

Martin Earl. Cllr Report – 14th December 2020

Since the last CC meeting Stirling Council has held the following Committee meetings. The links are to the full agendas & reports

Audit Committee <http://minutes.stirling.gov.uk/PDFs/AuditComm/Agendas/AuditComAgenda.pdf>

- Includes the Council's risk register, Fraud report and Council's audited accounts 2019/20

Environment & Housing Committee

<http://minutes.stirling.gov.uk/PDFs/Environment%20&%20Housing/Agendas/EnvHousingAgenda.pdf>

- Includes Performance reporting, Safer Communities , Play Parks/control dogs, Tree's & woodland policy
- Note item 10 was deferred at Officers request.

Stirling Council (Full Council Meeting)

<http://minutes.stirling.gov.uk/PDFs/Scouncil/Agendas/CouncilAgenda.pdf>

- Includes; Update on council response to pandemic, Key priorities update & use of Naloxone (emergency treatment for Opiod overdoses)
- I have also attached the written questions that were tabled & answers received
- Also attached is the Motion seeking Council to sign the Edinburgh Agreement on Biodiversity loss that was submitted and passed unanimously.

Callander

- **Latest meeting held with National Park, Police & Council regarding visitor pressures at South Loch Venachar . SLV residents submitted report to NPA that has also been made sent to the Community Council.**
- **Contractors working on the Passing Place improvements on South Loch Venachar & Invertrossachs Rds (work will be finished by 15 Dec latest) caused major broadband issue when plant machinery damaged an Openreach relay causing six days of lost connection to Invertrossachs & Brig O'Turk areas. Pressure needed applying to Openreach to urgently install a temporary repair.**
- **The long awaited temporary repairs to the collapsed culvert on the A84 at Leny Rd took place 9/10 Dec requiring closure of that road. Invertrossachs rd experienced issues on the 9th as contractors (same as above) remained working on the Invertrossachs Rd despite being told by Council officers to cease work during the A84 closure. Also vehicles were being directed along Invertrossachs Rd (including Lorries) by workers at the leny Rd closure.**
- **Ward Cllrs had a meeting regarding the Callander flood alleviation proposals with Council officers on 8 Dec . Separate report sent.**

**MEETING of the STIRLING COUNCIL to be held as a VIRTUAL MEETING via
MICROSOFT TEAMS on THURSDAY 10 DECEMBER 2020**

Motion in Terms of Standing Order 39

Information/Advice from Officers

1. The Edinburgh Declaration on Biodiversity

Council notes the Edinburgh Declaration on biodiversity, released in August of this year and which relates to this motion. The Declaration can be viewed at

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/edinburgh-declaration-on-post-2020-biodiversity-framework/>.

Council is in agreement with the issues raised regarding the importance of addressing the loss of biodiversity and agrees with the need for a global framework which helps to deliver local biodiversity.

Council will sign up to the Edinburgh Declaration for subnational governments, cities and local authorities on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. Council believes this will help the development of effective policy and governance of biodiversity making Stirling a place where we will live in harmony with nature.

Council agrees to request a report outlining a response to the call for action in the first half of 2021.

Signed by Councillor Neil Benny and Councillor Ross Oxburgh

Answer

Overview (summarised text from formal Declaration document)

The Edinburgh Declaration highlights the current and future concerns held by current signatories relating to the loss of biodiversity and climate change on our livelihood and communities. The Declaration recognises that the impacts on our environment, infrastructure, economy, health and well-being, and our enjoyment of nature are already visible. The Declaration further states that healthy biodiversity, and the ecosystem services that it provides, are key for human well-being and to build resilience of our cities and regions, both during and after the pandemic, and it should be central to our recovery.

The Declaration recognises the need for transformative change across ecosystems, development and productive sectors; as well as the role that our local communities hold in the management of their territories; and through effective biodiversity mainstreaming across all sectors.

The Declaration recognises that the role of local authorities extends beyond the provision of enabling conditions. Local authorities will play key roles in conserving, restoring and reducing threats to biodiversity, in meeting people's needs through sustainable use and equitable benefit sharing, in developing the tools and solutions needed for implementing biodiversity protection actions, and in monitoring and reporting.

The declaration invites further signatories at national, sub-national and local authority level to sign up to a commitment of working towards a prescribed framework, aimed at stopping the decline of global and local biodiversity, and working boldly towards rebuilding habitat and developing opportunities that will allow nature to thrive.

Proposed Framework

The proposed framework for signatories to work towards, from the Declaration, is identified below.

