

EAST KILBRIDE AREA COMMITTEE

Minutes of meeting held via Confero and in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Almada Street, Hamilton on 31 January 2023

Chair:

Councillor Archie Buchanan

Councillors Present:

Councillor John Anderson, Councillor Mathew Buchanan, Councillor Gerry Convery, Councillor Margaret Cooper, Councillor Joe Fagan, Councillor Grant Ferguson, Councillor Gladys Ferguson-Miller, Councillor Elise Frame, Councillor Susan Kerr, Councillor Elaine McDougall, Councillor Kirsten Robb, Councillor Ali Salamati, Councillor Graham Scott, Councillor David Watson

Councillors' Apologies:

Councillor Geri Gray (Depute), Councillor Hugh Macdonald, Councillor Monique McAdams

Attending:

Community and Enterprise Resources

I Ross, Project Manager

Education Resources

L Mitchell, Lead Officer

Finance and Corporate Resources

H Calley, Administration Officer; J McCafferty, Development Officer; I Mulholland, Community Asset Transfer Officer; L Wyllie, Administration Assistant

Housing and Technical Resources

C Frew, Strategy Co-ordinator

Also Attending:

Loaves and Fishes Foodbank, East Kilbride and Strathaven

L Davidson, Chair

1 Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the East Kilbride Area Committee held on 1 November 2022 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

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

3 Loaves and Fishes Foodbank, East Kilbride and Strathaven

L Davidson, Chair of Loaves and Fishes Foodbank, East Kilbride and Strathaven provided an overview of the work carried out by the charity.

Loaves and Fishes' aim was to give people "full tummies, warm hearts and clear heads" as the charity was more than "a bag of food". In addition to providing food, support and advice was also given, for example, assistance with contacting the Money Matters Advice Service, Citizens' Advice Bureau or Women's Aid as well as helping with school uniforms.

The charity issued 150 food parcels every week to members of the public, including those in employment, as the dynamic of people using foodbanks had changed drastically over recent years. In addition, approximately 50 agency parcels were provided to Social Workers, Housing Officers and Health Visitors for their clients who were at a crisis point. Loaves and Fishes was also supporting the new Salvation Army's project in Hamilton for Ukrainian families by delivering food parcels every week.

During the festive period, the charity had set up a food pantry at Hairmyres Hospital as senior management had approached them advising staff members were struggling and unable to undertake their roles as they were hungry.

L Davidson advised that Loaves and Fishes was a small, local charity with limited funding and although funding had been received from the Council, the charity was under pressure as many people were relying on foodbanks. Currently, there were more foodbanks in the United Kingdom than McDonalds restaurants, for example, 52 foodbanks in Glasgow compared to 18 McDonalds.

Before the pandemic, the charity issued 25 food parcels per week from a small warehouse with a handful of volunteers. It had since moved to a larger, commercial let warehouse which the charity had to fund. The charity now had over 40 regular, committed volunteers who helped distribute food parcels every week. The charity aimed to make those volunteers feel valued, appreciated and that they were giving back to their communities.

L Davidson, having responded to members' questions, was thanked for her informative presentation and members intimated their support for the charity.

The Committee decided: that the presentation be noted.

L Davidson left the meeting after this item of business

4 Community Asset Transfer Update

A report dated 10 January 2023 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted providing an update on the current work related to Community Asset Transfer (CAT).

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 created several legal obligations aimed at improving the involvement of community members in the design, implementation and delivery of services and activities that impacted them and their fellow residents, one of which had been the introduction of CAT.

CAT enabled suitably constituted local community organisations to formally apply to lease, purchase or implement managed arrangements for any land or property owned by relevant public bodies where they could evidence that their proposed community benefit was better than the current usage.

As this legislation increasingly impacted upon the work of the authority, a dedicated CAT Officer had been employed, from March 2022, on a 2-year contract. The Officer's role was to improve the authority's internal processes, redesign community information to improve uptake, support organisations considering the process and to act as a conduit for the flow of information both within the Council and externally.

The website had been upgraded to be more user friendly and provided both members of the public and interested parties with more information on the process. It was due to go live early in 2023.

The CAT Officer had attended a number of third sector network events to promote the opportunities that existed through the legislation. Strong links had been developed with key local and national agencies, ensuring that a joined-up approach existed to support interested organisations into and through the process.

The CAT Officer hosted an information event, in conjunction with South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture (SLLC) and the Scottish Football Association (SFA), to provide information to over 50 individuals, who represented community football clubs, on the CAT process and what it meant for them.

South Lanarkshire-wide, there had been contact from over 75 organisations during the last financial year, with 13 of those from the East Kilbride area. Of those enquiries, the CAT Officer was in dialogue with 30 organisations who were interested in using the legislation and 5 of those were from the East Kilbride area.

Two applications had been submitted and approved. It was anticipated that a further 5 would be submitted before the end of the year, with 2 of those from the East Kilbride area.

