

# HAMILTON AREA COMMITTEE

Minutes of meeting held via Confero and in Committee Room 1, Council Offices, Almada Street, Hamilton on 28 February 2024

## **Chair:**

Councillor Allan Falconer

## **Councillors Present:**

Councillor Andy Carmichael, Councillor Maureen Chalmers, Councillor Ross Clark, Councillor Maureen Devlin, Councillor Colin Dewar, Councillor Mary Donnelly, Councillor Graeme Horne, Councillor Martin Hose, Councillor Cal Johnston-Dempsey, Councillor Gavin Keatt, Councillor Kenny McCreary, Councillor Lesley McDonald, Councillor Davie McLachlan, Councillor Richard Nelson, Councillor Mo Razzaq (Depute), Councillor John Ross, Councillor Bert Thomson, Councillor Helen Toner

## **Councillors' Apologies:**

Councillor Celine Handibode, Councillor Mark McGeever

## **Attending:**

### **Education Resources**

I Gardiner, Headteacher, Dalserf Primary School; L Gardner, Quality Improvement Officer/Lead Officer; G Maguire, Quality Improvement/Lead Officer; G McLaughlin, Headteacher, St Mary's Primary School, Larkhall; E Mitchell, Headteacher, St Ninian's Primary School

### **Finance and Corporate Resources**

S Jessup, Administration Assistant; E-A McGonigle, Administration Officer; L O'Hagan, Finance Manager (Strategy)

### **Housing and Technical Resources**

D Duncan, Area Housing Manager; C Frew, Strategy Co-ordinator

### **Social Work Resources**

E Lloyd, Fieldwork Manager (Justice Services)

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## **1 Declaration of Interests**

No interests were declared.

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## **2 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting of the Hamilton Area Committee held on 29 November 2023 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

**The Committee decided:** that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

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## **3 Education Scotland – Dalserf Primary School, Ashgill, Larkhall**

A report dated 31 January 2024 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted on the outcome of the inspection of Dalserf Primary School, Ashgill, Larkhall made by Education Scotland.

The inspection had taken place in October 2023 as part of a national sample of primary education and the inspection letter reporting on the findings had been published on 19 December 2023.

A number of particular strengths of the school had been highlighted in the inspection letter. The areas for improvement, agreed with the school and education authority, had been incorporated into the school's improvement plan and parents would be informed of progress.

L Gardner, Quality Link Officer and I Gardiner, Headteacher, having spoken on key aspects of the report, were congratulated on the positive inspection report.

**The Committee decided:** that the report be noted.

*Councillors Keatt and Nelson entered the meeting during consideration of the above item of business*

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#### **4 Education Scotland – St Ninian's Primary School, Hamilton**

A report dated 31 January 2024 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted on the outcome of the inspection of St Ninian's Primary School, Hamilton made by Education Scotland.

The inspection had taken place in October 2023 as part of a national sample of primary education and the inspection letter reporting on the findings had been published on 21 November 2023.

A number of particular strengths of the school had been highlighted in the inspection letter. The areas for improvement, agreed with the school and education authority, had been incorporated into the school's improvement plan and parents would be informed of progress.

G Maguire, Quality Link Officer and E Mitchell, Headteacher, having spoken on key aspects of the report, were congratulated on the positive inspection report.

**The Committee decided:** that the report be noted.

*Councillor Ross entered the meeting during, and Councillor Nelson left the meeting after, consideration of the above item of business*

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#### **5 Education Scotland – St Mary's Primary School, Larkhall**

A report dated 1 February 2024 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted on the outcome of the inspection of St Mary's Primary School, Larkhall made by Education Scotland.

The inspection had taken place in June 2023 as part of a national sample of primary education and the inspection letter reporting on the findings had been published on 12 September 2023.

A number of particular strengths of the school had been highlighted in the inspection letter. The areas for improvement, agreed with the school and education authority, had been incorporated into the school's improvement plan and parents would be informed of progress.

L Gardner, Quality Link Officer and G McLaughlin, Headteacher, having spoken on key aspects of the report, were congratulated on the positive inspection report.