Subnational governments, cities and local authorities will continue to build upon our previous efforts, to deliver transformative actions by:

- Recognising the overall value of nature and integrating it into subnational, city and local planning, management and governance instruments;
- Implementing appropriate actions that deliver on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework goals and action targets;
- Aligning biodiversity strategies and actions, and our monitoring and reporting efforts with National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs), within our subnational, city and local competencies;
- Increasing resource mobilisation for investment in biodiversity action at subnational, city and local levels, and providing incentives to ensure positive outcomes;
- Mainstreaming biodiversity across public, private and business sectors to achieve greater environmental, societal and economic resilience;
- Communicating, educating and raising public awareness with specific efforts to make knowledge available in several languages;
- Strengthening capacity building in order to implement nature-based solutions (NBS) and green and blue infrastructure, particularly through ecosystem based approaches and as a contribution to a green recovery from COVID-19;
- Providing opportunities for knowledge exchange across subnational, city and local levels, and between all sectors of society;
- Sharing best practices across subnational, city and local levels, to efficiently implement transformative actions;
- Delivering convergence with other intergovernmental agreements and processes, taking forward bold and innovative actions at the subnational, city and local level which result in mutually beneficial outcomes.

Call for Action

Scottish Government was a partner in developing the Edinburgh Declaration. The process partners and the Convention of Biological Diversity are actively encouraging engagement and endorsement from, sub-national governments and local authorities. The Declaration is viewed as important in ensuring that local and subnational governments have a voice and a role throughout the development of the post-2020 biodiversity framework.

The following call for action is detailed in the Edinburgh Declaration. This outlines the commitments signatories would be compelled to consider:

We subnational governments, cities and local authorities therefore call upon Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to;

- i. Take strong and bold actions to bring about transformative change, as outlined in the IPBES global assessment report, in order to halt biodiversity loss.
- ii. Recognise the vital role of subnational governments, cities and local authorities, in delivering the 2050 vision of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, and the 2030 mission as set out in the Zero Draft document; and to explicitly place that recognition throughout the framework text, including the monitoring framework for the goals and targets.
- iii. Support the adoption at COP15, of a new dedicated Decision for the greater inclusion of subnational governments, cities and local authorities within the post-2020 global biodiversity framework; that builds upon and renews the Plan of Action on Subnational Governments, Cities and Other Local Authorities for Biodiversity (2011-2020) as endorsed under Decision X/22; and that significantly raises ambition for subnational, city and local implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework throughout the next decade.
- iv. Establish a multi-stakeholder platform that ensures representation of subnational governments, cities and local authorities to support the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

We, subnational governments, cities and local authorities, stand ready to meet the challenge of delivering, alongside Parties, the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, to ensure investment, and play a stronger role in the implementation of the framework through a renewed and significantly stepped-up Plan of Action for subnational governments, cities and local authorities for the coming decade.

Commentary

As part of the commitment towards recognition of the Climate Emergency, Stirling Council is focused on developing a comprehensive Alive with Nature Plan (AWNPN). The AWNPN will outline an action plan which has biodiversity protection and enhancement at the centre of all its actions. The current aim is to develop the AWNPN over the early part of 2021. Together with the key partners the objective is to develop a comprehensive action plan that methodically looks at habitat protection, together with a major tree planting plan, that will create a connected network and the associated conditions to allow nature to thrive.

Becoming a signatory to the Edinburgh Declaration aligns with the recognition of the Climate Emergency, and whilst resources associated with biodiversity activity need to be considered, this should not be an impediment to signing and developing future strategies and plans recognising the biodiversity framework. It is assessed that our officers will review the implications of becoming a signatory and align the final development of the Alive with Nature

Plan with this framework. The delivery of the Alive with Nature plan will require additional project management resource, and officers will continue to work collaboratively with partners including NatureScot, the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency and Central Scotland Green Network. This collaboration will include work to obtain external funding for projects, and there may be opportunities for Council to consider investment in specific projects.

STIRLING COUNCIL

10 DECEMBER 2020

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Questions on the following matters have been submitted in terms of Standing Order No 30. The written answers are attached.

