

MINUTE
of
CABINET

Minute of Meeting held at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 26 March 2015.

Present:

Councillor Jim Fletcher (Leader)	Councillor Alan Lafferty
Councillor Tony Buchanan (Deputy Leader)	Councillor Ian McAlpine
Councillor Danny Devlin	Councillor Mary Montague
Councillor Elaine Green	Councillor Vincent Waters

Councillor Fletcher, Leader, in the Chair

Attending:

Lorraine McMillan, Chief Executive; Caroline Innes, Deputy Chief Executive; Mhairi Shaw, Director of Education; Andy Cahill, Director of Environment; Louise Pringle, Head of Customer and Business Change Services; Andy Corry, Head of Environment (Environmental Services and Roads); Iain MacLean, Head of Environment (Planning, Property and Regeneration); David Miller, Head of Revenue Services; Charlie Armstrong, Roads and Transportation Manager; Barbara Clark, Chief Accountant; Jackie Martin, Corporate Business Manager; Phil Daws, Housing Services Manager; John Paterson ICT Manager (Infrastructure); Paul Parsons, Principal Accountant (Capital); Alan Hook, Principal Officer (Technical Services); David Anderson, Estates Surveyor; Ian Conway, Senior Regeneration Officer; and Paul O'Neil, Committee Services Officer.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1477. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE AND CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE AWARDS – PRESENTATION OF AWARDS TO CUSTOMER FIRST

1478. The Cabinet were advised that the Investors in People (IIP) award was a worldwide framework which recognised best practice in people management and that Customer First had been awarded IIP since 2003 and were assessed every 3 years.

Furthermore, the Customer Service Excellence award was a Government Standard awarded to services that put the customer at the heart of service provision. The Customer First team had first achieved the award in 2006, had continued to improve in line with any recommendations the assessor had made year on year, and had once again retained the award this year.

The Cabinet congratulated all the staff involved in achieving the awards and noted the presentation.

JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (FIRST TIER)

1479. The Cabinet considered and noted the Minute of the meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee (First Tier) held on 22 January 2015, which forms Appendix 1 accompanying this Minute.

AREA FORUM MINUTES

1480. The Cabinet considered the Minutes of the meetings of the undernoted Area Forums which form Appendices 2, 3 and 4 accompanying this Minute:-

- (i) Giffnock and Thornliebank, Netherlee, Stamperland and Williamwood Area Forum – 25 February 2015;
- (ii) Neilston, Uplawmoor and Newton Mearns North and Barrhead Area Forum – 26 February 2015; and
- (iii) Newton Mearns South, Busby, Clarkston and Eaglesham Area Forum – 3 March 2015.

The Cabinet agreed to note the Minutes and approve the recommendations therein.

GENERAL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2014/15

1481. The Cabinet considered a report by the Chief Executive, monitoring expenditure against the approved General Fund Capital Programme 2014/15, and recommending adjustments where necessary in light of issues that had arisen since the programme had been approved.

The report highlighted the latest developments relating to the programme, including the latest income and expenditure movements and cash flow management issues and indicated that the projected shortfall of £111,000 representing 0.7% of the resources available was within manageable limits.

The Cabinet agreed to:-

- (a) **recommend to the Council** that the proposed adjustments to the General Fund Capital Programme 2014/15 be approved; and
- (b) note that the shortfall of £111,000 would be managed and reported within the final accounts for the year;

HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2014/15

1482. The Cabinet considered a report by the Chief Executive, providing details of the expenditure against the approved Housing Capital Programme 2014/15 and recommending adjustments where necessary in light of issues that had arisen since the programme had been approved.

The report highlighted the latest developments relating to the programme, including the latest income and expenditure movements and cash flow management issues, and indicated that the projected shortfall of £43,000 representing 1.1% of the resources available was within manageable limits.

The Cabinet agreed to:-

- (a) **recommend to the Council** that the movements within the Housing Capital Programme 2014/15 be approved;
- (b) approve the expenditure increase of £50,000 on the kitchens as detailed in the report; and
- (c) note the shortfall of £43,000 would be managed and reported within the final accounts for the year.

ESTIMATED REVENUE BUDGET OUT-TURN 2014/15

1483. The Cabinet considered a report by the Chief Executive, detailing the projected revenue budget out-turn for 2014/15 and providing details of the expected variances together with summary cost information for each of the undernoted services as at 30 January 2015:-

- (i) Objective and Subjective Summaries;
- (ii) Education Department;
- (iii) Community Health and Care Partnership (CHCP);
- (iv) Environment Department;
- (v) Environment Department – Support;
- (vi) Corporate and Community – Community Resources;
- (vii) Corporate and Community Support;
- (viii) Chief Executive's Office;
- (ix) Other Expenditure and Income and Other Housing; and
- (x) Housing Revenue Account.

