

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

Housing and Health Committee

24 August 2016

Housing Estate-Based Initiatives

Report by Director (Housing and Social Work)

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report updates Committee on the development of estates based initiatives which have engaged and empowered local tenants to make improvements to their local neighbourhoods. The report also updates committee on the extension of the scheme and plans for the current year.

1. BACKGROUND / MAIN ISSUES

- 1.1 In January 2015, Housing and Health Committee approved proposals to introduce the Estate Based Initiatives Programme (EBIs) across Perth and Kinross (Report 15/52 refers). Funding was identified through the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and projects were expected to be on communal ground/property owned by the HRA and to demonstrate sustainability and either contribute to community safety, and/or improve the amenity of the areas.
- 1.2 The aim of EBI's is to involve and empower tenants at a local level within their communities to identify and prioritise environmental improvements that will benefit the wider community. The initiatives also enable tenants to agree and oversee a budget for their area, in discussion and partnership with elected members and staff.
- 1.3 EBIs support the delivery of the Council's five strategic objectives, as well as the Scottish Government's national priorities and approach through the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 by:-
 - Encouraging active community engagement
 - Building capacity within communities
 - Strengthening the voice of communities in the decisions and services that matter to them
 - Developing trust between and within services and communities
- 1.4 EBI's are closely aligned to the Housing Services and health and social care strategic plan themes to work with and within communities and involve and empower them to create safe, secure and sustainable communities.
- 1.5 Links between health and wellbeing and the environment was evident in the Scottish Government's publication "Good Places, Better Health" which recognised that to deliver on the Government's purpose, themes, and national

outcomes there is a need for greater connections around how physical environment influences health. Furthermore *Equally Well*, the Health Inequalities Task Force highlighted the need to work to reduce further people's exposure to factors in their physical and social environments that cause stress, damage health and wellbeing and lead to inequalities.

2. ACTIVITIES DURING 2015/16

- 2.1 During 2015/16 £100,000 of HRA funding was available to support the role-out and delivery of EBIs across all four localities: North/Highland Perthshire, South Perthshire & Kinross; Perth City; and Letham/Hillyland.
- 2.2 Local EBI panels were established in each locality consisting of local tenants and residents and elected members. They organised a number of community walkabouts, during which they identified a range of projects for potential funding.
- 2.3 In order to be inclusive and supportive of a range of local tenants housing and community capacity staff also led a series of focus groups and individual house visits to make sure there was wide community opinion and feedback to inform decisions about initiatives and funding.
- 2.4 Following the walkabouts, each Local EBI Panel assessed, appraised and ranked each of the potential projects using an option appraisal framework and this allowed the Panel to consider how well the project met the overall objectives of EBIs.
- 2.5 In total over 30 projects were funded, progressed and completed across Perth and Kinross, some of which are summarised below:-
 - Picnic benches and new seating in Hillyland, Pitlochry, Kinross and North Muirton
 - Clearance of open space to allow discussions for community allotment
 - Provision of community notice boards
 - Supporting North Muirton in Bloom with the provision of a ride on mower
 - Location of a porta-cabin at Pomarium flats to support community engagement over the next 12 months
 - Provision of new handrails to improve safety and access for vulnerable tenants/resident

A full list of projects is included in the Appendix.

3. TENANT AND ELECTED MEMBER FEEDBACK

- 3.1 Tenant and Elected Member feedback on the initiatives has been positive. A future development will be to formally record and analyse feedback and suggestions to continue to improve the process and impact of the initiatives.

- 3.2 The benefits of offering purposeful opportunities to support personal development, increase employment chances and aid recovery and well-being are well recognised. These activities can be of considerable value as part of support plans to those who are leading chaotic lifestyles or who are vulnerable. In order to support community capacity and deliver wider individual and community benefits, the locality Housing Teams worked closely with the Community Payback Team identifying projects to be delivered by them.
- 3.3 In addition, the social enterprise arm of RegenForce, 'Stepping Stones' have, over the past year, been supporting horticultural work for EBI's in terms of taking on contracts for clearing overgrown shrubbery, cutting back vegetation and high hedges, making new planting and installing localised environmental improvements. This has delivered positive outcomes for some of the workers who have been offered further training under the Council's own trainee schemes, and received praise and recognition from local residents for the extent and quality of their work.

