

**MINUTE**  
**of**  
**CABINET**

**Minute of Meeting held at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 29 January 2015.**

**Present:**

|  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| Councillor Jim Fletcher (Leader)         | Councillor Ian McAlpine  |
| Councillor Tony Buchanan (Deputy Leader) | Councillor Mary Montague |
| Councillor Alan Lafferty                 |                          |

Councillor Fletcher, Leader, in the Chair

**Apologies:**

Councillors Danny Devlin, Elaine Green and Vincent Waters.

**Attending:**

Lorraine McMillan, Chief Executive; Caroline Innes, Deputy Chief Executive; Andy Cahill, Director of Environment; Margaret McCrossan, Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer); Iain MacLean, Head of Environment (Planning, Property and Regeneration); David Miller, Head of Revenues; Lawrence Christie, Operations Manager (Cleansing and Land); Phil Daws, Housing Services Manager; Steve Murray, Principal Health and Safety Advisor; Louisa Mahon, Communications Manager; and Ron Leitch, Committee Services Officer.

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**1374.** There were no declarations of interest intimated.

**AREA FORUM MINUTES**

**1375.** 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 – 2 December 2014;
- (ii) Giffnock and Thornliebank, Netherlee, Stamperland and Williamwood Area Forum – 3 December 2014; and
- (iii) Neilston, Uplawmoor and Newton Mearns North and Barrhead Area Forum – 11 December 2014.

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

## WELFARE REFORM

**1376.** Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the Cabinet on 4 September 2014 (Page 1137, Item 1187 refers), when the Cabinet had noted progress that had been made in mitigating and preparing for the impacts of Welfare Reform and the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) plans for the further roll out of Universal Credit (UC), the Cabinet considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive, providing a further update on progress being made in respect of preparations for the Council's response to Welfare Reform.

The report referred to the work streams that were being taken forward by the Welfare Reform Planning Group (WRPG), and provided an update in respect of each.

In particular it was noted that during the current financial year, 553 awards of discretionary housing payments (DHP) had been made to tenants within East Renfrewshire who were in receipt of Housing Benefit, with the award being made due to removal of the spare room subsidy in 483 cases. It was further noted that as at the end of December 2014, only 4 Council tenants who were likely to be eligible for DHP for this reason had not submitted an application.

The report also explained that council departments and partners continued to make good progress in mitigating the effects of Welfare Reform and that preparations for the roll out of UC were becoming more focused although it was highlighted that the timetable from the DWP still lacked detail which in turn made the planning of services more challenging.

As a result of the roll out of UC being initially restricted to individuals who were likely to make the simplest claims, DWP had reduced the level of involvement in the claims process which it expected from councils and their partners and consequently had also reduced the level of funding which would be made available to help councils support claimants. The resulting agreements between DWP and the Council would require to be negotiated locally rather than nationally and councils involved in early roll out had reported that this had been an area of concern.

The Council's counter-fraud responsibilities in respect of Housing Benefit were due to transfer to DWP's Single Fraud Investigation Service in December and the Council would have to determine what further counter-fraud arrangements would need to be in place for other risks such as potential fraudulent claims for Council Tax Reduction.

Councillor McAlpine went on to explain that it was anticipated that payments to Scottish Welfare Fund (SWF) recipients would exceed the budget for the current financial year. However, the low uptake of Crisis Grants continued to be a concern and the availability of these payments would continue to be publicised regularly. Council services and partners were cataloguing all relevant support services available within the welfare sector in an effort to ascertain gaps in provision and were discussing how to improve the sharing of information.

He concluded by expressing the hope that the UK Government would halt any further implementation of UC in Scotland until it became clear what new powers in respect of welfare provision would be devolved to the Scottish Parliament as a result of the Smith Commission proposals.

The Head of Revenues, responding to concerns raised by Elected Members regarding the effects of the welfare changes on vulnerable people, explained that the Council was working closely with local DWP staff and East Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau to advise

residents on the procedure for appealing sanctions and in actively supporting them to do so. However, he also explained that although job coaches were based at local Job Centre Plus offices, the administration of the sanctions regime was controlled by a central office remote from East Renfrewshire. Councillor Buchanan, responding to Councillor Lafferty who had expressed the view that the Council should work closely with CoSLA to mitigate the effects of the policy on local residents, explained that CoSLA had done a considerable amount of work in this regard and would continue to do so.

Councillor Fletcher congratulated the Revenues Service for the work it had carried out in relation to Welfare Reform and explained that Council staff had worked tirelessly and invested a considerable amount of time and money in assisting vulnerable people to mitigate the effects of the reforms as much as possible.

