

HOUSING, ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of the Housing, Environment & Economic Development Committee held in Committee Room 3, Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton on Wednesday, 6 November 2013 at 2.00 p.m.

Present: Councillors Jim Bollan, Gail Casey, David McBride, Michelle McGinty, Marie McNair, John Mooney, Tommy Rainey, Gail Robertson, Martin Rooney and Kath Ryall.

Attending: Richard Cairns, Executive Director of Infrastructure and Regeneration; Ronnie Dinnie, Head of Neighbourhood Services; Jim McAloon, Head of Regeneration and Economic Development; Janine Corr, Accountant; ; Ian Dewar, Estates Surveyor; Stuart Gibson, Assets Co-ordinator; Craig Jardine, Corporate Asset Manager; John Kerr, Housing Strategy Manager; Jack McAulay, Manager of Roads and Transportation; Michael McGuinness, Manager of Economic Development Nigel Ettles, Principal Solicitor; and Nuala Quinn-Ross, Committee Officer, Legal, Democratic and Regulatory Services.

Apologies: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors William Hendrie and Lawrence O'Neill.

Councillor David McBride in the Chair

CHAIR'S REMARKS

The Chair, Councillor McBride welcomed Richard Cairns, the newly appointed Executive Director of Infrastructure and Regeneration, to the meeting.

VARIATION IN ORDER OF BUSINESS

Having heard the Chair, Councillor McBride, the Committee agreed to vary the order of business as hereinafter minuted.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Jim Bollan, Martin Rooney and Kath Ryall declared a non financial interest in the item under the heading 'Sale of Former Community Learning and Development Office, 5 West Thomson Street, Clydebank' being associated with local community organisations who submitted bids to purchase the property.

In addition, Councillors David McBride and Kath Ryall declared a non financial interest in the item under the heading 'Annual Performance of West Dunbartonshire Leisure Trust for Year to 31 March 2013' being board members of the Leisure Trust.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of Meeting of the Housing, Environment & Economic Development Committee held on 7 August 2013 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

SALE OF FORMER COMMUNITY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE, 5 WEST THOMSON STREET, CLYDEBANK

(a) Request for Deputation by Y Sort-It

The Manager of Legal Services advised that because the matter to be considered by Committee was a sale for value which had been evaluated against pre-determined criteria, were the Committee to be influenced by any matter which did not form part of the evaluation criteria, it would leave itself open to a credible risk of legal challenge.

Accordingly it was his recommendation that the deputation should not be heard.

Councillor Rooney, seconded by Councillor McGinty moved:-

The Committee agree that the deputation by Y Sort-it not be heard.

As an amendment Councillor Bolla, seconded by Councillor McNair moved:-

The Committee agree that the deputation by Y Sort-it be heard.

On a vote being taken 2 Members voted for the amendment and 8 Members voted for the motion which was therefore declared carried.

(b) A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Infrastructure and Regeneration advising of the outcome of the recent marketing of the former Community Learning and Development office, 5 West Thomson Street, Clydebank and seeking approval to sell the surplus property to Carers of West Dunbartonshire.

The Committee agreed:-

- (1) to thank officers for the work in assessing and scoring the bids;
- (2) to note the expression of interest in the property from a range of voluntary organisations and local businesses with an interest in Clydebank;

- (3) to note that the outcome of the Option Appraisal Process meant that Carers of West Dunbartonshire scored the most and the Executive Director therefore recommended the sale of the property as per their bid;
- (4) to note however, on 30 October Carers of West Dunbartonshire contacted the Council and formally withdrew from the process. As a result the next realistic bid which might be delivered relatively quickly was from Y Sort-it.
- (5) that the Executive Director of Infrastructure and Regeneration be authorised to sell the property at 5 West Thomson Street, Clydebank to Y Sort-it at a total price of £70,000, with an initial payment of £35,000 and five phased payments of £7,000 over five years, as outlined in their submission; and
- (6) that the Head of Legal, Democratic and Regulatory Services be authorised to conclude the disposal transaction subject to such legal conditions that are considered appropriate.

Councillor Bollan, having failed to obtain a seconder for a proposed amendment, asked that his dissent be recorded in respect of this item.

PROPOSED ABOLITION OF THE RIGHT TO BUY IN SCOTLAND – DESIGNATION OF PRESSURED AREA STATUS

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Infrastructure and Regeneration providing details of the arrangements for placing restrictions on the sale of Council houses to sitting tenants.

After discussion and having heard the Housing Strategy Manager in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) that a study be carried out into the potential value of a designation of Pressured Area Studies in West Dunbartonshire with a view to protecting appropriate properties from the Right to Buy in the period up to its abolition; and
- (2) that a report with recommendations for consideration on Pressured Area Status designation within West Dunbartonshire be submitted to Committee in May 2014.

SCOTTISH SOCIAL HOUSING CHARTER MID-YEAR PROGRESS REPORT

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Infrastructure and Regeneration providing a mid-year progress report on the introduction of the Scottish Social Housing Charter.

