

Committee Minutes

Pentlands Local Development Committee

Edinburgh, 3 November 2004

Present:- Councillors Paisley (Convener), Elaine Aitken, Henderson, Laing, Fallon, Hunter, McInnes, Rust and Scobbie.

Apologies:- Apologies were received from Councillor Russell.

In Attendance:- 58 members of local groups and individuals representing approximately 19 local organisations.

1 Welcome and Introduction

The Convener, on behalf of the Committee, welcomed Councillor Rust, newly elected member for the Colinton Ward, to his first Local Development Committee meeting.

2 Traffic Filter at Craiglockhart Avenue/Colinton Road

The Committee, on a motion by Councillor Hunter, agreed that the Director of City Development be invited to report to the Committee's next meeting on the circumstances surrounding the recent withdrawal of the left-hand traffic filter at the junction of Craiglockhart Avenue and Colinton Road and on the implications for peak period traffic flows.

3 Lothian Buses: Withdrawal of Number 18 Service on Sundays

Mr Campbell, Operations Director, Lothian Buses, outlined the background to the curtailment of the Sunday service on the 18 route, confirming that the route had been incurring a very heavy financial loss. He explained that Lothian Buses was obliged to run the network as a profitable business and that losses as severe as encountered on the no. 18 service could not be sustained.

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"Social" buses could, however, be provided at the discretion of the local authority. Having suggested that the Council benefited financially from the current arrangement, he added that the Council had now been given an indication of the likely cost of reinstating the service.

It was reported that Councillor Elaine Aitken had already asked for an urgent report on the decision to stop running evening services from Colinton, Fairmilehead, Oxgangs, Longstone and Sighthill to the new ERI and on how services could be continued, if necessary, through a supported bus contract. Councillor Paisley questioned Mr Campbell on Scottish Executive funding in support of uneconomic services. The operation of other services such as the nos. 33, 38 and 44 was also being discussed.

Mr Campbell invited consideration on the possibility of rescheduling the bus and noted also that the 32 service was also performing poorly. He also indicated that the Board recognised the significance of the Infirmary and had sustained the service to it, despite mounting losses, for two years in the hope that an increase in passenger numbers would improve the financial situation.

Decision

To note the presentation and the current situation on discussions between the Council and Lothian Buses on subsidy of uneconomic services.

4 Lothian Health Board Consultations

Mr Thomas of Lothian Health Board confirmed that the period for consultation on care and investment in change had been extended until 19 December and that two additional consultation meetings were planned for the West Edinburgh area.

Decision

To note the presentation by Mr Thomas of Lothian Health Board on continuation of Lothian Health Consultation Programme and plans for additional consultation meetings in West Edinburgh.

5 Minute

a) Pentlands Local Development Committee

The minute of the meeting of the Pentlands Local Development Committee of 15 September 2004 was approved as a correct record.

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Matters Arising

- 5.1 Youth Sub-Committee/Youth Council (item 3(c))** - The Committee, having heard Councillor Henderson, agreed that the Director of Corporate Services report on the proposals for co-ordinating the new Local Planning Committee's activities and the Youth Council structure to ensure that young persons issues were addressed effectively.
- 5.2 National and Regional Sports Facilities - Proposed Bid (item 5)** - The Committee had considered a report on the first stage of the council bid for Sportscotland funding to upgrade and develop new national and regional sports facilities in the City. The Director of Culture and Leisure outlined progress on the consultations and local concerns expressed at aspects of the development proposals, particularly as to the potential loss of green spaces relative to the Sighthill Park proposals. The Director further signalled his intention to report to the Council meeting in November 2004 on the outcome of the bid and on how the matter could be taken forward. It was his intention to report in further detail on the proposals to all Local Development Committees after that date.

Decision

The report was noted on the basis that the Director of Culture and Leisure would report in further detail on progress to the Committee's next meeting.

- 5.3 Services for Older People (item 6)** - Councillor Fallon outlined progress on the discussions with the Dove Centre relative to long-term funding and confirmed plans to transfer operations to the new community building. The discussions had extended to the operations of CHAI in service delivery for older people in the area, the Centre's aspirations and on their service delivery strengths and service base. It was believed that the talks could lead to progress on improving liaison and towards better communication and co-operation between service partners.