1. Convener of Environment & Housing Committee: Mugdock Country Park Car Parking
2. Convener of Public Safety Committee: Stirling Gender Based Violence Partnership
3. Convener of Environment & Housing Committee: Bridge of Allan Broadband
4. Convener of Environment & Housing Committee: Fire & Carbon Monoxide Detectors
5. Convener of Environment & Housing Committee: Waste Transformation Programme Contracts
6. Convener of Children & Young People Committee: Regional Improvement Collaborative (RIC)
7. Convener of Environment & Housing Committee: Anti-Social Behaviour
8. Convener of Children & Young People Committee: Universal School Meal Provision
9. Convener of Finance & Economy Committee: Living Wage

<p>Question 1</p>	<p>From: Councillor Robert Davies</p>	<p>To: Convener of Environment & Housing Committee</p>
<p>Question (include Subject)</p>	<p>Mugdock Country Park Car Parking</p> <p>Some residents of Mugdock village feel that there is a strong case for introducing charges for car parking at Mugdock Country Park to improve facilities there and reduce congestion. What are his thoughts on this suggestion?</p>	
<p>Answer</p>	<p>Mugdock Country Park is owned by Stirling Council and leased to East Dunbartonshire Council.</p> <p>East Dunbartonshire Council manage and maintain the park and as part of the lease agreement Stirling Council contribute a proportion of revenue and capital funding.</p> <p>The governance of Mugdock Country Park is overseen by a management committee. There are 8 Councillors on the committee, six from East Dunbartonshire and two from Stirling. Councillors Lambie and Berrill are the Stirling Council representatives on the committee. The Land Services Team Leader also attends the committee on behalf of Stirling Council.</p> <p>The introduction of parking charges has previously been considered by the committee; however, it was decided not to progress with the introduction of parking controls and charges. Instead, an honesty box was situated in the car park.</p> <p>Council officers will raise the issue of parking and visitor management again with the Mugdock Park Committee on behalf of the community and will provide Cllr Davies with the contacts within East Dunbartonshire Council should he wish to contact them directly.</p>	

Question 2	From: Councillor Maureen Bennison	To: Convener of Public Safety Committee
Question (include Subject)	<p>Stirling Gender Based Violence Partnership</p> <p>Over the past three years there has been a cross-party approach in tackling Gender Based Violence and Elected Members have been in regular attendance of the Stirling Gender Based Violence Partnership (SGBVP) meetings. Will the Convener of the Public Safety Committee continue to attend SGBVP meetings and what will the Convenor do to ensure the aims of the new strategy are met?</p>	
Answer	<p>The Terms of Reference for the Stirling Gender Based Violence Partnership state that there should be cross party representation. As a result, the Chair of the Partnership contacted Councillor Farmer to seek a replacement for Councillor Bennison. This has recently been confirmed as Councillor Tweed.</p> <p>The Convenor will continue to ensure that the work of the GBV Partnership is reported to the Public Safety Committee at every second meeting for consideration and comment by Committee Members. Stirling's Equally Safe Strategy to be published during the 16 Days of Activism Campaign is one of the first local Strategies in Scotland. This is a significant achievement for the Partnership and this Council. The reports to Public Safety Committee will increasingly focus on implementation of the new Strategy Action Plan.</p>	

Question 3	From: Councillor Douglas Dodds	To: Convener of Environment & Housing Committee
Question (include Subject)	<p>Bridge of Allan Broadband</p> <p>Will the Convener advise what is being done to address the fact that many homeowners in Bridge of Allan are being refused connection to the City Fibre superfast Broadband network due to being resident in a Conservation Area and buildings having listed status?</p>	
Answer	<p>There are instances where broadband providers will refuse to carry out domestic installations in Conservation Areas or at Listed Buildings, unless residents have written permission from the Council for the proposed works.</p> <p>The Planning Service are taking a pragmatic approach to the application of relevant planning regulations for the installation of broadband infrastructure, such as boxes, cables and ducting. Generally, planning applications for these situations will not be required, provided that the works are carried out in a sympathetic manner, particularly on principal or prominent street facing elevations, which are more sensitive. The service is also taking a pragmatic approach to Listed Building considerations, which can be more complex due to the need to consider the possible impact on internal features and routes within the building for broadband infrastructure.</p> <p>To support this approach the service has assigned a planning officer to deal with all broadband related enquiries to ensure that they are dealt with quickly and consistently. The officer also attends City Fibre project meetings to discuss potential challenges with buildings or locations, and how these can be dealt with before issues arise.</p> <p>The Planning Service webpage has been updated to encourage anyone considering a network connection to contact the Council to discuss planning requirements. To date, all enquires have been dealt with on an informal basis and have not required planning consent.</p>	

