

AGENDA

	<u>Page Nos.</u>
1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - In terms of Section 5 of the Code of Conduct Members of the Committee are asked to declare any interest(s) in particular items on the agenda and the nature of the interest(s) at this stage.	
3. MINUTE – Minute of the meeting of Cowdenbeath Area Committee of 31st May, 2022.	4 – 5
4. APPOINTMENTS TO EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS – Report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services.	6 – 8
5. AREA CAPITAL BUDGET REQUEST – Report by the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods.	9 – 14
6. PROPOSED ROAD ADOPTION - LOANHEAD AVENUE, LOCHORE – Report by the Senior Manager - Roads and Transportation Service.	15 – 17
7. COWDENBEATH TOWN HOUSE – Joint report by the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods and the Senior Manager, Property Services.	18 – 31
8. DOMESTIC WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE – Report by the Senior Manager, Environment and Building Services.	32 – 34
9. AREA HOUSING PLAN UPDATE – Report by the Head of Housing Services.	35 – 44
10. PROPERTY TRANSACTIONS – Report by the Senior Manager, Property Services.	45 – 47
11. COWDENBEATH AREA COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME	48 – 49
12. NOTICE OF MOTION - In terms of Standing Order No. 8.1(1), the following Notice of Motion has been submitted:-	

“Tackling Poverty and Crisis Prevention Growing

Committee notes that the Council agreed, with the Fife Partnership Board agreed (on 21.2.21 item 4b) to seek to address the issues of poverty in our communities/
and improve outcomes by Services of the Council working together locally, and with communities to help tackle poverty in our communities and improve outcomes by targeting anti-poverty funding.

This work will build on lessons learned during the initial response and community support to the Covid-19 crisis and set out how those lessons can be built into the Plan for Fife strategy for the next three years.

Committee also notes that the Community Grant Growing Scheme is one such scheme which will encourage community growing groups throughout Fife to develop projects and to provide support for existing and new growing projects.

Committee recognises that the positive overall benefits of such projects and detailed and evidenced one such example being the Edible Estates projects : <http://www.edibleestates.co.uk/benefits-of-community-growing/>

We are fully aware that Fife Council is therefore encouraging Community food growing groups, Community Orchards groups, Community Allotments and Community growing groups to work with our Locality Community and Learning Development Teams, and Allotment Team within Fife Council in developing and sustaining projects of this nature throughout Fife.

Area Committee request that Officers bring a report to a future Committee with a view to establishing and supporting a Community Growing Project, in conjunction with Forestry and Land Scotland, Fife Council and other Third Sector Funding bodies, on available land within the South Dundonald area of Cardenden.”

Proposed by Councillor Rosemary Liewald
Seconded by Councillor Lea McLelland

13. NOTICE OF MOTION - In terms of Standing Order No. 8.1(1), the following Notice of Motion has been submitted:-

“School Meals

Committee notes the deputation and subsequent motion passed at the meeting on 1 May 2019 regarding school meals and the subsequent reports submitted to the Area Committee in October 2019 and January 2020, providing an update together with comments received from Lochgelly High School pupils on the quality and price of School meals and the free school meal lunch allowance.

The Committee requests officers present a final report to the Area committee meeting to be held on 1 February 2023, to provide an update on progress since May 2020, to include views from the core groups of young people identified at Lochgelly and Beath High Schools.”

Proposed by Councillor Bailey-Lee Robb
Seconded by Councillor Lea McLelland

14./

14. PUBLIC QUESTION - The following question has been submitted by the public in terms of Standing Order No. 6.1:-

Submitted by Lochgelly Youth Forum -

“ We feel that all other Community Centres welcome young people to their buildings. We don't feel that the Lochgelly Centre is a welcoming environment for young people.”

We, Lochgelly Youth Forum are asking if someone else can oversee the running of the Lochgelly Centre. It is currently run by On@Fife and we don't think they are doing the best for young people and we would like to see CLD run the centre.

What can the Committee do to help our group with this?”

Members are reminded that should they have queries on the detail of a report they should, where possible, contact the report authors in advance of the meeting to seek clarification.

Lindsay Thomson
Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Finance and Corporate Services

Fife House
North Street
Glenrothes
Fife, KY7 5LT

24th August, 2022

If telephoning, please ask for:
Wendy MacGregor, Committee Officer, Fife House 06 (Main Building)
Telephone: 03451 555555, ext. 442178; email: Wendy.MacGregor@fife.gov.uk

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2022 CAC 1

THE FIFE COUNCIL - COWDENBEATH AREA COMMITTEE – REMOTE MEETING

31st May, 2022

9.30 a.m. – 9.36 a.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Alistair Bain, Alex Campbell, Linda Erskine, Rosemary Liewald, Mary Lockhart, Lea McLelland, Bailey-Lee Robb and Darren Watt.

ATTENDING: Sarah Roxburgh, Community Manager (Area), Communities and Corporate Development Management Team; Helena Couperwhite, Manager - Committee Services and Wendy MacGregor, Committee Officer, Committee Services, Legal and Democratic Services.

1. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEE

Decision

The Committee noted its membership as detailed on the agenda.

2. APPOINTMENT OF CONVENER

Motion

Councillor Linda Erskine, seconded by Councillor Mary Lockhart, moved that Councillor Alex Campbell be appointed as Convener.

Amendment

Councillor Bailey-Lee Robb, seconded by Councillor Rosemary Liewald, moved that Councillor Alistair Bain be appointed as Convener.

Roll Call

For the Motion - 4 votes

Councillors Alex Campbell, Linda Erskine, Mary Lockhart and Darren Watt.

For the Amendment - 4 votes

Councillors Alistair Bain, Rosemary Liewald, Bailey-Lee Robb and Lea McLelland.

Decision

As there was no clear majority, the appointment of the Convener was referred to the next meeting of Fife Council on 9th June, 2022 for determination and in accordance with the agreed procedure.

3./

3. **APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTE CONVENER**

Decision

The appointment of the Depute Convener was referred to the next meeting of Fife Council on 9th June, 2022 for determination and in accordance with the agreed procedure.

31st August, 2022.
Agenda Item No. 4

Appointments to External Organisations

Report by: Lindsay Thomson, Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Wards Affected: 7 and 8

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to ask the Area Committee to agree member representation on those external organisations detailed in Appendix 1.

Recommendation(s)

The Committee is asked to agree member appointments to the organisations detailed in the Appendix 1 to this report.

Resource Implications

There are no direct resource implications arising from this report.

Legal & Risk Implications

External organisations have their own governance structures and members should seek advice from the Head of Legal and Democratic Services on any concerns they have on membership of the organisations. In particular, members may be subject to other legislation such as the Companies Acts (directors' responsibilities) and charity law.

Failure to make such appointments may mean the external organisation cannot function effectively or secure a quorum at meetings.

Impact Assessment

An EqIA is not required because the report does not propose a change or revision to existing policies and practices.

Consultation

During the review carried out by Legal and Democratic Services, feedback was sought from organisations, officers and elected members previously appointed to ascertain if member appointment was still required.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Following a review of member appointments to external organisations, the Council at its meeting on 9th June, 2022, agreed to nominate members to a number of external organisations, where Council representation is required. It also delegated appointment of those members to either the Cabinet Committee or relevant Area Committee.
(*Previous Minute Reference – para. 20 of 2022 FC 34 – Fife Council of 9 June 2022 – refers.*)

2.0 Current position

- 2.1 Members are asked to consider the list of external organisations as set out in Appendix 1 and agree the members nominated to each of the organisations listed.

List of Appendices

1. External organisations requiring Member appointment from Cowdenbeath Area Committee.

Report Contact

Wendy MacGregor
Committee Officer
Legal and Democratic Services
Fife House
Glenrothes
Telephone: 03451 555555 Ext. 442178
Email – wendy.macgregor@fife.gov.uk

External Organisations Requiring Member Appointment from Cowdenbeath Area Committee

External Organisation	Main Functions / Purpose of Organisation	Ward(s)	No of Members to be Appointed
Brag Enterprises Limited Management Committee/Board	Community regeneration organisation acting as the lead partner in the Fife Employment and Training Consortium. We provide Fife wide NOLB employability and activities as well as affordable enterprise space. We run a community pantry scheme in Benarty and a NOLB Families project in Dunfermline/West Fife and North East Fife.	8	1 from Cowdenbeath Area (also 1 from Levenmouth)
Dunfermline & West Fife Sports Council	Advising on and supporting sports in Dunfermline and West Fife.	7 & 8	1 from Cowdenbeath Area (also 2 from City of Dunfermline and 1 from South & West Fife)
Heartlands of Fife Local Tourist Association	Local tourism group with public and private sector representatives to work together to develop and to deliver local tourism activities. The Chair of this Group reports into the Fife Tourism Partnership.	7 & 8	1 from Cowdenbeath Area (also 1 from Glenrothes Area and 2 from Kirkcaldy)
Mossmoran and Braefoot Bay Community & Safety Committee	The Committee shall provide a forum which will enable the local communities (1) to be aware of developments likely to take place at Mossmorran and Braefoot Bay; (2) to be briefed on environmental impacts and safety issues associated with the existing plant and terminal and associated with developments affecting the plant and terminal (this includes from the three Expert Advisory Groups for Air Quality, Noise, Vibration and Light and Communications (3) to allow the views of local communities on these issues to be properly expressed.	7 & 8	1 from Cowdenbeath Area (also 1 from Kirkcaldy and 1 from South & West Fife Area)

31st August, 2022.

Agenda Item No. 5

Area Capital Budget Request

Report by: Paul Vaughan, Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods Service

Wards Affected: 7,8

Purpose

To seek agreement from the Area Committee to allocate funds from the Area Capital Budget for projects including Lochore Meadows Country Park Greenspace project, Footpath improvement and lighting enhancement in Lochgelly Public Park and a contribution to the resurfacing of the car park at Hill of Beath ex-servicemen's club.

Recommendation(s)

The Committee is asked to agree to a total contribution of £180k from the Area Capital Budget for the following projects:

- (1) Lochore Meadows Country Park Nature Area project £100k
- (2) Lochgelly Public Park – Footpath and Lighting improvement £60k (from 22/23 revenue budget allocation £100k)
- (3) Hill of Beath car park - £20k
- (4) Reallocate funding of £40k from previous area budget allocations

Resource Implications

There is sufficient funding available in the Area Capital Budget should this contribution be agreed.

