

THE MORAY COUNCIL

MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

TUESDAY 10 JUNE 2014

COUNCIL OFFICE, ELGIN

Present

Councillors A Wright (Chair), G Coull, J Cowe, L Creswell, J Divers, E McGillivray, P Paul, M Shand, R Shepherd and A Skene.

Also Present

Councillors G Cowie, J Mackay and G McDonald.

Apologies

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors S Cree (Deputy Chair), P Gowans, G Leadbitter

In Attendance

The Chief Executive, the Corporate Director (Corporate Services), the Corporate Director (Education and Social Care), the Acting Corporate Director (Environmental Services), the Head of Financial Services, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, the Head of Community Care, the Head of Development Services, the Estates Manager, the Energy Officer and Mrs L Rowan, Committee Services Officer, as Clerk to the meeting.

1. URGENT BUSINESS

In terms of Standing Order 13 (b) the Meeting agreed to accept the undernoted item as urgent business on the Chairman certifying that in his opinion it required to be considered on the grounds of urgency as noted:

- (a) Report by the Acting Corporate Director (Environmental Services) – Buckie Harbour – Harbour Master Plan – in order to give early consideration to joint funding a Buckie Harbour Master Plan with Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE).

The meeting further resolved to take the urgent report on Buckie Harbour as item 20 on the Agenda (paragraph 22 of the minute refers).

2. ORDER OF BUSINESS

In terms of Standing Order 28, the meeting agreed to vary the order of business set down on the agenda and take Item 14 “Report on School Energy Audits” immediately

following Item 5 “Sustainability: Energy – Efficiency, renewable, innovation and Spend to Save, as both reports had a common theme.

3. DECLARATION OF GROUP DECISIONS AND MEMBERS INTERESTS

In terms of Standing Order 20 and the Councillors’ Code of Conduct, 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 or any declarations of Members’ interest in respect of any item on the agenda.

4. 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.

Paragraph No. of Minute

22

Paragraph No. of Schedule 7A

1 and 8

5. WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Committee noted that no written questions had been submitted.

6. TOMINTOUL AND GLENLIVET LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP

Under reference to paragraph 13 of the Minute of the Economic Development and Infrastructure Committee dated 6 May 2014, there was submitted a report by the Acting Corporate Director (Environmental Services) asking the Committee to approve in principle becoming a funding partner in the Tomintoul & Glenlivet Landscape Partnership.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed that, subject to the application to the Heritage Lottery Fund as outlined in Appendix 1 of the report being successful:

- (i) to allocate from the Economic Development Budget, £50,000 per annum for the four year life of the partnership programme from 2016/17 to 2019/20; and
- (ii) that the programme be delivered under the umbrella of the Moray Economic Partnership.

7. SUSTAINABILITY: ENERGY - EFFICIENCY, RENEWABLES, INNOVATION AND SPEND TO SAVE

Under reference to paragraph 9 of the Minute of this Committee dated 15 April 2014, there was submitted a report by the Acting Corporate Director (Environmental Services) asking the Committee to review the work that CIFAL will do and the annual work programme for the Council Energy Unit. The report highlighted that the Communities and Sustainability Partnership and CIFAL had identified energy reduction as the main priority to deliver carbon and financial savings and in order to achieve this required the appointment of external expertise to develop innovative solutions for Moray.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed:

- (i) the provision of £10k from reserves for the purpose of procuring advisers to identify opportunities for energy efficiency and providing carbon and financial savings;
- (ii) the provision of £12k from reserves to pay for services from CIFAL in supporting the Council with the ISM model and behaviour change; and
- (iii) to participation in the (Sustainable Energy Action Plan) SEAP proposal, subject to a further report being submitted for any request for funding.

8. REPORT ON SCHOOL ENERGY AUDITS

Under reference to paragraph 8 of the Minute of this Committee dated 18 February 2014, there was submitted a report by the Acting Corporate Director (Environmental Services) informing the Committee of a programme of energy audits of Council primary schools.

During discussion, the Chairman asked the Committee if they wished to see the energy reports from each of the 6 primary schools that had been audited.

