

THE MORAY COUNCIL

MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

TUESDAY 2 MARCH 2010

COUNCIL OFFICE, ELGIN

PRESENT

Councillors A. Wright, (Chairman), G. McIntyre, (Deputy Chair), J. S. Cree, B. Jarvis, G. McDonald, E. McGillivray, P. Paul, J. Russell, M. Shand, R. Shepherd and D. Stewart

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors L. Bell and G. Leadbitter

IN ATTENDANCE

Director of Environmental Services, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Legal Officer, Chief Executive, Director of Educational Services, Chief Housing Officer, Acting Head of Community Care (in respect of Items 6 & 8), Educational Resources Manager (in respect of Item 6), Road Maintenance Manager, (in respect of Items 9 & 10) Mrs Kessack, Programme Manager Business Change (in respect of Items 9 & 10), Mrs Leese, Senior Project Manager (in respect of Items 9 & 10), Mr Morris, Senior Programme Manager (in respect of Items 9 & 10), Corporate Policy Unit Manager (in respect of Item 16), Sports Facilities Manager (in respect of Item 6) and Mrs C Carswell, Committee Services Officer as Clerk to the Meeting.

1. DECLARATION OF GROUP DECISIONS AND MEMBERS INTERESTS

In terms of Standing Order 20 and the Councillors' Code of Conduct, the meeting noted that there were no declarations from group leaders or spokespersons in regard to any prior decisions taken on how members will vote on any item on the agenda nor any declarations of member interest in respect of any item on the agenda.

2. EXEMPT INFORMATION

The meeting resolved that in terms of Section 50A(4) and (5) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, the public and media representatives be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the items of business appearing at the relevant paragraphs of this minute as specified below, so as to avoid disclosure of exempt information of the class described in the appropriate paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

Para. No. of Minute**Para. No. of Schedule 7A**

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3. WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The committee noted that there were no written questions submitted.

**4. STRENGTHENING MORAY COUNCIL'S HEALTH IMPROVEMENT ROLE:
POST OF STRATEGIC PROGRAMME MANAGER (HEALTH IMPROVEMENT)**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Community Services setting out the background to the creation of a senior post to lead on the Council's responsibilities in relation to Health Improvement and seeking approval to draw down the funding earmarked for this purpose.

Following consideration, the committee approved the filling of the post of Strategic Programme Manager (Health Improvement) and the drawing down of funding allocated for the post.

5. CULLEN, DESKFORD & PORTKNOCKIE HERITAGE GROUP: MEMORIAL HALL

There was submitted a report by the Director of Educational Services inviting the committee to consider a request from the Cullen, Deskford and Portknockie Heritage Group for free use of the Memorial Hall in Cullen Town Hall to operate a temporary heritage centre throughout June, July and August 2010.

During discussion, the meeting noted that a report was to be submitted to the next meeting of this Committee scheduled on 30th March 2010 which would cover a range of major issues which the Council would require to consider and which included the future use of its properties.

Thereafter, in light of the foregoing, the committee agreed to defer the report until the next meeting of this Committee on 30th March 2010.

6. CHARGING FOR COUNCIL SERVICES

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer inviting the committee to consider and approve the Council's charges for services, for the financial year 2010/11, in line with Council Policy.

Prior to consideration of the report the meeting noted that there was an error on Page 64 of the report as the car park charges agreed at the Full Council on the 11th

February 2010 were £1.00 for up to one hour, £1.50 for up to 2 hours, £3.00 for 2 to 4 hours and £4.00 for 4 to 10 hours.

In response to concerns raised in regard to Members being assured that they have been provided with the most up to date version, it was agreed that in future documents are annotated with either a version number or dated.

Following further discussion Councillor G. McDonald stated that harbour users were of the opinion that the increase in charges for recreational vessels should be frozen due in light of there having been no increase in the level of repairs since 1995 and therefore moved that charges be frozen for recreational vessels as noted on Page 59 of the report. This was seconded by Councillor McGillivray.

There being no-one otherwise minded the committee agreed :-

- (i) the proposed revised charges for 2010/11 set out in APPENDICES 1 – 5 of the report with the exclusion of recreational vessels where it was agreed to freeze the charges; and
- (ii) to reaffirm the current policy of permitting circus lets only if the circus concerned was a member of the Association of Circus Proprietors.

7. USE OF COUNCIL BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES FOR ABSEILING ETC

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer establishing a policy on the use of Council buildings and structures for abseiling or similar activities.

Councillor Wright stated that, in his opinion, he favoured option 1 that “The Council does not permit the use of its buildings and structures for abseiling, aerial runways or similar events organised by external organisations”.

There being no-one otherwise minded, this was agreed unanimously.

8. CHARGES FOR LUNCH CLUBS

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer providing the Committee with an update on the cost of providing Lunch Club meals and finalising arrangements for charges for Lunch Clubs for financial year 2010/11

During discussion, the committee noted that discussions had taken place with community centres and Moray Catering Service whether meals could be produced for Forres and Elgin in the same economical and cost effective way but this would not be possible. However, should Leisure Centres be able produce meals within their coffee bars and sell them to the public for £3.50 then people from lunch clubs could obtain their meals there but this would be a matter for the community centres themselves.