Funding previously committed from Cowdenbeath Area Capital funding 2017-19 to be rephased and reallocated from Cardenden derelict building project £40k as this project is no longer required.

£100k of external match funding from Nature Restoration Fund has been allocated to Lochore Meadows Country Park Nature Area project.

Legal & Risk Implications

There is a risk if area funding not approved for Lochore Meadows Country Park Nature Area project, that the external funding from Nature Restoration could be reallocated.

The cost of delivery of project could increase due to the uncertainty around current contractor market.

Impact Assessment

An EqIA is not required because the report does not propose a change or revision to existing policies and practices.

Consultation

There has been extensive consultation with Lochgelly Public Park Improvements Group and dialogue with the Hill of Beath Ex-servicemen's club.

A consultation programme for Lochore Meadows visitors, key stakeholders, funding partners and ward members will be developed for Lochore Meadows Country Park Nature Area project once all funding secured.

Communication continues within Communities & Neighbourhoods, Locality Management and LMCP Management.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The approved Capital Investment Plan 2021 – 31 includes an allocation of £78K per year over two years (2021/22 & 2022/23, £156K in total) for each area to support local capital projects that are consistent with the local Community Planning initiatives.
- 1.2 The previous administration agreed a Temporary Revenue Budget Investment and allocated £100k for each Area Committee to assist with local recovery, to be spent in 22/23.
- 1.3 Area Capital Budgets will be managed through the existing delegated authority for Local Community Planning Budgets (LCPB) to Area Committee. Projects will require Area Committee approval.
- 1.4 As the funding is capital in nature, certain criteria require to be met in terms of the type of projects that can be funded. In addition to the guidance around what is capital in nature, projects should meet a recognised priority within the Local Community Plan or address health and safety or equality issues.

2.0 Project Information

- 2.1 Lochore Meadows Country Park – Nature Area project.

The project links with the play park project. A derelict part of the existing play park play will be repurposed into a nature area. The full cost is £200,000, £100,000 has been secured from the Scottish Government Nature Restoration Fund. The remainder needs to be secured. The project involves repurposing of mounds, topsoiling, new path. Native trees and shrubs will be planted to link in with the existing pine and birch wood. A wildflower meadow and a small marsh will be created. Some of the plants will be planted by local people, to raise awareness and involvement. When completed this will provide additional green space for visitors to enjoy and explore and will add value to the Visitor Centre offer. We anticipate commencement of planting etc Autumn 2023. Appendix 2 (Outline designs/dwgs?)

2.2 Lochgelly Public Park – Footpath and Lighting improvements.

The Lochgelly Public Park Improvements Group have been passionately involved with the project to replace the playpark. The group highlighted concerns (to Fife Council project team) about the poor condition of the footpath and the inadequate street lighting in some areas throughout the park. There is insufficient budget in the playpark fund to complete the required work to footpaths and lighting, therefore a contribution of £60k from the 'one off' revenue budget is requested. The work is currently underway with Fife Council Roads Team.

2.3 Hill of Beath Ex-servicemen's club car park resurfacing.

Communities Project Team have successfully awarded a contract to replace Hill of Beath Play Park with modernised, upgraded play equipment. There are plans for the construction of a MUGA following completion of the playpark. Anticipate delivery late 2023. As a result of these improvements, it is expected that there will be increased traffic using the car parking facilities at the Ex-servicemen's club. The club members had raised concern at the potential accelerated wear and tear to the surface, and as a goodwill gesture Fife Council have agreed to resurface the area in conjunction with the MUGA.

3.0 Conclusions

- 3.1 The additional funding from the area budget will support projects linked to Fife Councils 'Green Agenda'; that increase sense of safety and wellbeing; and keep relations strong with the local community
- 3.2 An Area Capital Project Proposal and Business Case is provided in Appendix 1

List of Appendices

1. Area Capital Project Proposal and Business Case
2. Outline Design/layout of Nature Area.

Background Papers

The following papers were relied on in the preparation of this report in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1973

- Council Capital Investment Plan 2021-31 agreed in February 2021
- The General Fund Revenue Budget 2022-25 – Temporary Budget Investment

Report Contacts

Louise Whyte
Capital Projects Manager
louise.whyte@fife.gov.uk

Project title	<i>Cowdenbeath Area Capital Contribution to LMCP Nature Project, Lochgelly Public Park Footpath&Lighting, Hill of Beath carpark</i>
Local Community Plan reference	
Project Sponsor	<i>Sarah Roxburgh – Cowdenbeath Community Manager</i>
Project Manager	<i>Louise Whyte & Kevin O’kane/Clare Hill</i>
Approval Committee	<i>Cowdenbeath Area Committee</i>
Date	<i>31st August 2022</i>

Section 1: Proposal

1.1 What is the project going to do?

There are three projects for consideration as follows:

1. Lochore Meadows Country Park – Nature Area.
The project involves removal of mounds, topsoiling, new path. Native trees and shrubs will be planted to link in with the existing pine and birch wood. A wildflower meadow and a small marsh will be created. Some of the plants will be planted by local people, to raise awareness and involvement

2. Lochgelly Public Park – Footpath & Lighting Improvements.
Lochgelly Public Park Improvements Group highlighted concerns (to Fife Council project team) about the poor condition of the footpath and the inadequate street lighting in some areas throughout the park. The project will address these health & safety issues ensuring safe use for all.

3. Hill of Beath Ex-servicemen’s club car park resurfacing.
Communities Project Team have successfully awarded a contract to replace Hill of Beath Play Park with modernised, upgraded play equipment. There’s also plans to deliver a MUGA in the near future. As a result of these improvements, it is expected that there will be increased traffic using the car parking facilities at the Ex-servicemen’s club. The club members had raised concern at the potential accelerated wear and tear to the surface, and as a goodwill gesture Fife Council have agreed to resurface the area in conjunction with the MUGA.

1.2 Which Local Community Planning priority does it meet?

Opportunities for all – Continuing to support and improve people’s feelings of place, safety and social wellbeing.

Thriving Places - Continue to develop the facilities and opportunities at Lochore Meadows

Community Led Services - Cowdenbeath area have reported a high sense of identity and belonging to the area, however, strengthening a sense of ‘community’ was still seen as a priority. Establishing links between community groups and promoting intergenerational work was seen as a way to help this. The use of allotments, developing the greenspace available in the area, would provide opportunities for younger and older people to work together, share skills and enhance wellbeing

1.3 What consultation/community engagement has taken place on this project?

Project Approach	Page 1 of 2	ACPF01 V1.1

1.4. What are the desired outcomes and benefits, and what measures will be used?

Outcome	Benefit	Measures
<i>Should link with the Local Community Plan</i>		

1.5 What are the known costs and timescale? How will this be funded?

1.5.1 Costs

Total expected one-off cost	Maintenance strategy
£180,000	<i>Results of discussion with maintenance manager</i>

1.5.2 Funding requested

How much funding is being requested?

Lochore Meadows Nature Area £100,000
 Lochgelly Public Park Footpath & Lighting £60,000
 Hill of Beath Car park £20,000

1.5.3 Funding availability

List sources of funding including any match funding

Lochore Meadows Nature Area match funding - £100,000 awarded via Scottish Government Nature Restoration fund.
 Lochgelly Public Park Footpath & Lighting – General Fund Revenue Budget 2022-25
 Hill of Beath Car Park – Cowdenbeath Area Capital 21-31

1.5.4 Resource availability

Identify availability and timescale of contractors

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1.6 What are the known risks?

1.6.1 Risk assessment

Risk description	Probability score (1-5)	Impact score (1-5)	Overall score (probability x impact)