The report explained that the estimated year-end position showed a net favourable variance on net expenditure of £1,272,000 based on current information. For General Fund services the projected underspend was £1,165,000. In addition, Council Tax collection had been higher than budgeted with additional income of £430,000 now anticipated, bringing the total forecast underspend on General Fund services to £1,595,000. This variance was anticipated in addition to the planned transfer to reserves of £150,000 agreed at the meeting of the Council on 13 February 2014.

The report concluded by indicating that whilst most departments expected to operate within budget, management action was required within the Community Health and Care Partnership and Environment Department (Non-Support) to address overspends against departmental budget at year-end. In addition, operational variances had been identified across the Council that required management action to ensure that expenditure would be within budget at the end of the financial year, all underspends were consolidated wherever possible and spending up to budget levels did not take place.

The Cabinet, having noted the reported probable out-turn position of the Revenue Budget 2014/15, agreed:-

- (a) that all departments currently on target to remain within budget be required to monitor and maintain their position to the year-end;
- (b) that those departments currently forecasting a year-end overspend position be required to take action to bring net expenditure back within budget;
- (c) to note that the Director of the Community Health and Care Partnership was continuing to take steps to address the overspend;
- (d) that all service departments ensure that effective control and measurement of agreed operational efficiencies are undertaken on a continuous basis; and
- (e) that departmental guidance be adhered to in respect of year-end expenditure.

REVIEW OF THE STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

1484. The Cabinet considered a report by the Chief Executive, providing the annual update of the Council's Strategic Risk Register and noting that the previous update had been considered at the meeting of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee on 5 March 2015. A copy of the register was appended to the report.

The report emphasised the importance of the Council having robust arrangements in place to manage any risk that might be faced notwithstanding the fact that the Council had well developed arrangements in place and had been commended by External Audit in its approach to managing risks.

The updated register set out the key risks that should be considered by the Council and detailed the actions that management had put in place to manage these risks. Furthermore, as well as additions to the register, several risks had been amended to include additional control measures and the risks had been rescored for significance. Risks identified by Audit Scotland in the Assurance and Improvement Plan which had been reported to the meeting of the Cabinet on 19 June 2014 had also been incorporated into the register.

The Cabinet approved the updated Strategic Risk Register.

SCOTTISH WIDE AREA NETWORK (SWAN)

1485. The Cabinet considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive, advising that the Council had joined the Scottish Wide Area Network (SWAN) which was a public services network for the use of all public service organisations within Scotland.

The report explained that more than 4,600 sites would be connected to the initial network including schools, hospitals, GP surgeries, pharmacies and local council offices. It was noted that key benefits included reduced costs, improved service and the ability to share data across organisations, and fostering co-operative working.

The Cabinet noted the terms of the report.

WRITE-OFF OF IRRECOVERABLE NON-DOMESTIC RATES

1486. The Cabinet considered and approved a report by the Deputy Chief Executive, seeking the write-off of £171,271.84 of irrecoverable Non-Domestic Rates, without prejudice to subsequent recovery procedure.

WRITE-OFF OF IRRECOVERABLE SUNDRY DEBTOR INCOME

1487. The Cabinet considered and approved a report by the Deputy Chief Executive, seeking the write-off of £54,362.40, without prejudice to subsequent recovery procedure.

10 KERR STREET, BARRHEAD – VARIATION TO CONTRACT

1488. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment, advising of a variation to the contract for 10 Kerr Street, Barrhead in accordance with clause 8.3 of the Council's Financial Regulations.

The Cabinet noted the variation to the contract with JCG Group of Glasgow of £100,000 from the approved contract sum.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT AND GROUND LEASE – FORMER SHANKS INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, BARRHEAD

1489. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment, seeking approval to enter into a development agreement with Cruden Estates Limited that would facilitate the redevelopment of Shanks Industrial Park, including the disposal of the Council owned assets.

The report explained that progress towards the redevelopment of Shanks Industrial Park had continued positively with demolition and some clearance of the site beginning to address the immediate blight on neighbouring areas and pressures on public sector partners. Furthermore, the development strategy, including legal agreements to deliver residential use, had been agreed with Cruden Estates Limited (Cruden).

The report proposed to conclude the legal agreements to formalise the relationship between the Council and Cruden to facilitate the redevelopment of the site and enable the Council to realise a future capital receipt from the sale of its landholding within the former Shanks site.

The Cabinet agreed that delegated powers be granted to the Director of Environment, in consultation with the Chief Officer (Legal and Procurement), to negotiate and conclude legal agreements with Cruden Estates Limited to facilitate the redevelopment of Shanks Park including the Council owned assets, on the basis of the terms outlined in the report.

