

**THE MORAY COUNCIL****MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE****12 MAY 2015****COUNCIL OFFICE, ELGIN****PRESENT**

Councillors S Cree (Chair), A Wright (Deputy Chair), G Coull, L Creswell, P Gowans, G Leadbitter, G McDonald, E McGillivray, P Paul, D Ross, M Shand and A Skene.

**APOLOGIES**

Apologies were intimated on behalf of Councillors J Cowe and S Morton.

**IN ATTENDANCE**

The Chief Executive, the Corporate Director (Corporate Services), the Acting Head of Legal and Democratic Services, the Head of Financial Services, the Head of Direct Services, the Benefits Manager, the Senior Programme Manager, the Customer Services Manager, the Trading Standards Manager, the Consultancy Manager, the Estates Manager, the Asset Management Co-ordinator and Mrs Lissa Rowan, Committee Services Officer as Clerk to the Meeting.

**1. DECLARATION OF GROUP DECISIONS AND MEMBER'S 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' interests 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.

<b><u>Paragraph No. of Minute</u></b>	<b><u>Paragraph No. of Schedule 7A</u></b>
19	14
20	6 and 8

### **3. WELCOME**

The Committee joined the Chair in welcoming Councillor McDonald to his first meeting of the Policy and Resources in this current Council.

### **4. MINUTE OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE DATED 14 APRIL 2015**

The Minute of the Policy and Resources Committee dated 14 April 2015 was submitted for approval.

During discussion, Councillor Ross sought clarification as to whether it was only questions raised on the previous minute that could be raised at Question Time or whether Members could also raise a general question in relation to this Committee's remit at that point and further queried why questions on the Minute of the previous meeting could not be asked when the Minute was being presented for approval.

In response, the Chair stated that he was content to have questions raised in relation to this Committee's remit at Question Time however questions on previous Minutes were noted and taken at Question Time to allow Officers the opportunity to make themselves available to answer questions raised.

Thereafter, the Minute of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee dated 14 April 2015 was submitted and approved subject to:

- (i) The wording in paragraph 3 of the Minute being amended to the following "The Committee agreed to a suspension of Standing Order 83 to allow amendment of a previous decision, which was based on a typographical error, taken in the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee dated 17 March 2014 Appendix 1 of the Charging for Council services report. SVA registration and induction was shown as currently £31 and proposed £33. These figures should have been currently £131 and proposed £133".
- (ii) clarification being provided at Paragraph 12 of the Minute to reflect that "status quo" made no change whatsoever to the allocation and system for distribution in respect of financial support for Community Councils, Area Forums and Community Associations.

### **5. WRITTEN QUESTIONS**

The Committee noted that no written questions had been submitted.

### **6. CORPORATE ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN**

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) providing the Committee with a report of progress made against the Corporate Asset Management Plan for 2014/15, requesting the Committee to consider targets for 2015/16 and asking the Committee to authorise amendments to the Community Asset Transfer (CAT) Policy to reflect revised governance arrangements for applications for Community Asset Transfer.

During the introduction to the report, the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) advised that, in relation to the amendment at paragraph 6.3 of the Community Asset Transfer Policy where reference to the Corporate Management Team had been removed, this had not been intended and should remain in the Policy and subsequently clarified that, reference to the CAT Steering Group should be the Asset Management Working Group. This was noted.

During discussion, concern was raised in relation to a recent CAT that had been awarded to Aberlour Community Association however, once agreed, the Council had requested further money from Aberlour in relation to the maintenance of a road outside Aberlour Station and that this had resulted in an unexpected financial burden to the Aberlour Community Association.

In response the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) advised that The Moray Council were at the forefront of taking forward Community Asset Transfers and had to develop the process from the beginning and asked the Committee to note that, as this was a new process, further learning would no doubt be required as the process developed.

The Chair stated that it was important that Officers made it clear to both the Committee and communities embarking on community asset transfers, if there were any additional financial burdens associated with the CAT.

In response, the Convener suggested that, in order to alleviate situations where an applicant encounters additional burdens once a CAT is agreed, wording be included in the CAT policy to reflect that the Applicant would be responsible for all burdens associated with the Community Asset Transfer. There being no-one otherwise minded, this was agreed.