4. LESSONS LEARNED

- 4.1 As this was the first year of the estates based initiatives, there were some lessons learned which have been included in the project plan for 2016/17. These include:
- Having adequate time for consultation and engagement with tenants for walkabouts but also for focus groups and arranging home visits
 - Recording and analysing tenant and Elected Member feedback on the impact
 - Ensuring sufficient time for the procurement process, particularly where work is being directed to a newly formed Social Enterprise

5. PLANS FOR 2016/17

- 5.1 An additional £50k has been allocated to support the 2016/17 Estates Based Initiatives following Housing and Health Committee approval in January 2016, to increase the budget to £150k (Report 15/50 refers).
- 5.2 Work has already begun to identify this year's initiatives, with walkabouts and focus groups taking place in May and June and plans for Local Panels to assess applications in July and August, with work getting underway in the autumn.
- 5.3 For example, 20 walkabouts have taken place as part of the main EBI programme in Luncarty, Coupar Angus, Invergowrie, Stanley, Methven, Alyth, Gilmerton and Comrie. The strong foundations established in 2015/16 mean that interest is growing and more tenants and residents are coming forward with ideas before the EBI walkabouts take place and attending on the day.

- 5.4 The walkabout in Gilmerton was the first such enterprise in many years and 15 residents made contact, with a contribution from a further 10 in a follow up door-knocking. As a result, the local Community Council is hosting a special meeting for Gilmerton to bring them into the local community decision making process.

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 The importance of the environment in creating a sense of place and wellbeing is central to supporting the wider outcomes of our tenants and communities. By involving and empowering our tenants through the Estate Based Initiatives, we are making a significant contribution to community sustainability, improving outcomes and tackling inequalities in local communities.

- 6.2 Committee is asked to:-

- (i) Note the excellent progress to date in delivering estates based initiatives and the positive impact these developments have on local communities.
- (ii) Welcome and note the plans to continue developing these in 2016/17 to support further community engagement, empowerment and improvements.
- (iii) Note the wider educational and employment opportunities delivered through initiatives such as Community Payback Team and Stepping Stones.

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1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes / None
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	Yes
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	Yes
Workforce	None
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	None
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	None
Strategic Environmental Assessment	None
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	None
Legal and Governance	None
Risk	None
Consultation	
Internal	None
External	Yes
Communication	
Communications Plan	Yes

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement

- 1.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2013 – 2018 lays out five outcome focussed strategic objectives which provide clear strategic direction, inform decisions at a corporate and service level and shape resources allocation. The report relates to the following:

- (ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens
- (iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy
- (iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives
- (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations

Corporate Plan

- 1.2 As above.

2. Resource Implications

Financial

- 2.1 There is a total of £150,000 available for 2016/17 to support this work and funded from the Housing Revenue Account.

Workforce

- 2.2 None

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

- 2.3 None

3. Assessments

3.1 Equality Impact Assessment

Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for plans and policies allows the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties.

- (i) Assessed as **not relevant** for the purposes of EqIA

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.2 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals.

However, no action is required as the Act does not apply to the matters presented in this report. This is because the Committee are requested to note the contents of the report only and the Committee are not being requested to approve, adopt or agree to an action or to set the framework for future decisions.

Sustainability

- 3.3 Under the provisions of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 the Council has to discharge its duties in a way which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. Under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 the Council also has a duty relating to climate change and, in exercising its functions must act:-

- in the way best calculated to delivery of the Act's emissions reduction targets
- in the way best calculated to deliver any statutory adaptation programmes
- in a way that it considers most sustainable

The information contained within this report has been considered under the

Act. However, no action is required as the Act does not apply to the matters presented in this report.

Legal and Governance

3.4 None

Risk

3.5 None

4. Consultation

Internal

4.1 None

External

4.2 The Tenant Committee Report Panel was consulted on this report. They commented that 'Estate Based Initiatives is a great idea and a good way of involvement but it is not for doing existing jobs that the Council is responsible for.'

5. Communication

5.1 Our tenants are our key target audience in relation to communication around this project. We will continue to undertake this through a range of methods including social media, tenant newsletter, locality events and our annual Tenant Conference.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

7. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: List of Estates Based Initiatives 2015/16

Appendix 1 – Estates Based Initiatives 2015/16

SOUTH LOCALITY
Kinross and Milnathort
<p>Montgomery Road: Use of grassed area as community seating area – seating and picnic tables and fit with metal legs and concreted in; creation of nice entrance into Montgomery Road with uniform fencing</p>
<p>Coventry Place: Fabricating and refurbishing the metal railings, which are eroded. Fix the broken paving stones and missing bricks from door steps and top step to Mill Street</p>
25 – 41 Bowton Road railings (houses at Whyte Court end)
De-rust and Paint the railings in front
Milnathort: Whyte Place
Number 44: Create a short fence between the house and the public path to the park, to secure the privacy of the occupier
Number 30: Create a short fence between house & street
Comrie
Laggan Square:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove overgrowth and define the boundary at the end of the Square Put in new fence on boundary line Tidy up tree line – remove or lop some trees Remove several tonnes of earth dumped and carry away. Remove fallen tree Remove one grass triangle to improve parking, and cobblestone the other one Make new signage and fit: 2,5 and 7 LAGGAN Square → Repair pot holes in entrance to Laggan Square
Car Park areas in Strowan Road and Queens Road:
Contribution to resurface of the car parks
Dunning
Croft Place:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hedge to be cut at the side of 22/24 Croft Place public way Weeds are sprayed and removed in kerbsides

