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## **LIVINGSTON NORTH LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE**

### **LOCALITY PLANNING UPDATE**

#### **REPORT BY DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE, EDUCATION, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

#### **A. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

The purpose of this report is to inform the Local Area Committee of progress on locality planning and other activities within the ward.

#### **B. RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Local Area Committee notes updates on:

1. Locality planning in Deans, Carmondean and Knightsridge including a report on progress since the first meeting of the services group;
2. Carmondean Library;
3. the Vennie and the arrangements regarding its council funding;
4. changes to Post Office provision within the ward; and
5. Dechmont Law path improvements and Deans North Road Street Lighting project.

#### **C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

<b>I Council Values</b>	Focusing on our customers' needs; being honest, open and accountable; providing equality of opportunities; making best use of our resources; working in partnership.
<b>II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)</b>	To be assessed on an individual project basis but it is not anticipated that any proposals will require to be the subject of specific assessments.
<b>III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers</b>	The report sets out specific delegations to the Head of Planning, Economic Development & Regeneration.
<b>IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators</b>	None.
<b>V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement</b>	Outcome 1 – We make West Lothian an attractive place to do business.

Outcome 10 – We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the services we need.

Outcome 12 – We value and enjoy our built environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations.

<b>VI</b>	<b>Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)</b>	Existing resources unless otherwise stated.
<b>VII</b>	<b>Consideration at PDSP</b>	Not applicable.
<b>VIII</b>	<b>Other consultations</b>	None.

## **D. TERMS OF REPORT**

### **D1 Background**

This report updates the committee on the work of the Community Wealth Building Team and its partners to support communities in Livingston North.

#### **D1.1 Regeneration Areas**

As has been reported to previous meetings of the Local Area Committee, whilst Knightsridge had previously been the focus of locality-based work within the ward, Deans and Carmondean both have datazones (or neighbourhoods) ranked within the 20% most deprived across Scotland. Therefore, those areas are now also a focus for locality planning.

#### **D1.2 Locality Plans**

New locality plans for such areas across West Lothian are in the process of being developed. Given the proximity of the above areas to each other, where relevant, an approach encompassing all three will be undertaken. This has involved pulling key services working across these areas together as a working group (see below) to help identify issues and opportunities across these areas.

Locality plans are required by the Scottish Government as part of the Community Empowerment Act.

### **D2 Deans, Carmondean and Knightsridge**

#### **D2.1 Services Group**

Given the group is the vehicle for services working across these areas to participate in locality planning, changing the title of the group to the Deans, Carmondean & Knightsridge Services Group is deemed to better reflect this.

However, the activity of the group will continue to be reported to the Local Area Committee, therefore information on the group and its output will be available to community members and groups from other parts of the ward, namely Eliburn and Livingston Village.

The next meeting of the group is intended for mid-September to provide interim

feedback on the activities in D2.2 and D2.3, and allow services to update each other on their activity now we are back in term time. Members will receive email notification of this.

## D2.2 'Snapshot' Services Survey

As was discussed at the first meeting of the services group, a survey has been developed and shared with the purposes of mapping out the services operating in the above geographical areas in terms of what they provide, what they are looking to achieve, the people they are working with, and what they think could help these communities.

To date, there have been 15 responses. Those who have not responded are being encouraged and offered support to complete.

Some preliminary issues that have been identified include the desire of 'green' groups to expand volunteering opportunities and community activity (particularly litter-picking within Deans and Carmondean), concerns around the mental health of young people and their parents, and a desire for further developing the links between financial/ employability/ adult-learning services with local projects and schools.

Once all agencies have responded to the survey, the findings will be brought together for consideration and prioritisation. This will help form the priorities for locality planning from a service perspective.

## D2.3 Community Engagement

There will also be a survey for community members to complete and contribute. The initial tool for this will be an online survey. This will be open for a few weeks in September and local community groups will be encouraged to share with the wider community on their social media pages.

It is intended to undertake in-person engagement after this point with the sections of the community who are under-represented in the survey (i.e. gender/ age/ geography).

Similar to the service survey, this will help form the priorities for locality planning from the perspectives of these communities.

## D2.4 Community Café, St. Andrew's Church

One particular development with regards to locality planning is that the Community Regeneration Officer (CRO) for the ward visited the community café ran by Livingston Old Parish Church in Deans, and met with the Community Development Worker there. Whilst the church has made connections with other local groups and services, the CRO is engaging with other council services to see if the café, and other services such as the clothes thrift shop, provides an opportunity for those services to engage directly with people who may require their support most.