During further discussion in relation to whether the Council should adopt a policy position on Council assets which no longer have a strategic fit with Council priorities but which have a high community profile, the Convener, in acknowledging that this would be an extra task for the Action Plan for 2015/16, was of the opinion that it was a necessity and therefore suggested that proposals be brought forward to this Committee for a policy on Council assets which no longer have a strategic fit with Council priorities but which have a high community profile.

In response to this suggestion, concern was raised that paragraph 4.7 of the report had made reference to specific examples of buildings in Moray that may fall into such a criteria and it was suggested that the recommendation from this Committee ignore the specific examples detailed in paragraph 4.7 of the report.

The Chair therefore moved that the recommendation from this Committee be that proposals be brought forward to this Committee for a policy on Council assets which no longer have a strategic fit with Council priorities, without any specific examples herein, but which have a high community profile. There being no-one otherwise minded, this was agreed.

Thereafter, the Committee agreed to:-

- (i) note the report of work done to date to meet the targets set in the Corporate Asset Management Plan for 2014/15;

- (ii) note the status of Asset Management Plans for each type of asset, as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report;
- (iii) note the requirement to revise the 10 year Capital Plan to ensure affordability;
- (iv) approve the targets set in the Corporate Asset Management Plan for 2015/16, as set out in Appendix 3 of the report;
- (v) note the amendments to the Community Asset Transfer Policy, as detailed in Appendix 4 of the report subject to:
  - (a) Members noting that the removal of reference to the Corporate Management Team at paragraph 6.3 of the policy was not intended and should remain and that subsequently reference to the CAT Steering Group should be the Asset Management Working Group; and
  - (b) the inclusion of wording in the policy to reflect that the Community would be responsible for all burdens associated with the Community Asset Transfer; and
- (vi) proposals being brought forward to this Committee for a policy on Council assets which no longer have a strategic fit with Council priorities, without any specific examples herein, but which have a high community profile.

## **7. RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY / CORPORATE RISK REGISTER UPDATE**

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) providing the Committee with an updated Risk Management Strategy together with the latest copy of the Corporate Risk Register for review and comment.

During discussion, concern was raised in relation to the wording at Section 3 “The Role of Internal Audit” in the Risk Management Strategy as it suggested that the Corporate Management Team would have to approve any changes made by the Audit and Performance Review Committee and that this was removing the decision making role of Elected Members.

In response, the Chief Executive advised that this wording was not intentional and that it would be changed to reflect that “the risk register would be updated by CMT to reflect these matters, following approval of the changes and consideration of the reports by the Audit and Performance Review Committee”.

During further discussion in relation to the decision taken at the recent meeting of The Moray Council where it was agreed that Service Committees would scrutinise performance relating to their Committee, clarification was sought as to where the scrutiny of risk registers would lie.

In response, the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) advised that consideration would be given to where the scrutiny of risk registers would lie when service plans are reviewed in the future.

Thereafter, the Committee agreed:

- (i) to approve the updated Risk Management Strategy and the draft Corporate Risk Register subject to the wording at paragraph 4 being amended to reflect that “the risk register would be updated by CMT to reflect these matters, following approval of the changes and consideration of the reports by the Audit and Performance Review Committee”; and
- (ii) that consideration is given to where the scrutiny of risk registers would lie when service plans are reviewed in the future.

## **8. DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS**

Under reference to paragraph 6 of the Minute of this Committee dated 12 May 2014, there was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) updating the Committee on the spending of Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) funding and asking the Committee to consider the future budget for DHP in light of reductions in government funding.

During discussion surrounding the insufficient funding available to continue to award the current number of claims that relate to the other welfare reforms, exceptional circumstances and exceptional hardship, Councillor Paul was of the opinion that providing additional budget of £20,000 as detailed in option C) would not be sufficient and therefore moved option B) that the Council limit the level of discretionary housing payments to the funding provided by the UK and Scottish Governments, working towards this during 2015/16 which would require an estimated additional budget of £40,000 for 2015/16 only. This was seconded by Councillor Coull.