**The Committee decided:** that the report be noted.

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## 6 Common Good Update

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A report dated 31 January 2024 by the Head of Finance (Strategy) was submitted providing an update on the Hamilton Common Good Fund.

Common Good comprised a fund of money or assets, or both, which was administered by a Scottish local authority in respect of each former burgh within the local authority area. Common Good property was owned by the local authority and administered separately from other local authority assets for accounting purposes.

The Common Good funds held within South Lanarkshire Council were Lanark, Biggar, Hamilton and Rutherglen. The Common Good fund in Hamilton held a number of properties and a proactive approach to maintenance supported the viability of those assets and reduced the Council's risk to greater liability in the future. On 2 October 2013, the Finance and Corporate Resources Committee approved an annual cyclical maintenance plan of £15,000 for Hamilton Common Good properties and the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) had delegated authority to approve maintenance expenditure up to that amount for all funds.

Finance Services administered the Common Good accounts, which included revenue monitoring, preparation of annual accounts and, when required, to seek approval from the Finance and Corporate Resources Committee for expenditure to be incurred on various projects. Reports on the management of the Common Good funds would be provided annually to appropriate Area Committees.

Decisions on the Common Good Accounts were taken by the Finance and Corporate Resources Committee. A report on the management of the Common Good fund would also be provided annually to the Hamilton Area Committee.

The audited annual accounts for 2022/2023 were detailed at Appendix 1 to the report. As at 31 March 2023, the balance invested in the Council's Loans Fund for Hamilton was £477,000.

As well as cash balances, the Hamilton Common Good Account also held assets, as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report.

Details were provided on repairs and maintenance incurred during 2022/2023 and the commitments for repairs and planned maintenance in 2023/2024. There were currently no consultations on Common Good assets.

The Finance Manager (Strategy) responded to members' questions on various aspects of the report and, where information was not readily available, undertook to provide that to members.

**The Committee decided:** that the report be noted.

*[Reference: Minutes of 9 November 2022 (Paragraph 3)]*

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## 7 Participatory Budgeting – Housing and Technical Resources

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A report dated 12 February 2024 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on Participatory Budgeting (PB) in relation to the Estate Improvement Budget and the Housing Investment Programme (HIP) Environmental Programme.

The Estate Improvement Budget totalled £40,000 and was split across the 4 housing divisions of South Lanarkshire. Each Local Housing Management Team could direct funding towards projects or improvements highlighted as a priority by customers of Housing and Property Services. Although not a significant value, the budget was ideally suited for conversion to PB and funded a number of smaller projects that had been highlighted as a priority by customers.

To date, a total of £9,262 had been spent from the Estate Improvement Budget for 2023/2024 on 5 projects that had been undertaken within the Hamilton area, as detailed in the report.

Engagement with tenants on the overall Housing Revenue Account budget for 2023/2024, and the proposed level and focus of the Housing Investment Programme (HIP) within this, had taken place as part of the Annual Resource 2023/2024 budgetary consultation process. The environmental aspect of the HIP (Environmental Programme) was a significant budget area that covered a wide range of projects that sought to improve the quality and energy efficiency of the Council's domestic housing stock.

To date, the following 3 PB projects had commenced in the Hamilton division:-

- ◆ provision of additional parking at Rorison Place, Ashgill
- ◆ installation of perimeter fencing and CCTV upgrades at the Shawlands Crescent Gypsy/Traveller site
- ◆ delivery of internal upgrades at the Lorne Street sheltered housing site in Hamilton

Officers from Housing and Technical Resources would continue to take forward opportunities within Hamilton to ensure tenants and other customers had the opportunity to determine the outcome of budgets within the Environmental Programme and Community Safety Partnership Commissioning budget, with further updates provided to this Committee in due course.

Officers responded to members' questions on various aspects of the report and members expressed their thanks to the team.

**The Committee decided:** that the report be noted.

*[Reference: Minutes of 8 February 2023 (Paragraph 5)]*

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## **8 Community Payback Order**

E Lloyd, Fieldwork Manager (Justice Services) gave a presentation on Community Payback Orders (CPO), the most common requirement of which involved unpaid work for the benefit of the community.

