

MINUTE
of
CABINET

Minute of Meeting held at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 27 March 2014.

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; Andy Cahill, Director of Environment; Norie Williamson, Director of Finance; Margaret McCrossan, Head of Accountancy Services; Louise Pringle, Head of Customer and Business Change Services; Patrick Murray, Head of ICT; Andy Corry, Head of Environment (Environmental Services and Roads); Iain MacLean, Head of Environment (Planning, Property and Regeneration); Charlie Armstrong, Roads and Transportation Manager; Jackie Martin, Business Manager; and Paul O'Neil, Committee Services Officer.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

985. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (FIRST TIER)

986. The Cabinet considered and noted the Minute of the meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee (First Tier) held on 30 January 2014, which forms Appendix 1 accompanying this Minute.

AREA FORUM MINUTES

987. 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 – 26 February 2014;

- (ii) Neilston, Uplawmoor and Newton Mearns North and Barrhead Area Forum – 27 February 2014; and
- (iii) Newton Mearns South, Busby, Clarkston and Eaglesham Area Forum – 4 March 2014.

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

CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE AWARD

988. The Cabinet considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive, providing details of the outcome of the most recent Customer Service Excellence assessment for Customer First. A copy of the assessment report was appended to the report.

Whilst noting that Customer Service Excellence was a government standard awarded for services that put the customer at the heart of service provision, the report highlighted that the Customer First team had initially gained the award in 2006, had continued to improve in line with any recommendations that had been made by the Assessor year on year and had once again attained the award for the eighth year running and had achieved their highest score to date.

The report concluded by emphasising that the assessment report and the confirmation of the continued achievement of the Customer Service Excellence standard recognised the Customer First team's sustained commitment to service excellence and continuous improvement.

The Cabinet:

- (a) noted the continuing high standard of service in Customer First as demonstrated by the award; and
- (b) recognised the Customer First team's sustained commitment to continuous improvement.

ROADS REVENUE WORKS PROGRAMME 2014/15, ROAD CONDITION INDICATOR AND UPDATE ON ROAD ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

989. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment, seeking approval of the Roads Revenue Works Programme 2014/15, and providing details of the 2014 Road Condition Indicator and an update on the Road Asset Management Plan (RAMP). Copies of both documents were appended to the report.

The report explained that the Roads Revenue Works Programme 2014/15 outlined the planned expenditure on road maintenance for the forthcoming year, highlighting that the main elements of the expenditure were routine maintenance (i.e. grass cutting, gully emptying and street lighting), and winter and structural maintenance (i.e. carriageways and footways to be re-surfaced). The programme had been based on a total revenue works allocation of £4,022,400 which included an additional £500,000 Repairs and Renewals allocation. The additional funding of £500,000 would allow £1,559,900 to be spent on re-surfacing and patching roads and footways. Furthermore, the winter maintenance budget had also been increased by £100,000 to £850,000.

Whilst noting that the Road Condition Indicator (RCI) for 2014 had shown a very slight increase from the 2013 value for the combined road classes, the report highlighted that the RCI for A Class routes had shown a drop in the Council's position against all other councils in Scotland from 2nd to 8th; B Class routes had improved from 20th to 11th. However, it was noted that the value for Unclassified roads remained very high at 50.3% (i.e. the percentage length of road network which should be considered for maintenance treatment) or a position of 27th nationally).

The report also provided an update on the tasks which had been undertaken and were ongoing to maintain the 'currency' of the RAMP and reiterated the commitment to collaborative working with other Scottish councils facilitated by the Society of Chief Officers for Transportation in Scotland (SCOTS).

The Cabinet:-

- (a) approved the Roads Revenue Works Programme for 2014/15;
- (b) noted the report in relation to the 2014 Road Condition Indicator; and
- (c) noted the report in relation to the Roads Asset Management Plan update.

ST MARK'S PRIMARY SCHOOL EXTENSION CONSTRUCTION WORKS

990. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment, providing details of action taken by the Director of Environment in awarding a contract for the construction of St Mark's playground to Fleming Builders Limited.