Councillor Cree was of the opinion that the reason the Council had been awarding the greater amount over the last 2 years was as a result of a generous amount of funding from the Scottish Government and that, as this was now reduced, the Council should revert back to what was previously awarded and therefore moved option C) that the Council limit the level of discretionary housing payments to the funding provided by the UK and Scottish Governments, with immediate effect which would require an estimated additional budget of £20,000 for 2015/16 only. This was seconded by Councillor Wright.

On a division there voted:

For the Motion (6):                      Councillors Paul, Coull, Gowans, Leadbitter, McDonald and Shand

For the Amendment (6):              Councillors Cree, Wright, Creswell, McGillivray, Ross and Skene

Abstentions (0)

There being an equality of votes, the Chair, in terms of Standing Order 63 (e), cast his casting vote in favour of the amendment.

Accordingly the amendment became the finding of the meeting and the Committee agreed to:-

- (i) note the significant reduction in funding for Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) which will either impact on the individuals requiring financial support or impact on the council's budget;
- (ii) approve the payment of DHP grants to tenants with an eligible claim, in relation to under-occupancy for 2013/14 and 2014/15 at a total cost of £84,000; and
- (iii) limit the level of discretionary housing payments to the funding provided by the UK and Scottish Governments, with immediate effect which would require an estimated additional budget of 20,000 for 2015/16 only.

### **9. DESIGNING BETTER SERVICES PROGRAMME PHASE 3 (IMPLEMENTATION): PROGRAMME PROGRESS UPDATE**

Under reference to paragraph 9 of the Minute of this Committee dated 7 October 2014, there was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) providing Committee with an overview of progress and highlighting the risks and issues being managed by the Programme Board.

Following consideration, the Committee commended the excellent work of the DBS Team and Council staff members in accommodating the changes associated with DBS and thereafter agreed to:-

- (i) approve the resources required to:
  - (a) support the implementation of the SharePoint Electronic Document & Records Management System (EDRMS) solution as set out in paragraph 6.4 of the report; and
  - (b) support the on-going maintenance of the new technology as set out in paragraphs 6.5 and 6.6 of the report;
- (ii) note the revised timescales for the successful implementation of the SharePoint EDRMS solution as set out in paragraph 6.2 of the report;
- (iii) note the outcome of the Tranche 7 Business Analysis Phase (Milestone Report) and the associated benefits as set out in Section 7 of the report;
- (iv) note the successful roll out of Data Capture Devices in Environmental Services as set out in Section 8 of the report;
- (v) note the formal closure of Tranche 6 (Corporate Services & Chief Executive's Office) and the lessons learned as set out in Section 9 of the report;
- (vi) note the arrangements for concluding the DBS programme as set out in paragraph 10.2 of the report; and
- (vii) note the review of financial benefits attributable to the programme, overall progress and the risks being managed by the Programme Board.

## **10. COMPLAINTS POLICIES**

There was submitted a Report by the Corporate Policy Unit Manager asking the Committee to approve amendments to the Complaints Handling Policy & Procedure, the Social Work Complaints Policy & Procedure and also to approve the Unacceptable Customer Actions Policy.

During discussion, clarification was sought as to whether the Unacceptable Customer Actions Policy would be applicable to Elected Members who at times have to deal with unacceptable behaviour from members of the public.

In response, the Chief Executive advised that the policy was to protect front line staff however, having been made aware of recent issues that certain Elected Members had been required to deal with, agreed to provide a briefing session to Elected Members on what is and is not acceptable in terms of unacceptable customer actions and how to use existing procedures to address such issues.

Thereafter, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to approve the amendments to the Complaints Handling Policy & Procedure as set out in Appendix 1 of the report;
- (ii) to approve the amendments to the Social Work Complaints Policy & Procedure as set out in Appendix 2 of the report;
- (iii) to approve the new Unacceptable Customer Actions Policy as set out in Appendix 3 of the report; and
- (iv) to provide a briefing session to Elected Members on what is and is not acceptable in terms of unacceptable customer actions and how to use existing procedures to address such issues.

