

MINUTE
of
EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

Minute of meeting held at 5.00pm in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 24 April 2024.

Present:

Councillor Andrew Anderson	Councillor Chris Lunday*
Councillor Caroline Bamforth	Councillor David Macdonald*
Councillor Tony Buchanan	Councillor Colm Merrick
Deputy Provost Kate Campbell	Provost Mary Montague
Councillor Angela Convery*	Councillor Andrew Morrison*
Councillor Betty Cunningham*	Councillor Owen O'Donnell (Leader)
Councillor Danny Devlin	Councillor Katie Pragnell
Councillor Paul Edlin	Councillor Gordon Wallace*
Councillor Annette Ireland	

Provost Montague in the Chair

Attending:

Steven Quinn, Chief Executive; Mark Ratter, Director of Education; Julie Murray, Chief Officer, Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP); Margaret McCrossan, Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer); Gerry Mahon, Chief Officer (Legal & Procurement); Graeme Smith, Communications Manager; Julie Nicol, Planning and Building Standards Manager; Barry Tudhope, Democratic Services Manager; Linda Hutchison, Senior Democratic Services Officer; and Lesleyann Burns, Assistant Democratic Services Officer.

(*) indicates remote attendance.

Apology:

Councillor Jim McLean.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS – ARTHURLIE JUNIORS

818. Provost Montague congratulated Arthurlie Juniors on reaching the Scottish Junior Cup Final, following their semi-final victory over Johnstone Burgh. Having commented that the team would face Darvel Juniors in the final on 2 June, she highlighted that 26 years had elapsed since the team had last been in the final. She expressed hope that they would bring the Cup back to Barrhead in 2024 and, on behalf of the Council, wished the team every success.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

819. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 28 FEBRUARY 2024

820. The Council considered and approved the Minute of the meeting held on 28 February 2024, subject to the amendment that the Chief Officer, Health and Social Care Partnership be added to the list of officers attending.

MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES

821. The Council considered and approved the Minutes of the meetings of the undernoted:-

- (a) Appointments Committee – 4 March 2024;
- (b) Cabinet – 7 March 2024;
- (c) Licensing Committee – 12 March 2024;
- (d) Planning Applications Committee (Special Meeting) – 14 March 2024;
- (e) Appointments Committee – 26 March 2024;
- (f) Cabinet – 28 March 2024;
- (g) Audit and Scrutiny Committee – 28 March 2024;
- (h) Planning Applications Committee – 3 April 2024;
- (i) Local Review Body – 3 April 2024;
- (j) Licensing Committee – 9 April 2024;
- (k) Appointments Committee – 15 April 2024; and
- (l) Education Committee – 18 April 2024.

AUDIT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 28 MARCH 2024 – INTERIM TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT FOR 2023/24 – QUARTER 4

822. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee of 28 March 2024 (Page 808, Item 796 refers), when it had been agreed to recommend to the Council that organisations for investment of surplus funds be approved, the Council considered a report by the Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer) reporting on Treasury Management activities for the quarter ending 31 March 2024.

The Council, having heard Councillor Morrison comment that the position had changed very little since quarter 3, agreed that the organisations for investment of surplus funds be approved in accordance with Appendix 8 to the report.

CABINET – 7 MARCH 2024 – GENERAL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME

823. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the Cabinet of 7 March 2024 (Page 787, Item 776 refers), when it had been agreed to recommend to the Council that proposed adjustments to the General Fund Capital Programme be approved, the Council considered a report by the Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer) monitoring income and expenditure as at 31 December 2023 against the approved Programme and recommending adjustments to it where possible.

In response to Councillor Ireland, the Director of Education reported that it was unknown if further grant funding for the Inspiring School Age Childcare Spaces Programme would become available in future but, should that be the case, an application for it would be submitted.

Councillor Morrison asked if the cost cited for the Neilston Learning Campus project of £30m was final or if it would be delivered under budget. The Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer) confirmed that the school had been built, but additional work was still required on clearing the site and creating a playground and sports area which was likely to be completed by the end of 2024 on which discussions would take place with the contractor. It remained the case that, if contingency for the project did not require to be used, it could be reallocated instead to the Neilston Leisure project.