Question 4	From: Councillor Neil Benny	To: Convener of Environment & Housing Committee
Question (include Subject)	<p>Fire & Carbon Monoxide Detectors</p> <p>What preparations are being made to fulfil the Council's new statutory duty to ensure that every house in the Council area meets the tolerable standard for fire and carbon monoxide detectors?</p>	
Answer	<p>The requirement for hard wired or long life lithium battery powered interlinked smoke alarms and heat detectors has been a legal requirement in the private rented housing sector, including licensed Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) for a number of years and compliance is monitored by the Private Rented Housing Team in Housing Services to ensure all private landlords are complying with the regulations for the safety of private tenants.</p> <p>In February 2019, the Scottish Government introduced new legislation requiring the current smoke and heat detection standards for private rented housing to now apply to all homes including social rented housing and the owner occupier housing sector. The legislation is the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 (Tolerable Standard) (Extension of Criterion). The original deadline for compliance was set for February 2021. In October 2020, the Scottish Government sought approval from the Scottish Parliament to delay the deadline for compliance by 12 months due to the impact of coronavirus and the practical difficulties likely to be faced by homeowners to make the necessary changes to their homes.</p> <p>The Scottish Government will undertake further awareness raising campaigns to ensure all homeowners are aware of the new requirements. In addition, from Feb 2022 compliance will form part of any Home Report when an owner comes to sell their property on the open market. The regulations will form part of the Tolerable Standard that applies to all housing across Scotland. Local authorities may use their statutory powers to require owners to carry out work on substandard housing. However, as is the case for other elements of the Tolerable Standard (e.g. serious structural problems through to other failures such as insufficient loft insulation), it is expected that any intervention is proportionate, rational and reasonable. As a general rule it is preferable that owners should carry out the necessary works on a voluntary basis rather than as a result of enforcement action.</p> <p>With 14 months left for homeowners to comply with the new regulations it is proposed that the Scottish Government will continue to raise awareness through local and national campaigns. Stirling Council's Housing Service will be raising awareness when engaging with private homeowners on any housing related matters including Home Energy Efficiency Programmes funded by the Scottish Government, Private Sector Housing Grant applicants, Care & Repair etc. The Planning and Building Standards service within Infrastructure will also participate in awareness raising through both application processes, and other engagement forums. There is also an expectation that building and content insurance providers will also raise awareness with the customers in Scotland setting out whether compliance will be part of the</p>	

	terms and conditions of any insurance policy after February 2022 and an opportunity for a discount to be offered on policies where a customer has installed smoke and heat detection that complies with the new standards.
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Question 5	From: Councillor Martin Earl	To: Convener of Environment & Housing Committee
Question (include Subject)	<p>Waste Transformation Programme Contracts</p> <p>Will the Convener please supply purpose and value of all contracts that have been awarded or are currently tendered that relate to the decision taken on the Waste Transformation Programme report at the Council meeting on 30 June 2020.</p>	
Answer	<p>Members will be aware that all tenders are reported through the information bulletin and subject to committee approval where appropriate. Information on tenders have been previously reported through these routes, however, the following information is provided for clarity.</p> <p>The Manufacture & Supply of Brown and Grey Comb Bins, and the Exchange of Diamond Bins for the New Comb Bins to Households was awarded to MGB via the Scotland Excel Framework Agreement for the Supply and Delivery of Recycle and Refuse Containers (01-17) – Lot 1. The contract value was £1,522,586.40 (One million, five hundred and twenty two thousand, five hundred and eighty six pounds and forty pence) exclusive of VAT. The award of the contract was approved at the Environment and Housing Committee on 24 September 2020.</p> <p>The printing and supply of garden waste permits was awarded to Permiserve via a Quick Quote procurement exercise. The contract value was £48,678 (Forty eight thousand, six hundred and seventy eight) exclusive of VAT.</p> <p>The mailing to households in relation to the Exchange of Diamond Bins for the New Comb Bins was awarded to Central Mailing Services following a Quick Quote procurement exercise. The value of the contract was £15,569.30 (Fifteen thousand, five hundred and sixty nine pounds and thirty pence) exclusive of VAT.</p> <p>At the Environment and Housing Committee on 03 December 2020 the award of Co-mingled Food and Garden Waste Haulage and Treatment Tender was approved following a Mini Competition exercise which was run through the Scotland Excel Organic Waste Framework Lot 3. Contracts such as these are not directly related to the Waste Transformation Programme but do relate to aspects of the waste service so this has been provided for clarity.</p>	