The report explained that the Capital Plan included the sum of £950,000 to fund an extension to St Mark's Primary School which covered the main construction works, enabling work, loose furniture, professional fees and playground equipment. It was noted that following a competitive tendering process for the construction of a 4 classroom extension, Fleming Builders Limited had been appointed as the main contractor in July 2013 for a contract value of £608,659.

However, it was noted that at the outset of the contract, it was discovered that the condition of the playground had deteriorated to the extent that action needed to be taken. The contractor delivering the new extension had been approached and had indicated that they could undertake the additional playground work at a total additional cost of £60,000 which could be captured within the total contract sum. The report explained the action taken by officers to approve the variation to the contract in compliance with the Council's Financial Regulations.

The Cabinet noted the action taken by the Director of Environment in awarding a contract for the construction of St Mark's playground to Fleming Builders Limited for a sum of £60,000.

TRAFFIC SIGNALS TERM CONTRACT – VARIATION OF CONTRACT VALUE

991. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment, seeking approval of a variation of £140,000 to the contract value for the Traffic Signals maintenance contract.

The report explained that the Roads and Transportation service had a contract in place for the maintenance and installation of traffic signals and that the contract was in year 4 of a 5 year contract with an anticipated spend of £450,000. The value of the contract was based on £90,000 per annum over a 5 year period and covered the maintenance of traffic signal equipment and the installation of new traffic signal junctions and controlled crossings.

Whilst noting that in 2013/14 and 2014/15 there had been an increase in the number of traffic signals being commissioned, the report stated the additional installation work had been secured through external funding. Details of the new traffic signal junctions to be installed were outlined in the report. In view of this, the proposed contract spend was now projected to exceed the original contract value of £450,000 by £140,000.

The Cabinet agreed, in accordance with the provisions of clause 8.3 of the Council's Financial Regulations, to approve the variation in the contract of £140,000 from £450,000 to £590,000 to allow additional externally funded works to be undertaken.

GENERAL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME

992. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Finance, monitoring expenditure against the approved General Fund Capital Programme 2013/2014, 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 £117,000 representing 0.6% 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 2013/14 be approved; and
- (b) note that the shortfall of £117,000 would be managed and reported within the final accounts for the year.

HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2013/14

993. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Finance, providing details of the expenditure against the approved Housing Capital Programme 2013/14 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 £65,000 representing 2.1% 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 2013/14 be approved; and
- (b) note that the shortfall of £65,000 would be managed and reported within the final accounts for the year.

MOBILE VOICE AND DATA SERVICES

994. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Finance, seeking approval of an exemption from tendering procedures to allow a contract to be negotiated for the provision of Mobile Voice and Data Services, for a period up to a maximum of 11 months from 1 January until 30 November 2015.

The Cabinet agreed, in accordance with the provisions of clause 6(iv) of the Council's Standing Orders Relating to Contracts, to approve an exemption from tendering procedures to allow a contract to be negotiated with O2, who currently provided Mobile Voice and Data Services to the Council, for a period of up to a maximum of 11 months from 1 January until 30 November 2015 at a cost of £110,000.

ICT COLLABORATION

995. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the Council of 24 October 2012 (Page 237, Item 242 refers), when it was agreed amongst other things to approve the Council's participation in a project to collaborate with other councils on ICT provision, the Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Finance, seeking approval of a variation of £114,550 for the ICT Collaboration contract.

Whilst noting that in June 2013 an external organisation, Castlerigg, were commissioned for a 2 year period at a cost of £199,650, to explore the opportunities for collaboration around ICT across partner councils, the report explained that initially the partner councils involved were East Renfrewshire, Renfrewshire and Inverclyde although Inverclyde Council had subsequently decided not to participate further.

The report highlighted that the commission was now in its 2nd stage which was an 18 month period focused on turning the opportunities identified in the original business case into tangible and deliverable benefits for partner Councils, including the delivery of financial, system and process savings. It was noted that it was proposed to purchase additional days at a cost of £114,550 from Castlerigg to support the delivery of key benefits, including a Strategic Review of ICT resulting in the new contract price of £314,200.

Consequently, approval was sought for a variation to the contract of £114,550 which was considered essential to turn the opportunities identified in the original business case for ICT Collaboration into tangible and deliverable reality for the Council and Renfrewshire Council.