Also in response to Councillor Morrison who sought clarification regarding the £2.8m allocated for the Country Park Visitor Centre and Infrastructure project, the Director of Environment clarified that the detailed use of that funding would be considered during the development of the Outline Business Case for the project, and that discussions on the Centre and related infrastructure costs were progressing. She reported that it was intended to submit an update on Glasgow City Deal projects to the Cabinet prior to the summer recess.

The Council:-

- (a) approved and noted the movements within the 2023/24 Programme; and
- (b) noted the shortfall of £0.203m and that this would be managed and reported within the final Accounts for the year.

CABINET – 7 MARCH 2024 – HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME

824. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the Cabinet of 7 March 2024 (Page 788, Item 777 refers), when it had been agreed to recommend to the Council that proposed adjustments to the Housing Capital Programme be approved, the Council considered a report by the Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer) recommending adjustments to the Programme as at 31 December 2023 where required.

In response to Councillor Ireland who sought clarification on the Communal Doors project including if it was being scaled back, the Director of Environment reported on progress, clarified that discussions with residents were ongoing, and explained that there was no indication at this stage that the project would be scaled back.

The Council:-

- (a) approved and noted the movements within the Programme; and
- (b) noted the shortfall of £0.100m and that this would be managed and reported within the final Accounts for the year.

STATEMENTS BY CONVENERS AND REPRESENTATIVES ON JOINT BODIES AND COMMITTEES

825. The following statements were made:-

- (a) **Councillor Anderson – Convener for Education, Culture and Leisure**

Councillor Anderson reported that Matthew Wynne, a football coach with East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure, had captained Scotland which had been crowned world champions at the 2024 International Federation of Cerebral Palsy Football World Championships in Spain. Having expressed great pride in the Team's and his performance and congratulated them on their

achievement, he highlighted that Mr Wynne had also been joint top scorer and awarded the accolade of Most Valuable Player of the tournament.

Councillor Anderson had also welcomed the opportunity to attend the 2024 East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure Dance Championships in March, which included events for primary and secondary schools, including pupils from Isobel Mair School and Family Centre. He highlighted that over 570 dancers had participated in front of an audience of 550 parents and family members, emphasised the high standard of the competition, and congratulated all those involved either as competitors or in supporting the organisational arrangements.

Furthermore, Councillor Anderson indicated that he had attended the opening of Barrhead Foundry's new functional training suite *The Grid*, a work-out area transformed from an under-utilised space into a versatile, modern facility focussing on training sessions for small groups and individual gym sessions. Alliance Leisure had been appointed by the Council to transform the space, working in partnership with the Trust, with funding of almost a quarter of a million pounds having been secured from developer contributions and the facility having been delivered in only four weeks and under budget. It was confirmed that there had been an overwhelmingly positive public response to the facility.

Finally it was reported that a new Equalities Forum was to be launched on 1 May at The Edge, further information on which was available on social media.

(b) Councillor Pragnell – Convener for Social Work and Health

Councillor Pragnell reported that on 27 March the East Renfrewshire Integration Joint Board (IJB) had approved its 2024/25 budget, recognising the pressures from 2023/24 and the difficult and challenging year ahead such as in terms of new costs. Although the report considered had contained no surprises, given the impact on public services and staff, the IJB had reluctantly acknowledged the need for difficult decisions to be made to set a balanced budget. It was confirmed that the IJB had agreed various savings proposals to close the funding gap of £9.8m, £5.9m of which related to the Council's funding contribution. These included a continued focus on care package reviews, service redesign, reductions to grant funding and a second targeted voluntary redundancy scheme for council employed staff. Further options of £2.1m were being developed to allow the gap regarding the NHS budget to be closed.

It was clarified that the Chief Officer, HSCP had reassured the IJB that the management team and operational leads were working hard to deliver savings and close the funding gap, and that despite challenges reviews of care packages under the Supporting People Framework continued to be a priority.