The Cabinet noted the report.

### **BURIAL GROUND CHARGES**

**1377.** Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the Cabinet on 4 December 2014 (Page 1242, Item 1308 refers), when the Cabinet had agreed that a report on burial charges be submitted to this meeting, the Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment regarding proposed burial charges for 2015/16 and providing details of the financial implications associated with the opening of the extended Muslim section at Cathcart Cemetery.

Details of the current and proposed charges accompanied the report.

Having explained the background to the current level of charges, the report explained that as part of the Charging for Services review process, an in depth study had shown a reduction in the number of burials between 2010 and 2013 from 293 to 187, with this being mainly attributable to capacity being reached in the Muslim section at Cathcart Cemetery. Works had subsequently taken place to extend this section of the cemetery, scheduled to open in early 2015, which should see an increase in the number of interments to approximately 250 per annum.

Having explained that the proposed charges would result in a continuing subsidy of the service, but with the envisaged increase in burials income generation was predicted to rise and close the gap towards a break even position, the report proposed an increase in burial charges of 20%, it being noted that this level of increase would not significantly affect the Council's position in terms of offering competitive charges, with the Council's charges still being 43% cheaper than the average of the other councils surveyed as part of the review.

The Operations Manager (Cleansing and Land), responding an enquiry from Councillor Lafferty who had questioned the apparently low charge for interments within the Hebrew Cemetery, explained that members of the Jewish community took care of much of that area of the cemetery and as a result the Council was required to do less work and this was reflected in the charges levied. Councillor Fletcher explained that the Muslim community had expressed the view that the additional lairs at Cathcart Cemetery should be reserved for residents of East Renfrewshire only but that this was not possible. Of the additional lairs provided, 330 would be available for sale by the Council with residents of East Renfrewshire being charged at the appropriate reduced rate.

The Cabinet:-

- (a) approved an increase in burial charges as outlines in the Appendix to the report; and

- (b) noted that the opening of the extended Muslim section at Cathcart Cemetery would increase burial income by approximately £46,800 per annum.

## **CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY**

**1378.** The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment, seeking approval for a revised Corporate Health and Safety Policy and associated arrangements for the high level promotion of health and safety across the Council. A copy of the proposed new policy accompanied the report.

The report explained that the original policy had been approved in 2008. As part of the development of the new policy a consultation exercise had been carried out. Feedback to the consultation had suggested a number of ways in which it was felt the revised policy could be improved. These included the combination of the previous corporate and departmental policies into a single policy; improving arrangements for the Council-wide communication and dissemination of the policy; and the nomination of an Elected Member to “champion” health and safety issues, amongst other things.

The Head of Environment (Planning, Property and Regeneration), responding to an enquiry from Councillor Lafferty, explained that the new consolidated policy applied to all departments but that individual departments would still be free to make appropriate arrangements for the day to day implementation and management of the policy. He also explained, in response to Councillor Montague who had expressed the view that more needed to be done to recognise and deal with the problem of mental health wellbeing through the elimination of behaviours such as sexism and bullying, that some wellbeing assessments had already been undertaken and that arrangements were in hand to roll out further assessments and implement examples of best practice identified during 2015/16. Councillor Montague indicated that she would welcome the extension of mental health wellbeing training to all Elected Members.

The Cabinet:-

- (a) approved the revised Corporate Health and Safety Policy;
- (b) agreed that a communication strategy be put in place to inform all Council employees of the policy; and
- (c) agreed that the Leader of the Council be appointed as the Elected Member with responsibility to champion health and safety across the Council.

## **ELIMINATION OF BED AND BREAKFAST USAGE FOR HOMELESS APPLICANTS**

**1379.** The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment, providing an update on progress towards the elimination of the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for homeless households and the approval of an action plan to help achieve this aim.

Having set out the legislative framework around the need for councils to provide homeless persons with temporary accommodation whilst their homeless status was investigated, including legislative moves to reduce the use of Bed and Breakfast (B&B) accommodation, the report referred to the criticism of the Council in the Scottish Housing Regulator’s 2011 report following the 2010 inspection of the Council’s Housing Service. This criticism related to the shortage of suitable temporary accommodation for service users with high support needs as well as a heavy reliance on B&B accommodation.

The report explained that in response to the Regulator's recommendations, the Council had prepared an action plan to review temporary accommodation in the area and to reduce the use of B&B accommodation by 50% by March 2012.

