

THE FIFE COUNCIL - COWDENBEATH AREA COMMITTEE – BLENDED MEETING

Willie Clarke Centre, Lochore Meadows Country Park, Lochgelly, KY5 8BA

12 June 2024

2.00 pm – 4.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Alex Campbell (Convener), Linda Erskine, Rosemary Liewald, Lea McLelland and Darren Watt.

ATTENDING: Anne-Marie Vance, Community Manager, Cowdenbeath, Scott Blyth, Project Manager and Izzy Scott-Trimmm, Community Development Team Manager (Cowdenbeath Area), Communities and Neighbourhoods Service; Hazel Crielly, Community Inspector and John Nicol, Community Sergeant, Police Scotland; Jenny Murray, Station Commander – Lochgelly Fire Station, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service; Dawn Jamieson, Safer Communities Team Manager and Brian Westwater, Safer Communities Lead Officer, Housing Services; Mary Mckay, Education Manager, Education Service; Rob Bowditch, Service Manager - Public and Environmental Protection, Environmental Health; Keith Johnston, Technician Engineer, Traffic Management South, Roads and Transportation Service; Eleanor Hodgson, Accountant and Wendy MacGregor, Committee Officer, Democratic Services, Finance and Corporate Services.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors Mary Lockhart and Bailey-Lee Robb.

128. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were submitted in terms of Standing Order No 22.

129. MINUTE

The committee considered the minute of the meeting of the Cowdenbeath Area Committee of 17 April 2024.

Decision

The committee agreed to approve the minute.

130. SUPPORTING THE LOCAL COMMUNITY PLAN - OPERATIONAL BRIEFING ON POLICING ACTIVITIES WITHIN COWDENBEATH

The committee considered a report by the Community Inspector, Cowdenbeath, Police Scotland updating elected members on policing activity in Wards 7 and 8 areas.

Decision

The committee noted the contents of the report and the policing activity undertaken to date and agreed to support Police Scotland to address priorities.

131. SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE - COWDENBEATH AREA ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

The committee considered a report by the Station Commander - Lochgelly Community Fire Station - Scottish Fire and Rescue Service providing incident information for the period 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024. The incident information enabled members to scrutinise the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) Clacks-Fife-Stirling – Cowdenbeath Area against key performance indicators (KPIs).

Decision

The committee noted the progress across a range of KPIs detailed in the report.

132. SAFER COMMUNITIES TEAM UPDATE REPORT

The committee considered a report by the Head of Housing Services providing an update on the operational activity of the Safer Communities Team within the Cowdenbeath committee area during the 12 month period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

Decision

The committee noted the contents of the report and activity to date.

133. PROPOSED RAISED TABLE – B920 LOCHLEVEN ROAD, BALLINGRY

The committee considered a report by the Head of Roads and Transportation Service providing a proposal to install a raised table on B920 Lochleven Road, Ballingry.

Decision

The committee, in the interests of road safety:-

- (1) agreed to the promotion of a Road Hump Order (RHO) for the installation of a raised table as detailed in drawing no. TRO24_28 (Appendix 1) with all ancillary procedures; and
- (2) authorised officers to construct the raised table within a reasonable period unless there were objections.

134. SUPPORTING THE PLAN 4 COWDENBEATH GROUNDS FOR GROWTH

The committee considered a report seeking agreement for a £10,000 allocation of funding from the Anti-Poverty budget which would be provided to Rural Skills Scotland. This funding would support the delivery of their Grounds for Growth project, providing training and employability work to local people.

Decision

The committee agreed to allocate £10,000 from the Anti-Poverty budget to Rural Skills Scotland to support the delivery of the Grounds For Growth Project.

135. COMMUNITY FOOD PROVIDERS FUNDING

The committee considered a report by the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods Service seeking agreement for the allocation of £80,000 from the Anti-Poverty Budget to support the delivery of community food projects across the area, aimed to tackle food insecurity.

Amendment

Councillor Linda Erskine, seconded by Councillor Lea McLelland, moved to add an additional recommendation to the report, as follows:

'Officers would work with food providers to ensure that memberships and/or any charges do not present a barrier to users who are in need. This condition would be incorporated into the Food Providers' Service Level Agreement.'

Decision

The committee, having agreed to the Amendment proposed by Councillor Erskine, agreed:-

- (1) to a total contribution of £80,000 from the Anti-Poverty Budget, which would be distributed to Community Food Providers to deliver food support to those in need as follows:
 - (a) Oor Wee Cafe - £12,281
 - (b) Lo'Gelly Lunches - £16,040
 - (c) BRAG Pantry - £16,215
 - (d) Cardenden Community Fridge - £12,619
 - (e) Crossgates Foodbank - £2,136
 - (f) Max's Pantry - £11,390
 - (g) The Clearing - £2,071
 - (h) The Knights Templar - £7,248
- (2) agreed officers would work with Community Food Providers to ensure that membership arrangements and any charges would not present a barrier to members using the services of the Community Food Projects'.