Following consideration, the committee noted the cost of providing meals for Lunch Clubs and agreed the arrangements for the provision of this service and the appropriate charges for 2010/11.

9. DESIGNING BETER SERVICES PHASE 2 (DESIGN): VEHICLE, TRANSPORT & PLANT; OPERATIONAL SUPPORT – FULL BUSINESS CASE
10. DESIGNING BETTER SERVICES – PHASE 3 IMPLEMENTATION

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer seeking approval to implement the recommendations detailed in the business cases for the Designing Better Services (DBS) Vehicles and Operational Support themes and reporting on phase 2 of the Designing Better Services (DBS) Programme. The report also provided members with an Implementation Plan for the Designing Better Services programme for consideration.

Following lengthy discussion during which Officers responded to Members' questions, the meeting noted:-

- (i) the Council will, over the next 12-18 months, produce new ways of working to better deliver services for the people of Moray;
- (ii) elected members and senior management are committed to the changes necessary to achieve this;
- (iii) the extent to which staff will be trained and supported in new roles;
- (iv) the need not to lose sight of the balance between the Council's investment in Designing Better Services and the return on that investment in terms of savings and improved service delivery.
- (v) how the service areas identified for these new ways of working were selected and scoped;
- (vi) how in particular the scope of the vehicle and transport etc service was arrived at.

The committee thereafter:-

- (i) approved the business cases and authorised the implementation phase of the programmes for
 - a. vehicle, transport and plant (Appendix 1 to the report) which includes adopting a corporate approach to fleet management and implementation of a car pool system;
 - b. operational support (Appendix 2 to the report) which involves simplifying and standardising the functions throughout the Council such as procurement, document management and centralised mailroom.

- (ii) noted the progress being made in the preparation for full implementation of the DBS recommendations.
- (iii) noted the report on phase 2 (design) of the Designing Better Services programme and agreed to:-
 - (a) the Programme Implementation Plan annexed to the report;
 - (b) the resources required to enable the delivery of the Implementation Plan as described in Section 5 of the report;
 - (c) the governance arrangements for overseeing the implementation summarised in paragraph 4.6 of the report;
 - (d) recognise that the implementation phase 2 is likely to result in disruption to services and short term reductions in performance as detailed in paragraph 4.4 of the report; and
 - (e) the implications for services
 - (f) detailed in paragraph 4.5 of the report.

Councillors McGillivray and Stewart left the meeting at the end of this item.

11. COMPLAINTS POLICY

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive asking committee to approve the revised Complaints Policy.

Following consideration, the committee approved the revised Complaints Policy which reflected best practice and recommended practices from the Commission of Local Government in Scotland (the Ombudsman).

12. CAPITAL FUNDING: INTRODUCTION OF SELF SERVICE AT PRINCIPAL LIBRARIES

There was submitted a report by the Director of Educational Services inviting the committee to approve a capital investment for the purchase of self service equipment at principal libraries to ensure future significant savings.

Following further discussion, the committee:-

- (i) approved capital expenditure of £21,847 for the purchase of self service machines at principal libraries, thereby leading to estimated savings of £125,153 over a five year period as itemised in Appendix 1 to the report; and
- (ii) noted that a report would be brought back by the Libraries and Museums Manager to the appropriate committee on how savings were implemented and achieved.

13. COMPLAINTS MONITORING REPORT FOR PERIOD APRIL 2009 – DECEMBER 2009

There was submitted and noted a report by the Chief Executive asking committee to scrutinise the Complaints Procedure Monitoring Report for the period April 2009 – December 2009 and the Council's performance against targets.

14. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT – PROGRESS AGAINST SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR THE PERIOD 1 OCTOBER TO 31 DECEMBER 2009

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive advising the committee of the progress made against the targets laid down in the Chief Executive's Service Improvement Plan, providing an update of Service Performance against performance indicators relating to the Chief Executive's Office and an update of progress on complaints relating to the Chief Executive's Office.

During discussion, the meeting noted that every outgoing phonenumber was currently monitored but that at present the "3 ring" policy target could not be met and would be reviewed.

Following further discussion, the committee agreed to:

- (i) note the progress of the Chief Executive's Office Service Improvement Plan 2009/10 detailed;
- (ii) the Chief Executive reviewing the indicators for answering telephone calls;
- (iii) note the update on Performance Indicator data for the Chief Executive's Office detailed; and
- (iv) note the update on Complaint data for the Chief Executive's Office detailed.

14. FINANCE AND ICT SERVICES; PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT – OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2009

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer asking the Committee to scrutinise progress made against priority areas and targets detailed in Finance and ICT Services' Service Improvement Plan to the end of quarter 3, December 2009. Committee is also asked to scrutinise progress against Performance indicators and Complaints to the end of quarter 3, December 2009.