Details were given on:-

- ◆ general requirements and objectives of CPOs
- ◆ the type of work carried out in relation to CPOs within South Lanarkshire, including community, resource centre based, remote and partnership projects
- ◆ the Unpaid Work Service, based within the Auchentibber resource centre, Blantyre
- ◆ delivery of work and activities both in terms of hours and bespoke projects delivered
- ◆ support offered to individuals who had received a CPO
- ◆ specific projects delivered in the Hamilton area

Having responded to members' questions on various aspects of the presentation, the Fieldwork Manager (Justice Services) was thanked for his presentation.

In response to a member's request for clarification in relation to the uplift of garden waste for unpaid work projects, it was agreed that the Chair, on behalf of the Committee, would write to the Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources) asking for an update on the position.

**The Committee decided:**

- (1) that the presentation be noted; and
- (2) that it be noted that the Chair, on behalf of the Committee, would write to the Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources) requesting an update on the position regarding uplift of garden waste for unpaid work projects.

*Councillors Hose, Keatt, McCreary and Thomson left the meeting during consideration of the above item of business*

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## **9 Community Grant Applications**

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A report dated 8 February 2024 by the Chief Executive was submitted:-

- ◆ on applications for community grant
- ◆ requesting authorisation for the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chair, to approve further community grant applications meeting the relevant criteria in the period to 31 March 2024 from the 2023/2024 budget

In view of the fact that this was the last meeting of the Committee in the current financial year and to allow best use to be made of the remaining 2023/2024 community grant budget, it was proposed that the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chair, be authorised to approve any further community grant applications meeting the relevant criteria in the period to 31 March 2024. Those grants awarded would be reported to a future meeting for noting.

There followed a discussion during which members debated the amounts that should be allocated to the community grants. Following the discussion, Councillor Falconer, seconded by Councillor McLachlan, moved that the recommendations for community grants (a) to (h), as detailed at section 2.1 of the report, be approved. Councillor Clark, seconded by Councillor Johnston-Dempsey, moved as an amendment that the full eligible amounts for community grants (a) to (h) be approved. On a vote being taken using the electronic voting system, 5 members voted for the motion and 8 for the amendment which was declared carried.

In response to a member's question in relation to what would happen to the money left over from the 2023/2024 community grant budget, the Administration Officer undertook to provide this information to members.

**The Committee decided:**

- (1) that community grants be awarded as follows:-

- |     |                   |   |
|-----|-------------------|---|
| (a) | Applicant:        | Fife Court Tenants Association, Bothwell (HA/31/23) |
|     | Purpose of Grant: | Start-up costs                                      |
|     | Amount Awarded:   | £999  |
| (b) | Applicant:        | Woza Theatre Group, Blantyre (HA/32/23)             |
|     | Purpose of Grant: | Start-up costs                                      |
|     | Amount Awarded:   | £400  |
| (c) | Applicant:        | Dalserf Village Garden Club, Larkhall (HA/33/23)    |
|     | Purpose of Grant: | Environmental Project                               |
|     | Amount Awarded:   | £350  |

- (d) Applicant: Hamilton Ramblers Club, (HA/34/23)  
Purpose of Grant: Outing  
Amount Awarded: £400
- (e) Applicant: Larkhall Probus Club (HA/35/23)  
Purpose of Grant: Outing, entrance fees, administration and publicity costs  
Amount Awarded: £450
- (f) Applicant: Trinity Church Guild, Larkhall (HA/36/23)  
Purpose of Grant: Outing and entrance fees  
Amount Awarded: £400
- (g) Applicant: Cadzow Community Corps, Hamilton (HA/37/23)  
Purpose of Grant: Environmental project  
Amount Awarded: £704
- (h) Applicant: The Monday Club, (Hamilton Old Parish Church) (HA/38/23)  
Purpose of Grant: Outing and entrance fees  
Amount Awarded: £400

(2) that, to ensure that the remaining 2023/2024 community grant budget was utilised as fully as possible, the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chair, be authorised to approve community grant applications in the period to 31 March 2024, subject to the applications meeting the Council's criteria for the receipt of funding; and

(3) that the details of those applications approved be reported to a future meeting for noting.

*[Reference: Minutes of 15 November 2023 (Paragraph 4)]*

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## **10 Urgent Business**

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There were no items of urgent business.