## **11. REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS (SCOTLAND) ACT 2000 AND REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERWS ACT 2000**

Under reference to paragraph 7 of the Minute of this Committee dated 27 April 2010, there was submitted and noted a report by the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) and the Acting Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) inviting the Committee to note the use made of covert surveillance by Council employees in the course of their duties for the year to 31 March 2015 and the acquisition of communications data by Council employees in the course of their duties for the year to 31 December 2014 for information purposes only.

## **12. CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED DRAFT CLIMATE CHANGE (REPORTING ON CLIMATE CHANGE DUTIES (SCOTLAND) ORDER 2015)**

There was submitted a report by the Acting Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) informing the Committee of the current Scottish Government consultation on mandatory reporting on compliance with climate change duties.

During discussion in relation to the question 10 in the consultation which asked “Do you believe climate change public bodies duties reports should be validated prior to submission”, Councillor McDonald moved that this be changed from “Yes, internal” to “Yes, independent” as he was of the opinion that the Council has a good track record in relation to climate change and therefore it should be in the public domain.

In response, the Chair was of the opinion that there would be a cost implication to the Council should independent validation be required prior to submission. The Head of Development Services therefore suggested that the Committee could if so minded change the response to “Yes, independent, subject to there being no cost incurred to the Council”. There being no-one otherwise minded, this was agreed.

During further discussion in relation to question 1 “Do you agree that the powers in the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 should be used to improve climate change reporting by public bodies”, Councillor McDonald moved that this be changed from “No” to “Yes” as he was of the opinion that other Local Authorities and Public Bodies should be encouraged to take action in relation to climate change and provide an good example. This was seconded by Councillor Leadbitter.

The Chair was of the opinion that mandatory reporting would not make a significant difference to climate change and therefore moved as an amendment that the answer to question 1 remain as “No”. This was seconded by Councillor Wright.

On a division there voted:

For the motion (7): Councillors McDonald, Leadbitter, Coull, Gowans, Paul, Ross and Shand.

For the amendment (5): Councillors Cree, Wright, Creswell, McGillivray and Skene.

Accordingly the motion became the finding of the meeting and the Committee agreed to note the content of the consultation on mandatory reporting on climate change duties and thereafter agreed the response set out in Appendix A to the Report subject to:

- (i) the answer to question 1 “Do you agree that the powers in the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 should be used to improve climate change reporting to public bodies” being changed to “Yes”;
- (ii) the answer to question 10 “Do you believe climate change public bodies duties reports should be validated prior to submission” being changed to “Yes, independent, subject to there being no cost incurrent to the Council”.

## **12. REPORT ON MONITORING OFFICER ISSUES ARISING 1 APRIL 2014 TO 31 MARCH 2015**

There was submitted and noted a report by the Monitoring Officer informing the Committee on the range of tasks undertaken by the Monitoring Officer from 1 April 2014 to the end of March 2015, this annual report being required as agreed at the Policy and Resources Committee on 2 October 2012, paragraph 8 of the minute refe



### **13. CUSTOMER SATISFACTION RESULTS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICES**

Under reference to paragraph 13 of the Minute of this Committee dated 18 March 2014, there was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) asking the Committee to scrutinise and note the results of the Customer Satisfaction Surveys undertaken for Customer Services.

During discussion, clarification was sought in relation to the length of time customers had to wait for their call to be answered in Elgin as it appeared from the table that 8% of calls answered were unaccounted for and concern was raised that those 8% had had to wait in excess of 15 minutes to have their call answered.

In response, the Customer Services Manager assured the Committee that no customer had to wait longer than 15 minutes to have their call answered however agreed to look into this matter further and provide the Committee with his findings.

During further discussion, clarification was sought as to whether there was a cost associated with joining the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy benchmarking club and if so, why this club had been joined when a decision had been taken by the Administration to reduce the number of Council subscriptions to such bodies. In response, the Customer Services Manager advised that the cost was approximately £600-£1000 over 3 years and further advised that this benchmarking club had been joined to provide useful information to compare performance with other Authorities in particular with regard to comparing digital services with other Local Authorities.

Further concern was raised in relation to the costs of being a member of the benchmarking club in comparison to the benefits gained from being a member and the Chair sought the agreement of the Committee to request that a further report be submitted to a future meeting of this Committee in relation to the benefits of Council Departments being members of Benchmarking Clubs. This was agreed.