The CAT Officer gave a presentation covering the legislation, criteria, process, best value, timescales, appeal/review process and overview of the CAT Officer role.

The CAT Officer responded to a member's questions regarding sharing applications and a register of assets.

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

J McCafferty and I Mulholland left the meeting after this item of business

5 Education Resources – Participatory Budgeting - Pupil Equity Funding

A report dated January 2023 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted on Participatory Budgeting (PB) in relation to Pupil Equity Funding (PEF).

Schools within the East Kilbride area had allocated £139,957.05 of their £2,037,860 PEF allocation for PB. A breakdown of the allocation for each learning community was provided in Appendix 1 of the report and Appendix 2 summarised the percentage of PEF which schools had allocated for PB. Appendix 3 outlined the outcome of the vote in relation to category of spend for each school. Appendix 4 indicated the distribution in terms of categories of spend across the East Kilbride area, while Appendix 5 outlined the distribution of votes by stakeholders across the East Kilbride area.

Schools were now progressing with their spend to ensure the minimum 5% was spent in full by the end of March 2023.

Education Resources would provide Area Committees with the following information:-

- ◆ a summary report of each school's PB outcome and local authority and area analysis report of this
- ◆ case studies of school activity, which had particular impact/success
- ◆ a detailed Local Authority Financial Report of how PEF money allocated for PB had been spent

Education Resources would support schools and monitor and track the impact of this activity, the findings from which would inform any future PB activity within the Resource.

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

L Mitchell left the meeting after this item of business

In terms of Standing Order No 14, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 2.43pm and reconvened at 3.01pm. Councillors Convery and Kerr were not present when the meeting reconvened

6 Housing and Technical Resources – Participatory Budgeting - Estate Improvement Budget/Housing Investment Programme Environmental Programme

A report dated January 2023 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 directed 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 a PB approach as it funded smaller projects. To date, 5 projects had been undertaken within the East Kilbride area which were detailed in the report.

During 2022/2023, 2 PB projects had been undertaken within the East Kilbride area from within this budget. As part of an internal upgrade programme, residents at the Strathcona House and Bosfield Place Sheltered Housing complexes had been offered the opportunity to determine a range of finishes, such as flooring, tiles and wall coverings, with an initial meeting held to explain the process. Officers prepared 'mood boards' and completed visits or sent letters to all households within the complexes asking them to select their preferred option.

A total of 67 households at Strathcona House and Bosfield Place took part in the exercise and the total costs for the project were £421,646.

A total of £11,373 from the Estate Improvement Budget had been spent in the East Kilbride division during 2022/2023 on a range of tenant priorities, which were detailed in the report.

Officers from Housing and Technical Resources would continue to take forward opportunities within the East Kilbride area to ensure tenants and other customers had the chance to determine the outcome of budgets within the Environmental Programme and Community Safety Partnership Commissioning Budget, with further updates provided to committee at a later date.

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

C Frew left the meeting after this item of business

7 Update on Town Centres

A report dated 17 January 2023 by the Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources) was submitted providing an update on the activity being undertaken in town centres across the East Kilbride area.

The nature of town centres across the United Kingdom was in a transitional stage, with a broad and complex range of issues and challenges. Factors, such as the economic downturn, internet shopping, the growth of out of town shopping malls, changes in retailers' business models and consumer expectations, had resulted in a decline in footfall.

Across the 10 towns defined in the South Lanarkshire Local Development Plan (LDP), there was active and ongoing engagement with the most appropriate groups in the towns. Those ranged from town-to-town and included Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), Development Trusts, Community Councils and private property owners.

Town centre strategies and action plans had been prepared and approved for Hamilton, Cambuslang, Larkhall and Blantyre, with work underway in Rutherglen. Similar plans were being progressed by the communities in Lanark and Carluke, along with the master planning work by the owners of East Kilbride.

Officers in Economic Development were working with all key stakeholders across towns in the area and had commissioned 2 key pieces of work on Town Centre Visioning and Transition to Net Zero, to set the direction of the Council's work on town centres. Those would inform and align with existing and emerging funding opportunities around town centres.

East Kilbride town centre had gone through a challenging period due to the pandemic and changes in shopping patterns. Recently, it had been called in by the bank, who had funded the previous purchase, and had subsequently been put into administration.

Meetings had taken place between the administrator, the asset managers and senior officers of the Council to update on the process and how they intended to proceed. The administrator had emphasised that the town centre would continue to trade and it was committed to working with all parties to secure a positive future for East Kilbride.

The Strathaven Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) had completed its 5 years of funding from Historic Environment Scotland. The last elements of the final projects were being completed and the final financial claims being signed off. This project had been challenging for all involved but the commitment of the community group, working closely with officers, had led to many positive outcomes.