In response to a question from Councillor Shand regarding the Schools ICT infrastructure, the Chief Financial Officer advised that the funding had been agreed at the meeting of The Moray Council held on 11 February 2010 for a five year strategy which at the end would ensure that there was a consistent level of ICT

provision within schools across Moray. He further advised that he would ensure that a report would be brought back to Children & Young People Services Committee.

Following consideration, the committee agreed to:

- (i) note the progress achieved, as at the end of Quarter 3 2009/10, in implementing the improvements identified in the Finance and ICT Service Improvement Plan 2009-2010;
- (ii) note the progress made in achieving, as at the end of Quarter 3 2009/10, the Finance and ICT Service Outcomes and Service Standards;
- (iii) note the progress made, as at the end of Quarter 3 2009/10, in achieving the Finance and ICT Complaints Targets;
- (iv) a report being put forward to Children & Young People Services Committee regarding Schools ICT Infrastructure.

15. CENTRAL SERVICES PERFORMANCE REPORT – QUARTER 3 OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2009

There was submitted a report by the Chief Legal Officer asking Committee to scrutinise progress made against priority areas and targets detailed in Central Services' Service Improvement Plan to the end of quarter 3, December 2009. Committee is also asked to scrutinise progress against Performance Indicators and Complaints to the end of quarter 3, December 2010.

The Chief Legal Officer advised that both the Energy Strategy/Policy and the annual report on progress achieved in moving outcomes of the strategy would be submitted to the Policy & Resources Committee on the 30th March 2010 not 2nd March as noted in the report.

Following consideration, the committee agreed to:

- (i) note the performance against Central Service's performance Indicators, at the end of quarter 3 2009/10, December 2009;
- (ii) note the progress against priorities identified in the Central Services' Service Improvement Plan 2009-2010, at the end of Quarter 3 2009/10, December 2009;
- (iii) note the performance in achieving the Central Services' Complaints Targets, at the end of Quarter 3 2009/10, December 2009.

16. SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT - QUARTER 3 MONITORING STATEMENTS

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive asking committee to consider progress against completion of Key Actions for which the underlying milestones were

due to have been completed in quarter 3 that address Single Outcome Agreement Local and National Outcomes.

Following consideration, the committee noted the performance against completion of Key Actions of which 88% of milestones are either complete or showing good progress in quarter 3, that address Single Outcome Agreement Local and National Outcomes.

17. SMALL GRANTS BUDGET (SECTION 20) – APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE – SCOTTISH LOCAL GOVERNMENT FORUM AGAINST POVERTY

There was submitted a report by the Chief Legal Officer inviting the Committee to consider a request for a Section 20 grant assistance for 2008/09 affiliation fees from the Scottish Local Government Forum Against Poverty.

The Chief Legal Officer advised that the report should read 09/10 not 08/09.

Councillor Jarvis, as the Council's representative on the Forum, stated that whilst a lot of good work was undertaken by the organisation, unfortunately the council may not obtain as much benefit as he was unable to attend very often.

Councillor Wright stated that the Chief Legal Officer was preparing a report, looking at all organisations with which the council were paying fees for including those the council have partnership agreements with and those that the council do not.

Following consideration, the committee agreed to award £870 affiliation fees for 2009/10 from the Scottish Local Government Forum Against Poverty and would be met from the Small Grants Budget for 2009/10.

18. TWINNING

There was submitted a report by the Director of Environmental Services asking Committee to consider awarding a grant of £3,000 to the Moray Twinning Association.

Following consideration the committee agreed to award a grant of £3,000 to the Moray Twinning Association.

19. QUESTION TIME

The committee noted that no questions were raised at the meeting.

20. DESIGNING BETTER SERVICES – PROPERTY ASSET MANAGEMENT (Para 1)

There was submitted a report by the Chief Housing Officer presenting proposals for a Housing and Property Service management structure which would achieve efficiencies through the integration of housing services and property asset management into one service.

Following consideration, the committee:-

- (i) agreed in principle and subject to formal consultations:-
 - a) the integration of Housing, Property and Estates services;
 - b) the design of the proposed management structure for a Housing and Property Service as set out in Appendix 1 to the report; and
 - c) that a further report be submitted to this committee following the consultation, setting out the final detailed proposals.
- (ii) noted that the DBS implementation plan would require to proceed on the basis of the integration of Housing, Property and Estates services if savings of £483,000 were to be generated within the timescales previously approved by the council within the budget.

21. FORMER SECONDARY SCHOOL, MAIN STREET, TOMINTOUL (Para 9)

There was submitted a report by the Head of Estates Services requesting the committee accept an offer to purchase the former Secondary School, Main Street, Tomintoul as shown outlined and hatched black on appendix 1 of the report.

Following consideration, the committee approved the offer to purchase the former Secondary School, Main Street, Tomintoul as detailed in Section 3.3 of the report and remit the Principal Solicitor (Commercial and Conveyancing) to conclude the transaction.