After discussion and having heard the Housing Strategy Manager in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) that the Council should participate in the Chartered Institute for Housing in Scotland (CIH Scotland) 'Stepping up the Scrutiny' programme;
- (2) that a full annual progress report on progress against the outcomes of the Scottish Social Housing Charter be submitted to the Committee in May 2014; and
- (3) otherwise to note the content of the report.

Councillor Bolla, having failed to obtain a seconder for a proposed motion, asked that his dissent be recorded in respect of this item.

COUNCIL HOUSE NEW BUILD PROGRESS REPORT

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Infrastructure and Regeneration providing details of the progress of the Council's new build housing programme.

After discussion and having heard the Housing Strategy Manager in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the progress made to date with the Council's new build programme;
- (2) to note the completion of 39 new build council homes for rent delivered within the target timescales; and
- (3) otherwise to note the content of the report.

TENANT SATISFACTION SURVEY 2013

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Infrastructure and Regeneration providing details of the results of the 2013 Tenant Satisfaction Survey.

After discussion and having heard the Housing Strategy Manager in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the results of the 2013 Tenant Satisfaction Survey;
- (2) to note the improved levels of customer satisfaction across all Housing Services;

- (3) that the survey be repeated in 2014 and on an annual basis until 2016, in order that tenant satisfaction can continue to be measured and benchmarked; and
- (4) that a briefing note be provided to Members of the Committee providing details of the comments received from tenants taking part in the survey.

AUDIT SCOTLAND REPORT – ‘HOUSING IN SCOTLAND’

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Infrastructure and Regeneration advising of the findings from the Audit Scotland national report ‘Housing in Scotland’, published in mid July 2013.

The Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the contents of the Audit Scotland report ‘Housing in Scotland’;
- (2) to accept the key recommendations in the report; and
- (3) to note the actions already taken in West Dunbartonshire in relation to key recommendations.

ALTERNATIVE MODELS OF SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Infrastructure and Regeneration seeking approval to develop alternative models of supported accommodation in partnership with other agencies.

After discussion and having heard the Housing Strategy Manager in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members’ questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) the approval of the development of alternative models of supported accommodation in partnership with other agencies; and
- (2) that a report or briefing note, be provided to the Members of the Committee providing details of the outcome of the option appraisal for O’Hare.

HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME - PERFORMANCE REPORT

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Infrastructure and Regeneration providing details of the progress in the second quarter of 2013/14 in delivering the Housing Capital Programme.

After discussion and having heard the Housing Strategy Manager and the Corporate Asset Manager in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members’ questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) that a briefing note be issued to Members of the Committee providing details of the 6 projects which have yet to commence on site within the Housing Capital Programme for year 2013/14;
- (2) that a briefing note be issued to Members of the Committee providing details of the problems expressed by respondents during the Quarter 1 Customer Satisfaction Survey;
- (3) that future reports continue to be submitted to Committee rather than circulated through the Members' Briefing System; and
- (4) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE OF WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE LEISURE TRUST FOR YEAR TO 31 MARCH 2013

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Infrastructure and Regeneration providing an update on the annual performance of West Dunbartonshire Leisure Trust (the Trust) during the period 5 April 2012 to 31 March 2013.

After discussion and having heard the Head of Neighbourhood Services in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) that the Head of Neighbourhood Services should discuss maintenance issues with the Manager of the Leisure Trust;
- (2) that the Manager of the Leisure Trust be invited to attend future meetings of the Committee where the annual report on the Leisure Trust is being submitted for consideration;
- (3) that Members of the Committee be provided with further information detailing the reduction in the use of the Playdrome by groups and clubs; and
- (4) that the Manager of the Leisure Trust be requested to provide details of the rationale behind the restructuring of swimming lessons within the Leisure Trust.

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL LOCAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY 2013 - 2018

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Infrastructure and Regeneration seeking approval for the finalised West Dunbartonshire Council Local Transport Strategy 2013 - 2018.

The Committee agreed to approve the Local Transport Strategy 2013-2018.

FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Infrastructure and Regeneration providing an update on the implementation of the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 and the progress to date with respect to the development and implementation of flood prevention and alleviation measures within West Dunbartonshire.

After discussion and having heard the Head of Neighbourhood Services and the Manager of Roads and Transportation in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the implementation of the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 within the Council area;
- (2) to note the progress made to date with regards to the development and implementation of flood prevention and alleviation measures; and
- (2) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

WINTER MAINTENANCE PLAN – 2013/14

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Infrastructure and Regeneration providing details of the Council's statutory obligations under Section 34 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 and seeking approval of the Winter Maintenance Plan 2013/14.