The Committee agreed that this would be beneficial and it was agreed that the Estates Manager would circulate the energy reports from each of the 6 primary schools to Members of the Committee following the Meeting.

During further discussion, the Chairman sought confirmation that measures were in place to encourage the enthusiasm of school pupils with regard to energy efficiency.

In response the Energy Officer advised that many schools have Green Energy groups and that children are often very keen to implement energy efficiency measures and agreed that continued effort would be made to encourage the enthusiasm of school pupils in the implementation of energy efficiency measures.

Thereafter, the Committee agreed:

- (i) to note the outcomes of the recent energy audits of six primary schools as set out in paragraph 3.2 of the report;
- (ii) to note the consumption at the Council's primary schools fell by 3,317,504 kWh in 2013/14 as detailed in paragraph 3.6 of the report;

- (iii) to endorse the further energy savings measures outlined at paragraph 3.12 of this report;
- (iv) that the energy reports from each of the 6 primary schools be circulated to Members of the Committee; and
- (v) that continued effort is made to encourage the enthusiasm of school pupils in the implementation of energy efficiency measures.

9. REPORT ON MONITORING OFFICER ISSUES ARISING 1 APRIL 2013 TO 31 MARCH 2014

Under reference to paragraph 8 of the Minute of this Committee dated 2 October 2014, there was submitted and noted a report by the Monitoring Officer informing the Committee of the range of tasks undertaken by the Monitoring Officer from 1 April 2013 to the end of March 2014 as detailed within the report.

10. ADMINISTRATION OF TRUST FUNDS

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) updating the Committee on the reorganisation of the trust funds held by the Council.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to:

- (i) note the progress made in the rationalisation of the various trust funds held by the Council detailed at Sections 4 and 5 of the report;
- (ii) approve the registration of the Craigmoray Bequest with OSCR detailed at Section 5.8 of the report; and
- (iii) note the progress made by the Head of Financial Services in improving access to trust funds at Section 6 of the report.

11. TRUST FUNDS – SUMMARY EXPENDITURE FOR 2013/14 AND DISPOSABLE INCOME FOR 2014/15

Under reference to paragraph 8 of the Minute of this Committee dated 8 October 2013, there was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) informing the Committee of the disbursements made from trusts in 2013/14 and the proposed disposable income for 2014/15.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed:

- (i) to note the disbursements from Trust Funds in 2013/14 as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report; and
- (ii) that the income be distributed in 2014/15 from trusts, as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report, with a cumulative disposable income greater than £50.

12. COMMON GOOD FUNDS – SUMMARY EXPENDITURE FOR 2013/14 AND DISPOSABLE INCOME FOR 2014/15

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) informing the Committee of the final position of Common Good Funds at 31 March 2014, the proposed disposable income for 2014/15 and asking the Committee to review the loans pool interest rate allocated to Common Good.

During discussion, clarification was sought as to whether officers could liaise with other Councils with regard to policies they have in place to maximise return on funds as it was understood that Argyle and Bute Council have a Common Good Investment Policy that might help to increase the return on council funds.

In response, the Chairman advised that the Chief Executive and Leader of Argyle and Bute Council were due to visit Moray Council in the near future and asked that the Head of Financial Services liaise with the Chief Executive and Leader of Argyle and Bute Council when they visit with regard to their Common Good Investment Policy and other policies they may have in place to increase the return on funds.

Thereafter, the Committee agreed:

- (i) to note the disbursements approved for 2013/14 for each of the Common Good Funds shown in Appendix 1 of the report;
- (ii) to approve the carry forward of the undisbursed balances for 2013/14 for the Buckie, Cullen, Dufftown, Elgin, Forres and Keith Funds to be made available in 2014/15;
- (iii) to note the revised loans fund interest rate;
- (iv) the Total Disposable Income for 2014/15 as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report; and
- (v) that the Head of Financial Services liaise with the Chief Executive and Council Leader of Argyle and Bute Council when they visit in the near future with regard to their Common Good Investment Policy and other policies they may have in place to increase the return on funds.