The report set out the challenges that had been faced in achieving the targets that had been set, and to the changing environment which had presented new challenges, not least of which was the introduction of the under occupancy charge for Housing Benefit claimants.

The report referred to the decision taken by the Cabinet in August 2014 (Page 1115, Item 1162 refers), to approve measures to increase from 10 to 20 the number of properties leased through the private sector leasing scheme thereby increasing the supply of temporary accommodation.

The report also referred to concerns about the continued use of B&B accommodation as referenced in the Assurance and Improvement Plan for 2014-2017 published in May 2014, and provided details of current performance as well as issues continuing to have an impact on service delivery. It was noted that whilst performance had improved on the previous year there was still a need for further progress.

The report outlined the variety of work that was being carried out and the steps that were already being taken to address the challenges being faced and put forward a proposed action plan, a copy of which accompanied the report.

The Housing Services Manager, in response to an enquiry from Councillor McAlpine regarding a previous proposal to build a supported accommodation unit within East Renfrewshire to permit the elimination of B&B usage and to provide the Council with appropriate options for households that were unable to sustain a mainstream tenancy, explained that it had not yet been possible to identify a suitable site for this development but that efforts were still underway to do so.

Having heard Councillor Lafferty express the view that pursuing the Local Housing Strategy with a view to improving the supply and availability of affordable and social rented housing was key to relieving a considerable pressure on the Council, the Cabinet:-

- (a) noted the progress that had been made towards the elimination of the usage of Bed & Breakfast accommodation for homeless households; and
- (b) approved the action plan that had been developed.

## **WRITE-OFF OF IRRECOVERABLE HOME CONTENTS INSURANCE PREMIUMS**

**1380.** The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment seeking approval for the write off of as irrecoverable home insurance contents premiums totalling £828.

Having explained that the Council's debt recovery policy listed small balances under £20 outstanding as one of the circumstances where debts could be considered for write-off when all viable means of collection were exhausted, the report provided details of 51 outstanding accounts, totalling £828, where the cost of pursuing the debts exceeded the amount of money that would be recovered should the recovery measures be successful.

In view of this it was recommended that the amount be written off without prejudice to subsequent recovery procedure.

The Cabinet approved the write-off of £828 off without prejudice to subsequent recovery procedure.

## **WRITE-OFF OF IRRECOVERABLE SHELTERED HOUSING WARDEN CHARGES**

**1381.** The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment seeking approval for the write off of as irrecoverable sheltered housing warden charges totalling £1,505.93.

Having explained that the Council's debt recovery policy listed small balances under £20 outstanding and a debtor being deceased and leaving no estate as two of the circumstances where debts could be consider for write-off when all viable means of collection were exhausted, the report provided details of 17 outstanding accounts, totalling £1,505.93, where the cost of pursuing the debts exceeded the amount of money that would be recovered should the recovery measures be successful.

The Cabinet approved the write-off of £1505.93 off without prejudice to subsequent recovery procedure.

## **ESTIMATED REVENUE BUDGET OUT-TURN 2014/15**

**1382.** The Cabinet considered a report by the Chief Executive relative to the projected revenue budget out-turn for 2014/15.

The report provided details of expected variances together with summary cost information for each department and explained that the departmental projections, which were based on the financial position as at 7 November 2014 and which would continue to be reviewed and updated as the financial year progressed.

The report explained that the estimated year-end position showed a total forecast underspend of £1.088 million, this amount being in addition to the planned transfer to reserves of £150,000 agreed by the Council at the budget meeting on 13 February 2014.

However it was noted that a year-end overspend was projected for the CHCP. The reasons for this were outlined and it was noted that the Director was taking steps to address the position with a view to achieving a balanced budget by year-end. Similarly, there was a projected overspend on the Environment Support Service and the Director of Environment was keeping expenditure under close scrutiny with a view to ensuring a balance budget by year-end.

Councillor McAlpine explained that it was important to recognise that a number of factors in the latter part of the financial year could impact on the final outturn position including the full effect of winter maintenance costs, revisions which may arise from devolved school management arrangements and any one-off costs that may result from restructuring proposals.

The Cabinet:-

- (a) noted the reported probable out-turn position;
- (b) agreed that all departments currently on target to remain within budget be required to monitor and maintain this position to the year end;
- (c) agreed that those departments currently forecasting a year-end overspend position be required to take action to bring net expenditure back within budget;

- (d) noted that the CHCP Director was already taking steps to address the overspend with a view to achieving a balanced budget by the year end;
- (e) agreed that all service departments ensure that effective control and measurement of agreed operational efficiencies are undertaken on a continuous basis; and
- (f) agreed that departmental guidance in respect of year-end expenditure is adhered to.