Regarding the 2023/24 budget, the Chief Financial Officer of the IJB had confirmed that the projected overspend was £4.7m after taking into account the use of all reserves and in-year COVID funding from Council. The IJB had recognised and appreciated support provided by its partners during 2023/24.

Councillor Pragnell reported that the IJB had also approved both the Suicide Prevention Strategy and Alcohol and Drugs Strategy (ADS). The former had been developed in consultation with a range of partners and focused on how services and organisations across East Renfrewshire supported wellbeing on a day to day basis. The latter had been developed collaboratively with people with lived experience, a key priority being the development of plans for a

recovery hub. The IJB had recognised the amount of work done on both strategies. There had also been discussion on gambling addiction and its impact on lives, which did not fall within the scope of the ADP but was considered within other HSCP strategies.

The Council noted the statements.

PROVOST'S ENGAGEMENTS

826. The Council considered a report by the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships, providing details of civic engagements attended and civic duties performed by Provost Montague since the meeting on 28 February 2024.

The Council noted the report, subject to the amendment that the Deputy Provost had attended a Citizenship Ceremony.

DRAFT OUTCOME DELIVERY PLAN AND FAIRER EAST REN PLAN FOR 2024-25

827. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 26 April 2023 (Page 486, Item 425 refers), when it had been agreed to approve the Outcome Delivery Plan (ODP) and Fairer East Ren Plan (FERP) 2023-24, the Council considered a report by the Chief Executive requesting consideration of the one-year Draft ODP and FERP 2024-25. These Plans included key planned activities for meeting the Council's outcomes, indicators to measure success and contributions from the HSCP and East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure Trust (ERCLT).

The report clarified that the Community Plan set out the Community Planning Partnership's (CPP's) vision for all East Renfrewshire's communities and incorporated FERP (the Local Outcome Improvement Plan) required under the Community Empowerment Act, which focused on tackling inequalities and closing the gap between communities. Reference was also made to the ODP which was the Council's contribution, in partnership with the HSCP and ERCLT, to the shared outcomes in the Community Plan with the additional organisational outcomes of Customer, Efficiency and People; and Vision for the Future, the over-arching long-term strategic vision and plan for the Council and CPP which was currently being refreshed and on which it was intended to submit a report to the full Council in June. It was clarified that 2024/25 would witness a cementing of the 15-year Vision for the Future and inform associated plans, including the ODP and FERP going forward.

Whilst commenting on the proposed updates to the Plans, the report clarified that the shared outcomes and associated intermediate outcomes across the ODP and FERP remained unchanged; referred to proposed changes to the critical activities required to achieve the outcomes (mainly in the ODP); and itemised changes to indicators in various outcomes, including the People outcome.

Having referred to related performance monitoring arrangements, the report concluded that the Council continued to face ongoing challenges, including unprecedented ones regarding the budget. However, it was considered vital to commit to a long-term strategy with ambitious aims for East Renfrewshire communities and the area, shaped through Vision for the Future. The one-year operational ODP and FERP would ensure that critical work of the Council and the CPP was driven forward.

Councillor Campbell voiced her serious concerns regarding reductions in care packages for older people, referring to the impact and citing an example. She highlighted that care packages were said to be regarded as a priority, and commented that intermediate outcome 5.2 of the ODP referred to older people and people with long term conditions staying as healthy as possible. Councillor Edlin commented in similar terms, referring to a Self-Directed Support (SDS) seminar he had attended. Whilst acknowledging that the situation was not the fault of the HSCP, he stressed the importance of addressing the needs of local residents requiring support. In response, the Chief Officer, HSCP acknowledged the challenges faced when support was reduced, explained why eligibility criteria had to be reviewed, clarified that the same criteria was applied as in neighbouring authorities, provided assurance that experienced care managers were undertaking assessments, and referred to some support secured from the third sector.