The Cabinet agreed, in accordance with the provisions of clause 8.3 of the Council's Financial Regulations, that a variation to contract of £114,550 be approved for the ICT Collaboration contract.

REVIEW OF THE STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

996. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Finance, 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 26 September 2013. 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 Strategic Risk Register set out the key risks that required to be considered by the Council together with the management actions that had been put in place to mitigate those risks. Some of the key strategic risks that required to be managed by the Council included a reduction in government funding; an increase in the elderly population leading to greater demands on services; and economic difficulties and welfare reform leading to increased poverty.

The Cabinet noted the development of the Council's Strategic Risk Register.

WRITE-OFF OF IRRECOVERABLE HOUSING BENEFIT OVERPAYMENTS

997. The Cabinet considered and approved a report by the Director of Finance, seeking the write-off of £15,624.24 of irrecoverable Housing Benefit overpayments, without prejudice to subsequent recovery procedure.

WRITE-OFF OF IRRECOVERABLE COUNCIL TAX

998. The Cabinet considered and approved a report by the Director of Finance, seeking the write-off of Council Tax arrears up to the value of £438,426.08 and Water and Sewerage charges up to the value of £146,142.03, without prejudice to subsequent recovery procedure.

WRITE-OFF OF IRRECOVERABLE NON-DOMESTIC RATES AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR ADMINISTRATION OF NON-DOMESTIC RATES

999. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Finance, seeking approval to write-off as irrecoverable Non-Domestic Rates totalling £199,921.98. The report also sought approval to continue the existing arrangements for Non-Domestic Rates being administered by Renfrewshire Council on behalf of the Council.

The Cabinet:-

- (a) agreed to approve the write-off of £199,921.19 of Non-Domestic Rates, without prejudice to subsequent recovery procedure;
- (b) noted that the sum had already been included within the Council's bad debt provision; and

- (c) approved that the existing administration arrangements of Non-Domestic Rates be continued for a further 5 years until 31 March 2019.

WRITE-OFF OF IRRECOVERABLE RENT AND COURT EXPENSES

1000. The Cabinet considered and approved a report by the Director of Finance, seeking the write-off of £51,806.76 of irrecoverable Rent and Court expenses, without prejudice to subsequent recovery procedure.

WRITE-OFF OF IRRECOVERABLE SUNDRY DEBTOR INCOME

1001. The Cabinet considered and approved a report by the Director of Finance, seeking the write-off of £96,893.46 of irrecoverable Sundry Debtor income, without prejudice to subsequent recovery procedure.

REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING

1002. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Finance, providing details of the position in respect of the undernoted revenue budgets for the period 1 April 2013 to 31 January 2014 and making recommendations in respect of the variances which had been identified during this period:-

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

The report highlighted that some adjustments had been made to the budgets since they had been approved earlier in the financial year and in terms of the overall budget performance, the current operational underspend of £12,333,600 was largely due to timing issues with the underlying real underspend being £2,333,600 or 1.4% of the profiled budget for the period.

It was noted that a significant element of the underspend lay within the Education Department and would therefore be available for virement under the Devolved School Management arrangements. The probable out-turn projection as at the year-end projected a year-end favourable financial position on General Fund services of £2,926,000 presenting a positive demonstration of the Council's continued sound financial management. Whilst noting that a number of operational variances required management action to ensure that expenditure would be in line with budget at the end of the financial year, the report highlighted that it was expected that management action would lead to all overspends being recovered, that all underspends were consolidated wherever possible and that spending up to budget levels did not take place.

The Cabinet, having noted the current financial position at this time, agreed that all service departments:-

- (a) currently showing an overspend position take action to ensure that the expenditure was within budget at year-end or, where this was not possible, to minimise any overspend; and
- (b) ensure that effective control and measurement of agreed operational efficiencies were undertaken on a continuous basis.

CHAIR

MINUTE

of

JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (FIRST TIER)

Minute of Meeting held at 2.00pm in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 30 January 2014.