## **D3 Livingston North Partnership Centre Updates**

### **D3.1 Carmondean Library**

Summer Reading Challenge - fifty children in the area registered to take part in this. A medal ceremony for completion of the challenge took place on Thursday 10 August where the participants received a medal and certificate from Ability Centre

staff. Representatives from Guide Dogs went along with two dog 'ambassadors' for the children to meet, and they were informed about how the guide dogs are trained to assist those with visual impairment. A tea was provided after the ceremony along with activities for the children.

School Visits - Staff are looking forward to getting in touch with local nurseries and primary schools after the summer break to restart class visits to the library. Before the summer break, St John Ogilvie's, Peel Primary & Harrysmuir Primary Schools went along to the library for class visits. One of the Customer Service Officers also visits nurseries and primary schools.

Bookbug – this is as popular as ever with many babies/toddlers attending with parents & guardians. These sessions run fortnightly on a Monday between 10-10.30am. The Bookbug Leader also visits the local nurseries where the children listen to the nursery rhymes and sing along. Gaelic Bookbug sessions will restart at the library in September following the summer break.

Junior Book Group - this is being planned along with an extra crafting session for Halloween to include a scary story. Book Week Scotland is also coming up where staff will set up new book displays, share stories and welcome new members into the library.

Saturday Coding Club – this is going well and there is a waiting list for those wishing to become involved. Staff training is being carried out so that they can run more classes for those wishing to go along. There is also a Saturday Lego club now available fortnightly which alternates with the Saturday Coding Club.

Other groups - the monthly Reading Group now has eight active members. The children and adult craft groups are also well attended. The children have been making suncatchers and jewellery. Adult crafts include beading, bookmarkers, cross-stitch and jewellery making.

Public access PCs are also available for public use along with photocopying facilities. All of the activities are available on the library website and this is updated as details change.

#### **D4 The Vennie**

As members were advised at the previous meeting of the Local Area Committee, Tom Heron, who has been the Project Manager since the Vennie was re-established in 2008, has now retired from the Vennie. His successor, Emmie Main, has been in post since the beginning of July.

##### **D4.1 Third Sector Community Support Fund**

As was reported to the previous meeting of the LAC, the Vennie has been awarded £28,500 from the council's Third Sector Community Support Fund for the current financial year and £31,405 for next year (2024/25).

The CRO covering the ward will be the council's Link Officer to the Vennie, to support and assess the activities and outcomes that were in the organisation's application for this fund. As with all funded groups, the Link Officer will have regular contact with the Vennie, attending some committee meetings and the AGM. Monitoring will be undertaken quarterly with an end of year report being produced.

**D5 Adult Learning Course**

A new 'Adult Up' literacy course will be delivered in Livingston Station Community Centre by the Council's Adult Learning team. This will take place on Wednesdays from 10am, beginning on 30 August. The group is free to join and for anyone 16 years of age and over. The project is part funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

**D6 Town Centre Fund projects****D6.1 Dechmont Law**

The path work improvements that are being made to Dechmont Law commenced in late June and were completed in early August.

**D6.2 Additional Footpath Lighting - Deans North/ Queen Crescent**

The council's Roads Lighting service have advised that these works have been completed and the street lights are operational.

**D6.3 Post Office Provision – Livingston North**

Further to previous correspondence with the Post Office regarding their plans for future service provision following previous closures of branches within the ward, the Post Office has advised the council that they are introducing a new 'lighter format' branch called 'Click & Collect' at the AGS Foodstore in Lamont Way, Knightsridge.

This was due to commence on Thursday 31 August. Opening hours for the service will be:

- Monday – Thursday: 0730 –1900
- Friday & Saturday: 0730 –2000
- Sunday: 0830 –1730

The Post Office's website (link within the Background References section) advises that, for this new branch, *'Drop & Collect will offer Post Office services from a handheld device, providing convenient access for customers to bill payments and prepaid parcel collections and returns.'*

Services such as personal and business banking will not be available at this branch but the Post Office advises that these wider services are available in Pumpherston and Dechmont post offices.

**E. CONCLUSION**

Members are asked to note the above activities taking place across the ward.

**F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES**

Post Office. *Lamont Way Drop & Collect.*

<https://www.postofficeviews.co.uk/national-consultation-team/lamont-way-drop-collect-eh54-8f-455351/>

Appendices/Attachments: None.

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