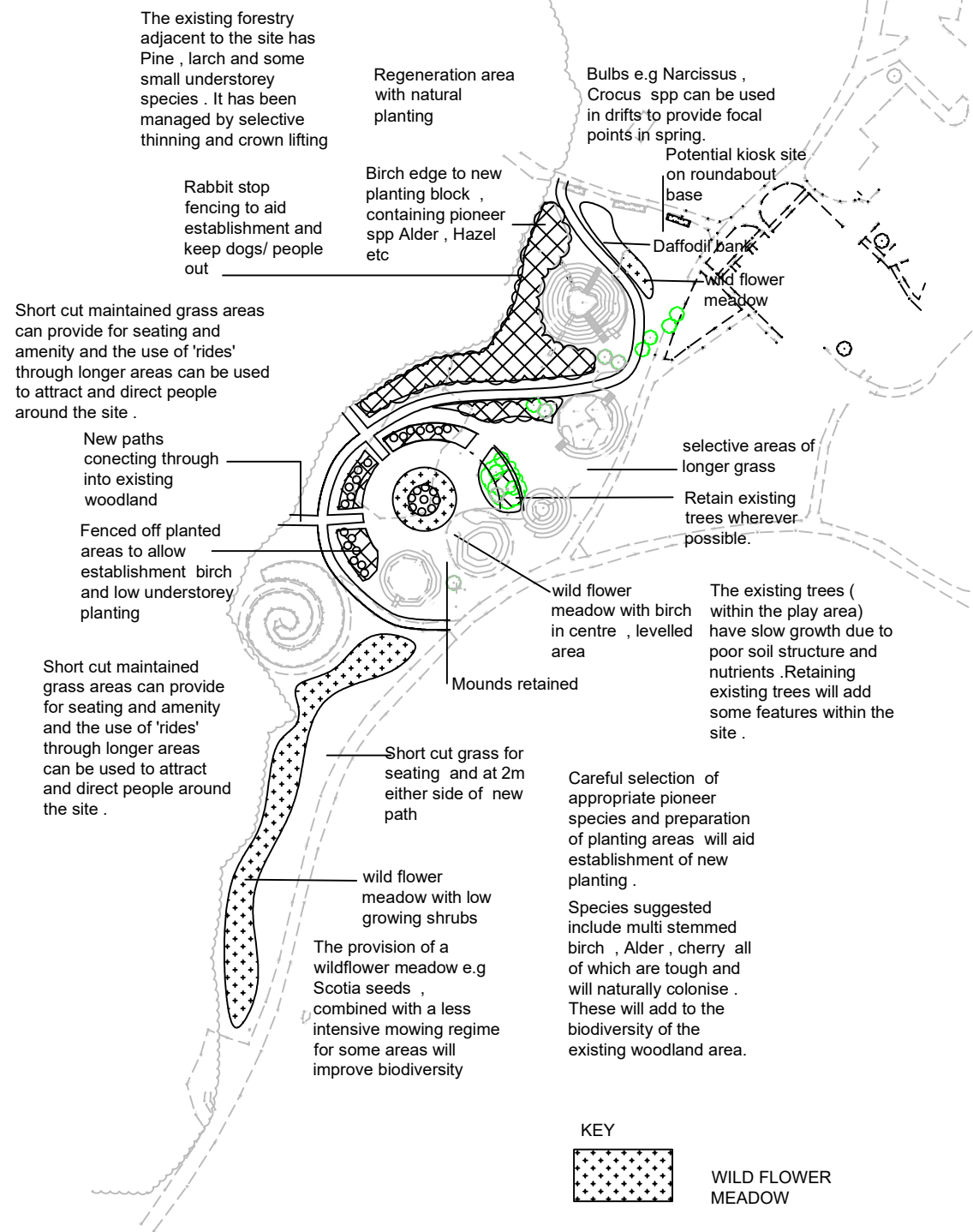
1.6.2 Risk mitigation

Risk description	Mitigation Measures

1.6 Proposal sign-off

Approved by	Role	Date approved
	Project Manager	
	Project Sponsor	

REVISED 2/08/22 to show mounds remaining



KEY

	WILD FLOWER MEADOW
	NEW TREES AND SHRUBS
	EXISTING TREES TO BE RETAINED

31st August 2022
Agenda Item No. 6

Proposed Road Adoption – Loanhead Avenue, Lochore

Report by: John Mitchell, Senior Manager, Roads & Transportation Services

Wards Affected: 8

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Committee approval to promote the adoption of a section of Loanhead Avenue, Lochore.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that Committee agree to the promotion of the adoption under Section 1 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984.

Resource Implications

None.

Legal & Risk Implications

None.

Impact Assessment

An Equalities Impact Assessment is not required because the report does not propose a change or revision to existing policies and practices.

Consultation

The adoption would be promoted under the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 with notification to frontagers and a legal notice in the local newspaper with a 28-day objection period.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Council has been approached by Baynes Bakers, who want to purchase additional employment land at Loanhead Avenue in Lochore from Fife Council to expand their existing bakery production and distribution facility.
- 1.2 The Council owns 13 acres of zoned employment land adjacent to the current Baynes Bakers facility and has agreed in principle to sell part of this land to them.
- 1.3 To ensure access to any remaining land the Council owns after the sale to Baynes Bakers, we need to extend the adoption of Loanhead Avenue before we finalise the land sale.

2.0 Conclusion

- 2.1 The proposed adoption would preserve access to Fife Council land following the sale of land to Baynes Bakers to facilitate their business extension proposals.

List of Appendices

Plan: The Fife Council (Loanhead Avenue, Lochore) Road Adoption Order 2022 (Drawing No.SM/RA/2022)

Background Papers

None

Report Contact

Ian Jones
Network Management Lead Consultant
Bankhead Central, Bankhead Park, Glenrothes, KY7 6GH
Email – ian.jones@fife.gov.uk



Legend

■ Proposed for Adoption

The Fife Council (Loanhead Avenue, Lochore) Road Adoption Order 2022 (Drawing No.SM/RA/2022)

Indicative Plan ONLY. Exact adopted road boundaries should be confirmed through Roads Asset Management. All queries should be directed to Garry Glass Ext 444387"

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Scale: 1:1,237

Prepared By: SMcCarroll-95
Service: Assets, Transportation & Environment
Printing Date: 22 July 2022



Fife
 COUNCIL
 Assets, Transportation and Environment
Ken Gourlay
 Head of Service

31st August, 2022

Agenda Item No. 7

Cowdenbeath Town House

Report by: Paul Vaughan, Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods; and
Alan Paul, Senior Manager – Property Services

Wards Affected: Ward 7

Purpose

This report updates the Committee on developments since the future of this property was last considered in February 2022 and updates the recommendation regarding the proposed disposal of this Common Good property.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. consider the updated options for the future of the Cowdenbeath Town House;
2. recommend to the Cabinet Committee that the Cowdenbeath Town House be sold to Coalfields Regeneration Trust at District Valuer's valuation (Please note the Cabinet Committee approval will be dealt with using the List of Officer Powers);
3. note that the Head of Legal & Democratic Services has confirmed that consent from the Sheriff is not required;
4. authorise further consultation required under Section 104 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 (the formal 8 week notification process); and
5. notes that the actions outlined above will be carried out with appropriate terms and conditions to the satisfaction of the Senior Manager – Property Services, Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods, and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services.

Resource Implications

The disposal of the property will generate a capital receipt for the Cowdenbeath Common Good Account and remove the liability for any further investment or maintenance for the property.

The potential cost avoidance from disposal of Cowdenbeath Town House is estimated to be around £85,000 per annum.

Legal & Risk Implications

The approval of the Sheriff is not required for the proposed transaction.

Further consultation under Section 104 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 is required.

Retaining the Town House has ongoing financial implications for the Cowdenbeath Area.

Impact Assessment

An EqlA has not been completed and is not necessary for the following reasons: this report does not propose a change or revision to existing policies and practices.

Consultation

Consultation has been undertaken with both the Cowdenbeath Area Committee and the community around future plans for Cowdenbeath Town House as set out in the previous report. Since then additional consultation has been carried out:

- Drop-in event held in Maxwell Centre (May 2022) providing information on Community Shop.
- Online consultation (July/August 2022) to seek feedback from the community on both the disposal and proposed future use of Cowdenbeath Town House.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 At the meeting of the 9 February 2022 this Committee recommended that the ground floor of the property be leased as a community shop and that proposals be developed for the upper floor that would ensure the historical integrity of the building.

2.0 Development Proposals

- 2.1 Following the Committee decision to lease the ground floor as a community shop there have been further discussions with the potential operators of the community shop and their partner in the project, the Coalfields Regeneration Trust (CRT).
- 2.2 Discussions have been held regarding a direct lease with Community Shop. However, they already have a working relationship with CRT at other locations and it would be their preference to continue on this basis. Both the Community Shop and CRT consider that their joint development proposals would be best placed to support the development and future viability.
- 2.3 Their proposal is that the CRT would lead on the project to refurbish the whole building. The ground floor would be refitted for use as a Community Shop and the upper floor refitted to allow it to be used as offices and community space.
- 2.4 CRT have indicated that they intend a significant level of capital investment. This is required to separate the building to permit these distinct uses. They advise that a lease of only the ground floor only would limit their ability to raise the capital needed for the project. CRT have therefore requested that the property be sold to them so they can source suitable funding for the costs involved.
- 2.5 Given this significant change of a lease to a disposal of the property it was considered that further consultation was required. Further informal community consultation took place from 18th July to 7th August. This indicated that 73% of respondents were in support of the sale. The full results from the consultation can be found in appendix 2.

3.0 Current Options

3.1 The options available for this property are set out below:

Council Retention

Whilst the property was previously used as the Cowdenbeath Local Office it is no longer required for this purpose. No suitable Council use has been identified for the property and development of the property would require substantial investment and ongoing resourcing.

While the building remains closed, there are liabilities which remain. This costs the Council around £85,000 per annum. Due to the current climate the cost for maintaining a building, even in a closed state, are increasing substantially.

Part Council Use/Part Lease

As advised above, the Council has no requirement for additional property of this type in Cowdenbeath. If the ground floor was refitted and leased to the Community Shop there is no suitable Council use identified for the upper floor and the financial and resourcing implications would remain for the vacant part.

In addition funding would have to be sourced for the ground floor refit which, based on the current Community Shop proposals, would not produce a rent for the Common Good Account.

Lease out Whole Property

From previous investigations it is considered unlikely that a single party would lease the whole property. Although there is interest from the Community shop for the ground floor, they already have an arrangement with CRT which precludes Fife Council offering a competitive lease. To permit the ground floor to be separated from the upper floor the property would need to be upgraded in terms of fire separation, access, utilities, etc. Such works have not been costed by the Council, but proposal figures from the Trust estimated it would cost around £100,000 to prepare the ground floor for use. A similar cost would likely be incurred for the upper floor.

A suitable tenant would require to be identified for the upper floor, which may require further fit out expenditure.

Disposal – The Coalfields Regeneration Trust (CRT)

CRT have expressed interest in purchasing the whole property at District Valuer's valuation. They would then arrange a basic fit out and split of the property into two units: ground floor and upper floor. The ground floor would then be leased to Community Shop who would then complete the fit out of the ground floor as a community store and cafe. The Trust would adapt the upper floor to create a community space/resource to be managed by the Trust.

This would deal with the whole property, subject to CRT securing the required funding.

Conditions of sale would be included to offer some assurances around the continued preservation of the building and the benefit the Town House brings to the Community.

Disposal – Open Market

The Council could advertise the property and invite offers. However, it would be anticipated that the majority of interest would be for the conversion of the property to residential use.

It is not considered that there would be community support for the conversion of the property to residential use.

4.0 Common Good Account

- 4.1 This property is held on the Common Good Account for Cowdenbeath. The Head of Legal Services has confirmed that the consent of the Sheriff will not be required for the proposed lease or disposal of the property.
- 4.2 Community consultation will be required under Section 104 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. This will be arranged based on the decision of this Committee.
- 4.3 Any purchase price or rent received for the property will be applied to the Cowdenbeath Common Good Account.
- 4.4 The disposal or lease out of the property will reduce/remove liabilities and ongoing revenue costs.

5.0 Conclusion

- 5.1 Cowdenbeath Town House is currently vacant but continues to negatively impact Council resources. Retaining the property without a defined use is not considered in the interests of the Common Good Account or Council.
- 5.2 Whilst there is merit in keeping the property to provide a potential income to the Common Good Account, the Common Good Account would not have the resources to develop the property. If developed the Common Good Account would be responsible for adaptation costs and other liabilities. The Common Good Account would also be exposed to greater financial risks, particularly if the upper floor is not let.
- 5.3 The disposal of the property would reduce the risks to the Common Good Account without the need for further investment and would produce a capital receipt.

6.0 Recommendation

- 6.1 The disposal of the Cowdenbeath Town House would provide a receipt for the Common Good Account. The conversion for use as a Community Shop and other Community space would also be a benefit.
- 6.2 Disposal of Cowdenbeath Town House to the Coalfields Regeneration Trust for the proposed development of the community shop and community offices/space is recommended.

