PREVIOUS MINUTES

1.1 APPROVAL AS A CORRECT RECORD
There were submitted and approved as a correct record, the Minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Group held on 30 January 2014 (circulated).

1.2 MATTERS ARISING

1.2.1 Regeneration Capital Fund
Noted, as advised by the Development Planning and Regeneration Manager, that a bid had been submitted to the Regeneration Capital Grant Fund in respect of the regeneration of 30-38 John Finnie Street, Kilmarnock and the outcome of Stage 2 of the bid was due to be announced week commencing 27 November 2014.

1.2.2 Reducing the Strength - Alcohol Related Statistics
Noted, as advised by the Democratic Services Officer, that domestic abuse incidents specifically related to alcohol, were not separately recorded by Police Scotland.

Following discussion, it was agreed that representatives of Police Scotland be invited to attend the next meeting of the Group to provide statistical information relating to alcohol related domestic abuse and alcohol related anti-social behaviour within the Town Centre.

Councillor Cowan joined the meeting during consideration of the above item.

1.2.3 Cumnock Town Centre Market
It was agreed to request the Town Centre Manager to provide members of the Scrutiny Group with information related to markets held within Cumnock Town Centre, similar to that previously submitted to the Scrutiny Group in respect of the nature and outcome of a survey of footfall and visitors over the four days of the Global Market held in Kilmarnock Town Centre during 12-15 September 2013.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY: PROMOTING TOWN CENTRE LIVING - ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT 2013/14

2. There was submitted a report dated 23 October 2014 (circulated) by the Acting Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services providing information on a report which was presented to the Governance and Scrutiny Committee of 6 November 2014, which
provided information on the Annual Performance Monitoring Report for the Council’s Strategic Priority: Promoting Town Centre Living.

During discussion, the following matters were raised:-

- the new housing development to be located within Darvel had been delayed due to land contamination issues;
- the Regeneration Capital Fund bid in respect of the potential business hub for 30-38 John Finnie Street, Kilmarnock;
- possible extension of the Cumnock Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS);
- the use of benefits sanctions and criminal ASBOs to tackle the factors that drive crime in communities in order to reduce victimisation, reoffending and in locations where reoffending occurs. In this respect, it was agreed to remit to the Acting Head of Housing and Environment Services to liaise with the Department of Work and Pensions in respect of the introduction and implications of introducing benefits sanctions under the Prevention First Initiative;
- comparisons between the number of houses demolished in respect of new builds, and the Acting Head of Housing and Environment Services agreed to provide the information to members of the Scrutiny Group;
- the future evaluation of the Prevention First Initiative, due to take place six months following the commencement of the Initiative, and the Acting Head of Housing and Environment Services agreed to provide clarification to members of the Scrutiny Group on who would undertake the evaluation;
- the development of a Kilmarnock Town Centre Action Plan, led by Vibrant Communities, and it was agreed to remit to the Strategic Manager, Vibrant Communities, to provide an update report on the Kilmarnock Town Centre Action Plan at the next meeting of the Scrutiny Group;
- the ongoing discussion in connection with access arrangements at Kilmarnock Railway Station in respect of the location of the Ayrshire College Kilmarnock Campus;
- the number of local apprentices employed in respect of the 170 construction jobs required for the construction of the Ayrshire College Kilmarnock Campus and it was agreed to remit to the Development Planning and Regeneration Manager to confirm with the members of the Scrutiny Group, the number of local employment opportunities in this regard;
- timescales in relation to the redevelopment of the Glaisnock Centre site within Cumnock, and it was agreed that an update report on the redevelopment of the Glaisnock Centre site in Cumnock be submitted to the next meeting of the Scrutiny Group;
- confirmation of the maintenance contract in place between East Ayrshire Council and East Ayrshire Leisure Trust in connection with Cumnock Town Hall, and it was agreed to remit to the Development Planning and Regeneration Manager to confirm the position to members of the Scrutiny Group;
- progress in relation to the Galston Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS);
- the need to examine the demand for amenity housing for older people within all communities. It was further noted that a report on the Strategic Housing Improvement Plan (SHIP) would be presented to a meeting of Cabinet on 26 November 2014;
• the process involved in tenancies being returned for older ambulant or disabled properties following the death of the tenant;
• milestones in connection with the key activity of "promote and encourage the use of vacant dwellings within the town centre living boundary of Kilmarnock and Cumnock" would require to be looked at in greater detail; and
• milestones in relation to the key activity of “support Kilmarnock and Cumnock Town Centres as centres for retail and employment”, specifically the marked increase in vacancy levels within Kilmarnock Town Centre for 2014/15.

It was agreed:

(i) to note the content of the performance monitoring report;
(ii) to note that the report had been presented to Cabinet on 29 October 2014 for its consideration;
(iii) to note that the report would also be presented to the Governance and Scrutiny Committee on 6 November 2014 for its consideration; and
(iv) otherwise, to note the contents of the report.

NEW COUNCIL HOUSE BUILDING IN OUR TOWN CENTRE

3. There was submitted a report dated 17 September 2014 (circulated) by the Acting Head of Housing and Environment Services which provided an update on the new build Council housing.

During discussion, the following matters were raised:

• the site at Robertland Square, Stewarton was now fully occupied;
• Cabinet, at their meeting held on 8 October 2014, agreed to approve the implementation of the letting plan for the Council's new building housing;
• the proposed revision to the Council's rent structure and the proposed procedure for this; and
• delays with regard to the housing sites at Hillhead Crescent, Kilmarnock; Lochore Terrace, Darvel; and Brewland Street, Galston. It was agreed to remit to the Acting Head of Housing and Environment Services to provide an update in respect of these sites at the next meeting of the Scrutiny Group.

Following discussion, the Scrutiny Group agreed to note the contents of the report.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

4. It was agreed to stand down the meeting scheduled to take place on 28 November 2014 and that the date of the next meeting be scheduled for early 2015, a date to be confirmed.

The meeting terminated at 1215 hrs.