

MINUTE
of
CABINET

Minute of Meeting held at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 16 January 2014.

Present:

Councillor Jim Fletcher (Leader)	Councillor Mary Montague
Councillor Tony Buchanan (Deputy Leader)	Councillor Paul O’Kane
Councillor Alan Lafferty	Councillor Vincent Waters
Councillor Ian McAlpine	

Councillor Fletcher, Leader, in the Chair

Attending:

Lorraine McMillan, Chief Executive; Mhairi Shaw, Director of Education; Andy Cahill, Director of Environment; Norie Williamson, Director of Finance; Margaret McCrossan, Head of Accountancy Services; Phil Daws, Housing Services Manager; and Paul O’Neil, Committee Services Officer.

Apologies:

Councillors Danny Devlin and Elaine Green.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

887. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

AREA FORUM MINUTES

888. The Cabinet considered the Minutes of the meetings of the undernoted Area Forums which form Appendices 1, 2 and 3 accompanying this Minute:-

- (i) Newton Mearns South, Busby, Clarkston and Eaglesham Area Forum – 26 November 2013;
- (ii) Giffnock and Thornliebank, Netherlee, Stamperland and Williamwood Area Forum – 27 November 2013; and
- (iii) Neilston, Uplawmoor and Newton Mearns North and Barrhead Area Forum – 28 November 2013.

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

COUNCIL TAX ON LONG TERM UNOCCUPIED PROPERTIES

889. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Finance, submitting for consideration the rates of Council Tax discounts to be applied to properties which were unoccupied over six months.

The report explained that the Local Government Finance (Unoccupied Properties)(Scotland) Act 2012 gave the Council discretion to vary rates of Council Tax discount or impose increases for long term unoccupied properties. Details of the discounts that could be applied were outlined in the report.

The report highlighted that in East Renfrewshire the incidence of such properties was very small and it was likely that altering discount rates to the level allowed would be seen to be punitive and unfair by the owners of properties likely to be affected. However, it was noted that should the incidence of long term unoccupied properties become more widespread in the Council area, the Council would be able to review its policy on Council Tax discounts at that time.

The Cabinet, having considered the rates of Council Tax discounts that could be applied to long term unoccupied properties and having noted the low incidence of such properties in East Renfrewshire, decided not to alter the existing discount rates.

ESTIMATED REVENUE BUDGET OUT-TURN 2013/14

890. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Finance, detailing the projected Revenue Budget out-turn for 2013/14 and providing details of the expected variances together with summary cost information for each of the undernoted services:-

- (i) Education Department;
- (ii) Community Health and Care Partnership (CHCP);
- (iii) Environment Department;
- (iv) Environment Department – Support;
- (v) Chief Executive's – Community Services;
- (vi) Chief Executive's – Support;
- (vii) Finance;
- (viii) Other Expenditure/Housing; and
- (ix) Housing Revenue Account.

Whilst noting that the year end out-turn financial position was reported as an underspend of £2,084,700, the report highlighted that whilst most departments expected to operate within budget, management action was required within the CHCP, Property and Technical Services and the Housing Revenue Account to address overspends against departmental budget at the year-end.

Furthermore, the report identified operational variances across the Council that required management action to ensure that expenditure would be within budget at the end of the financial year, that all underspends were consolidated wherever possible and that spending up to budget levels did not take place. It was noted that a number of factors in the latter part of the financial year might impact on the financial out-turn position. These included the full effect of winter maintenance costs, revisions that might arise from Devolved School Management arrangements and any one-off costs that might result from re-structuring proposals.

The Cabinet, having noted the reported probable out-turn position of the Revenue Budget 2013/14, agreed that:-

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

MOBILE WORKING FOR RESPONSIVE REPAIRS

891. The Cabinet considered and approved a report by the Director of Environment, seeking approval of an exemption from tendering procedures, in accordance with the provisions of clause 6(iv) of the Council's Standing Orders Relating to Contracts, to allow a contract to be negotiated with the Council's current service provider for the procurement and installation of the software and hardware associated with "Servitor Mobile" for the implementation of mobile working for the housing responsive repairs service.

WELFARE REFORM HOUSING ADVICE POST

892. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the Council of 7 February 2013 (Page 387, Item 407 refers), when it was agreed in approving the Revenue Estimates for 2013/14 that a contingency provision be established to meet unforeseen Welfare Reform costs, the Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment, seeking approval to use resources from the Welfare Reform contingency provision to fund a temporary staff member until March 2015 to provide housing advice in order to mitigate the impact of welfare reform.