Present:

Councillor Jim Fletcher
Councillor Charlie Gilbert

Councillor Ian McAlpine
Councillor Ralph Robertson

Union Representatives:

Ms Tracey Dalling (UNISON)
Mr Steven Larkin (UNISON)

Mr Gordon Lees (UNISON)
Mr Alan Munro (EIS)

Mr Munro in the Chair

Attending:

Caroline Innes, Deputy Chief Executive; Norie Williamson, Director of Finance; Margaret McCrossan, Head of Accountancy; Sharon Beattie, Human Resources Manager; Carole Donnelly, Human Resources Advisor; Steve Murray, Principal Health and Safety Advisor; and Linda Hutchison, Senior Committee Services Officer.

Apologies:

Councillor Gordon McCaskill, Mr John Guidi (SSTA), Mr Alan Scott (UNISON) and Ms Fiona Shannon (EIS).

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

1. The committee considered and approved as a correct record the Minute of the meeting held on 12 September 2013.

REVENUE BUDGET 2014/15

2. The committee considered a report by the Director of Finance on developments regarding the 2014/15 budget, reiterating that the indicative budget for 2014/15 approved by the Council in February 2013 had been based on spending pressures and funding level forecasts which had now been firmed up. It was clarified that in keeping with the Council's longer term approach to managing the financial difficulties, in February 2013 following consultation savings had been agreed for the 2013/14 and 2014/15 financial years. When the Council's provisional grant figures for 2014/15 had been announced in December 2013,

it had been confirmed that the core grant level was in line with that assumed previously, remaining at the same cash level as 2013/14. Consequently the Council required to self-fund pay and price increases and service demand pressures.

Having made reference to additional grant due to the Council to fund early learning and child care entitlements proposed under the Children and Young People Bill and how expenditure on related costs would be reflected in the 2014/15 budget, the report clarified that the headline grant figure announced 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. The report also commented on policy, funding and timescale uncertainties linked to welfare reform and related proposals to incorporate a contingency provision within the Council's 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. Regarding future funding uncertainties, it was clarified that forecasts of the Council's financial position would be subject to ongoing review to reflect clarification provided on grant funding and to review assumptions on spending pressures that needed to be addressed and assumed income from Council Tax. The report commented on a forecasted local government funding reduction in cash terms in 2016/17 and 2017/18, an anticipated shortfall of £25.7 million for the Council over the 3 year period 2015/18, how this compared to 2013/14 and 2014/15 and the scale of 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, Councillor Fletcher reiterated the extent to which the proposed budget was based on the indicative budget set in February 2013. He confirmed that for the 2014/15 financial year the Council would again be able to confirm its commitment to no compulsory redundancies and referred to the Council's commitment to tackling low pay by applying an increase to the living wage. He added that it had been hoped not to implement a saving arising from the review of Pupil Support Assistants (PSAs), commenting that the ability to consider this had been lost despite in-depth consideration because financial savings had to be made and because agreement had not been reached with the Trade Unions on withdrawal of the Essential Car Users allowance (ECUA) which would have been a preferable savings option. He emphasised the need for a balanced budget.

Mr Larkin welcomed the announcements on the living wage and redundancies but, supported by Mr Lees, stressed that the Trade Unions had not discussed or been asked to consider the PSA or ECUA savings as alternative savings options. Whilst commenting in similar terms in respect of the EIS, Mr Munro stated that it was unacceptable to present the above savings as alternative options, stating that other savings options could have been considered. He also commented on the extent to which the ECUA was enshrined in teacher's national and local terms and conditions and cited psychologists as an example of employees who required use of their cars to discharge their responsibilities effectively. He added that on that basis the Trade Unions had not been in a position to accept the saving. Mr Munro also suggested that excessive prudence had been demonstrated on reserves levels and that funds could have been made available to retain PSAs which was a severe cut.

Regarding the reduction in school technicians, Mr Munro requested that an impact assessment be undertaken some time after the reduced service had been operating. In relation to nursery teachers, he asked if the additional funding to be made available under the Children and Young People legislation could be used to help retain some staff. Mr Lees reiterated his disappointment about the way the PSA issue had been presented by Councillor Fletcher at the meeting and, supported by Ms Dalling, requested a review of the decision made. Ms Dalling commented that a range of potential savings could have been examined, emphasising that it had been unfair and incorrect to infer that the Trade Unions had favoured retaining the ECUA, including for higher paid employees, at the expense of protecting support for vulnerable children.