ROADS REVENUE WORKS PROGRAMME 2015/16 AND ROAD CONDITION INDICATOR FOR 2015 AND MAINTENANCE BACKLOG FIGURE FOR 2015

1490. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment, seeking approval for the Roads Revenue Works Programme 2015/16, advising of the 2015 Road Condition Indicator and providing an update on the maintenance backlog figure for 2015. A copy of the programme was appended to the report.

The report explained that in addition to the Road Revenue core budget allocation of £3,470,100, additional resources had been made available for 2015/16 of £500,000 in terms of Repairs and Renewal funding. It was noted that the total revenue budget available for the Roads Revenue Works Programme in 2015/16 was therefore £3,970,100. Details of the various factors that had been taken into account in prioritising the programme's resurfacing schemes were outlined in the report.

It was noted that the winter maintenance budget had been retained at £850,000 and that this expenditure related directly to the severity of the winter which could vary significantly from year to year.

The report also provided information on the Roads Condition Indicator (RCI) for 2015, which was a Statutory Performance Indicator (SPI) and had been calculated as part of the Scottish Road Maintenance Condition Survey (SRMCS). The figures were based on the surveys undertaken in 2013 and 2014 for A, B and C Class roads and for the 4 year average for 2011/2014 for unclassified roads.

In addition, a calculation for the maintenance backlog figure was developed by SCOTS in conjunction with Audit Scotland to quantify in monetary terms the cost of the outstanding repairs to the roads network. A model had been developed which allowed various scenarios to be tested. The headline backlog figure was the figure considered to represent in the clearest fashion the scale of the maintenance burden. It was noted that the overall RCI had shown a significant improvement from the 2014 value of 43.5 to 39.1 in 2015 improving the Council's ranking from 27th to 20th.

The Cabinet:-

- (a) approved the Roads Revenue Works Programme for 2015/16; and
- (b) noted the report in relation to the 2015 Road Condition Indicator, the improvement in the Council's position from 27th to 20th and the improvement in the maintenance backlog figure for 2015.

Resolution to Exclude Press and Public

At this point in the meeting on the motion of the Leader, the Cabinet unanimously resolved that in accordance with the provisions of Section 50(A)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 6 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Act.

BALGRAY WATERSPORTS CENTRE

1491. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment, advising on proposals relating to the creation of a watersports centre at Balgray Reservoir and seeking approval to enter into an agreement to lease land from Scottish Water for this purpose. A copy of a plan showing the location of the proposed watersports centre and wake park was appended to the report.

The Cabinet:-

- (a) noted the proposal to establish a watersports centre at Balgray Reservoir within the Dams to Darnley Country Park; and

- (b) agreed that delegated authority be granted to the Director of Environment, in consultation with the Chief Officer (Legal and Procurement), to negotiate the terms and enter into a ground lease with Scottish Water for Balgray Reservoir and adjacent land to enable the development of a water sports centre.

PROPOSED GROUND LEASE FOR A BIOGAS PLANT AT GREENHAGS BY NEWTON MEARNS

1492. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment, seeking approval to negotiate and enter into a ground lease for part of the Council owned land at Greenhags by Newton Mearns to enable the development of a biogas plant. A copy of the site location plan was appended to the report.

The Cabinet agreed that to continue consideration of the matter to a future meeting of the Cabinet.

PROPOSED GROUND LEASE AT DEACONSBANK GOLF COURSE, STEWARTON ROAD, THORNLIEBANK

1493. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment, seeking approval for a new ground lease to David Lloyd Leisure Group Limited for the Deaconsbank facility and for the demolition of the existing club house. A copy of the site location plan was appended to the report.

The Cabinet:-

- (a) approved the proposed ground lease for the Deaconsbank Golf Club site on Stewarton Road, Thornliebank to David Lloyd Leisure Group Limited to facilitate the development of a new fitness club on the site; and
- (b) agreed to the demolition of the existing club house in preparation for the redevelopment.

CHAIR

MINUTE

of

JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (FIRST TIER)

Minute of Meeting held at 2.00pm in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 22 January 2015.

Present:

Councillor Jim Fletcher
Councillor Charlie Gilbert
Councillor Ian McAlpine

Councillor Gordon McCaskill
Councillor Ralph Robertson

Union Representatives:

Mr John Guidi (SSTA)
Mr Steven Larkin (UNISON)
Mr Gordon Lees (UNISON)
Mr Alan Munro (EIS)

Mr David Nimmo (GMB)
Mr Alan Scott (UNISON)
Ms Fiona Shannon (EIS)

Mr Munro in the Chair

Attending:

Lorraine McMillan, Chief Executive; Caroline Innes, Deputy Chief Executive; Mhairi Shaw, Director of Education; Margaret McCrossan, Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer); Iain MacLean, Head of Environment (Planning, Property & Regeneration); Sharon Beattie, Human Resources Manager; Hugh Friel, Senior HR Officer; and Linda Hutchison, Senior Committee Services Officer.

