

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

GOVERNANCE AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 19 NOVEMBER 2010

MATTERS ARISING UPDATE REPORT

Report by Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Support

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with a consolidated response to information requests made by Members at previous meetings.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 As Members are aware, during the course of discussions at meetings of the Governance and Scrutiny Committee, Members, from time to time, seek information or clarification from Officers on particular matters which requires to be provided after the meeting. Such requests arise from, and reflect, the role of the Committee in respect of its scrutiny function.
- 2.2 The Committee at its meeting held on 3 April 2009 agreed that, in future, a report be submitted to the Committee to consolidate all responses to information requests made by Members of the Committee at previous meetings or, otherwise, provide an explanation as to why the relevant information is not yet available. This approach will formalise the various matters arising into report format thereby facilitating presentation of the information to Members and recording of the origin and progress of the issues raised.

3. UPDATE ON MATTERS ARISING

- 3.1 The outstanding matters arising from the last meeting of the Committee and the information relevant to these matters is set out below, namely:-

3.1.1 Matters Arising: Awarding of Contracts - Period from 5 June to 20 September 2010 (GSC 22 October 2010, Item 1.1.3, Page , 07/12)

Information Requested: The Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services would provide confirmation to Councillor John McGhee of the breakdown of the sources of funding for the Cumnock Creating Civic Space project, and that this information would also be included within the Matters Arising Update report to the next meeting.

Response by the Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services:- The sources of funding for the Cumnock Creating Civic Space project are set out in the table undernoted, together with the main expenditure headings:-

ITEM	COST
Access Road and CCTV	96,450.00
Demolition of bingo hall	114,913.47
Miscellaneous works	2,172.00
Fees	45,537.00
Sub Total	259,072.47
Civic Space construction contract - Stewart Landscapes	559,000.00
Total	818,072.47

Funding available	Amount
TCRF - construction of civic space	704,000.00
TCRF - demolition of bingo hall	45,000.00
EAC Capital - demolition of bingo hall	100,000.00
Total	849,000.00

3.1.2 Matters Arising Update Report (GSC, 22 October 2010, Item 2, Page 07/12)

Information Requested: With regard to the table featured within paragraph 3.1.1 of the report, the Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services would provide to Councillor Stuart Finlayson, information by "Reason for Termination" category on the number of tenants who were not in arrears at the point of termination of their tenancy, and that this information would also be included within the Matters Arising Update report to the next meeting.

Response by the Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services:- Information requested by Councillor Finlayson is presented in the table below together with, for clarity, the information previously presented to Committee, namely:-

Reason for Termination	In Arrears				Not in Arrears	
			Rehoused within 6 months			
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Ordinary termination (left giving notice)	391	57.1	0	0	230	50.9
Absconded (left without giving notice)	104	15.2	3	2.8	36	8
Death	80	11.7	-	-	115	25.4
Evicted	64	9.3	8	12.5	6	1.3
Moved to a Nursing Home/Hospital	25	3.6	-	-	37	8.2
Evicted Short Secure Tenancy Conversion	12	1.8	12	100	4	0.9
Transferred to a Housing Association Property	9	1.3	0	0	24	5.3
Total	685	100	-	-	452	100%
Total (Absconded/Evicted/Evicted SSST)	180	-	23	12.7		

* The Evicted (short secure tenancy conversion) category is a homelessness prevention measure. This measure replaces a standard tenancy and is used in cases where the current tenant is assessed as requiring support to maintain their tenancy. Tenants in this category have been technically evicted but are allowed to remain in their home; in addition they receive housing support and have an arrangement in place to pay off their arrears.

3.1.3 Department of Educational and Social Services: Standards and Quality Report for 2009: Close Cleaning Scheme (GSC, 22 October 2010, Item 3, Page , 07/12)

Information Requested: That information be provided within the Matters Arising Update report to the next meeting on (a) the number of properties to be included in the Close Cleaning Initiative within each area, following extension of the pilot scheme; and (b) if possible, an indication as to the increase in the level of rental income resulting from the improved level of cleanliness of closes due to the Close Cleaning Scheme compared to the cost of operating the scheme.

Response by the Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services:- Following on from the extension of the Close Cleaning Scheme, the number of properties within each area is as follows.

Area	Common Entries
New Farm Loch	17
Central North	43
Onthank	5
Stewarton	3
Kilmaurs	4
Galston	5
Newmilns	1
Catrine	4
Cumnock	3
Muirkirk	3
Total	88

Selection of properties for inclusion in the scheme is based on lettable patterns and estate management information. There is some scope to increase the number of properties, if required, but this would restrict the scope of works done within each property.

With regard to the indicative increase in rental income arising from the introduction of the scheme, it is difficult to attach a definitive value to this as it is not possible to establish how many tenants have been encouraged to remain in the property owing to the improved conditions within the close entry. Additionally, acceptances of properties cannot be exclusively attributed to the improved condition of the close entries.

A comparison of terminations showed that within the pilot areas there were 36 fewer terminations in 2009/10 than there were in 2008/09. Taking account of

demand for these properties, this would equate to an estimated saving in void rent loss of £15, 000. Additionally, when the average cost for void repairs and security, is taken into account, the improved tenancy sustainment contributes a further potential saving of £68,400. The cost of the service in the pilot area in 2009/10 was £52,000.

In a sample analysis of refusals within the pilot area, it was found that there were 23% fewer refusals in 2009/10 than there were in 2008/09.

3.1.4 Winter Service Improvement Plan (GSC, 22 October 2010, Item 4, Page 07/12)

Information Requested: That information be provided within the Matters Arising Update report to the next meeting on the numbers of Community Councillors and Elected Members who had attended the four local presentations made by the Roads Division on the Winter Service Improvement Plan.

Response by the Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services:- Four presentations were held as undernoted, and Community Councillors and Elected Members attended as indicated:-

Wednesday 20 October 2010 within the Council Chambers, London Road, Kilmarnock -

Community Councils - three representatives (Galston, Dunlop and Lugton, Grange/Howard);
Residents Associations - two representatives (Altonhill Residents Association x2); and
Elected Members - two

Wednesday 20 October 2010 within Patna Community Centre -

Community Councils - four representatives (Dalrymple x2, Patna x2); and
Tenants/Residents Association - one representative (Drongan TARA).

Thursday 21 October 2010 within the Council Chambers, London Road, Kilmarnock -

Community Councils - two representatives (Galston x2);
Tenants/Residents Association - one representative (Kirkstyle TARA);
Elected Members - one

Thursday 21 October 2010 within Netherthird Community Centre, Cumnock -

Community Councils - four representatives (Cumnock x1, New Cumnock x3);
Elected Members - two

4. FINANCIAL/LEGAL/POLICY/COMMUNITY PLANNING/RISK IMPLICATIONS

- None arising directly from this report.

5. RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1** The Committee is asked to note the information provided in response to the matter arising as set out in this report.

Alex McPhee
Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Support

1 November 2010
SN/FM

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS - NIL

Any person wishing further information on this report should contact Bill Walkinshaw, Head of Democratic Services on Telephone Number (01563) 576135.

Implementation Officer: Stuart Nelson, Administrative Officer.