The report highlighted that due to the likelihood of financial hardship to Council residents as a result of legislative changes in relation to Housing Benefit it was considered necessary to create the post as detailed in the report in order to provide additional advice and additional options.

The Cabinet approved the proposal to use resources from the Welfare Reform contingency provision to fund a temporary housing staff member until March 2015 to provide housing advice in order to mitigate the impact of welfare reform and in particular to prevent homelessness.

CHAIR

MINUTE

of

NEWTON MEARNS SOUTH, BUSBY CLARKSTON AND EAGLESHAM AREA FORUM**Minute of Meeting held at 7.00pm in Mearns Castle High School on 26 November 2013.****Present:**

Provost Alastair Carmichael (Chair)
Councillor Barbara Grant

Councillor Alan Lafferty
Councillor Stewart Miller

Sergeant Tom Devine (Police Scotland); Station Commander John Divers (Scottish Fire and Rescue Service); 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.

Also Attending:

Korin Gillespie and Kelly Jamison, local residents.

Apologies:

Councillors Ian McAlpine and Jim Swift; Bill Duguid, (Eaglesham and Waterfoot Community Council); Liz Holms (East Renfrewshire CHCP); and Ian Thomas (Clarkston Community Council).

POLICE AND FIRE AND RESCUE MATTERS

1. Sergeant Devine was heard on the activities of the police in the forum area since the previous meeting. He referred to discussions at the previous meeting around the number of people being stopped by the police. He clarified that many of the searches carried out were consensual and that on every occasion a search was carried out it was done so with courtesy and respect.

Having referred to housebreakings in a particular area in respect of which an arrest had been made, in response to Provost Carmichael he outlined the work being carried out by the police to tackle the problem of speeding motorists as well as other road traffic matters.

Discussion also took place on the wearing of high visibility jackets by the police and the deterrent this had on driver behaviour.

Thereafter Station Commander Divers provided an update on the activities of the fire service across the area for the period May to November. Mr Divers explained that the figures presented were very good.

Having commented on a number of specific matters referred to in the report, Mr Divers, in response to Provost Carmichael explained the possible reasons for the cause of an accidental dwelling fire being categorised as “electricity supply”.

Referring to electrical supply interruptions, Mr Seenan highlighted that this was often the cause of house alarms being set off and enquired if the emergency services were required to attend in these circumstances.

In response, Sergeant Devine explained that in the event the police were notified of a house alarm being set off they would always attend.

On behalf of the forum, Provost Carmichael thanked both officers for attending and providing the information.

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

2. The forum considered and approved the Minute of the meeting of 3 September 2013.

PROJECT MONITORING AND PROPOSALS 2013/14

3. The forum considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive giving details of the allocated General Services budget for 2013/14 and remaining available balance, together with details of 2 projects for consideration by the forum.

Provost Carmichael introduced, Korin Gillespie and Kelly Jamison who were in attendance to speak in support of the proposals to install fencing at Broomburn park.

They were heard in support of the proposals and in response to questions from members of the forum.

Having heard the Democratic Services Manager on uncertainties surrounding area forum funding for 2014/15 which may impact on the ability to support the proposed fencing project, following full discussion the forum:-

- (a) agreed that the following projects be approved:-

General Services Budget £5,050

PROJECT	COSTS/COMMENTS
Installation of supportive disability swing at Easterton Avenue park, Busby	£650

Installation of fencing at Broomburn Park, Newton Mearns	£4,400 Subject to the balance of the project (£6,585) being met once future area forum funding had been clarified.
TOTAL	£5,050
REMAINING BALANCE	NIL

- (b) agreed that the balance of funding for the installation of fencing at Broomburn playpark, Newton Mearns would be considered at the next meeting of the forum at which time area forum funding levels for 2014/15 would be known;
- (c) noted that Mrs Yona would raise with Newton Mearns Community Council the possibility of the community council making a contribution to the fencing project; and
- (d) agreed that delegated powers be granted to the Head of Democratic and Partnership Services in consultation with the Chair to approve any projects up to the end of the current financial year.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

4. It was noted that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday, 4 March 2014 at 7pm in Williamwood High School.

MINUTE

of

**GIFFNOCK AND THORNLIEBANK, NETHERLEE STAMPERLAND AND
WILLIAMWOOD AREA FORUM**

**Minute of Meeting held at 7.00pm in Woodfarm High School, Woodfarm on 27
November 2013**

Present:

Councillor Mary Montague (Chair)
Councillor Gordon McCaskill

Councillor Ralph Robertson

Ritchie Adam (Thornliebank Community Council); and Savio D' Souza (Giffnock Community Council).