13. CAPITAL PLAN 2013/14 – OUTTURN AS AT 31 MARCH 2014

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) asking the Committee to note the expenditure for the Capital Plan for financial year 2013/14 and to approve budget carry forwards for inclusion in the 2014/15 Capital Plan.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to:

- (i) note the expenditure to 31 March 2014 of £46.7 million;

- (ii) approve carry forwards of £622,000 as detailed in the table at paragraph 4.2 and other minor adjustments to 2014-15 capital plan as detailed in paragraph 5.3.1 of the report;
- (iii) approve a spend to save project at Ashgrove Fleet Depot as detailed in paragraph 6.1 of the report;
- (iv) approve the reprofiling of major flood alleviation schemes as detailed in paragraph 5.6 of the report; and
- (v) approve the reprofiling of Elgin Traffic Management projects as detailed in paragraph 5.4.3 of the report.

14. DESIGNING BETTER SERVICES PROGRAMME PHASE 3 (IMPLEMENTATION): PROGRAMME PROGRESS UP-DATE

Under reference to paragraph 6 of the minute of this Committee dated 15 April 2014, there was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) asking the Committee to note the progress and highlight achievements to date.

During discussion, clarification was sought with regard to whether the functionality issues for the interface connector between the Lagan CRM System and the Revenues Management System had been resolved.

In response, the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) advised that he did not have that information at that time and would ask the Senior Programme Manager to provide Members with an update with regard to the functionality issues for the interface connector between the Lagan CRM system and the Revenues Management System following the meeting.

Thereafter, the Committee agreed:

- (i) to note the DBS financial contribution to the corporate CAG/GIS resource;
- (ii) to note the revised financial benefits associated with the reablement theme of the Community Care Redesign Project;
- (iii) to note the impact of the GIS/CAG resource as set out at 6.2 and adjusted Reablement benefits as set out at 7.4 of the report and the overall programme benefits profile;
- (iv) to note the progress and the risks being managed by the Programme Board as set out in section 8 of the report; and
- (v) that the Senior Programme Manager would provide Members with an update with regard to the functionality issues for the interface connector between the Lagan CRM system and the Revenues Management System following the meeting.

15. CORPORATE SERVICES PERFORMANCE REPORT – OCTOBER 2013 TO MARCH 2014

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) asking the Committee to note the performance of the service for the period from October 2013 to March 2014.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to note the:

- (i) performance outlined in Section 4 of the report; and
- (ii) actions being taken to seek improvements where required as outlined in Sections 5.16 – 5.20 of the report.

16. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE PERFORMANCE REPORT – OCTOBER 2013 TO MARCH 2014

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive asking the Committee to note the performance of the service for the period from October 2013 to March 2014.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to note the:

- (i) performance outlined in Section 4 the report;
- (ii) actions being taken to seek improvements where required as outlined in Sections 5.13 – 5.18 of the report.

17. RUGBY DEVELOPMENT OFFICER FOR MORAY

Under reference to paragraph 14 of the minute of the Children and Young People's Committee dated 30 April 2014, there was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Education and Social Care) asking the Committee to approve the extension of the contract of the Rugby Development Officer post for a further three year period.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to extend the contract of the Rugby Development Officer post for a further three year period in partnership with the Scottish Rugby Union, NHS Grampian and other partners.

18. COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER: OUT OF THE DARKNESS THEATRE COMPANY

There was submitted a report by the Head of Community Care asking the Committee to approve in principle a Community Asset Transfer (CAT) of the former Roads Office (Academy Street, Elgin) to Out of the Darkness Theatre Company at nil consideration (a discount provisionally estimated at £340,000) and to approve the grant of a lease of the building to the Out of the Darkness Theatre Company for an initial period of 6 months at an annual rental of £35,000, subject to a 100% rental grant.

During discussion, the Chairman stated that, in his opinion, the transfer of the offices in Academy Street was not the transfer of a community asset but that of a Council

property and, as a number of applications had now been received for surplus properties that were formerly offices rather than community facilities, sought the Committee's agreement to ask Officers to review the CAT policy to consider whether applications are accepted for former offices and other Council facilities which were not used as community facilities so that such assets can be assessed for suitability for a transfer prior to any work being taken forward with community groups in the future. This was agreed.