Councillor Wallace expressed the opinion that some targets were becoming redundant, such as the one cited by Cllr Campbell. He acknowledged that reassessing needs was delivering savings, but stressed that the root cause of the problem was a lack of Scottish Government funding which was having a consequential and unacceptable impact on local government, such as the Council having to contribute additional funds to support the IJB. In response to these and other comments, Councillor O'Donnell stated that he considered COSLA's approach and response on IJB funding cuts disappointing, adding that he continued to raise concerns regarding the focus placed on the National Care Service Bill but not improved outcomes, and pressing for more to be done. He highlighted how raising public awareness could be helpful in generating further public discussion, expressing the view that COSLA was not sufficiently engaged on the issue.

Having heard Councillor Ireland confirm that appreciation for the work of the SDS Forum had been expressed when it had met and that discussions at the Forum had been beneficial, Councillor Morrison highlighted the soaring demand for care at home and related costs, including for agency staff required to cover sickness absence, some of which was COVID related. He sought clarification if COVID reserve funding, which had been repaid to the Scottish Government at one stage and redirected to the NHS, was providing the indirect benefit to the social work service which it had been argued would be the case. The Chief Officer, HSCP undertook to provide further clarification to him following the meeting on the reallocated funds.

Councillor Pragnell commented that some issues associated with the Supporting People Framework required to be fully resolved, but that every effort was being made to put residents at the centre of what was being done. She highlighted demographics regarding the elderly population locally, reporting that these were unique to East Renfrewshire. She thanked the Chief Officer, HSCP, the Chief Financial Officer of the IJB and all officers concerned for their work, commented on a briefing to be made available to all Elected Members, and confirmed that a valuable dialogue was on-going on support the third sector could provide.

Councillor O'Donnell welcomed the debate on this important issue, stressed the need to identify solutions to problems encountered, and referred to the importance of including a range of officers in discussions who were critical to service delivery. More generally he welcomed various positive developments reported. In response to further issues raised by him, the Director of Education confirmed that a spotlight continued to be placed on children and young people's wellbeing and readiness to learn, this having been the subject of a report to the Education Committee on 1 February 2024 for example. Also in response to him, the Director of Environment confirmed the current position on work that was continuing to develop the Local Transport Strategy.

Councillor Wallace proposed that the Convener for Social Work and Health write to the Scottish Government Cabinet Secretary for NHS Recovery, Health and Social Care regarding the lack of adequate financial provision for HSCP Services, which Councillor Pragnell indicated she was happy to do if that was the Council's decision.

Having highlighted the importance of context, Councillor Macdonald quantified the extent of the real term Capital funding cuts faced by the Scottish Government from 2022/23 to 2024/25.

The Council agreed:-

- (a) to approve the content of the Outcome Delivery Plan 2024-25 and Fairer East Ren Plan 2024-25;
- (b) to note that these were both one-year operational plans while the Council undertook a more focused period of longer-term strategic planning;
- (c) that the Convener for Social Work and Health would write to the Scottish Government Cabinet Secretary for NHS Recovery, Health and Social Care regarding the lack of adequate financial provision for Health and Social Care Partnership Services; and
- (d) to note that the Chief Officer, Health and Social Care Partnership would provide further clarification to Councillor Morrison following the meeting on COVID related funds reallocated to the NHS.

CLYDEPLAN AND REGIONAL SPATIAL PLANNING GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

828. The Council considered a report by the Director of Environment seeking approval to withdraw formally from the Clydeplan Joint Committee, and agreement to transfer responsibility for the development of a Regional Spatial Strategy to the Glasgow City Region Cabinet.

The report referred to the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) approved by the Scottish Government in 2023 which replaced the statutory requirement to produce a Strategic Development Plan with a duty to prepare a non-statutory Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). Since 1996 the 8 Glasgow City Region local authorities had worked together to develop various regional spatial plans, most recently the Clydeplan Strategic Development Plan (SDP) approved by Scottish Ministers in July 2017 which set out a Vision and Spatial Development Strategy until 2036, suggested where new development should be located, and provided a policy framework to help deliver sustainable economic growth through high quality development. It was clarified that the SDP also set the strategy and policy context for individual local authority Local Development Plans (LDPs), and that there was no longer an up-to-date expression of policy since its replacement by an RSS under NPF4.