Councillor Montague in the Chair

Attending:

Paul O'Neil, Committee Services Officer.

Also Attending:

Mark Harris, Civil Contingencies Officer, Civil Contingencies Service.

Apologies:

Councillor Jim Fletcher, Monty Cowen (Jewish Representative Council), and Bernard Fishman (Eastwood Crime Prevention Panel).

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

1. The forum considered and approved the Minute of the meeting held on 28 August 2013.

CIVIL CONTINGENCY SERVICE

2. Councillor Montague introduced Mr Mark Harris, Civil Contingencies Officer who was present to give a short presentation on the work of the Civil Contingency Service.

Mr Harris began his presentation by explaining that community resilience considered the importance of resilience, the roles and responsibilities of the local authority and community resilience plans. It was noted that individual resilience dealt with such matters as how individuals coped with emergencies such as the loss of water, electricity or damage to property and the importance of preparing in advance for such emergencies by working with our families, friends and neighbours. Examples of the roles and responsibilities of the local authority were also highlighted such as supporting emergency services, agencies and community planning partners.

Whilst noting the importance of neighbourhood and community organisations in preparing for, responding to and recovering from emergencies, Mr Harris explained the purpose of community resilience plans and indicated the ways in which these plans could be developed.

There followed a short question and answer session in the course of which Mr Harris provided clarification on the work and operation of the Civil Contingency Service in dealing with emergencies and how community organisations could become involved at a local level.

Councillor Montague, on behalf of the forum, thanked Mr Harris for his presentation.

PROJECT MONITORING AND PROPOSALS 2013/14

3. The forum considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive, providing details of the proposals previously approved by the forum together with details of the balance outstanding in the General Services budget.

The forum agreed:-

- (a) that delegated powers be granted to the Head of Democratic and Partnership Services in consultation with the Chair to approve any projects up to the end of the current financial year; and
- (b) to otherwise note the report.

POLICE AND FIRE SERVICES – UPDATE

4. There were no Police or Fire representatives in attendance at the meeting.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

5. It was noted that the next meeting would be held in Woodfarm High School on 26 February 2013 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 28 November 2013

Present:

Councillor Kenny Hay (Chair)

Heather Anderson (Uplawmoor Community Council); Station Commander Cameron Black (Scottish Fire and Rescue Service); Rita Connelly (Auchenback Tenants and Residents Association); Sergeant Matt Gemmell (Police Scotland); Steven Healy (Neilston Community Council); David Jesner (Newton Mearns Community Council); and Linda McCullagh (Hillside Tenants and Residents Association).

Councillor Hay in the Chair

Attending:

Jennifer Graham, Committee Services Officer.

Also Attending:

Cath Close, Neilston and Uplawmoor First Responders.

Apologies:

Councillors Betty Cunningham, Danny Devlin, Elaine Green, Paul O'Kane and Tommy Reilly; Grace Brookmyre (East Renfrewshire Faith Forum) and John Divers (Scottish Fire and Rescue Service).

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

1. The forum considered and approved the Minute of the meeting held on 29 August 2013.

CCTV

2. Under reference to the previous Minute (Item 4(a) refers) when Councillor Hay undertook to contact the appropriate officers with a view to them contacting Mr Jesner to discuss CCTV, Mr Jesner advised that he had not been contacted in this regard. Councillor Hay advised that he would send a further request to the appropriate officers to contact Mr Jesner.

The forum noted that Councillor Hay would contact the appropriate officers.

POLICE AND FIRE AND RESCUE MATTERS

3. Councillor Hay invited Station Commander Black and Sergeant Gemmell to give an update on any activities in the forum area.

Station Commander Black was heard on local fire and rescue statistics advising that most figures had decreased, including for primary and secondary fires, and the only increase had been in respect of unwanted fire alarm signals (e.g. false alarms). He advised that Station Commander Divers and his staff would visit Barrhead Health Centre during December to encourage local people to sign up for home fire safety visits and he would ask Station Commander Divers to advertise this initiative by sending information leaflets to local groups.

Thereafter, Sergeant Gemmell advised that local police offices would only open during office hours as a result of a national footfall survey which had taken place. The Barrhead Police Office would open from 8am to 6pm daily and would continue to be manned during these hours. He further advised that both Stewart Street and Govan Police Stations in Glasgow would continue to be open to the public twenty four hours a day. Public satisfaction surveys had been completed and it was expected that the results would be available in Spring 2014. He further advised that police officers were attending a number of youth meetings in Neilston during November and December, in conjunction with Alcohol Scotland, to discuss local issues and concerns.