Strathaven had been successful in securing funding from the Town Centre Capital Fund for the development of the Thomson Suite in the Town Mill and provision of a tourist information point in the town centre. It had also been part of the first phase of towns involved in the development of the Inside Out app, along with Stonehouse. The app gave communities a free online platform to promote their town centres and community activities.

There was significant, ongoing activity across the town centres in the East Kilbride area and officers in Enterprise and Sustainable Development were keen to explore further opportunities with groups across the communities.

The Project Manager, Community and Enterprise Resources responded to members' questions regarding Levelling Up funding and the opportunity to comment on plans for East Kilbride town centre.

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

I Ross left the meeting after this item of business

8 Community Grant Applications/Warm Welcome Initiative

A report dated 17 January 2023 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on:-

- ◆ applications for community grant
- ◆ grants awarded to community and voluntary groups/organisations in the East Kilbride Area Committee area in response to the Warm Welcome Initiative

At its meeting on 28 September 2022, the Council agreed that the Chief Executive would bring a package of cost of living supports for agreement, in consultation with Group Leaders, which was approved in terms of Standing Order No 37(c) and noted by the Executive Committee on 30 November 2022. This package included support for a Warm Welcome Initiative.

Working in conjunction with South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture and community and voluntary groups/organisations, the Warm Welcome Initiative was a network of warm spaces in community settings and public buildings where members of the public were welcomed and could participate in activities and access advice and support.

To support the Initiative, a small grants scheme had been created offering grants to a maximum of £1,000 to cover extra costs incurred by offering a Warm Welcome. A total of £40,000 had been identified for the Initiative and the monies had been apportioned equally between the 4 Area Committees.

As funds were required immediately, it had been agreed that applications would be considered by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources), in consultation with the relevant Area Committee Chair or Depute and submitted to the Area Committee for noting.

As the total grants awarded had exceeded the budget of £10,000, the Depute Chair had agreed that the additional £500 would be met from the community grants budget for 2022/2023.

The Committee decided:

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

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| (a) | Applicant: | East Kilbride and District Indoor Bowling Club (<i>EK/32/22</i>) |
| | Purpose of Grant: | Outing |
| | Amount Awarded: | £300 |
| (b) | Applicant: | XRR Mountaineering Club, East Kilbride (<i>EK/33/22</i>) |
| | Purpose of Grant: | Outing |
| | Amount Awarded: | £300 |
| (c) | Applicant: | Claremont Rambling Club, East Kilbride (<i>EK/34/22</i>) |
| | Purpose of Grant: | Outing, administration and publicity costs |
| | Amount Awarded: | £480 |
| (d) | Applicant: | Sandford WRI, Strathaven (<i>EK/35/22</i>) |
| | Purpose of Grant: | Outing and entrance fees |
| | Amount Awarded: | £350 |
| (e) | Applicant: | Friends of Stonehouse Park (<i>EK/36/22</i>) |
| | Purpose of Grant: | Equipment, administration and publicity costs |
| | Amount Awarded: | £300 |

(2) that the award of 11 grants, totalling £10,500, to the following community and voluntary groups/organisations in the East Kilbride Area in response to the Warm Welcome Initiative be noted:-

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| (a) | Applicant: | East Kilbride West Kirk |
| | Amount Awarded: | £1,000 |
| (b) | Applicant: | St Andrew's Methodist Church, East Kilbride |
| | Amount Awarded: | £1,000 |

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| (c) | Applicant: | Trust Jack Foundation, Stonehouse |
| | Amount Awarded: | £1,000 |
| (d) | Applicant: | The Village Centre, East Kilbride |
| | Amount Awarded: | £1,000 |
| (e) | Applicant: | Calderwood Baptist Church, East Kilbride |
| | Amount Awarded: | £1,000 |
| (f) | Applicant: | Avendale Old Parish Church, Strathaven |
| | Amount Awarded: | £1,000 |
| (g) | Applicant: | Healthy and Active in East Kilbride |
| | Amount Awarded: | £1,000 |
| (h) | Applicant: | Strathaven Rugby Club |
| | Amount Awarded: | £1,000 |
| (i) | Applicant: | Stonehouse Business Association |
| | Amount Awarded: | £1,000 |
| (j) | Applicant: | East Kilbride Moncrieff Parish Church |
| | Amount Awarded: | £1,000 |
| (k) | Applicant: | Coffee, Chat and Company, East Kilbride |
| | Amount Awarded: | £500 |

9 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

10 Chair's Closing Remarks

The Chair:-

- ◆ referred to correspondence received requesting recognition for a constituent who had played and taught badminton for over 50 years. Following discussion, it was agreed that Councillor Watson would pass details to the East Kilbride Sports Council as it held an annual awards ceremony, for which nominations were currently open, including a Lifetime Achievement Award
- ◆ suggested that, in order to enhance future agendas, some members of the Area Committee meet informally, on a monthly basis, to put forward topics that were specific to the geography of the East Kilbride Area Committee area. It was agreed that he would send an email seeking nominations from those who wished to participate