Apologies:

Mr Martin Doran (GMB) and Mr Joe Lynch (UNISON).

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

1. The committee considered and approved as a correct record the Minute of the meeting held on 9 October 2014, subject to Councillor McAlpine's name being added to the list of apologies.

REVENUE BUDGET 2015/16

2. The committee considered a report by the Chief Executive on developments regarding the 2015/16 revenue budget, explaining that since March 2014 work had been ongoing to forecast future spending pressures and levels which had now been firmed up to deliver a proposed budget. In keeping with the Council's longer term approach to managing its financial difficulties, in February 2015 the Council also planned to set indicative budgets

incorporating planned savings measures for the 2016/17 and 2017/18 financial years. Savings measures for all 3 years had been the subject of full consultation.

When the Council's provisional grant figures for 2015/16 had been announced in December 2014 it had been confirmed that the core grant level aligned with that assumed in the Council's plans, being based on the same cash level as 2014/15. Consequently the Council required to self-fund pay and price increases.

Having made reference to additional grant due to the Council to fund free school meals for all primary 1-3 pupils, increased entitlement to early learning and childcare proposed under the Children and Young People Act, and how expenditure on related costs would be reflected in the 2015/16 budget, the report clarified that the headline grant figure incorporated funding to support a Council Tax freeze which was a condition of the grant, as was maintaining teacher numbers in line with pupil numbers for 2015/16. The report also commented on policy, funding and timescale uncertainties linked to welfare reform, and related proposals to continue to incorporate a contingency provision within the revenue budget to be drawn upon following clarification of the impact of changes.

Issues referred to on the financial outlook included the multi-year budgets set by the Council recently to help manage the extremely difficult financial circumstances and the value of continuing a longer term financial planning approach. Forecasts of the Council's financial position would be subject to ongoing review to reflect clarification provided on future grant funding and to review assumptions on spending pressures to be addressed and assumed Council Tax income. The report commented on a forecasted local government funding reduction in cash terms in 2016/17 and 2017/18, an anticipated shortfall of £22 million for the Council over the 3 year period 2015/18, how this compared to 2013/14 and 2014/15, and the scale of the difficulties faced which would be considered in line with the longer term financial management strategy and involve Trade Union engagement.

Whilst commenting on the Capital Plan for the General Fund which the Council would also consider in February, reference was made to the need for investment to reflect economic circumstances, a reduction in receipts from realising capital assets, and how an appropriate level of Capital Reserve had been established to apply over the coming years. Reference was also made to the Housing Capital Plan. More generally, related consultation and communication, including with the Trade Unions, was commented on.

Whilst commenting in detail including on the savings required, Councillor Fletcher thanked the authority's employees for their help addressing budget issues. He referred to the budget consultation, confirmed that the proposed budget was based on a flat cash settlement, and clarified that the 2016/17 and 2017/18 budgets set would be indicative pending confirmation of the actual financial settlement. He emphasised that the Council had been as open as possible about the budget, commenting that the current total estimated shortfall of £22 million had increased from a previous estimate in respect of which he referred to related developments on teachers' superannuation and the local government pension scheme. Councillor Fletcher emphasised the need for a balanced budget and further efficiencies, confirming that meeting the Scottish Government's specific grant conditions reduced flexibility elsewhere in the budget. Referring to the authority's investment in teaching staff, he expressed disappointment that all local authorities, including those who had invested less on this, were being treated the same way in terms of the grant conditions. Regarding the Capital Plan the Council would consider in February, he cited examples of good projects to be progressed.

In reply to Mr Munro, Councillor Fletcher confirmed the Council's commitment to no compulsory redundancies for 2015/16 and the living wage. He stated that pending

confirmation of the grant settlement for future years, guarantees beyond 2015/16 could not be given, but everything possible to avoid future compulsory redundancies would be done.

Also in response to Mr Munro who asked how concerned the Council was about addressing the total £22 million shortfall forecast, Councillor Fletcher commented that it remained very concerned about the financial position, emphasising how challenging addressing this was. He highlighted the need to work even harder to identify ways of addressing the position, seeking Trade Union help to work in partnership with the Council to reduce costs, encourage further efficiencies, and reduce absence levels which remained too high.

Having reiterated that it was hoped that the transparency of the budget consultation had been helpful, Councillor McAlpine welcomed comments on specific proposals given difficult choices faced, adding that during the public consultation some members of the public had acknowledged the challenges faced by local authorities associated with the lengthy, ongoing Council Tax freeze. Having welcomed that budget consultation had taken place, Mr Munro explained that the Trade Unions held some concerns regarding how information on some proposals had been presented, citing an example of an inaccuracy and concerns it had created, and stressing the need for clarity on cuts that would be detrimental to services. Mr Larkin acknowledged that the anticipated total savings associated with various savings proposals were provided, but added that how such figures had been determined in detail had not which was unhelpful. Councillor Fletcher gave an assurance that there had never been any intention to mislead, highlighting the challenging nature of cuts and dangers of some misreporting in the press.