Whilst providing further clarification Councillor Fletcher, supported by Councillor McAlpine, acknowledged the Council had not been able to pursue the ECUA savings option as intended. He explained that a related consequence was that flexibility on savings had been reduced requiring other options to be examined, expressing disappointment that the PSA saving had needed to be pursued and acknowledging that the PSA and the ECUA proposals had not been presented to the Unions as either/or options. Regarding the ECUA savings option, Councillor Robertson, supported by Mr Munro, highlighted that it should have been checked earlier if any impediment existed to exploring this further. Mr Munro added that it was not the Trade Union's role to support an ECUA saving that impacted on people who required to use their car for business, including those paid more highly in accordance with their responsibilities. Ms Dalling explained that many of those receiving the ECUA were not highly paid, such as homecare workers. Making reference to all those for whom an ECUA was awarded, Councillor Fletcher clarified why the saving had not been pursued on the basis of withdrawing it from a proportion of the workforce which would have been grossly unfair, adding that the Council's scheme differed from many in place elsewhere.

Ms Dalling acknowledged the scale of the challenge facing the Council to achieve savings, emphasised the Trade Unions' willingness to engage in discussions on options and referred to a proposed buyout of the ECUA which had been rejected, stressing that ultimately decisions on savings rested with elected Members. Mr Lees highlighted that if the ECUA was ever removed, the Trade Unions' view would be that the Council should provide car transport for those for whom it was essential for their job.

Councillor Fletcher emphasised that no cuts were palatable with some less so than those actually considered. He stressed that the cooperation of Trade Unions and employees in back office services who had coped with cuts to protect front line services was highly appreciated. Having stated that public feedback on services remained favourable and referred to the financial outlook, Councillor Fletcher emphasised the scale of savings to be achieved in future and the anticipated impact on services, clarifying the extent to which reserves would support the Capital Programme.

In response to Mr Munro, Councillor Fletcher commented that it was very unlikely that the decisions made on school technicians and nursery teachers would be reviewed, but adding that the Council would comply with early learning and child care requirements approved under the Children and Young People Bill for which additional funds were to be provided. In response to general comments by Councillor Fletcher on where future savings might need to be found, Mr Munro stated the savings already made on the school technicians service, nursery teacher provision and PSAs were already cuts to front line services. Ms Dalling commented that it remained uncertain if services lost locally would ever return to local control, emphasising the significance of the current phase in the life time of authorities and reiterating that the Trade Unions wanted to engage in negotiations in future in the way that this should be done.

Councillor Fletcher quantified the level of capital investment to be taken forward during the next eight years, citing examples of projects to be pursued. The Director of Finance referred to the success of previous projects, reiterating that reserves had been increased to support the Capital Programme. Councillor Fletcher emphasised that capital investment on roads projects would be maintained following which Councillor Robertson commended action over recent years to help address roads issues. Mr Munro commended highly the services provided through Isobel Mair School and Family Centre and Eastwood High School, but emphasised the need to balance capital and revenue expenditure, citing the reduction in technician services as a diminution in service.

In response to Mr Lees who sought clarification on expenditure on external consultants including on projects that were not eventually progressed, Councillor Fletcher, supported by the Deputy Chief Executive, clarified that figures were not available but that consultants were only retained when particular skills required were unavailable in house. Councillor McAlpine stated that it could be easier to comment if the Trade Unions cited specific examples of where they felt consultants had been engaged unnecessarily.

In conclusion, Councillor Fletcher sought the support of the Trade Unions to identify future savings and move forward in partnership, emphasising that the Council shared the Trade Unions' frustrations regarding cuts. Mr Munro emphasised that the Trade Unions wished to engage in discussions in an appropriate manner, acknowledging the difficulties that lay ahead.

The committee noted the position and comments made.

COUNCIL HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

3. There was submitted and noted the Minute of the meeting of the Council's Health and Safety Committee held on 25 September 2013.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

4. The committee noted that:-

- (a) feedback from the Trade Unions was awaited on possible dates for the next meeting prior to the summer recess and that the date of the next meeting would be confirmed in due course; and
- (b) that the first meeting after the summer recess would take place on 9 October 2014.