List of Appendices

1. Site Plan
2. July 2022 Consultation

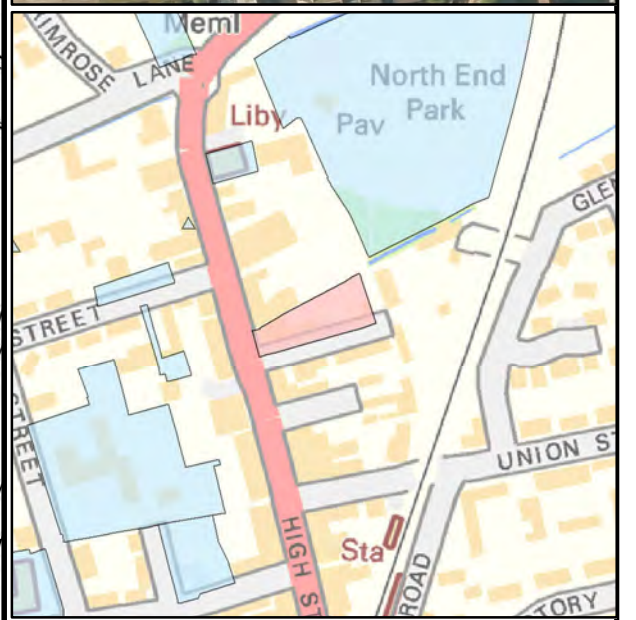
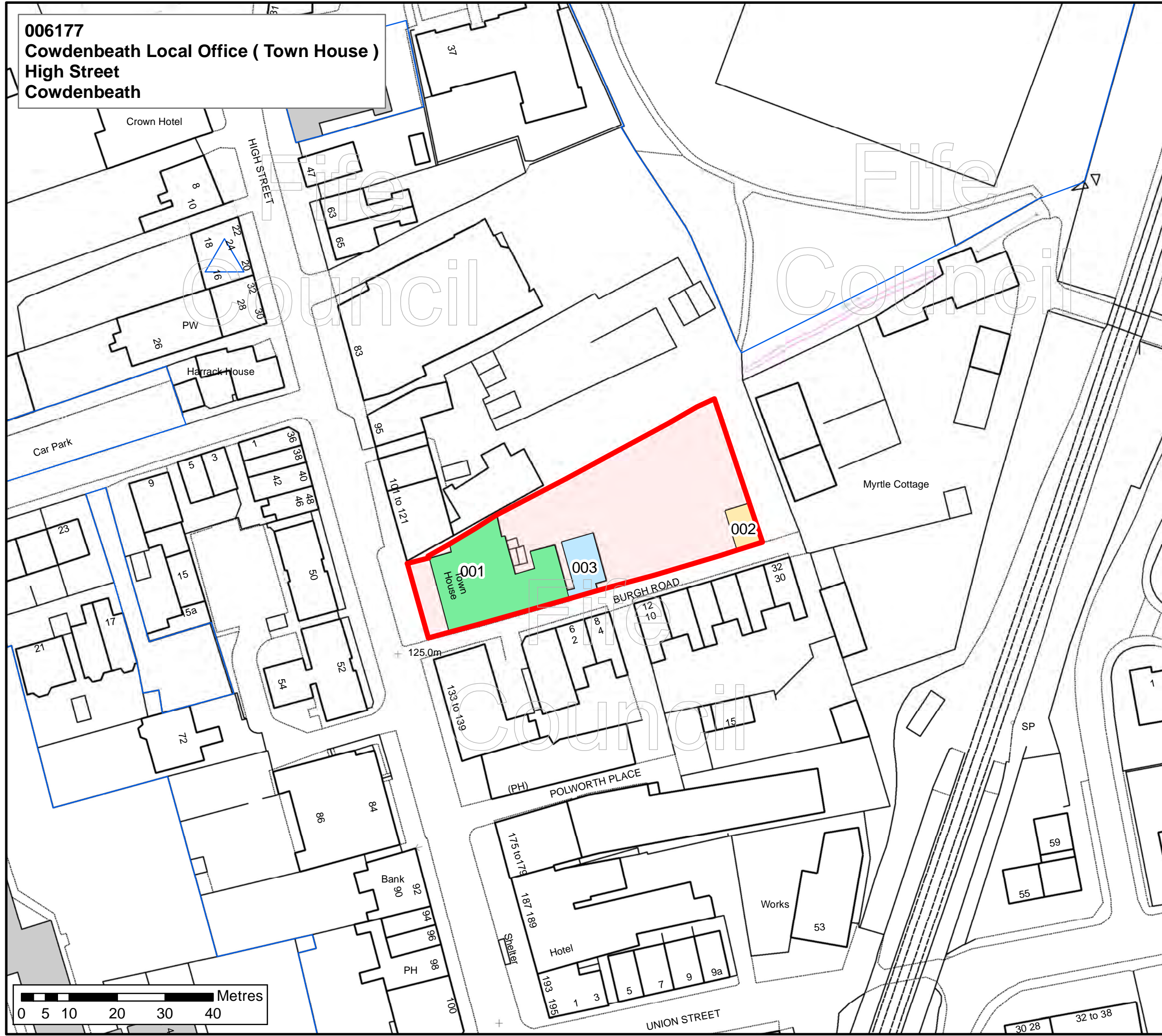
Report Contacts:
Sarah Roxburgh

Community Manager (Cowdenbeath)
Telephone: 03451 555555 + VOIP Number 442016
Sarah.Roxburgh@fife.gov.uk

Michael I McArdle
Lead Professional
Bankhead Central
Telephone: 03451 555555 + VOIP Number 440268
Michael.McArdle@fife.gov.uk

Andrew Walker
Economic Advisor
Town Centre Development
Telephone: 03451 555555 + VOIP Number 442274
Andrew.Walker@fife.gov.uk

006177
Cowdenbeath Local Office (Town House)
High Street
Cowdenbeath



Scale: 1:750

Prepared By: BMillar-50
Service: Property Services
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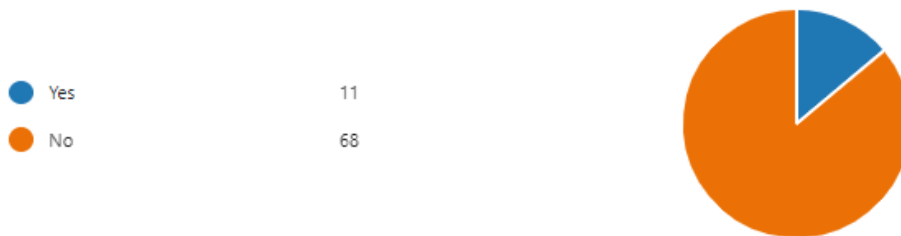
Appendix 2
Cowdenbeath Town House Consultation

A consultation on the potential sale and future use of Cowdenbeath Town House was undertaken from 18th July to 7th August. Promotion of the consultation was shared through social media, press releases, Fife Council’s website and through posters displayed on-street and within businesses on Cowdenbeath High Street.

The consultation was undertaken using an online form. This was anonymous and allowed people to complete the form on others behalf, helping reduce barriers to participation. A breakdown of the demographics is contained in appendix 1.

79 responses were received in total. Relative to other consultations, this is considered to be a successful result which allows us to gain insight into the communities’ thoughts on the proposals.

To get an understanding of engagement, we asked whether the respondent had attended the May consultation in the Maxwell Centre. 11 respondents had attended.



We asked “Do you support the sale of the Town House with the intention of it being brought back into use for the community?”

73% of respondents were in favour of a sale, with 22% against.



We then provided an opportunity for respondents to leave comments sharing their thoughts. 50 responses were received, with examples below. The full comments are available in appendix 2.



Sample comments:

“Not generally happy to hear of these buildings being sold off but this seems like an opportunity to make good use of it by a ‘sympathetic’ organisation who aren’t necessarily out to make a big profit out of it - community use idea sounds useful and in the current economic climate, sounds beneficial to Cowdenbeath and surrounding areas”

“This is a historic building & should be used to reflect our past & our future. The proposed use of the Toon Hoose is a waist of its stature in the community. Any one of half a dozen empty shops on the High Street could be utilised as a Community Shop. Don’t waste a resource just for the sake of it !!!”

To establish the appetite for a Community Shop, the following questions related directly to the Community Shop provision.

69% of respondents had heard of Community shop. Information about Community Shop was provided as part of the consultation, with 81% of respondents saying they’d like to see Community Shop in Cowdenbeath.

We then provided the opportunity for respondents to leave comments relating to Community Shop. There is a sample of the responses below, with the full responses available in appendix 3.



“It will undercut independent shops on the High St already struggling. What analysis have you done on this being required by us folk who actually live here? We already have Morrisons, Aldi, Lidl, convenience stores and a foodbank, this isn’t needed.”

“Great for people who really need it. With the cost of living being so high just now, this is exactly what people who are struggling could do with.”

Finally, we provided the opportunity to allow people to share their thoughts around the sale or future use of the Town House. 35 responses were received, with a sample of the comments below and the full comments available in appendix 4.



“Museum run by the community on a voluntary basis would be a better use. No one in the community has any opportunity to use the building”

“No sale. FC renovates the building into a cafe with small cinema/ entertainment room upstairs. Also a well-being centre created with classes”

“Seems like you’re just interested in seling off our heritage to save money. Honestly is a tragedy you’re trying to offload places like this when it could have been used for ao many other purposes.”