In response to Mr Lees who highlighted that staff directly affected by cuts were seeking information on the detailed implications for them as soon as possible, Councillor Fletcher acknowledged the importance of this and of addressing issues sensitively. He and the Chief Executive confirmed that such engagement could not precede the Council formally setting its budget in February, but that discussions could ensue after that, prioritising first those on services where savings would be realised in the first year. Complementing previous comments, the Chief Executive stressed that every effort was being made to minimise the impact of budget cuts on staff, such as by considering where natural attrition could deliver savings. The importance of balancing when and how to deliver information and value of partnership working with the Trade Unions on this was commented on.

Having welcomed the commitment given on no compulsory redundancies and the living wage, Mr Munro acknowledged that absence levels needed to be addressed given their impact, adding that stress was currently a predominant reason for this. Having acknowledged pressures faced by staff linked to the financial climate, Councillor Fletcher stressed the importance of addressing absence issues but acknowledged too that where stress levels were considered high that should be examined also. Mr Lees added that determining causes of stress and addressing that was in everybody's interest, welcoming the opportunity to work with the Council on this. The Human Resources Manager commented on current absence statistics, stressing the commitment that existed to addressing this, including in partnership with the Trade Unions. Councillor McAlpine added that the Corporate Management Team was committed to supporting initiatives that could reduce absence. Mr Lees acknowledged the importance of managers discharging their absence related responsibilities appropriately.

Mr Munro welcomed the commitment to maintaining teacher numbers, highlighting the impact on attainment should numbers reduce. More generally, in response to Mr Munro, Councillor Fletcher confirmed that the detailed budget proposals would be available when the agenda for the forthcoming Council meeting was issued on 6 February.

The committee noted the position and comments made.

1402

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

3. The Committee noted that the next meeting would take place on 21 May 2015.

MINUTE
of
GIFFNOCK AND THORNLIEBANK, NETHERLEE, STAMPERLAND
AND WILLIAMWOOD AREA FORUM

Minute of Meeting held at 7.00pm in Woodfarm High School, Woodfarm on 25 February 2015.

Present:

Councillor Mary Montague

Councillor Jim Fletcher

Lynne Arnott (Thornliebank Seniors Forum); Bill Considine (Stamperland and Netherlee Community Council); Monty Cowen (Jewish Representative Council); Dan McPhail (Thornliebank Community Council); and Jim Martin (Giffnock Community Council).

Councillor Montague in the Chair

Attending:

Paul O'Neil, Committee Services Officer.

Apologies:

Councillors Ralph Robertson; and Gordon Wallace; Savio D'Souza (Giffnock Community Council); and Helena Shanks (Thornliebank Community Council).

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

1. The forum considered and approved the Minute of the meeting held on 3 December 2014.

PROJECT MONITORING AND PROPOSALS 2014/15

2. The forum considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive, providing details of projects previously approved by the forum in 2014/15; the balance outstanding in the General Services budget for 2014/15; and details of a project that had been continued for consideration.

Whilst commenting on the proposal previously approved by the forum to replace dead trees on Eastwoodmains Road, Giffnock, Mr Martin sought clarification about whose responsibility it was to maintain the trees on Hathaway Drive, Giffnock.

1404

Following discussion, It was agreed that the Environment Department be contacted regarding this matter and that once a response was received that it be reported back to the next meeting.

The forum agreed:-

- (a) that consideration of the proposal to extend the basketball practice area at Overlee Park be continued;
- (b) that clarification be sought from the Environment Department regarding the maintenance responsibility of the trees on Hathaway Drive, Giffnock; and
- (b) to otherwise note the terms of the report.

BUDGET ALLOCATION FOR 2015/16

3. The Forum considered and noted a report by the Deputy Chief Executive, advising of the General Services budget allocation for 2015/16.

POLICE AND FIRE SERVICES – UPDATE

4. There were no police or fire representatives in attendance at the meeting.

Copies of the multi member ward plans for the third quarter of 2014/15 for Giffnock and Thornliebank (Ward 3) and Netherlee, Stamperland and Williamwood (Ward 4) were tabled at the meeting.

The forum noted the terms of the plans.

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2016

5. The forum considered and noted a report by the Deputy Chief Executive, providing details of the meetings of the forum in 2016.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

6. It was noted that the next meeting would be held in Woodfarm High School on 27 May 2015 at 7 pm.

MINUTE
of
NEILSTON, UPLAWMOOR AND NEWTON MEARNS NORTH AND BARRHEAD
AREA FORUM

Minute of Meeting held at 7.00pm in the Council Offices, 211 Main Street, Barrhead on 26 February 2015.

