

THE FIFE COUNCIL - COWDENBEATH AREA COMMITTEE – BLENDED MEETING

Willie Clarke Centre, Lochore Meadows Country Park, Lochgelly.

4 September 2024

2.00 pm – 4.25 pm

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

ATTENDING: Anne-Marie Vance, Community Manager – Cowdenbeath Area and Louise Whyte, Capital Projects Manager, Community Projects Team, Communities and Neighbourhoods Service; Amanda Cathrew, Housing Team Manager, Housing Services Operations and Regeneration; Mary Mckay, Education Manager, Education Service; Vicki Storrar, Lead Consultant - Roads Lighting and Asset Management and Keith Johnston, Technician Engineer, Traffic Management South, Roads and Transportation; David Thomson, Customer Experience Lead Officer, Information Management and Requests, Customer and Online Services; Lesley Robb, Lead Officer - Committee Services and Wendy MacGregor, Committee Officer Legal and Democratic Services.

142. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

143. MINUTE

The committee considered the minute of the meeting of 12 June 2024.

Arising from the minute with reference to paragraph number 140 Community Engagement - further detail was requested on plans for any future community engagement events. Members agreed similar events organised in the past, such as the Lochore Meadows consultation, had proved to be a valuable exercise and was beneficial when engaging with local communities.

Decision

The committee agreed to approve the minute.

144. OBJECTIONS TO PROPOSED ROAD HUMPS - FOULFORD ROAD, COWDENBEATH

The committee considered a report by the Head of Roads and Transportation Services in relation to the consideration of objections to a proposal to introduce road humps on Foulford Road, Cowdenbeath.

Decision

The committee agreed to set aside the outstanding two objections to the proposed Road Hump Order (RHO) introducing road humps on Foulford Road, Cowdenbeath as detailed in drawing no. TRO24_35 (Appendix 1 of the report), to allow the works to be constructed.

145. PLAY SPACE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION - COWDENBEATH AREA

The committee considered a report by the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods Service seeking approval of the approach adopted for the delivery of the proposed play space strategy implementation programme for Cowdenbeath area, taking cognisance of the issues noted around timescales for delivery based on resources, contractor market and funding availability.

Amendment

Councillor Bailey-Lee Robb, seconded by Councillor Alistair Bain, moved an amendment to add additional recommendations to the report as follows:-

'Committee requests a briefing note, detailing the total funding available in the Capital Budget over a 10-year period, including a description of the provisional plans for the funding.

Committee also requests a briefing note outlining local community groups/organisations for each area across Cowdenbeath, including any local groups that had been active in the past but were no longer in existence.'

Decision

The committee:-

- (1) approved the suggested programme noting project sequencing and timescales for delivery as follows:-
 - (a) Ward 7 - Cullaloe View in 2024/25 and Cowdenbeath Public Park in 2025/26
 - (b) Ward 8 - Balgreggie Open Area in 2024/25 and Denfield Avenue in 2025/26
- (2) agreed the investment allocated to the above projects, as detailed in the report, for delivery between 2024-2026;
- (3) as a result of an amendment proposed by Councillor Robb, seconded by Councillor Bain, the following additional recommendations were agreed:-
 - (a) requested a briefing note detailing the total funding available in the Capital Projects Budget over a 10-year period, including a description of the provisional plans for the funding; and
 - (b) requested a briefing note outlining local community groups for each area across Cowdenbeath, including any local groups that had been active in the past but were no longer in existence.

146. ANNUAL ROADS PROGRAMME 2023/24 - FINAL REPORT

The committee considered a report by the Head of Roads and Transportation Services advising on the delivery of the 2023-24 Area Roads Programme (ARP).

Decision

The committee noted the contents of the report and the appendices.