“I would like to see the Town House brought back to life and protected as a community asset. I think CRT would be able to do this,”

Appendix 1

1. Gender

[More Details](#)

[Insights](#)

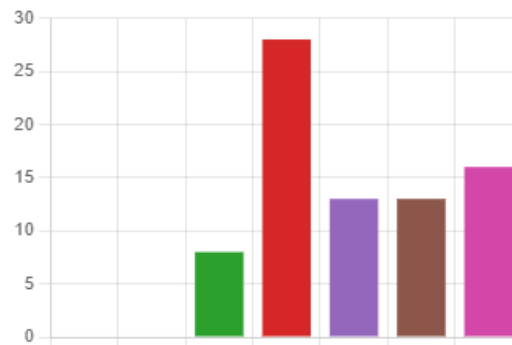
Woman	42
Man	30
Non-binary	2
Prefer not to say	3



2. Age

[More Details](#)

Under 16	0
16-24	0
25-34	8
35-44	28
45-54	13
55-64	13
65 and over	16



3. Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

[More Details](#)

[Insights](#)

Yes	19
No	59

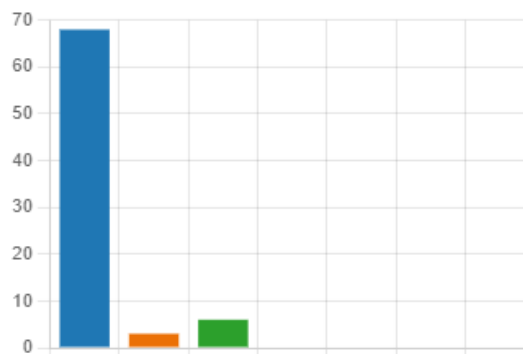


4. What is your ethnic background?

[More Details](#)

[Insights](#)

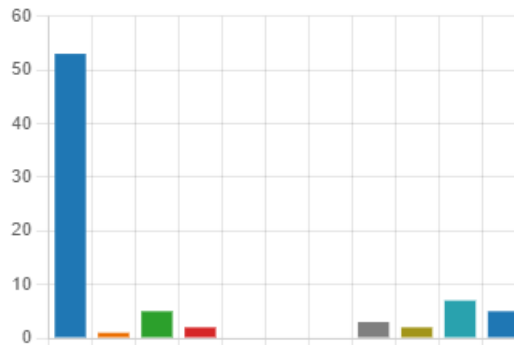
White Scottish	68
Other White British	3
Other White Background	6
Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Backgr...	0
African	0
Asian	0
Other Ethnic Background	0



5. Where do you currently live.

[More Details](#)

Cowdenbeath	53
Lochgelly	1
Lumphinnans	5
Crossgates	2
Crosshill	0
Glenraig	0
Ballingry	0
Hill of Beath	3
Cardenden	2
Kelty	7
Other	5



Appendix 2

Question 8 – Please leave any comments on the potential sale of the Town House

It should never be sold with false promise of belonging to people of Cowdenbeath.It will belong to whoever buys it and becomes a business like all others.Just need to look at high street Dunfermline where the same occurred
I think it should be something like a homeless shelter
Not generally happy to hear of these buildings being sold off but this seems like an opportunity to make good use of it by a 'sympathetic' organisation who aren't necessarily out to make a big profit out of it - community use idea sounds useful and in the current economic climate, sounds beneficial to Cowdenbeath and surrounding areas
Fife council should keep building and redevelop it
This historical building should not be lost to a charity outside of the town. This whole thing has been so underhanded. You've also not been clear about how it will be funded in your statement on the consultation website.
I think this will be a good thing for Cowdenbeath and the surrounding villages
I do not support the Coalfields plan for the Town House and I also think Fife Council haven't been completely truthful with the local community about this development. A beautiful old building like this has fallen into disrepair because of decisions you took, not the local community. We shouldn't lose out because FC can't find a suitable use for the building. There isn't any space for office work in the town - this could easily be changed into a mini business centre similar to Lochgelly. Keep it in community ownership and don't sell out.
This is a historic building & should be used to reflect our past & our future. The proposed use of the Town House is a waste of its stature in the community. Any one of half a dozen empty shops on the High Street could be utilised as a Community Shop. Don't waste a resource just for the sake of it !!!
This building is where the decisions that created the Burgh of Cowdenbeath . There should be part of the building used as a museum and Photographic record with the facility used by the schools to educate the kids of our local history . The late Alan Stott had hundreds of Photos. The museum could also include the history of the many small villages that do not exist any more . There may just be enough knowledge in the living to make something good for the future
Keep it in community ownership
I am concerned that it will be lost to the community at some future date if sold privately without safeguards in place that it will be used for the common good in perpetuity. Perhaps a community trust could be formed to take ownership with local people (residents, people working or worshipping In Cowdenbeath given membership of the trust with full voting rights. Local employers may be given associate membership with members electing a board of trustees. It could be established as charity, not for profit, or SCIO. Assistance and guidance may be available from Fife Voluntary Action
I don't think it should be sold to a company that doesn't know Cowdenbeath. They have a portfolio and a lot of the buildings they acquired are still in disarray and derelict. It should be kept by Cowdenbeath organisations. The building could be used as offices or similar to new volunteer house in Kirkcaldy. This company who wants the town house has big ideas but I don't think it would work. Please keep it for Cowdenbeath organisations.
Would it not be more sensible to rent the building out?

I would prefer a lease for the Town House but I understand that the Community Shop do not want a lease. Nor does CRT. I expect every effort to go in to trying to persuade them to go for a lease. Having said that if there is no alternative but to sell the building then so be it. As long as it is the market value of the building properly assessed by the appropriately qualified people. The sale of the Town House may anger a number of people but for me it's just a building and if selling it means it can be put to good use then so be it.
In the first part of the questionnaire, it should be Sex not Gender??
The sale of this historical building to the hands of an organisation not based here and, prior to this plan, having done no work here, is a real disappointment. Seems they saw a quick buck to be made and the Council cant get rid of the property quick enough. Responses to the consultation so far seem to be abysmal for a large national charity. If they cant generate enthusiasm and interest in the town for this plan by now, why keep flogging this plan to us all.
Hopefully a low sales price would leave more funds for redevelopment and quality of finish
It was the venue of my mother and grandmother's wedding ceremonies and it has a long history as the Burgh Chambers. I would be very sad to see it go into the hands of folk who dont live here.
As a former resident of Cowdenbeath I think this is a great idea and the building should be kept for the people of Cowdenbeath
this building belongs to the community not for sale for profit for fife council the building should never have been let run down by the council it should be refurbished by the council for the people of the community not for private profit !
I have concerns about the outright sale, not with the principles of the development which I think are sound. My worry is that the Town House is swallowed up by an organisation that already has £42m in assets like this on its books, with no evidence of returning these buildings to communities at a later date. I'm also concerned that the overall benefit of the sale is not flowing directly to Cowdenbeath residents, but "reinvested" by Fife Council.
Sounds like a good idea
As long as it's used for socially useful purposes and not private profit, please make use of the building
I'm all for the sale of the town house and bringing in additional resources to support those in the community is a great idea. It will be good to see this building back in use rather than it being boarded up. I think it's important to make sure that the sale will not result in more flats being created in the high street if the hub doesn't take off.
This is a historic building and should be turned into a heritage centrr or youth space, not handed over to a group who've done nothing for us.
The plans looked and sounded brilliant, I definitely agree with the proposals especially in the current climate, let's get it done ASAP
Turn into council flats- what's proposed is a vanity project
I feel the same can be achieved with a long term lease, if this is not possible then a clause must be attached to the sale that it will return to the ownership of the common good fund if the plan does not materialise, or it closes at any point in the future.
It will good to see it getting ousted
It's better to sell the Town House and get it back open for the community, rather than let it sit closed for another 6 years.
I don't believe it should be sold . Lease or rent but not sold
Should only sell if it's for community use, not for private company or profit
Sale contract should make sure that the town house will always remain a community asset
Better than having it sitting empty and not being used.
Will there be a condition or clause which prevents CRT simply doing what they want and selling off privately. What is the market value of the building and has it actually been marketed in anyway to date. If sold it must be at correct market value
Townhouse is a Council building and owned by them should not be sold Council should re-open and use money that was being made from the sale to benefit the people of Cowdenbeath
As it stands just now just to get someone in the house and using it would be great And if that means selling it then so be it . Better that than letting it go to rack and ruin . Also great if it were to be of community use .
We don't want this becoming another eyesore on the High Street. It's been more than 5 years since it was open, it's time to do something with it before it attracts vandalism and anti-social behaviour.
Well if it has to be sold and being used y much better that than it standing empty
Would have preferred a lease but can understand why a sale is preferred option by CRT. Would like a clause that it can not be sold on for profit for 10 years
A positive step to improve the high street which has looked run down for so many years. Still loads of work to be done though.
It should be used to benefit the community
The building would a great place to create a museum on the mining history of Fife and the workshops in Cowdenbeath...
As long as the conditions are for community use and to benefit the community .
Let's Reuse This Building For The Improvement of Cowdenbeath .
It needs rejuvenated and this idea is absolutely fantastic news for the area .

It is a beautiful building and just to see it getting used for the community will be great.
I am happy to have it sold as long as it serve the community. I would like to see it used for people in need and families.
Use it for flats, the idea publicised doesn't seem like it would last beyond a couple of years. Folk need housing now!
The area needs more housing turn it into flats.

Appendix 3

Question 11 – Please let us know what you think about Community Shop.

It's great
Another charity shop and food bank that Cowdenbeath have plenty of
It will undercut independent shops on the High St already struggling. What analysis have you done on this being required by us folk who actually live here? We already have Morrisons, Aldi, Lidl, convenience stores and a foodbank, this isnt needed.
Good to have a resource that will help people
Seems like a mini market with a membership - where would lorries unload, why should I need a membership to shop for food, this is completely the wrong model for a place like Cowdenbeath.
Plenty of other ex-shops in the High Street can be made in to a Community shop
Not in the townhouse !!!!!Can be located in ANY OF THE DOZENS OF EMPTY PREMISES THROUGHOUT HIGH STREET
My concern would be as to what impact it would potentially have on the Foodbanks and other shops (employers) in the area
We already have lots of places people could get cheap food and food banks . Taking away customers from other shops.
A great way to stop wastage at the same time as helping people.
I've read articles about Community Shop and spoke with one of their reps and it sounds very interesting. And the way the economy is going I'm anticipating that there will be a need for this type of enterprise for a few decades to come.
Seems like they just want duplicate what we already have in the town. This plan will make other places close down.
Important for getting life back into town centres
Completely agree with the provision of a community shop. This will help others access food etc who may otherwise have financial restrictions.
While the principles of more affordable food and practical cookery courses are plausible, my concern is the membership requirement to access the Shop, as well as abl lift for these cookery courses to be provided from Maxwell Centre kitchen. This feels like it could harm other businesses in the town by undercutting them. I also have concerns about the level of due diligence conducted on Community Shop / Company Shop finances, which I suggest need more investigation and assurances.
Also sounds like a good idea
I think this would greatly benefit Cowdenbeath and the surrounding areas.
Not in favour
Great idea!
As above with the current economic climate , being a deprived area we need a community shop
I think this would be a worthwhile addition to the town, particularly with the current cost of living crisis.
It will be cheaper than morrisems
That's Great
Great for people who really need it. With the cost of living being so high just now, this is exactly what people who are struggling could do with.
I believe it would help low income families. Great idea
Good idea, there's similar in rosyth eats and greener kirkcaldy. Would be a good asset to the area
Great to help all types of families
Yes community shop sounds great . My slight concern would be Would it impact any businesses on high Street ?
Good idea to help people in the area who need help
Good way to start helping people survive without relying on Food banks.
Yes good idea and would also bring people to that end of the town

Will help provide support to the community to those who need and potential
Brilliant
I think it is essential for Cowdenbeath to have a community shop, it would help a lot of people in the community
Yes
Don't think their idea works really.
A good idea but not in the town house

Appendix 4

Question 12 – Please share any other thoughts you have around the sale or future use of the Town House.