Decision

To note the progress of the discussion with the Dove Centre and that further reports on funding and accommodation issues would follow.

- 5.4 Greenbank Road and Lane: Road Safety (item 9)** - At its meeting on 15 September 2004, the Committee had asked for a further report on road safety at Greenbank Road and Lane.

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The Director of City Development explained that a central part of the Council's road safety strategy was the reduction of accidents in residential areas by introducing 20 mph zones with traffic calming throughout the city. A significant number of zones had already been introduced. The Council had allocated an additional £2 million for the financial year 2005/06 for the implementation of further 20 mph zones. The Greenbank area had been considered for calming as part of this city wide initiative but was not included in the prioritised list of locations for which funding was presently available. Areas were ranked based on the personal injury accident rate of each zone. Account was also taken at accidents involving vulnerable road users such as pedestrians and cyclists and locations such as schools, community centres and local shopping areas.

The Director also indicated that measures were to be introduced to upgrade carriageway markings at the location of the blind summit in Greenbank Road, to further emphasise the need for vehicles to be driven at an appropriate speed. As safety concerns remained about the introduction of a single traffic calming feature at an isolated location, it was not recommended that a physical feature be provided at the summit location separate from any calming treatment of the entire zone.

It was also reported that the introduction of signals at the junction of Greenbank Drive and Comiston Road had greatly improved the pedestrian crossing facilities at this location. There were no further locations where it was considered that there was a significant demand at this time and there were no plans to introduce a further traffic signal controlled pedestrian crossing in Greenbank Drive (because Greenbank Crescent was a bus route and a main traffic route was not considered appropriate for traffic calming features to be installed). Instead it was considered that the question of dealing with vehicles that were being driven at speeds in excess of the speed limit was one that should be addressed by affirmative police action.

A spokesperson for local residents expressed the view that the current plans for upgrading of the blind summit were unacceptable and that they should be treated as a special case. It was also suggested that there was a lack of access to the pedestrian crossing and no safe routes to school, that 20-mph traffic calming measures were required as a matter of urgency to prevent constant speeding and that the present road narrowing schemes were ineffective. Concerns were raised at cancellation of a proposed site visit, the lack of consideration given to the children's nursery and to a perceived emphasis on costs to the detriment of road safety.

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Councillor McInnes indicated that he planned to arrange discussions with the residents and the Director of City Development, to progress the issues raised and with a view to a further report to the next Local Development Committee.

Decision

To note that Councillor McInnes would seek further discussions with the Director of City Development on road safety in the Greenbank area and to agree to receive a further report on this in due course.

(References - minute of meeting of Pentlands Local Development Committee of 15 September 2004 (item 9); report by the Director of City Development, submitted.)

b) West Edinburgh Community Planning Partnership

The minute of the meeting of the West Edinburgh Community Planning Partnership of 9 September 2004 was approved.

6 Sighthill Health Centre, Hours of Opening

It was noted that the hours of opening of Sighthill Health Centre had been reduced in terms of the new Lothian Health Board out of hours scheduling, the effects of which were being monitored.

Decision

It was agreed to receive a report on preliminary assessment of the Centre's new hours of opening to the Committee's next meeting.

7 Local Governance and Local Community Planning

At its meeting of 15 September 2004, the Committee had continued consideration of Local Governance and Local Community Planning for further detailed examination.

Steve McGavin, West Edinburgh Committee Planning Partnership Manager, outlined the Council's current proposals on new local governance and development of democracy at local level, emphasising that the focus was on strengthening the local partnership approach at neighbourhood level, embracing SIP transition, engaging the community in decision making and linking with area service changes. He also explained that the current thinking was for 15 local Community Planning Partnerships (LCPPs) to be established across the City, representative of local Councillors, partner agencies, communities and voluntary sector representatives. An enhanced role was suggested for

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Community Councils. The LCPP functions and service influence areas were also discussed and possible further steps towards implementation in 2005/6 outlined.

Marie Anderson, local voluntary sector representative on West Edinburgh Community Partnership was heard. She stressed that additional recognition for the voluntary sector's contribution, possible within the Planning Partnership framework, improved service delivery and general awareness of the work of the voluntary sector, was welcomed.

Keith Bell, for the Sighthill, Broomhouse and Parkhead Community Council, was supportive of the Planning Partnership initiative although still critical of some aspects of communication with specific Council departments. He viewed the situation as improving and suggested that there was real potential for improvement from the LCDPP exercise.