After discussion and having heard the Head of Neighbourhood Services in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) that authority be delegated to the Executive Director of Infrastructure and Regeneration to provide assistance to Transerve and BEAR Scotland, if requested, to keep the A82 Trunk Road open during severe weather;
- (2) the approval of the Winter Maintenance Plan - 2013/14;
- (3) that colour copies of the gritting route maps be provided to Members of the Committee for their information; and
- (4) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

Councillor Bolla, having failed to obtain a seconder for a proposed amendment, asked that his dissent be recorded in respect of this item.

MID YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Infrastructure and Regeneration providing details of the progress made in meeting departmental objectives set out in the Housing, Environmental and Economic Development Strategic Plan 2013-18.

After discussion and having heard officers in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) that the details of the 4 performance indicators which could not be calculated for quarter 2 due to the figures not previously being available, now be provided to the Members of the Committee;
- (2) that a briefing note detailing the complaints received for the Housing, Environment and Economic Development department be provided to Members of the Committee;
- (3) to note the progress which has been made in meeting the targets set for the 31 performance indicators set with the Housing, Environmental and Economic Development Strategic Plan 2013-18; and
- (2) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

ADJOURNMENT

Having heard the Chair, Councillor McBride, the Committee agreed to adjourn for a period of 10 minutes.

The meeting reconvened at 3.55 p.m. with all those Members shown on the sederunt in attendance, with the exception of Councillors Casey and Mooney.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY ACTION PLAN PROGRESS REPORT NO. 4

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Infrastructure and Regeneration informing of the progress made in implementing the Economic Development Strategy Action Plan.

After discussion and having heard officers in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) that Members of the Committee be provided with details of projects being progressed through the Dumbarton Common Good Fund;
- (2) that a report on the work undertaken on technical and marketing appraisals for sites identified, within the Council's Disposal Strategy, as strategic sites be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee;

- (3) that the Corporate Asset Manager speak with the contractor on site in Alexandria Town Centre regarding concerns with poor lighting; and
- (4) otherwise to note the progress made in implementing the Economic Development Strategy Action Plan.

Note:- Councillors Casey and Mooney arrived during discussion of the above item of business.

VALE OF LEVEN INDUSTRIAL ESTATE – REGENERATION CAPITAL GRANT FUNDING APPLICATION

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Infrastructure and Regeneration seeking retrospective approval of second stage Regeneration Capital Grant Funding (RCGF) application.

The Chair, Councillor McBride, advised that there was an amendment to the report, as detailed below:-

Paragraph 6.1 be corrected to read:-

An overall sum of £900,000 would be allocated to this project from the Local Economic Development budget during 2014/15 within the General Services Capital programme, of which there are funds available. £80,000 (£70k from RCGF towards Site One only) would be allocated towards sites purchased and £820,000 (£830,000 from RCGF) towards the costs of a workshop development of an estimated size of approximately 17,000 square feet gross development, with a total project cost of £1.8 million.

After discussion and having heard the Head of Regeneration and Economic Development in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to approve the retrospective Regeneration Capital Grant Funding application;
- (2) to approve the allocation of £900,000 from the Council's Capital Funds in year 2014/15 to the project,
- (3) that authority be delegated, subject to the RCGF application being successful, to the Head of Legal, Democratic and Regulatory Services, in consultation with the Executive Director of Infrastructure and Regeneration, to acquire the necessary land for the project from Scottish Enterprise, on such conditions as are considered appropriate; and
- (4) to proceed with all processes required for the construction of the proposed small workshop units at the Vale of Leven Industrial Estate (VOLIE), Dumbarton.

REGIONAL AID GUIDELINES AND ASSISTED AREAS MAP CONSULTATION

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Infrastructure and Regeneration providing details of the Scottish Government's consultation process for the new Assisted Area map.

The Committee agreed to note the response to Stage 1 of the consultation process.

OVERTOUN HOUSE, MILTON BRAE, MILTON, G82 2SH

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Infrastructure and Regeneration providing an update of the progress in respect of the completion of the refurbishment and conversion works of Overtoun House.

After discussion and having heard officers in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the progress made in respect of the refurbishment and conversion works at Overtoun House;
- (2) to continue to support the tenant of Overtoun House; and
- (3) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

Councillor Bollan, having failed to obtain a seconder for a proposed amendment, asked that his dissent be recorded in respect of this item.

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGETARY POSITION 2013/14 AS AT PERIOD 6 (30 SEPTEMBER 2013)

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Infrastructure and Regeneration advising of the financial performance of the Housing Revenue Account revenue and capital budgets for the period to 30 September 2013.

After discussion and having heard the Business Unit Finance Partner (HEED) in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

FINANCIAL REPORT 2013/14 AS AT PERIOD 6 (30 SEPTEMBER 2013)

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Infrastructure and Regeneration providing an update on the financial performance of the Housing, Environment and Economic Development department to 30 September 2013 (Period 6).

After discussion and having heard the Accountant in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) that further information on the office rationalisation project will be included in a finance update report being submitted to West Dunbartonshire Council at its meeting in December 2013; and
- (2) to otherwise note the contents of the report.

The meeting closed at 4.20 p.m.

DRAFT