Museum run by the community on a voluntary basis would be a better use. No one in the community has any opportunity to use the building
As I said above I would love to see it become a homeless shelter where you can help people have them food and try get there life sorted
Light and colourful, people having there life back!!!
If this doesn't work out. What about similar development like Burntisland primary school redevelopment into social housing
No sale. FC renovates the building into a cafe with small cinema/ entertainment room upstairs. Also a well-being centre created with classes
Seems like you're just interested in seling off our heritage to save money. Honestly is a tragedy you're trying to offload places like this when it could have been used for ao many other purposes.
I would like to see the Town House brought back to life and protected as a community asset. I think CRT would be able to do this,
We need to take any opportunity to get the Town House open again.
The sale would need to have clauses making sure CRT can't sell the property on to developers, it has to stay benefiting the community.
The bias shown by Council employee Sarah Roxburgh in publicly supporting this plan before a full consultation has happened goes completely against Community Engagement Principles and she should not be part of this decision making.
Cowdenbeath has no where for people to go to reflect on the history of the town & surrounding villages.We have a rich history which people are interested in.Computers could be set up so people could check their family history.Lots of old postcards & pictures are available to show school kids things that were in the Town but are now lost.It generates conversations between old folk & bairns.We have a rich mining & political history in the area, but a visitor wouldn't know that as there is no reminders of it in Cowdenbeath,once head of the fife Coal company.We have sporting memories which are being lost, football,speedway,dog racing etc, no reminders in this area.A heritage centre + local research facilities would be a better use of historic building.Another kitchen would only take away business from established units in the High Street
I would be happy to use the Town house for the Good of the community . I would be unhappy for a private company to have control of the activities and events held in the Town house . Any Profits should be reinvested in the building or given as grants to support local good causes.
Dhould be made into heritage centre by Fife council
Possible use may be as community hub where organisations (charities) such as Express Group (Fife) could operate drop in centres. Also a part could be set up as a museum to remember our mining heritage. One final point is the memorial for the war dead with Remembrance Day services are well attended. Any plans should not cause any disrespect for this important memorial.
It should be kept as a office building for charity's.
It's in a great location and should be used for the good and welfare of the community.
Please don't give the Town House away. Sell it for what's its worth and make all dealings transparent
Imagine if you put all this effort into transforming the Town House into a refuge for women, or for refugees, or maybe the homeless? I dont see anything that says this plan should be a priority right now for the people of Cowdenbeath, its just about saving the Council money. Huge missed opportunity.
Please dont lose all the town's history and heritage by trying to sell off our lovely old buildings. Please think again.
the building belongs to the people of cowdenbeath not fife council to sell off!
It would be great to bring this building back into use, but I don't think this is the right plan nor is the evidence of need strong enough to lose this asset from the common good asset register.

<p>The analysis of potential options for the Town House seemed very limited in scope and didn't engage the local community enough.</p> <p>I also have concerns that the grants required for the refit of the building would exclude other local projects from development in the future. We need to be very clear with the public that the CFT investment in the refit, is in fact coming from grant funding, not from their own private investment, which was explained to us at the Maxwell Centre open day.</p>
<p>Disgraceful that this idea has even made it this far.</p> <p>Save the Toon Hoose!</p>
<p>I would love to see the building in use for the local community, definitely not flats , this could be a lasting legacy for the community</p>
<p>Repeating my answer on Q 8, I feel the same can be achieved with a long term lease, if this is not possible then a clause must be attached to the sale that it will return to the ownership of the common good fund if the plan does not materialise, or it closes at any point in the future.</p>
<p>It will good for the kids is well</p>
<p>Community art class for painting, drawing, sculpture</p>
<p>Please don't keep spending money on a closed building. Sell it and let it be opened up by someone who can look after it.</p>
<p>I would love to see it used for the community. But not sold off.</p>
<p>There should be a clause to ensure the historical building is looked after properly and not damaged or ruined.</p>
<p>As above condition written in stone that building of taken over by CRT isn't just sold off as a pub houses hotels etc to make them money. Market value says no one has come forward, where has it been marketed to date?</p> <p>Never saw any signs</p>
<p>I would like to see the Town House being used for the people of Cowdenbeath. As proposed or either the Library and Museum being utilised there.</p>
<p>Hopefully whoever does take over the town house Would front of indeed the outside walls remain as is This is probably the most iconic building in not just cowdenbeath but in thus area real shame if it was changed .</p>
<p>Still not sure about the sale in case after a few years it's sold on and turns into a place like James Bank in Dunfermline.....</p>
<p>If on the other hand some other form of use was brought to the building to help keep it open can only be good for the town house and also the high street .</p>
<p>I support the proposal to allow the community to benefit by having cut price food cheap hot meals and training opportunities especially in these difficult times ,Cowdenbeath really neds something positive in the centre of the high street to bring some life back into it</p>
<p>The history of the town should be shared here... a museum dedicated to the mining history of the town and surrounding areas... and to the people who lived and died building the town....</p>
<p>Let's Continue The Improvement of The High Street Which Has Come A Long Way In A Short Time After Years Of Neglect.</p>
<p>As long as it's never turned into residential properties and is used by the community I'll be happy</p>
<p>It is a lovely historic building and a landmark in cowdenbeath and should be used in any way to help the community.</p>
<p>I would like to know how the community shop will be funded to ensure it works and serve the community.</p>
<p>Wonder if you'll let us, the public, see all the responses to this survey, I doubt it.</p>
<p>A community shop will hurt other small shops in the area causing more unemployment</p>

31st August, 2022

Agenda Item No. 8

Domestic Waste Collection Service

Report by: John Rodigan, Senior Manager, Environment and Building Services

Wards Affected: 7 and 8

Purpose

To explain the challenges facing the Domestic Waste Service that are resulting in delayed household bin collections in the Cowdenbeath area and share the mitigating actions to help resolve the situation.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

1. Consider the challenges facing the Domestic Waste Service; and
2. Note the mitigating actions to help resolve the delayed collection service.

Resource Implications

None

Legal & Risk Implications

None

Impact Assessment

An EqIA is not required because the report does not propose a change or revision to existing policies and practices.

Consultation

None required

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Since the beginning of the Covid pandemic, domestic waste collection routes and cycles have been disrupted by significant staff absence levels. Covid sickness and isolation is no longer an issue, however bin collections continue to be impacted by developing challenges.

2.0 Challenges

2.1 Staff Absence

Sickness levels remain high and recruitment of additional seasonal workers is not resolving the issue because interest is limited and of those who do apply, many are unsuitable for the role.

2.2 Vehicle Breakdowns

The Service has an ageing fleet of refuse collection vehicles and breakdowns are becoming more frequent. Despite procurement arrangements with national supply chains, vehicle parts are becoming harder to source and vehicles are off the road for longer periods. This is an industry wide problem affecting all waste collection providers. Replacement hire vehicles are also taking weeks to source because of demand and the supply of new vehicles is taking 6 to 9 months from order. Demonstrator vehicles from suppliers are being used to supplement the fleet, when available.

2.3 Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) Driver Shortage

The national HGV driver shortage is making it harder to retain and recruit staff. When drivers are absent, temporary cover through seasonal or agency recruitment is no longer possible. This effectively takes vehicles off the road, regardless of waste collector availability.

3.0 Mitigating Actions

3.1 New Shift Pattern

The Service is pursuing a single shift pattern which would see staff returning to normal working hours and remove their current unsociable start and finish times. This change will support a greater work life balance for crews and hopefully reduce staff absence with a more contented workforce. Unfortunately, the committee approval process, managing change project and additional fleet procurement timeline won't see an introduction till late summer 2023.

3.2 Environmental Training Academy

The Service is increasing quarterly intake numbers, and this will result in additional temporary and permanent 'home grown' waste collectors.

3.3 HGV Driver Training

The Service is increasing HGV driver training numbers and although some will leave for the private sector, a number will stay and alleviate current vacancy pressures.

3.4 Overtime

Weekend overtime is being offered to all attending staff to catch backlogs anywhere in Fife.

4.0 Conclusion

- 4.1 Sickness absence, vehicle breakdowns, the shortage of suitable seasonal workers and drivers are all contributing to failure in the Cowdenbeath area.
- 4.2 The most sustainable solution to the problem of delayed bin collections is a return to a single shift pattern. As well as reducing absence, less vehicle maintenance will result from a shorter working day. Crews will take greater ownership for redesigned routes that they will have sole responsibility for servicing all waste streams on.
- 4.3 The Service regrets the impact of delayed bin collections on residents in the west area and every attempt is being made to minimise disruption. However, some level of intermittent failure may continue to be experienced until a single shift pattern is introduced.

Report Contact:-

John Rodigan
Senior Manager, Environment and Building Services
Bankhead Central

Telephone: 03451 55 55 55 ext 473223
John.rodigan@fife.gov.uk

31st August, 2022

Agenda Item No. 9

Area Housing Plan Update

Report by: John Mills, Head of Housing Services

Wards Affected: 7 & 8

Purpose

Members approved the Cowdenbeath Area Housing Services Plan 2017/19 in December 2017. A revised Plan for 2022/25 is in development and will be presented to Committee before the end of December this year.

This report provides an update on progress in delivering service priorities and performance information for the financial year 2021/22 where figures are available at an area level.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:-

1. Scrutinise and comment on the work progressed through the previous Area Housing Plan for the financial year 2021/22;
2. Comment on Cowdenbeath area performance financial year 2021-22 outlined in Appendix 1; and
3. Note the Expenditure for the HRA Locality Managed Budget for financial year 2021-22 outlined in Appendix 2.