Present:

Councillor Kenny Hay

Grace Brookmyre, (East Renfrewshire Faith Forum); Rita Connelly, (Auchenback Tenants and Residents Group); Inspector Alan Dickson, (Police Scotland); Station Commander John Divers, (Scottish Fire and Rescue Service); David Jesner (Mearns Community Council); Gordon Steel, (Uplawmoor Community Council); and Alan Walker, (Neilston Development Trust).

Councillor Hay in the Chair

Attending:

Ron Leitch, Committee Services Officer.

Apologies:

Councillors Elaine Green and Paul O’Kane; and Rena McGuire (Barrhead Community Council).

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

1. The forum considered and approved the Minute of the meeting held on 11 December 2014 subject to an amendment to record that Rita Connelly had tendered her apologies for non-attendance.

POLICE/FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES – UPDATE

2. Councillor Hay invited Station Commander Divers to update members on the activities of Scottish Fire and Rescue Service in the forum’s area since the last meeting.

Station Commander Divers, referring to the Tactical Assessment Report for the period 1 August 2014 to 31 January 2015 which had been tabled at the start of the meeting, highlighted the increase in the number of road traffic collisions (RTCs) within the area and expressed the view that this had been caused by a prolonged period of exceptionally low overnight temperatures resulting in very icy driving conditions rather than a deterioration in

the standard of driving in general across the area. He went on to explain that the increase in refuse fires had been mainly as a result of Bonfire Night 2014 being dry compared with the very wet conditions in 2013. The number of deliberate fire raising acts within the former Shanks site had reduced considerably as a result of the clearance of the site and the fitting of lockable gates at the entrance.

Concluding his remarks, Station Commander Divers explained that he was now in charge of both Barrhead and Clarkston Community Fire Stations and that a number of community involvement events were planned throughout the year. He also advised the forum that Local Senior Officer Paul Tanzilli was due to retire in the near future and a replacement would be appointed in due course.

Inspector Dickson then updated members on the activities of Police Scotland locally since the last meeting.

Inspector Dickson, referring to the 2014/15 Quarter 3 Ward Updates which had been circulated, highlighted a number of key figures relating to the 4 priority areas identified by the public prior to the individual ward plans being developed. There had been a significant increase in detections in relation to drug supply and possession; the number of assaults had increased, albeit from a historically low level in 2013/14, but the detection rate for crimes of this nature had reached a record level of 92%; offences relating to housebreaking and other thefts had been disrupted through the examination of crime patterns and intelligence gathering with a view to targeting individuals known to be involved in these activities; and there had been no fatalities and fewer people injured on the roads as result of initiatives undertaken to influence driver behaviour.

The winter initiative which had seen a dedicated team of officers patrolling the main shopping centre areas to disrupt individuals intent on committing crimes of dishonesty and theft and to provide reassurance to residents, had been judged to be a great success and the festive period had passed without any serious incidents.

Responding to concerns from members, Inspector Dickson explained that in the vast majority of cases, victims and offenders in cases of assault were personally known to each other and that alcohol usually played a major part in the incident. He also expressed his satisfaction that campus police officers would be retained for 2015/16 and commended the efforts of the East Renfrewshire Young Team, a group of young people supported by campus police officers to undertake valuable community service, which had won a national award for their work. He went on to explain that campus police officers underwent joint training with partners in the social work service in order to assist them in dealing with vulnerable young people.

Having heard Councillor Hay thank Station Commander Divers and Inspector Dickson for their presentations, the forum noted the position.

PROJECT MONITORING AND PROPOSALS 2014/15

3. The forum considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive giving details of the amount allocated and balance remaining in the 2014/15 budget.

The report outlined the current budget spend and listed the projects approved by the forum and under delegated powers.

Following full and detailed discussion on the proposals submitted, the forum agreed:-

- (a) that the following projects be approved

Opening Balance £8,738

PROJECT	COSTS/COMMENTS
Provision of bench and litter bin at Glen Halls, Neilston (revised location)	£917
Power supply to site of proposed outdoor bandstand at Fairweather Park	£3,000 (subject to clarification from Parks section of the feasibility of the proposal)
Total	£3,917
Remaining Balance	£4,821

- (b) to note that further projects could still be submitted for approval under delegated powers; and
- (c) otherwise, to note the report.

FORUM BUDGET 2015/16

4. The forum considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive giving details of the budget allocation for 2015/16.

Having noted that the budget of £7,500 allocated to the forum by the Council as part of its Revenue Estimates 2015/16 represented a reduction of almost 50% compared with 2014/15, members engaged in a wide-ranging discussion in respect of alternative methods of community engagement and funding including, amongst other things, transferring the allocated budget to the Community Grants Scheme. Other suggestions included the creation of a new community fund with funding coming from the Council and from contributions from the community benefit schemes associated with the various windfarms which had been established within East Renfrewshire.