### **Resolution to Exclude Press and Public**

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

### **ARTHURLIE FC SOCIAL CLUB BARRHEAD – GROUND LEASE**

**1383.** The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment, seeking approval to terminate the existing ground lease and to enter into a new ground lease with Arthurlie FC Social Club in respect of the site of the club at Ralston Road, Barrhead.

The reasons for the change together with the proposed new conditions were outlined.

The Cabinet agreed that:-

- (a) the Council cancel the current lease and enter into a new lease with Arthurlie FC Social club in respect of the site of the club on Ralston Road, Barrhead on the terms and conditions as outlined in the report; and
- (b) it be delegated to the Director of Environment, in consultation with the Chief officer (Legal & Procurement) to make the necessary arrangements.

### **EAST RENFREWSHIRE CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU – LEASE OF PREMISES**

**1384.** The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment, seeking approval to lease the premises at 214, 216 and 218 Main Street Barrhead to East Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB). Proposed terms and conditions of the lease were outlined.

Councillor Fletcher highlighted that the CAB provided a very important service to residents of East Renfrewshire, that the Council had always been supportive of their work, and that in the present uncertain economic situation, demand for their services was higher than ever.

The Cabinet approved the lease of 214, 216 and 218 Main Street Barrhead to East Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau on the terms and conditions as outlined in the report.

**55 BURNBANK DRIVE, BARRHEAD – PROPOSED SALE**

**1385.** The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment seeking approval for the sale of the former Psychological Services building at 55 Burnbank Drive, Barrhead.

The premises had been advertised for sale by open tender and 2 offers had been received details of which were listed.

Councillor Fletcher explained that one of the offers received had been conditional upon licensing and planning permission for a licensed convenience store, which in terms of the planning brief, would be unlikely given the property's residential location. He went on to explain that the second offer had been unconditional and was considered to offer the best prospect of generating a capital receipt and relieving the Council of future maintenance or other expenditure on the empty property.

The Cabinet:-

- (a) approved the sale of 55 Burnbank Road Barrhead as outlined in the report;  
and
- (b) agreed that it be delegated to the Director of Environment to make the necessary arrangements to conclude the sale.

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 2 December 2014.

**Present:**

Provost Alastair Carmichael  
Councillor Barbara Grant

Councillor Stewart Miller

Sergeant Jim Boyle (Police Scotland); Bill Duguid, (Eaglesham and Waterfoot Community Council); George McLachlan (Busby Community Council); and John Seenan (East Renfrewshire Neighbourhood Watch Association).

Provost Carmichael in the Chair

**Attending:**

Eamonn Daly, Democratic Services Manager.

**Apologies:**

Councillors Alan Lafferty, Ian McAlpine and Jim Swift and John Divers (Scottish Fire and Rescue Service).

**MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

1. The forum considered and approved the Minute of the meeting of 9 September 2014.

**PROJECT MONITORING AND PROPOSALS 2014/15**

2. 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 2014/15.

Mr McLachlan referred to comments made by local residents regarding the size of the slide that had been installed at the play area on Cartsbridge Road, Busby, and enquired if it would be possible for a breakdown of the costs to be provided. In reply, Mr Daly explained that with most projects of this type a large proportion of the total project cost went towards the cost of the associated safety surfacing. He undertook to obtain a breakdown of the costs as requested.

The forum noted the report and that Mr Daly would request a breakdown of the cost of the project to install a small slide and matting at the playpark on Cartside Road, Busby.

## **POLICE UPDATE**

3. Sergeant Boyle reported that the police annual winter initiative was just about to start. This would see a high visibility police presence in the main shopping areas in East Renfrewshire. He reported that with regard to housebreakings in the area, arrests had been made and this had resulted in a significant reduction in crimes of this type.

He further reported that the annual public consultation exercise conducted by the police had taken place recently. And that this had helped to inform the community policing plan updates for the Newton Mearns South and the Busby, Clarkston & Eaglesham wards. Copies of the updates for both wards were tabled.

Sergeant Boyle then commented further on the local priorities that had been identified in both wards and the steps being taken to address these.