In response to a query as to whether the asset value of £340,000 for the offices at Academy Street was included in the Council's budget for the provision of the new Council Annex, the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) advised that the asset value of £340,000 was included in the projected £4 million yearly savings from the DBS project which included building the HQ Annex.

Concern was raised that whilst the CAT policy was being reviewed, the Out of the Darkness Theatre Company currently did not have any premises from which to operate as Elgin Town Hall was undergoing refurbishment and, recognising the good work of the Out of the Darkness Theatre company, it was suggested that the Committee approve the grant of a short term full repairing and insuring lease of the building and award a 100% rental grant for the period of the short term lease, equivalent to £35,000 per annum. This was agreed.

During further discussion, the Chairman sought the Committee's agreement that the Council suggest that no further work be undertaken by the Out of the Darkness Theatre Company with regard to developing a business case for purchase until such time as the CAT policy has been reviewed. This was agreed.

Thereafter, the Committee agreed:

- (i) to approve the grant of a short term full repairing and insuring lease of the building, on detailed terms and conditions to be agreed upon by the Estates Manager and the Legal Services Manager (Property and Contracts);
- (ii) to award a 100% rental grant to the Out of the Darkness Theatre Company for the period of the short term lease, equivalent to £35,000 per annum;
- (iii) that the CAT policy be reviewed to consider whether applications are accepted for former offices and other Council facilities which are not currently used as community facilities so that such assets can be assessed for suitability for a transfer prior to any work being taken forward with community groups in the future; and
- (iv) that the Council suggests no further work be undertaken by the Out of the Darkness Theatre Company with regard to developing a business case for purchase until such time as the CAT policy has been reviewed.

19. COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER - JAMIA ISLAMIC CENTRE TRUST FUND

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) asking the Committee to approve a Community Asset Transfer (CAT) of the former Council offices at 78 South Street, Elgin, to Jamia Islamic Centre Trust Fund, at market value, to facilitate an Islamic Centre in Moray

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to:

- (i) approve the transfer of the former Council offices at 78 South Street, Elgin, on the main terms as set out in paragraph 3.7 of this report; and
- (ii) remit the Legal Services Manager (Property and Contracts) to conclude the transaction.

20. LEASE FOR CABRACH SCHOOL SITE

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) asking the Committee to approve the application received from New Cabrach Developments (NCD) for approval and consideration of a lease to allow preparation of a business plan for the future development of the school and wider Cabrach area.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to:

- (i) approve the grant of a full repairing and insuring lease for up to two years of the former school, hall and school house, on detailed terms and conditions to be agreed upon by the Estates Manager and the Legal Services Manager (Property and Contracts); and
- (ii) award a 100% rental grant to the new Cabrach developments for the period of the lease.

21. QUESTION TIME

Councillor Skene sought clarification with regard to the high level of turnover of staff in the Contact Centre which results in any training they have received being wasted and asked if there was a reason for the high level of staff turnover and also requested an update on action from the Service Learning Visit that had taken place a year ago.

In response, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services advised that there was a high level of staff turnover within the Contact Centre however each member of staff who leaves participates in an exit interview which has highlighted that most left due to personal circumstances and not due to systemic issues within Customer Services.

With regard to the Service Learning Visit, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services advised that she was aware of the issues highlighted from the visit and that an Improvement Group consisting of staff of all levels had been formed which focuses on issues such as staff views on improvements and provides direct access for staff who may have concerns to the service manager. Telephony is a key area under development in an effort to deal with an increasing call volume.

Councillor Skene stated that she would still like an update on progress that has been made since the formation of the Improvement Group following the last Service Learning Visit.

In response the Head of Legal and Democratic Services agreed to arrange a further Service Learning Visit. This was noted.

22. BUCKIE HARBOUR – HARBOUR MASTER PLAN [Paras 1 & 8]

Under reference to paragraph 13 of the minute of this Committee dated 13 May 2014, there was submitted a report asking the Committee to consider joint funding a Buckie Harbour Master Plan with Highlands and Islands Enterprise.

Following consideration, the Committee approved £10,000 as joint funding for a Buckie Harbour Master Plan with Highlands and Islands Enterprise.