147. COMPLAINTS UPDATE

The committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Communities providing an overview of complaints received relating to the Cowdenbeath area for the year from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

Amendment

Councillor Bailey-Lee Robb, seconded by Councillor Lea McLelland, proposed as follows:-

'to refer the matter of Building Services complaints to the Environment, Transportation and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee, due to the high volume of complaints received and timescales to rectify issues, for further scrutiny and consideration and the overall Complaints Process/Policy be referred for further scrutiny to the People and Communities Scrutiny Committee'

Decision

The committee:-

- (1) noted the content of the report on complaints received, complaints responded to in target timescales and the proportionality of Service complaints;
- (2) as a result of an amendment proposed by Councillor Robb, seconded by Councillor McLelland, the following additional recommendations were agreed:-
 - (a) requested, in light of the numerous complaints in relation to Building Services, that the matter be referred to the Environment, Transportation and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee for consideration; and
 - (b) requested, that in relation to the overall Complaints Policy/Procedure and the recording of corporate complaints, the matter be referred to the People and Communities Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

148. EDUCATION - PARENTWISE AND PUPILWISE SURVEYS

The committee considered a report by the Head of Service, Education Directorate, summarising the Parentwise and Pupilwise survey process undertaken across Fife in academic session 2023/24, focusing on the Cowdenbeath area results.

Decision

The committee noted:-

- (1) the findings and considerations of next steps as outlined in the report; and
- (2) that schools welcomed contact from elected members to discuss their approach to engaging with parents/carers and pupils, as well as how they responded to the findings of the ParentWise and PupilWise 2023/24 surveys.

The committee adjourned at 3.25 pm and the reconvened at 3.35 pm.

Councillor Mary Lockhart left the meeting following consideration of the above item.

149. AREA HOUSING PLAN 2024-25

The committee considered a report by the Head of Housing Services seeking approval for a revised Area Housing Plan 2024-25 setting out area performance, service delivery and highlighting key housing issues for consideration.

Decision

The committee agreed to approve the Cowdenbeath Area Housing Plan for 2024 - 2025.

150. COWDENBEATH AREA - ANTI-POVERTY WORK UPDATE

The committee considered a report by the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods Service providing an update on the activity and outcomes of the anti-poverty work undertaken in the Cowdenbeath Area. The work outlined in the report aligned with the key priorities for the Cowdenbeath Area Local Community Plan 2023 - 2026.

Decision

The committee:-

- (1) noted the content of the report; and
- (2) agreed that due to the level of detail in the report and sensitive nature of the content, the report would be scrutinised by elected members in more detail at a future Ward meeting or workshop in October 2024.

151. COWDENBEATH AREA SCHEDULES – UPDATE

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

Decision

The committee:-

- (1) noted spend on the Ward 7, Ward 8, Local Community Planning and Anti-poverty budgets (referred to in the report as 'Area Revenue Budgets') for 2024/2025 as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report;
- (2) noted spend on the Cowdenbeath Area's Community Recovery Fund budget, as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report;
- (3) approved the reallocation of £30,000 from the Anti-Poverty budget Community Growing proposal to the Minto Wood project;
- (4) agreed that area budget spend would be presented annually to Cowdenbeath Area Committee on the first committee date after the summer recess. This would inform on the area's budget spend for the previous financial year; and
- (5) noted at paragraph 2.4, following the outcome of a workshop on 6 August 2024 a report outlining opportunities identified for support from the Community Recovery Fund budget would be presented at its next meeting on 30 October 2024.

152. PROPERTY TRANSACTIONS

The committee considered a report by the Head of Property Services advising of action taken using the list of Officer Powers in relation to property transactions for the Cowdenbeath Area.

Decision

The committee noted the contents of the report.

153. COWDENBEATH AREA COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

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

Decision

The committee:-

- (1) noted the contents of the work plan;
- (2) noted the report on the Community Recovery Fund would be submitted to the committee meeting on 30 October 2024;
- (3) requested a report detailing job vacancies across the Cowdenbeath area, outlining the impact this had on all Service delivery; and
- (4) requested that the Member of Scottish Youth Parliament for the Cowdenbeath area was invited to future meetings of the committee.