Having commented on related governance arrangements in place, the report explained that, unlike the current SDP, the RSS would not form part of the SDP which would comprise the National Planning Framework and LDP. Given these changes, the role and remit for which the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Strategic Development Planning Authority Joint Committee was originally established would change significantly requiring the future role of the Committee to be reviewed. The Joint Committee itself had recommended to its members that the functions transfer to the Glasgow City Region (GCR), with its Cabinet overseeing the development of the RSS. In February 2024, the GCR Cabinet had agreed to establish a Regional Planning Sub-Committee to discharge this function, subject to approval by the 8 local authorities on which an update was provided. The recommendations of the report, a copy of which was provided (Appendix 1 refers) also reflected a recommendation of the Clydeplan Joint Committee that member authorities nominate two members to join the new Sub-Committee, which reflected the current Joint Committee numbers.

Having itemised three fundamental principles under the proposed approach to future collaboration, it was clarified that the new Sub-Committee would not have decision-making powers, and explained how the Council would remain accountable and responsible for all

planning decisions within the area. Having confirmed the related financial implications, the report clarified that the proposed arrangements would have no impact on East Renfrewshire Council employees.

The Council agreed:-

- (a) to note the recommendation of the Clydeplan Joint Committee to transfer responsibility for the development of a Regional Spatial Strategy to the Glasgow City Region Cabinet;
- (b) to note Glasgow City Region Cabinet's approval of the establishment of a new Regional Spatial Planning Sub-Committee to oversee the development of a Regional Spatial Strategy and agree to the Council's participation;
- (c) to note that approval of participation in any future Regional Spatial Strategy would remain a decision for East Renfrewshire Council;
- (d) to formally withdraw from the Clydeplan Joint Committee;
- (e) to transfer requisition funding to Glasgow City Council as lead authority for the Glasgow City Region; and
- (f) that Councillors Edlin and Merrick be nominated as the Council's representatives on the new Regional Spatial Planning Sub-Committee.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 3 (DEVELOPMENT PLAN SCHEME)

829. The Council considered a report by the Director of Environment seeking approval to publish and submit the revised Development Plan Scheme to Scottish Ministers under the requirements of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019.

The report clarified that the proposed Development Plan Scheme (DPS) was an important communication and project management tool and formed a statutory part of the process for developing Local Development Plan (LDP) 3. It was required to be prepared and maintained at least annually, its purpose being to set out the Authority's proposals for preparing and reviewing its LDP and what was likely to be involved at each stage. It required to include a Participation Statement explaining when, how and with whom consultation on the Plan would take place, further requirements being that it contain a timetable, specifying proposed timings for publication of the Evidence Report, publication of the Proposed Plan, submission of the Proposed Plan to Scottish Ministers and the expected adoption of the LDP. A copy of the Scheme was attached to the report (Appendix 1 refers). Once approved, the revised DPS would, in accordance with statutory requirements, be published, including electronically on the Council's website, and copies would be submitted to Scottish Ministers.

The report also clarified that a cross party Member Officer Working Group was in the process of being established to keep Members abreast of progress and enable input at key stages of the preparation of the LDP.

The Planning and Building Standards Manager highlighted key aspects of the report, including key dates for producing the LDP. Thereafter, in response to Councillor Ireland, she clarified how people could easily sign up to receive updates and announcements at key stages of the preparation of the Development Plan, confirming that proactive action would also be taken to reach out to interested parties in various ways.

In response to Councillor O'Donnell who commended the work done by officers thus far, the Director of Environment explained that the Corporate Management Team would start to

consider reports on the preparation of LDP3 from May, that when the membership of the Member Officer Working Group was finalised shortly its membership would be confirmed to Councillor Devlin who had requested this, that dates for the Group to meet would be scheduled, and that various reports on progress would be submitted to the full Council over time. Having referred to the development of LDP1 and 2 which had gone well despite related challenges, Councillor Buchanan expressed confidence on the way forward and that any comments residents would have would be managed well and taken forward in an appropriate manner.

