

THE FIFE COUNCIL - COWDENBEATH AREA COMMITTEE – REMOTE MEETING

13th January, 2021

2.00 p.m. – 3.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Linda Erskine (Convener), Alistair Bain, Alex Campbell, Gary Guichan, Rosemary Liewald, Lea Mclelland and Darren Watt.

ATTENDING: Sarah Roxburgh, Community Manager (Cowdenbeath Area), Communities and Neighbourhoods; Eleanor Hodgson, Accountant, Finance and Wendy MacGregor, Committee Officer, Legal and Democratic Services.

ALSO ATTENDING: Bailey-Lee Robb, MYSP.

Prior to the start of Committee business, the Convener welcomed all members to the first meeting of the Cowdenbeath Area Committee of 2021. The Convener, on behalf of the Committee, paid thanks to all staff and volunteers involved in the delivery of various food projects over the festive period and also wished Willie Shaw, constituent of Cardenden, and his twin sister Elsie, a happy 100th birthday.

203. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were made in terms of Standing Order No. 7.1.

204. MINUTE

The Committee considered the minute of the meeting of the Cowdenbeath Area Committee of 9th December, 2020.

Decision

The Committee agreed to approve the minute subject to the following amendments at paragraph 194. Declarations of Interest:-

- 1 Councillor Alistair Bain declared an interest at Paragraph 195 - Representation from Exxon Mobil, Mossmorran - as he was Convener of the Mossmorran Events Committee - being changed to read " as he was Convener of the Mossmorran and Braefoot Bay Community and Safety Committee."; and
- 2 Councillor Alex Campbell declared an interest at Paragraph 195 - Representation from Exxon Mobil, Mossmorran - as he attended meetings of the Mossmorran Liaison Committee - being changed to read " as he was present during a protest held at Exxon Mobil, Mossmorran."

205./

205. ANTI-POVERTY FUND 2019-2020

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods providing members with an overview of the projects and work supported by the Cowdenbeath area anti-poverty fund in the financial year 2019-20 and an overview on actual spend to date from the 2020/21 budget.

Motion

Councillor Guichan, seconded by Councillor Campbell, moved as follows:-

“That part of the remaining anti poverty fund be used to provide ongoing emergency food provision, similar to Cafe Inc To Go across the area with immediate effect. Officers will rapidly establish this provision across the area. Also the groups who have received money to provide emergency food, free at the point of need, will receive the same funding again”.

Amendment

Councillor Liewald, seconded by Councillor Bain, moved as follows:-

“That members of the Committee obtain further information on the food poverty provision through Ward meetings, before a decision is made on the allocation of the Anti-poverty Fund 2020/21”.

Roll Call

For the Motion - 4 votes

Councillors Alex Campbell, Linda Erskine, Gary Guichan and Darren Watt.

For the Amendment - 2 votes

Councillors Alistair Bain and Rosemary Liewald.

Decision

The motion was accordingly carried.

206. COMMON GOOD FUNDS ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services advising members of the current status of the Common Good Funds in the area and relevant fund activities over the financial year 2019- 2020.

Decision

The Committee noted the information contained in the relevant Appendices for the various Common Good funds.

Councillor/

Councillor Lea McLelland joined the meeting during consideration of the above item.

207. PROPERTY TRANSACTIONS

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Assets, Transportation and Environment advising members of action taken using the List of Officer Powers in relation to property transactions.

Decision

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

208. COWDENBEATH AREA COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Decision

The Committee noted the draft Forward Work Programme for the Cowdenbeath Area Committee, which would be updated as appropriate.

209. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Questions were submitted (in terms of Standing Order No 6.1) by Mr Tom Kinnaird, resident of Benarty.

Question 1

An existing core path links the Avenue in Ballingry with the Pit Road at Lochore Meadows Country Park and provides a direct link into the park for most of Ballingry. This path is however inaccessible to anyone with a mobility issue as it involves the use of a stile to get over the field fence at both ends. Will the Committee consider a Sustrans application to open this path to make it inclusive for all and provide a surface suitable for those with mobility issues, young families with prams and pushchairs and those members of the community who need mobility scooters?

Response

Allan Maclean, Lead Consultant Sustainable Traffic and Travel, Fife Council:-

As far as I know, there are no plans within the Sustainable Transport section for upgrading the path.

It sounds like there is a good case for doing so however, so I would be keen to work with other officers and the community, to see if there is potential for future enhancement.

Sarah Johnston, Access Officer, Fife Council:-

I have no plans to upgrade the path at the moment. However (when we can get out) I am more than happy to meet up with the local community and see what needs done to see if we could secure funding.

Question 2/

Question 2

Following a rise in fly-tipping recently, Councillor Ross Vettraino announced in the local press that Fife would be monitored by a "comprehensive CCTV system" in order to catch those responsible. Benarty suffers a great deal from fly-tipping in several areas but mainly Hill Road west of Ballingry to the Fife boundary, at our recycling point in Navitie Park, on the Avenue near Ballingry Road and Martin Crescent and at the bottom of Loanhead Avenue at Torres Loan. Will the committee consider liaising with Councillor Vettraino to ensure that Benarty is included in the CCTV monitoring he is proposing, and provide a funding contribution if necessary?

Response

Councillor Ross Vettraino, Convener of Environment and Protective Services Committee:-

I am looking to the development of an Environmental Vandalism Strategy, which will embrace, illegal dumping, littering, graffiti and dog fouling. Improved policing of Environmental Vandalism will be central to the Strategy and will include improving the network of CCTV cameras in Fife. Unhappily, the Council does not have the type of cameras, which the situation demands and funding, as always, is a material consideration.

In Glenrothes, the Members in Wards 13 and 15 recently agreed to buy two 'state of the art' cameras per Ward and it is intention of the members to use these cameras to monitor illegal dumping 'hotspots'. I think that that is a good way to go about things, as it enables Members to focus on the areas that they choose. Buying the cameras, however, is only the first step and talks are in hand with the local Community Police, who have agreed to administer the cameras with any enforcement action being taken by the Council. It may be that any protocol which is agreed with the Community Police in Glenrothes would be used as a template by other Wards in Fife. The issue of funding has also to be determined. The cameras in Wards 13 and 15 have been bought using the Local Community Planning Budget, but I understand that that Budget cannot be used for revenue costs, such as moving the cameras, so details of how that will be achieved are still to be worked out and will be part and parcel of the Environmental Vandalism Strategy.

In answer to the question that has been asked, therefore, it will be for the Local Members to decide if they wish to use some of the Local Community Planning Budget to buy cameras for each Ward and, if so, to decide where they would like the cameras to be situated. I would suggest, however, that the members in the Cowdenbeath Area be patient and wait and see how things work out in Glenrothes and then adopt all or part of those arrangements as they deem appropriate for their Wards.

Decision/

Decision

The Committee:-

1. noted the questions submitted by Mr Tom Kinnaird and the respective responses;
 2. acknowledged that the Path at Pit Road, Lochore Meadows had been discussed at a meeting of the Leadership Group in December and they had agreed to consider establishing this as a future project, the Lead Officer - Cowdenbeath Area would provide any future updates to the members of the Committee at Ward meetings;
 3. agreed to seek further information on the cost of CCTV cameras; and
 4. agreed to monitor the development and success of the Environmental Vandalism Strategy in the Glenrothes area, prior to considering implementation of the Strategy in Wards 7 and 8.
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