In the course of discussion on the information provided, Councillor Grant referred to information in the press the previous week suggesting that crime detection rates were poor in East Renfrewshire. She explained that at the recent meeting of the Council's Cabinet (Police & Fire) Mr Bates, the Divisional Commander had clarified that the figures quoted in the press related to a particular issue and that overall detection rates in East Renfrewshire were very high. In support Sergeant Boyle emphasised that due to the low base figures in East Renfrewshire and the use of percentages, a small rise in terms of actual crimes or incidents could lead to what appeared to be a significant increase in percentage terms.

In response to Mr Seenan, Sergeant Boyle explained the mechanisms used by the police to carry out their consultation to ensure that the responses were reflective of the population makeup. He also provided clarification on advisory and mandatory speed signs, with particular regard to 20's Plenty areas around schools and 20mph signs in these areas, and on some of the collaborative work between the police and community wardens to tackle in appropriate parking around schools.

The forum noted the information.

## **QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION**

4. Mr Seenan referred to the challenging financial situation facing the Council and sought clarification of the position regarding property revaluation, suggesting this was an area where potentially the Council could increase the amount of Council Tax it received if properties were revalued and moved into higher Council Tax bands. He sought clarification of the when revaluation of properties took place, particularly whether revaluation took place when houses were sold.

Mr Daly undertook to raise this matter with the Assessor at the Renfrewshire Valuation Joint Board.

## **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

5. It was noted that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday, 3 March 2015 at 7pm in Mearns Castle 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 3 December 2014.

**Present:**

Councillor Montague

Councillor Gordon Wallace

Sergeant Jim Boyle (Police Scotland); Monty Cowen (Jewish Representative Council); Mr Kenneth Darroch (Thornliebank Seniors Forum); and Dan McPhail (Thornliebank Community Council).

Councillor Montague in the Chair

**Attending:**

Paul O'Neil, Committee Services Officer.

**Apologies:**

Councillors Jim Fletcher, Gordon McCaskill, and Ralph Robertson, Lynne Arnott (Thornliebank Seniors Forum); Inspector Alan Dickson, Police Scotland; Lisa Marie Patton (Thornliebank and Giffnock Tenants and Residents Association); and Helena Shanks (Thornliebank Community Council).

**VARIATION IN ORDER OF BUSINESS**

Councillor Montague agreed to take Item 4 on the agenda as the first item in order to facilitate the conduct of the meeting.

**POLICE AND FIRE SERVICES – UPDATE**

1. Sergeant Boyle began his update by advising that Chief Inspector Angela Carty had replaced Chief Inspector Campbell Crawford as the area commander for East Renfrewshire. He reported on the police annual winter initiative which was just about to start. This would see a high visibility police presence in the main shopping areas in East Renfrewshire. He also reported on the local priorities that had been identified in the Giffnock and Thornliebank (Ward 3) and Netherlee, Stamperland and Williamwood (Ward 4) and the action being taken by the police in respect of each priority.

Whilst noting that the annual public consultation exercise conducted by the police had taken place recently, Sergeant Boyle reported that the results would be published in February 2015 and would help to inform the Community Policing Plan updates for the Giffnock and Thornliebank, and Netherlee, Stamperland and Williamwood wards. Copies of the updates on the priorities for the respective wards were tabled at the meeting.

There followed a short question and answer session in the course of which Sergeant Boyle drew the forum's attention to a number of internet scams that were operating and advised that members of the public should report these to the police. He also highlighted the measures being taken by the police to improve road safety by targeting speeding motorists and inconsiderate drivers which was one of the priorities for Ward 4.

The forum noted the position.

### **MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

2. The forum considered and approved the Minute of the meeting held on 3 September 2014.

### **PROJECT MONITORING PROPOSALS 2014/15**

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

Following discussion, the forum agreed:-

- (a) that the following projects be approved;

#### **General Services Budget – Opening Balance £5,602**

| <b>PROJECT</b>   | <b>COST/COMMENTS</b> |
|--|----------------------|
| Replacement of three dead trees on Eastwoodmains Road, Giffnock.                               | £1,758.00            |
| Installation of dropped kerb across from 1 Addison Road, at 194 Carnwadric Road, Thornliebank. | £2,000.00            |
| Purchase and installation of 2 more picnic benches to create a social area in Overlee Park.    | £1,817.54            |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   | <b>£5,575.54</b>     |
| <b>REMAINING BALANCE</b>   | <b>£26.46</b>        |

- (b) that consideration of the proposal to extend the basketball practice area at Overlee Park be continued; and
- (c) to otherwise note the terms of the report.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**4.** It was noted that the next meeting would be held in Woodfarm High School on 25 February 2015 at 7 pm.