Thereafter, the Committee agreed:

- (i) to note the results of the Customer Satisfaction Surveys undertaken for Customer Services as set out in Appendix 1 of the report;
- (ii) that clarification would be provided to Members as to whether any caller to Elgin had to wait more than 15 minutes to be answered; and
- (iii) that a further report would be submitted to a future meeting of this Committee in relation to the benefits of Council Departments being members of Benchmarking Clubs.

### **13. COOPER PARK RAISED LANDFORM**

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) asking that the Committee make a decision on the provision of a raised landform in Cooper Park formed from the surplus soil from the Elgin Flood Alleviation Scheme.

During discussion, it was queried what the cost to the Council would be to flatten the raised landform, should it be considered detrimental to the application for funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund. In response, the Head of Direct Services advised

that the cost to the Council to spread the soil throughout Cooper Park would be approximately £18,000.

During further discussion surrounding the cost to spread the soil throughout Cooper Park, concern was raised that £18,000 was a considerable sum and the Chair suggested that, should the landform require to be removed at a later date that the cost could be born by the Elgin Common Good Fund and that this could be considered by the Council should the need arise in the future.

Councillor Leadbitter being of the opinion that no confirmation had been received stating that proceeding with the creation of the raised landform in Cooper Park would be detrimental to the application for funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund moved that the Committee agree to the creation of a raised landform in Cooper Park. This was seconded by Councillor Shand. There being no-one otherwise minded, this was agreed.

Thereafter, the Committee agreed to the creation of a raised landform in Cooper Park as shown in APPENDIX 1 to the Report.

#### **14. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS**

The Committee agreed to suspend Standing Order 25 to conclude deliberation of the Agenda.

#### **15. COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER – FOCHABERS INSTITUTE**

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) inviting the Committee to consider the future of the Fochabers Institute following an application by Fochabers Village Association Limited (FVAL) for a Community Asset Transfer (CAT) of the property.

During his introduction, the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) advised that it had been brought to his attention that, as the FVAL were requesting a grant of £150,000 from the Council in relation to the Fochabers Institute CAT, Policy and Resources Committee did not have the authority to approve this as it exceeds the limit of £50,000 or above and therefore the decision would have to be taken by The Moray Council. This was noted.

During discussion, concern was raised in relation to the length of time the CAT had taken to go through the process and the lack of communication between the Council and the FVAL in relation to their business case that had been submitted in February 2015..

In response, the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) advised that he had taken a decision not to bring this report to the last meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee as it was just prior to the General Election and that at that time, the Council was in a state of purdah. With regard to the business case, the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) suggested that the Committee nominate a group of Councillors to be involved in the next feedback session with FVAL to assist with a wider understanding of the improvements sought in relation to the business case.

The Chair sought the Committee's agreement that the Chair/Depute Chair and 3

local Ward Members be involved in the next feedback session with the Fochabers Village Association Ltd to assist with a wider understanding of the improvements sought in relation to the business case. This was agreed.

Councillor Ross commended the Fochabers Team in their efforts so far in producing the business case and further stated that, as the Fochabers Institute was in a poor state of repair with an estimated cost of £700,000 to bring it up to standard, he was of the opinion that providing a grant of £150,000 to FVAL would be value for money for the Council and would provide a great asset for Fochabers and therefore moved that the request from FVAL that the Council awards it a grant of £150,000 to cover essential maintenance to the Institute building be recommended for approval to the next meeting of The Moray Council, subject to the provision of a completed business case up to the standards of Officers and Elected Members. This was seconded by Councillor Wright.

Councillor Skene raised concern that, should this Committee recommend that The Moray Council approve the request from FVAL of a grant of £150,000 to cover essential maintenance to the Institute Building, the Council were in danger of setting a precedent as there were a number of iconic buildings in Moray that could progress through the CAT process whereby Community Groups may seek additional grant funding from the Council and moved as an amendment that the decision to the request from Fochabers Village Association Ltd that the Council awards it a grant of £150,000 to cover essential maintenance to the Institute building, be considered at the next meeting of The Moray Council, with no recommendation from this Committee. This was seconded by Councillor McDonald.