Mr Healy advised that 14 young people had recently attended the Neilston Community Council meeting and had requested further information about "proceeds of crime" funds and whether or not they could be used to fund local initiatives. In response, Ms McCullagh advised that new funding was available and she would pass the appropriate information to Mr Healy.

Mr Jesner advised that a large galvanised tank on a local farm had recently been covered in graffiti and referred to an initiative in Cardiff where billboards were erected to allow young people to use these for graffiti instead of private property. He asked if a similar initiative would work in this area. Sergeant Gemmell advised that such an initiative may not be required in this area as graffiti incidents had declined in East Renfrewshire in recent years.

Having heard Councillor Hay advise that he had received a number of compliments from members of the public regarding recent days of action undertaken by the Police, the forum noted the position.

PROJECT MONITORING AND PROPOSALS 2013/14

4. The forum considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive giving details of the allocated general services budget for 2013/14 and submitting proposals for consideration.

The Committee Services Officer provided an update on previously approved projects. Referring to the project to resurface the access road to the Scout Hall in Barrhead, which had been approved subject to match funding by the Roads and Transportation Service and satisfactory conclusion of legal investigations, she advised that the land was held within the Council's Housing Revenue Account. Having discussed this matter with officers from both the Housing Service and Roads and Transportation Service, she advised that match funding could not be provided due to budgetary constraints. An inspection of the road had recently been undertaken and it was reported that there were no safety defects on the access road and it was unsuitable for extensive patching. She further advised that the project to fund a pensioner's Christmas dinner in Neilston, which had been approved at the meeting on 13 June 2013, had now been withdrawn and the funds returned to the General Services budget.

A further project proposal was tabled requesting funding for a public access defibrillator in Uplawmoor. Mrs Close from Neilston First Responders was in attendance to answer questions from members regarding the project. During discussion, in the course of which Mr Jesner indicated that this excellent project should be replicated in other areas, Mrs Close advised that she would obtain further information regarding a cost for the defibrillator casing and would submit this in due course. Members of the forum advised that they would be keen to support the additional funding if the cost was not prohibitive.

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

- (a) that the following projects be approved

General Services Budget - Balance £7,352

PROJECT	COSTS/COMMENTS
Relocation and repair of notice board from Hillside Road to Kirkstyle Lane, Neilston	£253.30
Replacement of air conditioning unit at Auchenback Resource Centre	Up to £2,000.00
Public access defibrillator in Uplawmoor	£400.00
TOTAL	£2,653.30
REMAINING BALANCE	£4,698.70

- (b) that the following project be refused

PROJECT	ESTIMATED COST
Provision of electricity supply at former public toilets, Kirkstyle Lane, Neilston	£2,550.00

- (c) that funding of £4,000 to resurface the access at the Barrhead Scout Hall, approved at the previous meeting, be withdrawn as no match funding could be found;

- (d) to note that the remaining balance would now be £8,698.70 to take account of the decision at (c) above;
- (e) to note that Mrs Close would provide information on the cost of the defibrillator casing to the Committee Services Officer who would forward this to the Chair for consideration regarding funding;
- (f) that delegated powers be granted to the Head of Democratic and Partnership Services in consultation with the Chair to approve any projects up to the end of the current financial year; and
- (g) otherwise, to note the report.

QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

5. The following issue was raised:-

Council Consultations

Referring to a number of consultations which were currently taking place in respect of modifications to the Local Development Plan, Mr Jesner requested a breakdown of the responses received by the Council to these consultations. Councillor Hay advised that this information was not yet available but confirmed that a report would be submitted to the Council for consideration in early 2014. Having heard Mr Jesner advise that local groups had not received a breakdown of the responses submitted during the original Local Development Plan consultation earlier this year, Councillor Hay advised that he would raise this matter at a Members' Working Group which was taking place the following week.

Referring to plans for a new Barrhead High School at Cowan Park, Councillor Hay advised that invitations to comment on the proposals had been issued to local groups but a number of groups had decided not to respond. The responses received to all of the consultations would form part of the report to Council at the beginning of 2014 and would thereafter be submitted to the Scottish Government for examination.

Mr Jesner referred to developer contributions received by the Council and requested clarification regarding whether or not some of this funding could be used to widen the road at Hillfield. Councillor Hay advised that he would seek clarification in this regard.

Following discussion, the forum noted that Councillor Hay would seek clarification on a breakdown of responses to the original Local Development Plan consultation and developer contributions for Hillfield and report back to Mr Jesner in due course.

DATE AND VENUE FOR NEXT MEETING

6. It was reported that the next meeting of the forum would be held in the Council Offices, Main Street, Barrhead on Thursday, 27 February 2014.