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

**Minute of Meeting held at 7.00pm in the Council Offices, 211 Main Street, Barrhead on 11 December 2014.**

**Present:**

Councillor Kenny Hay

Grace Brookmyre, (East Renfrewshire Faith Forum); Inspector Alan Dickson, (Police Scotland); Steven Healy, (Neilston Community Council) (Vice Chair); Gordon Steel, Uplawmoor Community Council; and Alan Walker, (Neilston Development Trust).

Councillor Hay in the Chair

**Attending:**

Jennifer Graham, Committee Services Officer.

**Apologies:**

Councillor Elaine Green; David Jesner (Mearns Community Council); Linda McCullagh (Hillside Tenants and Residents Association); and Rena McGuire (Barrhead Community Council).

**MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

1. The forum considered and approved the Minute of the meeting held on 11 September 2014, subject to Rena McGuire (Barrhead Community Council) being added to the list of attendees.

**POLICE/FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES – UPDATE**

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

Inspector Dickson provided an update on the Community Policing Plan 2014 which outlined the priorities for local communities and how Police Scotland planned to address these throughout the year. Inspector Dickson advised that, although violent crime statistics had increased in 2014, the number of common assaults had decreased and officers remained focussed on tackling violence and antisocial behaviour. The supply and manufacture of

controlled drugs had been targeted in the area and the number of offenders arrested had increased, disrupting the activities of individuals involved in this type of crime. He further advised that Police Scotland would continue to target violent crime and dangerous driving throughout East Renfrewshire in the coming months and increased police patrols had been deployed in shopping areas across East Renfrewshire to provide public reassurance and act as a deterrent against thefts and disorder.

Councillor Hay highlighted that a recent day of action, known as Operation Relay, had been held in Barrhead and this had received a very positive reaction from members of the public. Inspector Dickson advised that Operation Relay would continue across the Greater Glasgow area in 2015 and communities could expect to see high profile police activity with operations targeting drugs, street drinking and youth disorder, bogus callers, proceeds of crime and businesses connected to serious and organised crime, amongst other things.

Having heard Councillor Hay thank Inspector Dickson for his presentation, the forum noted the position.

### **PROJECT MONITORING AND PROPOSALS 2014/15**

3. The forum considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive, giving details of the budget allocation for 2014/15 and submitting proposals for consideration.

Under reference to the minute of the previous meeting (Item 3(c) refers), when it was agreed that consideration of provision of a notice board near Barrhead Police office would be continued to allow clarification to be sought from Police Scotland, the Committee Services Officer reported that a response had been received from Police Scotland advising that they would not allow noticeboards to be erected on police property to ensure that, amongst other things, a corporate appearance was retained across the force.

In response to a question regarding the availability of funds from Neilston Community Wind Farm to support local projects, Mr Walker advised that the initial profits generated by the wind farm would be used to pay back loans and no funds would be available for community projects in the next few years. He added that no money had yet been received by local communities from Middleton Wind Farm which had been established 3 years previously and he requested further information on this.

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

(a) that the following projects be approved:-

#### **Opening Balance £14,748**

| <b>PROJECT</b>  | <b>COSTS/COMMENTS</b> |
|---|-----------------------|
| Provision of bench at entrance to new car park on Kingston Road         | £860                  |
| Provision of 2 seat benches at basketball area, Kingston Playing Fields | £1,150                |



|  |               |
|--|---------------|
| Cycle Friendly Village Initiative (Neilston) – Signage | £4,000        |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>£6,010</b> |
| <b>Remaining Balance</b>                               | <b>£8,738</b> |

- (b) that the project to provide a bench, notice board and bin at Glen Halls, Neilston be continued to allow further discussion to take place with the appropriate department regarding a suitable location for the items requested;
- (c) to note the response from Police Scotland regarding erection of a notice board;
- (d) 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;
- (e) that further information would be requested on community funds from Middleton Wind Farm; and
- (f) otherwise, to note the report.

#### **QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION**

4. The following issue was raised:-

##### Skateboard Facility – Cowan Park

In response to Mr Healy, who had requested clarification regarding the future of the skateboard facility at Cowan Park, Councillor Hay confirmed that, if planning permission for the new school was approved, the skateboard facility would be moved to another location within Cowan Park.

The forum noted the position.

#### **DATE AND VENUE FOR NEXT MEETING**

5. It was reported that the next meeting of the forum would be held in the Council Offices, Main Street, Barrhead on Thursday, 26 February 2015.