136. REVIEW OF MOSSMORRAN AND BRAEFOOT BAY COMMUNITY AND SAFETY COMMITTEE – GENERAL ANNUAL REPORT 2022

The committee considered a report by the Head of Protective Services providing the findings of the latest 2022 general annual report for the operations at the Mossmorran and Braefoot Bay facilities in accordance with the agreed recommendation of the meeting of the Environment, Transportation and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee of 19 March 2024.

Decision

The committee noted:-

- (1) the contents of the general report and, in particular, the large reduction in complaints following investment in improvement technologies at the complex;

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- (2) the new noise and air quality monitoring arrangements introduced around the complex; and
- (3) the steps taken to improve communications between appropriate parties.

137. REPORT ON EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES 2022/23

The committee considered a report by the Head of Service - Education and Children's Services, providing details of the attainment outcomes achieved by pupils within the area's schools during the school year 2022/23. The report also provided an overview of the range of strategies being developed to support key priorities to raise attainment.

Decision

The committee:-

- (1) noted the overall progress in raising levels of attainment in 2022/23 and the strategies being implemented to raise attainment; and
- (2) acknowledged the retirement of Mandy Miller, Music Teacher from Lochgelly High School after 43 years' service of commitment and dedication to the young people of Fife. Members expressed thanks and appreciation to the service Mandy had provided and wished her well in her future endeavours.

The meeting adjourned at 3.30 pm and reconvened at 3.35 pm.

138. AREA CAPITAL BUDGET REQUEST

The committee considered a report by the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods Service seeking agreement to allocate funds from the Area Capital Budget for Lochgelly Public Park and Hamburg Park Play Area in Crossgates. The projects were complete and had been funded from local community planning budgets, however, the spend was capital in nature therefore capital funding of £67,771 would be transferred into the local community planning budget.

Decision

The committee agreed to a total contribution of £67,771 from the Area Capital Budget for reimbursement of the following projects:

- (1) Lochgelly Public Park – Footpath and Lighting improvement - £60,000; and
- (2) Hamburg Park Play Area, Crossgates - £7,771

139. AREA SCHEDULES

The committee considered a report by the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods Service providing an update on the 2024/2025 balances and expenditure against Ward 7 and Ward 8 Local Community Planning, Anti-poverty and Community Recovery Fund budgets.

Decision

The committee noted:-

- (1) spend on Ward 7 and Ward 8 Local Community Planning and Anti-poverty budgets (referenced within the report as Area Revenue Budgets) for 2024/2025 as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report; and
- (2) spend on the Cowdenbeath Area's Community Recovery Fund budget, as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report.

140. PLAN 4 COWDENBEATH 2023-2026 - VERBAL UPDATE

The Community Manager (Cowdenbeath) provided a verbal update on the Plan 4 Cowdenbeath 2023-26 providing assurance that partners had been working on delivering priorities in the area as follows:-

Tackling Poverty - Oor Wee Cafe was successful in winning the Fife Voluntary Action Volunteering Award on 5 June 2024. Volunteers were supported by a Community Education Worker, funded through the Community Recovery Fund, to develop the service ensuring the pantry and cafe continued to improve, working towards sustainability and meeting community needs - a well deserved award;

Raising Aspirations - Supported by Community Education Worker, funded by the Community Recovery Fund, a mountain biking course was delivered in Lochore Meadows to assist in tackling mental health and wellbeing for young men living in the Benarty area. The course focused on physical and mental health, demonstrating the positive impact fitness and socialising had on wellbeing, in reducing anxiety and increasing confidence. Positive feedback had been received from the participants which included an improvement in their mental health and feeling more relaxed overall.

Punched Beyond Project - A boxing initiative delivered through funding from Ward 8 and Police Scotland to reduce antisocial behaviour in the area. The project was aimed at selected young people and provided an insight into the consequences of violence. As well as boxing, specialist workshops took place demonstrating influences in violence, guidance on how to rationalise situations to assist in making good choices and also covered respect and discipline. Twelve young people had participated in the initiative which had the outcome of improved attendance at school. A fuller report on the initiative was available and could be shared with members on request.

Community Engagement - Cowdenbeath Area Partnership Group - The first training session on Fife Council Community Engagement Toolkit commenced in May 2024 ensuring the standards of engagement were at the forefront of any community consultation carried out, ensuring a good quality approach for engagement with communities. A further session would be held in September to reach any partners unable to attend the session.

Decision

The committee noted the updates.

141. COWDENBEATH AREA FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services, providing the workplan for future meetings of the committee.

Decision

The committee:-

- (1) noted the contents of the Forward Work Programme;
- (2) requested the following areas be included in the Area Housing Plan report due for submission to the committee meeting in September 2024 - update on new build properties at Lumphinnans and Lochgelly and turnaround of empty properties, to include number of unallocated properties in Wards 7 and 8; and
- (3) noted the end of year report on the Local Community Plan - Plan 4 Cowdenbeath 2023-26 update would be submitted to the committee meeting on 30 October 2024 and the planned verbal update on the Plan 4 Cowdenbeath would not be required for presentation at the September meeting of the committee.