Discussion also took place in respect of how any future funding could be allocated with views ranging from community groups bidding for funding for specific projects similar to the current position with respect to area forum funds, to funds being distributed directly to community councils on a per-capita basis. It was suggested that allocating funds by either of these methods would lead to greater community engagement to the benefit of both the community and the Council.

The view was expressed by a number of members that area forums, in their current form, had reached the end of their useful lives and should be disbanded and a new system of community engagement introduced.

Following further discussion, the forum agreed:-

- (a) to note the proposed budget allocation for 2015/16;

- (b) that consideration be given to the creation of a new method of funding for community organisations; and
- (c) that the forum Chair, Councillor Hay, contacts the Head of Democratic and Partnership Services to express the view of the forum that Area Forums, in their present form, had reached the end of their useful lives and should be disbanded and a new system of community engagement introduced.

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS - JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2016

5. The forum considered and noted a report by the Deputy Chief Executive providing details of the proposed meeting dates of the forum for the period January to December 2016.

QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION.

6. The following issues were raised:-

- (i) Warranty conditions relating to noticeboards supplied to community councils

Mr Jesner expressed concern that, following the installation of a new noticeboard for the community council at Broomburn shops, no-one within the Council appeared to be able to provide information regarding what warranty, if any, was given by the supplier in the event of faults arising shortly after commission. The Committee Services Officer undertook to approach the Council's Property and Technical Services team with a view to clarifying the position.

- (ii) Advertising trailer at Greenlaw Village

Mr Jesner requested information regarding what action, if any, the Council could take in respect of a vehicle and associated advertising trailer which was parked, seemingly on a permanent basis, opposite the Premier Inn at Greenlaw. Following discussion it was suggested that Mr Jesner approach the Roads Service or the Planning Service with a view to ascertaining the legal position relating to the vehicle and whether or not any enforcement action could be taken to have it removed.

The forum noted the position.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

7. It was reported that the next meeting of the forum would be held in the Council Offices, Main Street, Barrhead on Thursday 28 May 2015 at 7.00pm.

MINUTE

of

NEWTON MEARNS SOUTH, BUSBY CLARKSTON AND EAGLESHAM AREA FORUM**Minute of Meeting held at 7.00pm in Mearns Castle High School on 3 March 2015.****Present:**Provost Alastair Carmichael
Councillor Barbara GrantCouncillor Ian McAlpine
Councillor Jim Swift

Inspector Alan Dickson (Police Scotland); Bill Duguid, (Eaglesham and Waterfoot Community Council); George McLachlan (Busby Community Council); John Seenan (East Renfrewshire Neighbourhood Watch Association); and Irene Yona (Newton Mearns Community Council).

Provost Carmichael in the Chair

Attending:

Eamonn Daly, Democratic Services Manager.

Apologies:

Councillors Alan Lafferty, and Stewart Miller and John Divers (Scottish Fire and Rescue Service).

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

1. The forum considered and approved the Minute of the meeting of 2 December 2014.

MATTERS ARISING

2. Under reference to Item 2 of the Minute of the previous meeting, Mr McLachlan reported that he had now seen the breakdown of costs for the installation of the slide at the playpark at Cartside Road, Busby. He expressed concern that the costs were in his view excessive and questioned whether some of the work listed in the price had actually been carried out.

In the course of discussion around the prices quoted for potential projects to be funded by the forum, Mr Daly clarified that officers had to follow strict procurement processes, and suggested that Mr McLachlan e-mail him with his concerns about the project which would be taken up with the relevant officers.

The forum noted the position.

BUDGET ALLOCATION 2015/16

3. The forum considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive, giving details of the general services budget allocation for 2015/16.

It was noted that the Council was required to make significant savings across all departments, and that as part of the agreed savings the funding available to area forums had been reduced, with the funding available for 2015/16 being £4,600.

The forum noted the report.

PROJECT PROPOSALS 2015/16

4. The forum considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive regarding proposed projects for 2015/16.

1 project, for the installation of a bench on Kirkhill Road, Newton Mearns, had been submitted for consideration.

Following discussion on the background to the request and possible locations for a bench. the forum agreed that the following project be approved:-

General Services Budget £4,600

PROJECT	COSTS/COMMENTS
Installation of bench on Kirkhill Road.	£800, subject to the identification of an appropriate location and confirmation that there were no landowner permission issues
TOTAL	£800
REMAINING BALANCE	£3,800

POLICE UPDATE

5. Inspector Dickson provided an update on the activities of the police locally since the last meeting.

Referring to the 2014/15 Quarter 3 Ward update Inspector Dickson was heard on some of the work that had been carried out. He explained that in the Busby, Clarkston & Eaglesham Ward there had been a reduction in the number of offences of drug dealing although possession offences had increased, particularly around the Whitelee Windfarm where stop and search was being used by the police and producing positive results. With regards to the Newton Mearns South ward, Inspector Dickson explained that although there had been a slight increase in the number of housebreakings for the reported period, preliminary figures for Quarter 4 were showing a reduction.