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

Minute of Meeting held at 7.00pm in Woodfarm High School, Woodfarm on 26 February 2014.

Present:

Councillor Mary Montague (Chair)
Councillor Jim Fletcher

Councillor Vincent Waters

Ritchie Adam (Thornliebank Community Council); Lynne Arnott (Thornliebank Seniors Forum); Bill Considine (Stamperland and Netherlee Community Council); Monty Cowen (Jewish Representative Council); Inspector Alan Dickson (Police Scotland); Savio D'Souza (Giffnock Community Council); Bernard Fishman (Eastwood Crime Prevention Panel); and Lisa Marie Patton (Thornliebank and Giffnock Tenants and Residents Association).

Councillor Montague in the Chair

Attending:

Paul O'Neil, Committee Services Officer.

Apologies:

Councillors Ralph Robertson and Gordon Wallace.

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

1. The forum considered and approved the Minute of the meeting held on 27 November 2013.

PROJECT MONITORING AND PROPOSALS 2013/14

2. 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 was advised that under the delegated powers that were granted to the Head of Democratic and Partnership Services in consultation with the Chair at the meeting of the forum on 27 November 2013, to approve any projects up to the end of the current financial year, Councillor Montague had approved the two projects as detailed below.

- (a)
(b) **General Services Budget – Opening Balance £2,425**

PROJECT	COST/COMMENTS
Purchase and installation of 3 litter bins at the following locations:- (a) Clarkston Road x 2; and (b) Orchard Park x 1.	£525 (3 x £175)
Purchase and installation of 2 x LED zebra beacons at the zebra crossing at Orchard Park Avenue, Giffnock.	£1,900
TOTAL	£2,425
REMAINING BALANCE	Nil

BUDGET ALLOCATION FOR 2014/15

3. The forum considered and noted a report by the Deputy Chief Executive, advising that the forum's 2014/15 General Services budget would be £9,760.

POLICE/FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES – UPDATE

4. Councillor Montague invited Inspector Dickson to give an update on the activities of the Police Scotland in the forum's area since the date of the last meeting.

Inspector Dickson began by advising of the new opening hours of the Barrhead and Giffnock Police offices in the course of which he explained that the offices would be staffed by civilian workers allowing more police officers to be out on the streets. He also intimated that the 3-year Local Police Plan 2014-17 which set the local priorities of Police Scotland in East Renfrewshire had now been completed and would be submitted to the Council for approval towards the end of March 2014. Copies of the April to December 2013 update reports for the Giffnock and Thornliebank and Netherlee, Stamperland and Williamwood multi member wards were tabled. He reported on the local priorities in each ward and provided further details of the crime statistics in respect of each priority.

There followed a short question and answer session in the course of which Inspector Dickson clarified a number of operational issues in the forum's area.

The forum noted the position.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

5. It was noted that the next meeting would be held in Woodfarm High School on 28 May 2014 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 27 February 2014.

Present:

Councillor Kenny Hay (Chair)
Councillor Tony Buchanan
Councillor Danny Devlin

Councillor Paul O’Kane
Councillor Tommy Reilly

Heather Anderson (Uplawmoor Community Council); Rita Connelly (Auchenback Tenants and Residents Association); Inspector Alan Dickson, (Police Scotland); Linda McCullagh (Hillside Tenants and Residents Association); and Alan Walker (Neilston Development Trust).

Councillor Hay in the Chair

Attending:

Ron Leitch, Committee Services Officer.

Apologies:

Councillor Elaine Green; John Divers (Scottish Fire and Rescue Service); and Steven Healy (Neilston Community Council).

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

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

POLICE/FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES – UPDATE

2. Councillor Hay invited Inspector Dickson to give an update on the activities of Police Scotland in the forum’s area since the date of the last meeting.

