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| Report To: | Local Police & Fire Scrutiny Committee | Date: | 19 September 2019 |
| Report By: | Head of Environmental & Public Protection | Report No: | P&F/11/19/MM |
| Contact Officer: | Martin McNab | Contact No: | 01475 714298 |
| Subject: | Clune Park Regeneration Plan – Deliberate Fire Raising & Vandalism | | |

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Local Police and Fire Scrutiny Committee on an ongoing issue regarding deliberate fire raising and vandalism in the Clune Park area of Port Glasgow.

2.0 SUMMARY

2.1 The report provides information to members on the prevalence of deliberate fire raising and vandalism within the Clune Park Regeneration Area and the actions being taken by partners in response.

2.2 Properties within the Clune Park Regeneration area have been subject to a number of deliberate attacks within the last 10 months. This has required a multi-agency response to minimise risk and damage and partners continue to work together to address this issue.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 That the Committee:

a) notes the prevalence of deliberate fire raising and vandalism within the Clune Park Regeneration Area; and,

b) notes the actions being taken in response.

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Clune Park estate in Port Glasgow is in a severe state of disrepair and provides some of the poorest housing in Scotland. The estate consists of 45 tenements which provide 430 distinct properties, approximately 95% of which appear to be unoccupied. Section 85 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 confers a duty on Local Authorities to ensure that all housing in their district which does not meet the tolerable standard are closed, demolished or brought up to the tolerable standard. The Council approved a regeneration plan in May 2011 to rehouse long-term residents and demolish the existing properties to facilitate regeneration through future development.
- 4.2 The Environment & Regeneration Committee approved an acquisition strategy in October 2018 which allowed Inverclyde Council to acquire property within the Clune Park Regeneration Area within a policy framework. The implementation of this strategy, alongside the serving of Closing and Demolition Orders, has seen Inverclyde Council remove 273 properties, which fail to meet basic housing standards, from the local housing market.

5.0 DELIBERATE FIRE RAISING AND VANDALISM

- 5.1 Since the implementation of the acquisition strategy, there has been a significant increase in the number of fires within the regeneration area. During the 10 month period October 2018-August 2019 there were 16 instances of deliberate fire raising within the Clune Park regeneration area. By comparison, in the neighbouring areas there was an average of 1 dwelling fire per year over the past 3 years. At an Inverclyde level the prevalence of dwelling fires per 1,000 properties has decreased from 2.02 in 2017 to 1.38 in 2018. In the Clune Park Regeneration area, the comparable rate is 32.3 dwelling fires per 1,000 properties in the past 10 months, with this figure expected to rise for a full 12 month period.
- 5.2 The intelligence reports provided by Scottish Fire & Rescue and shared with Inverclyde Council and Police Scotland after each incident, confirm that of the 16 dwelling fires within the Clune Park Regeneration Area, 13 were determined as deliberate, 1 accidental and 2 unknown. Analysis of the location of each fire has identified a pattern with Inverclyde Council having ownership within all buildings subject to deliberate fire raising and 11 of the 16 flats being owned by Inverclyde Council with the remaining 5 fires being in properties immediately adjacent to those owned by Inverclyde Council.
- 5.3 Deliberate fire raising combined with the poor physical condition of the properties in the Clune Park regeneration area increases the risk of harm for Officers of Scottish Fire & Rescue who not only have to attend to the fire, but also have to carry out a full property check throughout the building each time there is a fire.
- 5.4 Vandalism is prevalent across the estate, with forced entries, smashed windows and fly-tipping being a constant issue. In recent weeks a single episode of vandalism saw the windows of 18 ground floor flats smashed and a considerable tonnage of fly tipping into a common close which had to be removed to reduce the fire risk. Investigation of the incidents confirms that the vandalism was confined to the east end of the estate where there is no CCTV. It is confirmed that 14 of the flats affected are owned by Inverclyde Council. It was further confirmed that a considerable amount of fly-tipping of combustible materials had occurred in ground floor properties owned by Inverclyde Council.

6.0 RESPONSE

- 6.1 The regeneration of Clune Park is the Council's primary housing-led project and to ensure sufficient progress, a Corporate Task Group was established which is chaired by the Head of Legal & Property Services. The Task Group is responsible for co-ordinating and delivering the Council's legal plan and has progressed the development of a

Regeneration Masterplan, which is currently with the Scottish Government for consideration. The Task Group also receives regular updates from frontline services which carry out weekly inspections within the estate, carry out tolerable standard surveys and liaise with partner agencies such as Police Scotland and Scottish Fire & Rescue. In addition, the Environment & Regeneration Committee have set a budget for the completion of dangerous building surveys at all 45 tenements within the Clune Park Regeneration Area.

- 6.2 Inverclyde Council have secured all property in our ownership and through regular inspection these security standards are maintained. However, the level of vandalism in the area is high and many properties require to be repeatedly secured at a cost of £150-£200 per property each time. Inverclyde Council has no legal powers to secure privately owned property and whilst Police Scotland have powers under Section 61 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 the high level of insecure properties combined with the continually changing ownership of properties and the fact that many owners are located outwith Inverclyde presents a considerable barrier in encouraging owners to meet their obligations or recovering costs where security works have been instructed by Police Scotland.
- 6.3 Intelligence sharing arrangements are in place and our ownership information is shared with partner agencies. The Council's out-of-hours service secures properties owned by Inverclyde Council following an incident and weekly property checks are carried out to identify insecure properties. The Deliberate Fire Reduction Task Force remains operational and provides direct liaison between dedicated Council and SFRS Officers for the prompt removal of fire hazards in communal areas.
- 6.4 The occupancy rate in Clune Park is estimated to be 10%, with many buildings having no residents. However, Inverclyde Council has no legal powers to secure whole buildings solely on the basis that they are not occupied. Whole buildings have been secured where they are subject to an active demolition order and will also be secured where Building Standards have declared that the property is a dangerous building. The cost of securing a whole building on the basis of front and rear entrances and ground floor windows in steel sheeting is approximately £3,000. However, experience has shown that even this high standard of security works does not prevent vandalism, with entry to one wholly secured building having been gained by knocking through the wall from the privately owned, unsecured, neighbouring building.
- 6.5 The poor physical and social conditions in the area, combined with the level of input required from a range of organisations, indicates that the private housing market has failed and that large-scale, planned intervention is required. Inverclyde Council continues to progress the Clune Park regeneration plan through the completion of tolerable standards surveys, the service of closing and demolition orders, leading ultimately to the physical demolition of buildings which fail to meet even the most basic standards for housing.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Finance