On a division there voted:

For the Motion (5): Councillors Ross, Wright, Cree, Leadbitter and McGillivray

For the Amendment (7): Councillors Skene, McDonald, Coull, Creswell, Gowans, Paul and Shand

Abstentions (0)

Therefore the amendment became the finding of the Meeting and the Committee agreed that the decision to the request from Fochabers Village Association Ltd that the Council awards it a grant of £150,000 to cover essential maintenance to the Institute building be considered at the next meeting of The Moray Council with no recommendation from this Committee.

In response to a query raised as to whether the completed business case could be emailed to Elected Members prior to the CAT being considered at the next meeting of The Moray Council, the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) advised that the revised business case from Fochabers Village Association Limited would be emailed to all Elected Members if Officers consider it to be insufficient to justify the award of the grant funding requested by Fochabers Village Association Limited.

Thereafter, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to approve in principle a Community Asset Transfer (CAT) of Fochabers Institute to Fochabers Village Association Limited at a price to be agreed

following receipt of a satisfactory business case, as described in paragraph 3.1 of the report;

- (ii) to note that this Committee does not have authority to approve the grant requested as it exceeds the limit of £50,000 or above and therefore the decision has to be made by The Moray Council;
- (iii) that the decision to the request from Fochabers Village Association Ltd, that the Council awards it a grant of £150,000 to cover essential maintenance to the Institute building, be considered at the next meeting of The Moray Council with no recommendation from this Committee;
- (iv) that the Chair/Depute Chair and 3 local Ward Members be involved in the next feedback session with the Fochabers Village Association Ltd to assist with a wider understanding of the improvements sought in relation to the business case; and
- (v) that the revised business case from Fochabers Village Association Limited be emailed to all Elected Members if Officers consider it to be insufficient to justify the award of the grant funding requested by Fochabers Village Association Limited.

## 16. QUESTION TIME

Councillor Paul sought clarification in relation to the closure of the Post Office in Dufftown as pensioners were concerned as to how they were to receive their pension and it was queried if a report could be provided as to how the Council could assist in this matter.

In response, the Chief Executive thanked Councillor Paul for raising this issue and advised that he was aware of the situation, that enquiries were underway and that meantime the Head of Community Care was looking into contingency plans to assist elderly people access their pension from the Aberlour Post Officer and confirmed that members would be kept informed of any updates.

Councillor McDonald sought clarification in relation to the provision of WiFi in schools as some of his parent council groups who were fund raising to provide WiFi in local schools were coming up against resistance from the Council in relation to regulations as to what can and cannot be accessed and it was queried if the Council had a policy in relation to WiFi facilities within schools.

The Corporate Director (Corporate Services) advised that he would look into this matter further however did advise that the Acting Head of Schools and Curriculum Development had a working group which was looking at ICT provision within schools and that it would be beneficial for parent council groups to liaise with the Acting Head of Schools and Curriculum Development so that they can work together in this regard.

### **17. FORRES (RIVER FINDHORN AND PILMUIR) FLOOD ALLEVIATION SCHEME – PAYMENT OF ADVANCE COMPENSATION [PARA 14]**

There was submitted a report by the Acting Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) asking the Committee to approve an advance payment of compensation to Grange Estate.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to:-

- (i) approve an advance compensation payment as detailed in paragraph 5.1 of the report; and
- (ii) remit the Legal Services Manager (Property & Contracts) to document the transaction accordingly.

### **18. RIVER LOSSIE CYCLEWAY – ELGIN [PARA 6 AND 8]**

Under reference to paragraph 9 of the Minute of The Moray Council dated 5 February 2014, there was submitted an urgent report by the Acting Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure), the reason for urgency being as a result of emerging information which had enabled the clarification of funding figures. The report also included recent confirmation from Sustrans that they would provide the funding gap for the Lhanbryde section of the cycleway.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to:-

- (i) note the target cost submitted by the Council's Framework contractor is more than can be offered by the Elgin Flood Alleviation Scheme contractor as detailed within Section 5 (c) of the report; and
- (ii) procure the works through a variation to the Elgin Flood Alleviation Scheme Contract.