The Council agreed to:

- (a) approve the revised Development Plan Scheme for publication and submission to Scottish Ministers;
- (b) delegate to the Director of Environment authority to approve any minor inconsequential changes to the documents, in line with Council policy, prior to submission to Scottish Ministers; and
- (c) note that the Director of Environment would confirm the position on the membership of the Member Officer working Group to Councillor Devlin.

SECOND REVIEW OF SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT BOUNDARIES

830. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 28 June 2023 (Page 581, Item 513 refers), when the Council had agreed the terms of its initial submission to Boundaries Scotland in response to the consultation on the review of Scottish Parliamentary Constituency Boundaries, the Council considered a report by the Chief Executive providing an update on the ongoing review, and summarising issues raised by the Council initially and at a related local enquiry in East Renfrewshire in December 2023. Regarding consultation on the current proposals that would close on 15 May 2024, approval was sought to submit a response to Boundaries Scotland supporting the revised proposals for East Renfrewshire, details of which were provided.

Councillor O'Donnell, supported by other Elected Members, thanked the political Group Leaders and other Elected Members for taking a unified approach to challenge the original proposals, and commended the Chief Officer (Legal & Procurement) and Head of Communities and Transformation for presenting a strong case at the Local Enquiry in December, all of which had contributed to a positive outcome in terms of the current proposals. Councillor Anderson also commended input from Community Councils regarding the issue.

The Council agreed to submit a response to Boundaries Scotland supporting the revised proposals for East Renfrewshire for the reasons set out in paragraphs 14 and 15 of the report.

CROOKFUR, GREENFARM, MEARNS VILLAGE AND WESTACRES COMMUNITY COUNCIL – PROPOSED CHANGE OF NAME

831. The Council considered a report by the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships seeking approval to change the name of Crookfur, Greenfarm, Mearns Village and Westacres Community Council to Mearns West Community Council, as unanimously supported by the Community Council. It was confirmed that the proposal required to be approved by the Council and that the change of name did not affect the efficacy of the Scheme for the Establishment for Community Councils or its related documents.

The Council agreed to approve the decision of Crookfur, Greenfarm Mearns Village and Westacres Community Council to change its name to Mearns West Community Council.

CHIEF OFFICER RECRUITMENT

832. The Council considered a report by the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships seeking approval to convene an Appointments Committee for the Head of Environment Operations post.

It was reported that the Head of Environment Operations had intimated that he would retire by 18 October and proposed that an Appointments Committee be established to progress the related recruitment arrangements. Membership of the Committee had been proposed, together with a timetable for the appointment to the post.

The Council agreed:-

- (a) to note the notice of retirement of the Head of Environment Operations by 18 October 2024;
- (b) that Councillors O'Donnell, Cunningham and Pragnell be appointed to serve on the Appointments Committee to fill the resulting vacancy;
- (c) that the Conservative and Unionist Group and SNP Group would each confirm one nomination to serve on the Appointments Committee;
- (d) to delegate authority to the Head of HR & Corporate Services, in consultation with the Director of Environment, to make the necessary arrangements for this recruitment; and
- (e) to authorise the Director of Environment to put in place appropriate interim management arrangements for the Department if required.

SCHEME FOR MEMBERS' REMUNERATION AND EXPENSES 2024/25

833. The Council considered a report by the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships explaining that the Scheme of Members' Remuneration and Expenses had been updated for 2024/25. A copy of the Scheme was appended to the report.

The report explained that the Scheme provided details of the levels of basic salary payable to all councillors, and the increased salaries paid to the Leader and Civic Head (Provost), these amounts being prescribed in legislation. The Scheme also provided details of Senior Councillor positions identified within the Council for the purpose of the regulations, and the levels of salary to be paid to each post holder. In addition, the Scheme provided details of those other categories in respect of which Elected Members were entitled to claim expenses, such as the performance of approved duties, travelling expenses and subsistence allowances.

The Council agreed to note that the Scheme for Members' Remuneration and Expenses had been updated for 2024/25 in terms of Councillors' pay.