There are no financial implications.

| Cost Centre | Budget Heading | Budget Years | Proposed Spend this Report £000 | Virement From | Other Comments |
|-------------|----------------|--------------|---------------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| N/A | | | | | |

Annually Recurring Costs/(savings)

| Cost Centre | Budget Heading | With effect from | Annual net impact £000 | Virement From | Other Comments |
|-------------|----------------|------------------|------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| N/A | | | | | |

7.2 Legal

There are no legal implications.

7.3 Human Resources

This report does not impact on Human Resources

Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

| | |
|---|---|
| | YES (see attached appendix) |
| X | NO - This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required. |

7.4 Repopulation

The Clune Park Regeneration Plan is designed to address the worst housing in Inverclyde and ensure that Inverclyde remains an attractive place to live, work and play.

8.0 CONSULTATIONS

8.1 None

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1
- Robert Street Area - Housing Options Study: June 2006
 - Robert Street Area – Housing Options Study, Environment & Regeneration Committee, January 2007. ECP/HOU/BB07MSB/010
 - Robert Street Area – Regeneration Strategy Steering Group Update, SSCC, June 2007. ECP/HOU07WR/032
 - Robert Street Area – Regeneration Strategy Steering Group Update, SSCC 25 October 2007. ECP/HOU/WR07/046
 - Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – SSCC, March 2011. ECP/Plan/WR10/008
 - Clune Park – Proposed Regeneration Plan – Special SSCC May 2011. SCS/64/11/AH/DH
 - Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – SSCC, August 2011. SCS/65/11/AH/DH
 - Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – SSCC, January 2012. SCS/85/12/AH/DH
 - Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – SSCC, March 2012. SCS/94/12/AH/DH
 - Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&CC, June 2012. EDUCOM/01/12/AH/DH
 - Affordable Housing Investment – Strategic Local Plan – E&CC, September 2012. EDUCOM/16/12/AH/DH
 - Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&CC, September 2012. EDUCOM/18/12/AH/DH
 - Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&CC, October 2012.

- EDUCOM/38/12/AH/DH
- Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&CC, January 2013. EDUCOM/01/13/DH
- Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&CC, March 2013. EDUCOM/32/13/DH
- Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&CC, May 2013. EDUCOM/47/13/DH
- Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&CC, September 2013. EDUCOM/61/13/DH
- Clune Park Regeneration: Review Report – E&CC, November 2013. EDUCOM/78/13/DH
- Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&CC, January 2014. EDUCOM/10/14/DH
- Clune Park Regeneration Plan Update – Structural Conditions Report – E&CC, March 2014. EDUCOM/22/14/DH
- Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&CC, March 2014. EDUCOM/31/14/DH
- Clune Park Regeneration Plan Update – Structural Conditions Update Report – E&CC, May 2014. EDUCOM/35/14/DH
- Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&CC, May 2014. EDUCOM/34/14/DH
- Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&CC, September 2014. EDUCOM/56/14/DH
- Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&CC, November 2014. EDUCOM/74/14/DH
- Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&CC, January 2015. EDUCOM/01/15/DH
- Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&CC, March 2015. EDUCOM/22/15/DH
- Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&CC, May 2015. EDUCOM/38/15/DH
- Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&CC, September 2015. EDUCOM/61/15/DH
- Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&CC, November 2015. EDUCOM/79/15/DH
- Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&CC, January 2016. EDUCOM/03/16/DH
- Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&CC, March 2016. EDUCOM/20/16/DH
- Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&CC, May 2016. EDUCOM/30/16/DH
- Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&CC, September 2016. EDUCOM/43/16/DH
- Clune Park Estate - Special Meeting E&CC, November 2016. LP/133/16
- Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&CC, March 2017. EDUCOM/24/17/DH
- Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&CC, June 2017. EDUCOM/42/17/DH
- Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&CC, Sept 2017. EDUCOM/57/17/DH Service of Demolition Order under the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 Special Meeting E&CC, October 2017, EDUCOM/74/17/DH.
- Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&CC, Oct 2017. EDUCOM/75/17/DH.
- Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&CC, Jan 2018. EDUCOM/11/18/DH.
- Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&CC, Mar 2018. EDUCOM/25/18/DH
- Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&CC, May 2018. EDUCOM/46/18/DH
- Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&RC, Aug 2018. ENV/019/18/DH

- Single Party Negotiations – Consultant Support – E&RC Aug2018
E+R/18/08/06/SJ
- Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&RC, Oct 2018. ENV/032/18/DH
- Clune Park Masterplan – E&RC, Oct 2018. ENV042/18/SJ
- Service of Closing Orders under Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 – E&RC, Oct 2018. ENV/034/18/DH
- Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&RC, Jan 2019. ENV/004/19/DH
- Clune Park Estate: Port Glasgow Training Initiative Properties. GM/LP/015/19
- Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&RC, March 2019.
ENV/015/19/DH
- Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E & RC, May 2019.
ENV019/27/MM