Police Inspector Brian Muir, Lothian and Borders Police, welcomed the Community Partnership initiative and voiced his support for it as a step towards service improvements and for establishing stronger links with the community.

Following the presentations, the members attending discussed the issues arising in three separate Focus Groups.

Decision

To note the presentations made and to thank the contributors and to note that the results, inclusive of the results of the Focus Group discussions, would be the subject of a report to the Committee's next meeting.

(Reference - Pentlands Local Development Committee, 15 September 2004 (item 4; paper - Local Governance and Local Community Planning: Proposals for Edinburgh.)

8 Local Development Committee Grants Scheme Eligibility Criteria

The Committee noted a report by the Council Executive on recent reviews and revision of the eligibility criteria for LDC Grants Scheme. The review extended the scope of the Scheme to consideration of applications from religious bodies and school boards.

(Reference – report of 7 September 2004 by the Council Executive, submitted.)

9 Local Development Committee Community Grants Fund

Details of applications for grants from the Community Grants Fund were provided with recommendations for awards under the principal headings of Community Participation and Sport, Quality of Life and Social Inclusion.

Decision

To award grants under these headings as shown in Appendix 1 to this minute.

(Reference – report of 20 October 2004 by the Director of Corporate Services, submitted.)

10 Public Question Time

Members of the public attending the meeting had been invited to submit questions on matters of local concern. The issues and responses given at the meeting are detailed in Appendix 2 to this minute.

11 Date and Venue for Next Meeting

Wednesday 26 January 2005 at Sighthill Community Centre.

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APPENDIX 1

Local Development Committee Community Grants Scheme: Eligibility Criteria

- 1) To award a grant of £3,685 to the Broomhouse Tenants and Residents' Association for the projects detailed.
- 2) To award a grant of £379 to EVOC for the project detailed.
- 3) To award a grant of £2,490 to the Broomhouse Empowerment Project for the project detailed.
- 4) To award a grant of £1,172 to the Longstone Community Education Centre Association for the project detailed.
- 5) To award a grant of £1,156 to the Octagon Club for the project detailed.
- 6) To award a grant of £196 to the Artists Unlimited for the project detailed.
- 7) To award a grant of £4,600 to Girlguiding UK for the project described.
- 8) Not to award a grant to the South West Edinburgh Community Learning Partnership for the reason described.
- 9) To note the applications for continuation, listed.

APPENDIX 2

Public Questions

Question 1

Keith Bell, Sighthill, Broomhouse and Parkhead Community Council – Lothian Buses route and journey times and specific services.

Answer – Response provided from Mr Campbell, Operations Director, Lothian Buses, as detailed at the meeting.

Question 2

Keith Bell, Sighthill, Broomhouse and Parkhead Community Council – Signage and associated matters in respect of the school crossing at Murrayburn Road/Hailesland Road.

Answer – Director of City Development to provide a written response.

Question 3

Graham Neil, Community Centre Education Officer (on behalf of a local resident) – Speculation on the withdrawal on the no. 44 bus service and implications for provisions of youth services close to Lanark Road.

Answer – Mr Campbell, Operations Director, Lothian Buses, to provide a written response.

Question 4

Andrew Patterson, Sighthill, Broomhouse and Parkhead Community Council – When the Planning Department would put Community Councils on the online portal.

Answer – Director of City Development to provide a written response.

Question 5

George Dobbie, The Greenways Centre – Withdrawal of the no. 3 bus service.

Answer – Mr Campbell, Operations Director, Lothian Buses, to provide a written response.

Question 6

George Lighthouse, Firrhill Community Council and Pentlands Community Education Centre – Janitorial services at Pentlands Community Education Centre.

Answer – Director of Education to provide a written response.

Question 7

George Dobbie, The Greenways Centre – Progress of housing and related developments at Harvesters Way.

Answer – Councillor Henderson replied to the enquiry at the meeting, indicating also that further information on the outcome of the planning process relative to the developments at Harvesters Way would be made available in due course.

Question 8

George Dobbie, The Greenways Centre – Police call response times.

Answer – Chief Inspector Brian Muir replied to the question at the meeting with particular regard to transfer of information through the new Police Call Centre.