Inspector Dickson began by advising of the new opening hours of the Barrhead and Giffnock Police offices in the course of which he explained that the offices would be staffed by civilian workers allowing more police officers to be out on the streets. He also intimated that the 3-year Local Police Plan 2014-17 which set the local priorities of Police Scotland in East Renfrewshire had now been completed and would be submitted to the Council for approval

towards the end of March 2014. Update reports for the Neilston, Uplawmoor and Newton Mearns North, and Barrhead wards for the period April to December 2013 were discussed. He reported on the local priorities in each ward and provided further details of the crime statistics in respect of each priority.

There followed a short question and answer session in the course of which Inspector Dickson clarified a number of operational issues in the forum's area.

The forum noted the position.

PROJECT MONITORING AND PROPOSALS 2013/14

3. Under reference to the Minute of meeting of 28 November 2013 (Item 4 refers) when project proposals had been approved and authority had been delegated to the Head of Democratic and Partnership Services, in consultation with the Chair, to approve additional projects prior to the end of the financial year, the forum considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive providing details of available funds remaining for projects for the 2013/14 financial year and projects approved under the delegated authority referred to above.

The Committee Services Officer emphasised that there was still money available in the budget for this financial year and urged community representatives to encourage their own organisations and any other local groups not represented on the forum to submit project proposals for consideration by the middle of March.

The forum noted the position.

FORUM BUDGET 2014/15

4. The forum considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive, giving details of the general services budget allocation for 2014/15.

Councillor Hay explained that the budget for 2014/15 was slightly down on the current allocation but that it was anticipated that in the light of work which was currently being undertaken by relevant officers to develop revised criteria to be applied to funding requests in future, more projects would be funded albeit that an upper limit might be applied. This approach was intended to ensure that smaller local groups which had little chance of securing funding from other sources such as the National Lottery and Whitelee Windfarm Fund would not be disadvantaged.

The forum noted the position.

MEETING DATES – JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2015

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 2015.

QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

6. The following issues were raised:-

Middleton Windfarm

Mr Walker questioned whether or not the operator of Middleton Windfarm made any financial contribution for the benefit of the local community. In response, Councillor Buchanan explained that it was his understanding that a sum of money was paid into the Whitelee Windfarm Fund by the operator of Middleton Windfarm but that this was effectively ringfenced for projects within the Uplawmoor area. Councillor Buchanan undertook to confirm this information and to respond directly to Mr Walker in this regard.

Continuity of approach across area forums

Ms McCullagh asked if there was a continuity of approach across the 3 area forums when considering projects for funding approval. In response, Councillor Hay explained that discussions were currently underway with relevant officers to develop revised criteria to be applied to funding requests and that it was anticipated that these new rules would be more specific and less open to interpretation than the current guidelines.

The forum noted the position.

DATE AND VENUE 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 29 May 2014 at 7.00pm.

MINUTE
of
NEWTON MEARNS SOUTH, BUSBY CLARKSTON AND EAGLESHAM AREA FORUM

Minute of Meeting held at 7.00pm in Williamwood High School on 4 March 2014

Present:

Councillor Barbara Grant
Councillor Alan Lafferty
Councillor Ian McAlpine

Councillor Stewart Miller
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).

Mr McLachlan in the Chair

Attending:

Eamonn Daly, Democratic Services Manager.

Apologies:

Provost Alastair Carmichael; and Liz Holms (East Renfrewshire CHCP).

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

1. The forum considered the Minute of the meeting of 26 November 2013.

Referring to the Minute, and to proposals that Mrs Yona raise with Newton Mearns Community Council the possibility of the community council making a contribution to the project to install fencing at Broomburn Park, Councillor McAlpine enquired if any contribution was to be made.

In reply, Mrs Yona confirmed that the matter had been raised with the community council but that the view had been taken that as the park was Council-owned the Council should fund improvements. In view of this the community council had decided not to make a contribution to the project.

Councillor McAlpine having expressed disappointment at the community council's decision, the forum approved the Minute.

PROJECT MONITORING AND PROPOSALS 2013/14

3. The forum considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive giving details of the expenditure and projects associated with the allocated General Services budget for 2013/14.

Referring to the project to replace mounts for Eaglesham Heritage Trail information panels with stone cairns, Mr Duguid clarified that the match funding for the project had been provided by the Eaglesham Development Trust and not the community council as indicated.