Resource Implications

Work is taking place within agreed HRA local and capital budgets.

Legal & Risk Implications

There are no legal / risk implications arising from this report.

Impact Assessment

An EqlA Checklist is not required because the report does not propose a change or revision to existing policies and practices.

Consultation

Local tenants were involved in the development of the Area Housing Plan through local groups and events. Local members undertook walkabouts with staff and relevant services. We have also used feedback from the annual tenant survey to develop the plan. A new online consultation approach has been taken for the development of the Cowdenbeath Area Housing Services Plan for 2022/24.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Members approved a report in December 2017 which outlined the 2017/19 Cowdenbeath Area Housing Plan and set out how we intended to:
 - Understand and address housing needs in the area
 - Deliver effective housing management
- 1.2 The Council has a vision to create a fairer Fife where all residents live good lives, make informed choices, and have a sense of control so that they can reach their full potential and where all children are safe, happy, and healthy. At the heart of the Plan for Fife is the aim to reduce inequalities and to promote fairness in everything that we do. It is recognised that having a fairer Fife will benefit everyone. Housing Services as the largest landlord in Fife can improve the lives and opportunities of its tenants through effective neighbourhood management and community led improvement initiatives. We have a key role to work in partnership with others to reduce poverty in Fife and to ensure that we are acting 'one step sooner'.
- 1.3 This report includes measures to outline how well we are performing and addressing housing need in Cowdenbeath. Performance figures for financial year 2021-22 are provided where this is available at an area level. It also outlines how staff have adapted to deliver services during COVID restrictions. Housing Officers are now able to be more visible in local communities as we work our way through the Recovery Plan.
- 1.4 A revised Cowdenbeath Area Housing Plan is in development for 2022-25. This will outline future priorities that are informed through discussions at Ward Meetings and reflect the views of our local communities.

2.0 Issues and Options

- 2.1 This report will focus on the following Plan for Fife headings-
 - Opportunities for all
 - Thriving places
 - Community led services

2.2 Attached to the report are two appendices –

- Appendix 1 is a summary of Cowdenbeath Area performance information for 2021-22
- Appendix 2 provides information for expenditure of the 2021-22 locally managed budget allocation.

2.3 Opportunities for all

2.3.1 As we moved out of lockdown restrictions, Housing Services adapted to change and new ways of working. We adopted a blended approach with staff predominantly working from home with access to office space as and when required. The focus was on continuing to deliver critical services while improving the condition of our estates and addressing the welfare needs of our tenants.

2.3.2 Housing Allocations continue to promote transfers to meet housing needs, however, there continues to be a focus on statutory homelessness particularly to assist those at risk of homelessness, care leavers, people fleeing domestic abuse, and those in poor housing conditions. The demand for temporary accommodation is extremely high and steps have been taken to increase the temporary accommodation stock to ensure that Housing Services meets its statutory duties.

2.3.3 There is a renewed focus on preventing homelessness by providing high quality Housing advice. To enhance this and improve the customers journey a managing change exercise was undertaken and a new Housing Options Officers role was developed. This brought together our Housing Access Officers and Homeless Persons Officer's. While continuing to deliver essential services eight Officers are undertaking training for this new role in the Cowdenbeath area and will have responsibility for:

- housing allocations, housing list management and voids management.
- preventing homelessness by delivering enhanced housing options advice and initiating early intervention actions.
- assessing needs and making statutory decisions in relation to potentially homeless customers in line with legislation and working with applicants to secure rapid (permanent) rehousing, which meets their requirements.
- Working in partnership with a wide range of Services and agencies to ensure a person centred responses and sustainable housing outcomes.
- representing the Housing Service at statutory Public Protection Meetings in Child Protection and Adult Protection. The post will take a lead in responding to Public Protection issues within the

2.3.4 Our new build site in Woodbine, Cardenden has unfortunately been met with some difficulties. After successfully handing over 18 new properties to tenants in phase 1 and 2, our contractor through unforeseen circumstances requested to be removed from the contract. This has delayed the completion of phase 3 and 19 properties are currently awaiting completion. Our Building Services have taken over the contract, and we have a proposed completion date of September 22 for the conclusion of the site.

2.3.5 Appendix 1 provides a summary of key performance information for 2020/21. The following areas are highlighted:

- Our percentage of rent loss due to empty houses figure has increased slightly at 1.16% and continues to sit below the Fife average of 1.44%. We continue to have a focus on reducing delays for new tenants setting up home and minimising rent loss over the period.
- Void properties were turned around and reallocated within 57 days compared to the Fife average of 49 days. We are working hard with our Building Services to improve this performance.
- Allocations to each housing list category:
 - 50.42 % to homeless,
 - 28.53 % to transfer,
 - 20.78 % to the housing list
- Allocations to Homeless applicants have increased over the period in line with Council policy to move families faster out of temporary accommodation into secure tenancies.
- Due to the pandemic, we were limited in opportunities to facilitate moves where tenants are under occupying larger family sized properties. However, with the easing of restrictions in 21-22 the Tenant Incentive Scheme (TIS) was used to assist 5 tenants with the costs associated with moving home. Practical help can be provided with the things that can sometimes be a barrier for people wishing to downsize and this includes removal costs, decoration, new carpets, furnishings and white goods.
- We have acquired 10 properties in accordance with our Property Acquisition Policy. These properties will be used to provide permanent housing for homeless families. We continue to actively look at opportunities to return larger former council properties back to stock to meet the housing needs of families in the Cowdenbeath area and where transfer chains can be created.
- The number of abandoned properties shows a decreasing trend with 12 in 2021-22. To improve tenancy sustainment the Housing Management Officers, offer a Tenancy Assistance service to tenants to help tenants to sustain their tenancies. Home support visits have been re-started following a telephone only service during lockdown restrictions. We continue to make referrals for longer term and specialist housing support through our partner agencies.
- In 21-22 there were 18,336 repairs carried out in the Cowdenbeath area, with 96.9% completed within the category timescale. This is broken down as follows:
 - Emergency repairs 99.2%
 - Urgent repairs 94.4%
 - Routine repairs 97.3%

- The table on Appendix One shows the recorded breaches of Tenancy actions for anti-social behaviour. Most complaints are of a low level and involve estate management or environmental type issues that are quickly resolved. The Safer Communities Team are now integrated within Housing Services and the new dedicated Officers respond to and case manage all antisocial behaviour complaints. This dedicated resource will improve the customers experience when reporting anti-social behaviour where they will have a single point of contact.

2.4 The Housing team have been at the forefront of tackling poverty in the Cowdenbeath Area and assisting vulnerable tenants whose normal life has been disrupted due to the pandemic.

- Improving rent collection rates continues to be a challenge and for Cowdenbeath the Qtrs 2021-22 collection rate was 96.23 % which is comparable to the Fife wide average of 96.83%. The percentage of tenants in arrears who have made arrangements with us to repay their debt was 15% by the end of 21/22 which is just below the Fife wide average of 17%.
- The rent arrears in Cowdenbeath at the end 21-22 were £ 920,065 which is a slight decrease on last year's figure of £926,757. This reflected the efforts made by staff to increase contacts with tenants with a view to resolving their difficulties.
- It has been a priority for staff to work with tenants in debt within their patches and to liaise closely with Revenues Officers. A preventative approach is taken to support new tenants and promote early intervention. At the accompanied viewing for new tenant's staff discuss affordability with new tenants, the Welfare Fund and other options for sourcing household items. Through the Locality Managed Budget household items and other practical help can be provided to new tenants in need who are struggling to set up their home.
- There were no evictions in the Cowdenbeath area in 21/22 due to the introduction of the Coronavirus (Scotland) Act which prevents the eviction of tenants for rent arrears until the 31st March 2021. Fife Council extended this approach beyond March.
- It was recognised that we needed to continue to assist tenants facing financial pressures during the pandemic and we continued to reach out to tenants who were experiencing a disruption to their employment. Advice and assistance were offered to those who were self-employed, faced redundancy or part of the governments furlough scheme.

2.5 Community Led Services

- 2.5.1 Tenant engagement is critical for the Housing Service to receive feedback and to deliver community led and relevant services. Tenants indicated to us that they wished to be more involved in improving their local areas and this will be reflected in the new Area Housing Plan going forward. An online consultation has recently been carried out and the results will help to inform the action plan.
- 2.5.2 We re-commenced our area walkabouts with members and other key services in late Summer and have identified projects and improvements to progress. As restrictions

eased our staff walked their estates to identify improvements and react to any estate management issues as a result of limited services and opportunities for residents.

2.5.3 Participation in Tenants & Residents meetings were affected by the pandemic. We are now attending most meetings face to face.

2.5.4 The weekly “The Well” at the Clearing on Cowdenbeath High Street, a Health & Social Care Partnership initiative aimed at promoting health and wellbeing has now developed into a virtual Well with Housing staff available once a week to assist with requests for service.

2.5.5 Following lessons learned from a multi-disciplinary approach to the most vulnerable in our communities during the pandemic, Housing Services along with other key services have been key in developing a People and Place Leadership local delivery model. The People and Place Leadership Teams work collaboratively to understand our places and the people who live there. The Teams provide support and services which are responsive to the needs of individuals, families and local communities delivered by a range of partners working as “one organisation”. Both groups focus delivery on the following key areas; tackling poverty and crisis prevention, leading economic recovery, sustaining services through new ways of working. In Cowdenbeath the Groups meet on a 4-weekly basis.

2.6 Thriving Places

In 21-22 we committed £460,313 of our Housing Initiatives budget of £362,319 across the Cowdenbeath Area to support a wide range of different projects. This is an overspend of appx £98k and was due to the fact that projects were carried over from the previous financial year. The overspend was offset against underspend elsewhere in Fife. Highlights include:

- Ballingry Road, Ballingry- new fencing project
- Balbeddie Avenue, Lochore - rebuild retaining wall due to H&S issue
- White Threshes Road, Cowdenbeath - sort back garden draining issues
- Provost Mill Way, Kelty - Sort drainage and re- slab
- Shank Brae, Ballingry- clear area and re-plant
- 2 & 3 Sunnyside Court, Cowdenbeath- convert 2 x bedsits to a 2-bed property
- Woodbine, Cardenden- lay slabs
- Cullaloe View, Cowdenbeath Lock up site demolition
- Martin Crescent, Ballingry- resurface parking area
- All areas- small scale fencing work, garden maintenance, garden improvements, tree management, environmental clean-up works, landscape improvements

In addition, £46,609 of the budget has been used to support vulnerable tenants who required help to sustain their tenancy, and tenants who are engaging with Housing Officers through our Tenancy Assistance service.