NORTH LOCALITY	
Pitlochry	
James Court	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Construction of external platform lift and fitting from resident lounge; access to garden b) Make two benches and refurbish existing benches c) Planting in back garden, add a bird table by the windows, fencing to denote garden area; Weeding and planting to the side and front of the building; wooden steps to rear of the grass.
Dalchampaig Court	Weed the side areas and remove all shrubbery.
Rattray	
Davie Place corner of Ashgrove Road (3/4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Public ways overgrown, remove the overgrowth and thin out b) Very high tree/s blocking the light - Remove tree
Interlocking green spaces, lanes between Ashgrove Road, Ashgrove Gardens, Davie Place, McDonald Crescent	Overgrowth of amenity planting
Hatton Road/Glenalmond Road flats:	Several areas where weeds have taken over the bin store areas
Picture House Court	Seating and picnic benches
LETHAM LOCALITY	
Letham	
Strathtay Road flats	Remove the thick shrubbery and remove overgrowth of plants. Seed the cleared ground for grass – all blocks, frontages
Garth Avenue:	Side of the shops recycling unit provision of cover around the unit
Firbank Road:	Clear the space for use as a community area and consultation with tenants as to future use
Newhouse Road Odd numbers	Tidy entrances and weed the bin areas from 45 -57
Dalreoch/Marlee Road:	Cut grass in newly cleared area
Noticeboards x 1	Housing Office in Letham (new address in Rannoch Road)
	Meldrums to fix and cement in place:

17 Dalreoch Place:	Remove current overgrown shrubbery and replant with low maintenance ground plants
Hillyland	
Ettrick House:	A double bench for residents to sit on outside the block make and fit; metal legs and concreted in plus vandal proof coating
Tennis Court, Primrose Crescent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove graffiti. Payback team from St Martins House Tension fencing panels to be repaired and replaced
Create seating areas	on old Play areas x 3: in Nimmo Avenue, behind the shops at Primrose Crescent
Bruce Crescent:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove old gnarled fence, clear away all overgrowth and update the area. Replace old fence with a 60ft long, 8ft high panelled wooden fence.
Maxton Place:	level off and fill in the bank just before the sewage manhole, clear away unsightly overgrowth backfill and make grassed area around.
Noticeboards x 5	Locations: 1) Tulloch Terrace by the Institute, 2) On wall of the shops (co-op wall) in Tulloch 3) Maxton Place, 4) Mathieson Place 5) wall mounted in Tulloch Net Contract for Meldrums: install only – 3 x noticeboards free standing, and 2 wall mounted – fixed and cemented – provided with metal fixings and 2 posts per sign
Nimmo Avenue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> through to Primrose Crescent by the steps: clear all overgrowth and prune small trees replace damaged fence at top of steps
Bulb Planting	throughout Letham and Tulloch Purchase of bulbs
CITY LOCALITY	
Town Centre	
Pomarium: Path alongside the car park and garages:	Make a rail and link barrier alongside the dedicated path at the garage and car park area – chain and link posts Steps down to Victoria Street – install a set of handrails on either side of the steps
Temporary Portacabin	in forecourt for tenant and community activities (with electricity)
Pomarium garages forecourt:	Resurface forecourt area. Remove every other tree on the bank overlooking the garage forecourt 3 trees

Tree stumps in the front forecourt need cleaving flat, trip hazard.
Milne Court: Remove old tree root and old noticeboards posts and create a new flower bed there New free standing Noticeboard by the old flower bed Removal of weed overgrowth in car park which contributes to flooding issues
Market Court: Cut back bushes altogether and put to grass Removal of weed overgrowth in car park which contributes to flooding issues
Frontage of Market and Lickley: Bricks from the raised flower bed need re-cementing – When repaired, replanted and overgrown planting cut back
North Muirton
Weed spraying in various locations, including May Place and drying greens
May Place: Make and install 1 ordinary and 1 double bench to front and back of the flats metal legs and concreted in
Ride-on mower for the North Muirton Bloom group Donation under EBI clear that no further expenses under EBI ; insurance fee including in cost. Provision of storage facility
Benches: Make and fit. Vandal proof style benches and picnic tables intermittently along the riverside behind Stronsay Court; metal legs and vandal proof
Sanda Court: remove and replace tree
Colonsay Street: remove and replace 4 trees