The forum noted the report and the additional information.

FORUM BUDGET 2014/15

4. The forum considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive, giving details of the general services budget allocation for 2014/15.

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 2014/15 being £9,280.

Councillor Grant referred to the reducing levels of funding being provided to area forums, which in turn affected the forums' abilities to undertake local projects and make a positive impact in their areas. She commented on the cost of organising forum meetings both in terms of accommodation and officer time and questioned the merit of the continued operation of the forums. She referred to the former area committee structure which she suggested more accurately reflected local communities, and also to the meeting room in Mearns Library as an example of a worthwhile local project taken forward in the past.

Noting Councillor Grant's comments, Councillor Lafferty explained the background to the introduction by the Council of firstly area committees then area forums. He reminded the forum that its purpose was not simply as a grant distribution body, and that the intention when they were established by the Council was that they would have role in community planning.

Councillor Miller having commented on some overlap between the work of area forums and community councils, Mr Seenan was heard in support of area forums, referring to some of the positive benefits in the Busby area that had come out of the work of the forum.

Councillor McAlpine was heard in support of area forums. Whilst acknowledging that funding for forums was reducing, he suggested there were still opportunities for relatively low cost projects to be taken forward, highlighting that the forum was able to prioritise projects which were never likely to be taken forward by the Council. This was echoed by Mr McLachlan who referred to projects in the Busby area that had been taken forward through the forum which would not have been carried out otherwise.

Councillor Swift having made further comment on the amount of overlap between forums and community councils, and having suggested that there was insufficient funding being made available to forums to justify their continued operation if simply approving projects was their only purpose, Mr Duguid referred to the review of the Scheme of Establishment for Community Councils which the Council was undertaking, and that there was an opportunity for the comments made to be taken into account and reflected on in that review.

The forum noted the report.

PROJECT PROPOSALS 2014/15

5. Under reference to the Minute of the previous meeting (Item 3 refers) when it had been agreed to part-fund proposals to install fencing at Broomburn Park, Newton Mearns, subject to the remaining funding being approved from the 2014/15 budget, the forum considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive relative to the proposals.

The report reminded the forum that the total cost of the project was £10,985, that due to the nature of the project it had to be carried out in its entirety, and that following agreement at the previous meeting, funding of £6,585 was required from the 2014/15 budget to allow the project to proceed.

The forum agreed to fund the balance of the project at a cost of £6,585.

Mrs Yona indicated that one of the project proposers had indicated that she would be prepared to purchase a piece of equipment for the park if the project was approved and she would now contact her to let her know the project was proceeding.

POLICE AND FIRE AND RESCUE MATTERS

6. Mr McLachlan invited Inspector Dickson to give an update on the activities of Police Scotland in the forum's area since the date of the last meeting.

Inspector Dickson began by advising of the new opening hours of the Barrhead and Giffnock Police offices in the course of which he explained that the offices would be staffed by civilian workers allowing more police officers to be out on the streets.

He also intimated that the 3-year Local Police Plan 2014-17 which set the local priorities of Police Scotland in East Renfrewshire had now been completed and would be submitted to the Council for approval towards the end of March 2014.

Thereafter he provided some statistical information both East Renfrewshire-wide and also in terms of the Newton Mearns South (Ward 5) and Busby, Clarkston and Eaglesham (Ward 6) wards.

Of particular note was the fact that calls from the public regarding drunk and disorderly activity had reduced by 47% in Ward 5 and 25% in Ward 6. He also referred to reductions in violent crime and serious assaults.

Inspector Dickson was then heard in response to questions from forum members in the course of which he referred to the levels of collaborative working between the police and other agencies, including the Council, and the need for all organisations to be "working smarter".

The forum noted the report.

QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

7. Mr Seenan referred to the "Instant Village" streetscape that had been erected in Busby. He explained that following the recent severe storms many of the panes had been blown down resulting in the area being unsightly, and enquired what steps were being taken to resolve the matter.

960

Mr Daly undertook to contact Mr McKendry from the Council's Economic Development section to establish what steps were being taken to resolve the matter.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

8. It was noted that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday, 27 May 2014 at 7pm in Mearns Castle High School.