note the contents of the report; and
2. To request that members of the committee were provided with further information on domestic abuse figures in order to provide clarity on the numbers discussed and identify if the figures were due to reporting of historic cases.

6. FIRE SERVICE UPDATE

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service updating on the activity within the ward for the period up to 30 September 2022.

It was recommended that the committee note and provide comment on the Livingston South Multi-Member Ward Performance Report.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

7. HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES

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 Livingston South Ward.

It was queried whether information was available on the site at Wellhead and the new build activity by Places for People. The officer, having lost connection to the meeting, would be asked to circulate the requested information to members separately.

It was recommended that the committee note Housing, Customer and Building Service activity as detailed in the ward report for the period Quarter 2 - 1 July 2022 to 30 September 2022.

Decision

1. To note the contents of the report; and
2. To ask that members were provided with an update on the RSL new build activity by Places for People at the Wellhead site.

8. SERVICE UPDATE - NETS, LAND AND COUNTRYSIDE

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Operational Services advising of the recent activity of the

NETs, Land and Countryside Services teams for the period 1 July 2022 – 30 September 2022.

Officers were asked if there had been a rise in the number of abandoned shopping trolleys and how such instances were addressed. In response, the committee were informed that local stores were approached to discuss any cases and the numbers reported would be obtained with members updated accordingly.

It was recommended that the committee:

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

Decision

1. To note the contents of the report; and
2. To request that further information relating to the number of abandoned shopping trolleys within the ward was circulated to members.

9. LIVINGSTON SKATE PARK

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Operational Services providing an update on Livingston Skate Park.

Whilst noting that the initial request was for restoration and conservation, it was queried whether obtaining historic status could lead to returning the skate park to a world class facility and assist with the resulting costs. Committee were informed that the appropriate officer would be contacted with regards to this possibility and an update would be forwarded to members.

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

Decision

1. To note the contents of the report; and
2. To ask that members were advised whether achieving historic status could enable the skate park to be brought back to a world class facility and assist with associated costs.

10. ANTI-POVERTY SERVICES UPDATE

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Finance and Property Services informing of the work undertaken by the Anti-Poverty Service from April 2021 to March 2022.

It was recommended that the committee note:

1. the Anti-Poverty Service provision in the ward; and
2. the impact provision was having in terms of supporting the outcomes of the Community and the Planning Partnership's Anti-Poverty Strategy 2018-23.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

11. PENSIONERS GROUPS CHRISTMAS FUND ALLOCATIONS 2022-2023

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Planning and Economic Development) informing of the final allocations that were made from the Pensioners' Groups Christmas Fund 2022-23 to groups in the Livingston South Ward, Livingston-wide groups and West Lothian-wide groups. The committee were asked to note that applicants were offered, as they were in 2020 and 2021, an additional option of a pre-prepared chilled Christmas meal as an alternative to a direct grant award.

It was recommended that the committee note:

1. four groups in Livingston South ward had been supported through the Pensioner's Christmas Fund 2022-23; and
2. the continued inclusion of a pre-prepared meal option.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

12. REPORT ON PROGRESS OF LOCAL REGENERATION PLANNING

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Planning and Economic Development) informing on locality planning within the ward.

It was recommended that the committee note the:

1. progress of the two local plans; and
2. progress and development of actions.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

13. WORKPLAN

A workplan had been circulated for information.

Decision

To note the workplan.