Area teams are offered the opportunity to make a bid for funding from Housing’s Opportunities Fund. Submissions must include projects that have been identified using the Place Standard Tool. Cowdenbeath Area team were awarded funding to deliver 2 projects as follows:

- Blackburn Drive, Cowdenbeath- Renew wall, upgrade steps – award £154,587- work delayed until this financial year
- Greenmount. Cowdenbeath- repair retaining walls, front boundary walls, steps and railings- award £95,000- work complete August 2021

2.7 Information on how the Housing Service Locality Managed budget has been allocated for 2021-22 is contained in Appendix 2.

2.8 Approval was received by members at Area Committee on 30th March 2022 to demolish the block 101-147 Martin Crescent, Ballingry and transfer existing tenants to other accommodation on a priority basis. I can provide the following update:

- All existing tenants have now completed FHR application forms
- We have facilitated 4 transfers to other accommodation
- All empty properties are secured and have had alarms fitted- meters are removed.

3.0 Conclusions

3.1 Our aim is to be a top performing social landlord in Scotland. Through the new Area Housing Plan, we will identify local issues and plan to address these. This is intended to encourage member scrutiny of our work to address those concerns and demonstrate improved outcomes. The plans can be updated to reflect where member scrutiny shows a need to quicken the pace of improvement.

Appendices

1. 2021-22 Performance
2. Housing Service Locality Managed Budget 2021/22 Cowdenbeath Area

Background Papers

No papers were relied on in the preparation of this report in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1973:

Report Contact

Russel Gray
 Area Housing Manager
 Brunton House, Cowdenbeath
 Telephone: 03451 55 55 55 Ext No 446105
 Email: russell.gray@fife.gov.uk

Appendix 1 –2021-22 Performance

Indicator	Cowdenbeath	Fife
Average days to turnaround an empty property	57	49
% of the rent lost due to empty houses	1.16%	1.44%
Rent collection rates	96.23%	96.83%
% of agreements	15%	17%
% allocations to homeless households	50.42%	-
% allocations to transfer	28.53%	-
Routine repairs completed within 10-day timescale	97.3%	-
Emergency repairs completed within 24-hour timescale	99.2%	-
Number of abandoned tenancies	12	118
Number of evictions	0	0
Number of reported breach of tenancies	181	-

Breach of tenancy details	Category	Description of behaviours
Amount 71 Responded in timescale 71	Cat B Serious Anti-Social Behaviour	Verbal abuse; frequent/ongoing serious disturbances - i.e. loud music, parties, shouting & swearing; drug dealing.
Amount 95 Responded in timescale 95	Cat C Nuisance/Minor Anti-Social Behaviour.	Occasional noise; family disputes affecting neighbours; behaviour of children; household noise; first complaints or infrequent disturbances; smell of drugs.

Amount 15 All cases were responded to within the 2 working day timescale.	Cat D Extreme Behaviour -	Physical violence/assault/unprovoked attack; Threats of violence; Aggressive behaviour causing fear; drug charges/cultivation; hate incidents; immediate threats; Serious anti-social behaviour where Court action is being sought.
125 cases	Estate management complaints	Reports of untidy gardens, dumping of rubbish and stairwells in poor state.

The last two quarters numbers are distinctly less as the recording of BOT cases in the Area Offices ceased on the 17th of January 2022 and the responsibility taken over by Safer Communities Officers, they report back to SCAC. The numbers above include all cases dealt with by the HMO.

Appendix 2

Housing Service Locality Managed Budget 2021/22 Cowdenbeath Area

The Locality Managed budget is used for three priorities which are:

- Estate Management
- Tenancy Sustainment
- Improvement Projects

Estates Management

The budget is used to deal with estate management related issues and is mainly reactive. Examples of this type of work would include managing open space areas on housing land, tree maintenance, fencing, removal of fly tipping and looking after garage sites.

Tenancy Sustainment

This involves supporting tenants to sustain their tenancies and ensuring balanced communities. Due to the impact of welfare reform we are having to take a more proactive role in this area. We can offer practical help to vulnerable tenants through tenancy assistance. The budget can be used in certain circumstances for clearing properties and providing help to source essential household items. The focus of this type of intervention is to work closely with other partner services to meet any gaps in provision.

Improvement Projects

The projects are identified through estates walkabouts, consulting with our tenants, and through working with Tenants and Residents Associations. These are usually proactive works to improve the local environment for our tenants. Examples would be lighting, parking provision, improvements to bin store areas, lock ups and communal areas and environmental improvements.

Expenditure to date

The budget for 2021/22 is £362K and in 21/22 we committed £460K. The table below shows how the expenditure was proportioned.

Estate Management & projects	77%
Tenancy Sustainment	13%
Overspend 2021-22	97,994

Monitoring

Project work will be considered through discussions with elected members and issues identified at walkabouts. If the allocation of funds needs adjusted in line with the reactive nature of the budget, then this can be highlighted through further update reports.

31st August, 2022

Agenda Item No. 10

PROPERTY TRANSACTIONS

Report by: Alan Paul, Senior Manager – Property Services

Wards Affected: 7 and 8

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to advise Members of action taken using the list of officer Powers in relation to property transactions.

Recommendation(s)

The Committee is asked to note the contents of this report.

Resource Implications

There are no resource implications arising from these transactions, as any expenditure is contained within the appropriate Service budget.

Legal & Risk Implications

There are no legal or risk implications arising from these transactions.

Impact Assessment

An EqIA is not required and is not necessary for the following reasons: the items in this report do not propose a change or revision to existing policies and practices.

Consultation

All consultations have been carried out in relation to this report.

1.0 Background

- 1.1** In dealing with the day to day business of the Council there are a number of matters relating to the purchase, disposal and leasing of property and of property rights. This report advises of those transactions dealt with under powers delegated to officials.

2.0 Transactions

2.1 Disposals

2.1.1 97 sqm of additional ground at 25A Cartmore Road, Lochgelly

Date of Sale: 8 July 2022
Price: £6,000
Purchaser: Steven and Katrina Page

2.2 Acquisitions

2.2.1 21 Gilmour Street, Cowdenbeath

Date of Acquisition: 21 January 2022
Price: £125,000
Seller: John Patrick Gallagher and Jennifer Lea Gallagher

2.2.2 59 Balbedie Avenue, Lochore

Date of Acquisition: 14 January 2022
Price: £132,000
Seller: Theresa Mary Boyle, Executor of the late Margaret Boyle

2.2.3 4 Sharp Grove, Lochgelly

Date of Acquisition: 1 April 2022
Price: £136,500
Seller: Francis Moyles and James Moyles as executors nominate of the late James Moyles

2.2.4 64 High Street, Lochgelly

Date of Acquisition: 14 April 2022
Price: £56,000
Seller: Herbert Taylor and Ruth Taylor

2.2.5 19 Watters Crescent, Lochgelly

Date of Acquisition: 22 April 2022
Price: £38,000
Seller: Elaine Mackie

2.2.6 105 Main Street, Kelty

Date of Acquisition: 6 May 2022
Price: £80,00
Seller: N/A

2.2.7 28 Craigbeath Court, Cowdenbeath

Date of Acquisition: 20 May 2022
Price: £128,000
Seller: Michael Gallagher

2.2.8 **28 Denfield Avenue, Cardenden**

Date of Acquisition: 20 May 2022
Price: £93,500
Seller: Robert Steele

2.2.9 **23 Union Street, Lochgelly**

Date of Acquisition: 10 June 2022
Price: £52,500
Seller: Debra Weatherston

Amendment from previous meeting – 2.2 should have read 98 High Street, Lochgelly and not 98 High Street, Cowdenbeath as stated.

2.3 Leases by the Council – New Leases

2.3.1 **15 square metres of land at Lochore Meadows Country Park, Crosshill**

Term: 5 years from 1 April 2022
Rent: £18,000 per annum
Tenant: Fotheringhams Ice Cream Limited

3.0 Conclusions

3.1 These transactions are reported back in accordance with the List of Officers Powers.

List of Appendices

1. N/A

Background Papers

The following papers were relied on in the preparation of this report in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1973:

N/A

Report Contact

Author Name Michael I McArdle
Author's Job Title Lead Professional
Workplace Property Services – Estates
Bankhead Central
Bankhead Park
Glenrothes, KY7 6GH
Telephone 03451 555555 Ext No 440268
Email Michael.mcardle@fife.gov.uk

Cowdenbeath Area Committee of 26 October 2022			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
Complaints Update	Customer Services Improvement Service	David Thomson-CRM	
Safer Communities Team - Update Report	Customer Services Improvement Service	Lisa Taylor, Liz Watson-SC	
Supporting the Local Community Plan – Operational Briefing on Policing Activities within Cowdenbeath.	Police Scotland		
Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Cowdenbeath Area Annual Performance Report	Scottish Fire & Rescue Service		
Area Roads Programme 2022-Final Report	Assets, Transportation and Environment	Vicki Connor, Neil Watson	
Common Good and Settlement Trust Funds Annual Report	Finance and Corporate Services	Eleanor Hodgson	

Cowdenbeath Area Committee of 1 February 2023			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
Lochore Meadows Country Park Update and Future Plans	Communities and Neighbourhoods Service	Ian Laing, Sharon Murphy, Scott Blyth, Sarah Roxburgh	Report regarding future development and a park update
Pupil Equity Fund Report	Education and Children's Services	Zoe Thomson	

Unallocated			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
School Attainment and Achievement Report	Education and Children's Services	Lynn Porter, Jacqueline Price	
Area Housing Plan Update	Housing Services	Russell Gray	Submitted to Committee annually.

Unallocated			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
Children's Services in Fife	Education and Children's Services		
Pupil Equity Fund	Education and Children's Services		
Local Community Planning Budget	Communities and Neighbourhoods Service	Sarah Roxburgh	
Pupilwise and Parentwise Annual Report	Education and Children's Services		
Area Capital Update Report	Communities and Neighbourhoods Service	Sarah Roxburgh	
Grounds Maintenance Service Annual Report- Previously Parks, Streets and Open Spaces	Environment & Building Operations (AT&E)	Scott Clelland	