Inspector Dickson also reported that following the public consultation exercise towards the end of 2014, the 2015/16 ward plans were in the final stages of preparation prior to being introduced from 1 April 2015. He reported that the results of the research work carried out had shown that the same public priorities in the same order had emerged for both wards for 2015/15, these being:-

- Drunkenness and anti-social behaviour
- Dishonesty, housebreaking and other theft
- Violent crime
- Speeding and inconsiderate motorists.

He explained that the answers to the consultation reinforced what the police already knew about crime patterns and public concerns in the area.

Inspector Dickson also made reference to the success of the Christmas initiative conducted by the police over the festive period. As part of this initiative visits had been made to businesses such as bookmakers and post offices to provide them with advice and guidance on steps to take to reduce the likelihood of robbery. It was noted that there had been no robberies in East Renfrewshire over the festive period.

Thereafter in response to a question from Councillor Grant on the perception of crime levels against actual crime levels, Inspector Dickson explained that whilst people may be concerned about crime levels, the reality was that crime levels in East Renfrewshire were low. By way of example he explained that whilst people may be concerned about violent crime, there were only 2 crimes of this type in East Renfrewshire the previous year. However, he explained that people being concerned about crime did have an effect on their quality of life and it was the role of the police not only to deal with crime when it happened but to provide reassurance and also act as a deterrent.

Provost Carmichael questioned whether in the light of a general reduction in crime levels, there was any future likelihood of a reduction on the number of police officers in East Renfrewshire. In reply, Inspector Dickson provided details of current staffing levels and indicated that any reduction from current levels would be very challenging in terms of local operational management.

Further discussion also took place on crimes of dishonesty and scammers in the course of which Inspector Dickson outlined some of the very positive work that had been taking place in conjunction with local banks and local trading standards officers.

In addition Inspector Dickson welcomed the retention of the campus cops for 2015/16.

The forum noted the information.

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

6. The forum considered and noted a report by the Deputy Chief Executive providing details of the dates for meetings of the forum in 2016 as follows:-

Tuesday 1 March 2016
Tuesday 24 May 2016
Tuesday 6 September 2016
Tuesday 29 November 2016

QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

7. The following issues were raised

(i) Citizens UK Refugee Campaign

Mr Seenan advised the forum that he was a member of the National Commission for Justice and Peace, and that that organisation had been approached by another organisation, Citizens UK, to support work to increase the number of refugees settled in the UK. As part of this campaign, Citizens UK were suggesting that councils actively participate in the resettlement of refugees.

Citizens UK had produced a leaflet and Mr Seenan circulated copies for information.

(ii) Online planning Information

Mrs Yona referred to the Council's decision that copies of objections to planning applications would not be available online and to the difficulties this posed for people now having to go to the Planning Offices to view these in hard copy.

Discussion took place in the course of which Councillor Grant queried why someone submitting a representation to a planning application would actually need to see online what other people had said in respect of an application, whilst Mr Duguid suggested that it may prove helpful to see how much support or opposition a being generated to a particular proposal.

(iii) Discontinuation of area forums

Mrs Yona referred to discussions that had taken place at the recent meeting of the Neilston, Uplawmoor, Newton Mearns North and Barrhead Area Forum about the perceived ineffectiveness of the area forums and to the suggestion from by that area forum that the forums be wound up and new methods of community engagement introduced. It was also suggested that the funds currently allocated to area forums could be disbursed to community councils.

In the course of discussion that followed, in response to questions from Councillor Grant on the review of area forums, Mr Daly explained that the review was being conducted on the back of the community empowerment legislation going through the Scottish Parliament. As this had been delayed there had been a subsequent knock on effect to the area forum review.

Councillors Swift referred to the lack of participation in forums by some of the Council's partner organisations, and supported by Councillor Grant suggested that the area forums in their current form had outlived their usefulness.

Mr Daly explained that any decisions on the future of area forums, future community engagement methods, and the destination for any residual funding in the event forums were wound up would be matters for the Council.

The forum noted;

- (a) the campaign by Citizen UK to increase the number of refugees in the UK;
and
- (b) the recommendation made by the Neilston, Uplawmoor, Newton Mearns North and Barrhead Area Forum and the comments made at this meeting.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

8. It was noted that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday, 26 May 2015 at 7pm in Mearns Castle High School.