Question 6	From: Councillor Bryan Flannagan	To: Convener of Children & Young People Committee
Question (include Subject)	Regional Improvement Collaborative (RIC) Will the convener confirm how much time has been dedicated to the Regional Improvement Collaborative (RIC) by Stirling Council officers since its inception in 2017?	
Answer	Officers from across Stirling Schools, Learning and Education service have contributed to the Forth Valley and West Lothian Improvement Collaborative (RIC) in a range of ways. Officers were part of each of the initial workstreams: Literacy, Numeracy, CLPL (Career Long Professional Learning) and Early Years. The workstreams have recently been reviewed with a focus on recovery and Officers will be involved in these workstreams. Officers are also involved in planning, evaluation and other collaborative RIC activities. Time given by Officers to the RIC is not specifically accounted for. Time given contributes to the progress and improvement of our schools and nurseries and the work of the service.	

Question 7	From: Councillor Ross Oxburgh	To: Convener of Environment & Housing Committee
Question (include Subject)	Anti-Social Behaviour Would the convener advise what support is available to local businesses who are affected by persistent anti-social behaviour issues?	
Answer	<p>Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) which affects a wider community, including local businesses, can be tackled in a number of ways, however it requires a multi-agency approach.</p> <p>Where behaviour affects businesses, the Safer Communities team work with Police Scotland in identifying those responsible, but also in providing increased visible presence in the area to deter ongoing activities and provide reassurance. Visible presence is achieved by Police Officers or by members of the Stirling Council's Safer Communities enforcement team.</p> <p>Any ongoing issues can be raised directly with the Police or the Safer Communities team, who will in turn liaise on these issues at the regular partnership meeting for an action plan to be agreed. Depending on the nature of the issues, colleagues from other service areas such as Trading Standards may also be able to provide support and guidance.</p> <p>A number of specific interventions can be utilised depending on the particular type of behaviour occurring, taking into consideration any physical conditions such as streetscape, access routes and existing CCTV coverage. Either agency provides advice and guidance on placement of CCTV equipment by business both from a security and evidence gathering perspective.</p>	

Question 8	From: Councillor Alistair Berrill	To: Convener of Children & Young People Committee
Question (include Subject)	<p>Universal School Meal Provision</p> <p>Will the Convener confirm that this Local Authority will seek from the Scottish Government the full extra funding required to provide universal school meal provision should the Local Authority be required to introduce it.</p>	
Answer	<p>This policy intention has been announced recently by the Deputy First Minister on behalf of the Scottish Government. Prior to adoption, it will require to be subject to the usual governance steps at the Scottish Parliament, and it will need to feature in a future Scottish Budget. Prior to that, the Scottish Government will undoubtedly require a financial memorandum to be prepared, in conjunction with councils and other stakeholders, to ensure that the full costs of the policy are identified and accommodated within the Scottish Government's spending plans. If ultimately adopted, the distribution of funding would then be considered by the Settlement & Distribution Group and recommendations would be made to COSLA Leaders to consider and make decisions. All councils would then be notified of the funding that would be distributed to them to implement the policy.</p>	

Question 9	From: Councillor Alasdair Tollemache	To: Convener of Finance & Economy Committee
Question (include Subject)	<p>Living Wage</p> <p>Following the success of the living wage places in Glenrothes and Dundee does the council have plans to promote one in the Stirling area? How does the Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work with its suppliers and contractors to ensure they pay the living wage; and • make provision in any SLA with the third sector for these organisations to pay their staff the living wage. 	
Answer	<p>Having become an accredited Living Wage employer in 2015, the Council is constantly looking to promote the payment of the Living Wage by contractors and subcontractors through our procurement activity.</p> <p>All standard regulated Invitation to Tender documentation currently asks whether the supplier has signed up to the living wage requirements. Where they have this becomes a contractual requirement and where they haven't, we require a commitment that they work towards paying the living wage during the term of the contract.</p> <p>For third sector suppliers, again, the existing standard SLA documentation requires the organisation to be signed up to paying the living wage or working towards this within the term of the agreement.</p> <p>Since 2016, in line with the Scottish Government's commitment to ensuring living wage for all staff engaged in adult social care, all contracts of this nature have included a requirement to pay the Living Wage.</p> <p>In both cases if the supplier wants to engage with Stirling Council to discuss steps needed to achieve this we will, of course, enter into dialogue as required.</p> <p>We are in early discussions with our Community Planning Partners on a community wealth approach that drives commitment to paying the living wage, creates recruitment opportunities from lower income areas and builds progression routes for workers. These are all examples of actions that anchor institutions, including the Council, can take to stimulate the local economy and bring social improvements to our local communities.</p>	