

MINUTE VOLUME

23 October 2024

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MINUTE
of
EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

Minute of meeting held at 5.00pm in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 11 September 2024.

Present:

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

Provost Montague in the Chair

Attending:

Steven Quinn, Chief Executive; Louise Pringle, Director of Business Operations and Partnerships; 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); Andy Corry, Head of Operations (Environment); Jamie Reid, Head of Communities and Transformation; Mark Rogers, Head of Housing and Property; Kirsty Stanners, Head of Finance; Michaela Sullivan, Head of Place; Richard Greenwood, Principal Strategy Officer; Barry Tudhope, Democratic Services Manager; Jennifer Graham, Democratic Services Officer; and Lesleyann Burns, Assistant Democratic Services Officer.

(*) indicates remote attendance.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

931. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 26 JUNE 2024

932. The Council considered Minute of the meeting held on 26 June 2024.

Councillor Morrison advised that the item relating to the General Fund Capital Programme in the minute did not reflect answers provided to questions from Members and proposed, seconded by Councillor Wallace, that the minute be amended to reflect these responses. Provost Montague proposed that the minute contained within the minute volume be approved

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but, as no seconder could be found, the motion fell and the amendment was subsequently approved.

Thereafter, the minute was approved subject to the undernoted comments being added:

General Fund Capital Programme (Page 896, item 893 refers) – In response to questions, the Director of Education advised that, in relation to the Crookfur Primary School Extension project, pupil numbers were constantly being monitored and, referring to pupil numbers in P1 for 2024, and the number of 3 and 4 year olds expected to register at the school in the next few years, it was expected that an extension would no longer be required at this stage but would remain in the capital plan for possible future provision. He advised that, should the project be required in future years, he expected the tender process to be completed quickly, as designs for the extension were already in place, with the project thereafter being completed within 12 months. In response to a further question about the Dams to Darnley Country Park project, the Director of Environment confirmed that the roadworks currently underway at Aurs Road, Barrhead should be completed within the original timescale.

MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES

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

- (a) Appointments Committee – 18 June 2024;
- (b) Appeals Committee – 1 August 2024;
- (c) Licensing Committee – 6 August 2024;
- (d) Local Review Body – 7 August 2024;
- (e) Audit & Scrutiny Committee – 8 August 2024;
- (f) Cabinet – 15 August 2024;
- (g) Education Committee – 22 August 2024;
- (h) Licensing Committee – 3 September 2024;
- (i) Cabinet – 5 September 2024;

STATEMENTS BY CONVENERS AND REPRESENTATIVES ON JOINT BODIES AND COMMITTEES

934. Two statements had been received and summarised as follows:

- (a) Councillor Anderson – Convener for Education and Equalities

Councillor Anderson advised that the Culture and Leisure Trust had welcomed local school pupils, volunteers and community leaders to the opening of Thornliebank Community Garden at Thornliebank Library. School pupils had submitted design ideas for the garden which included fruit trees; seating areas; planters for fruit and veg; and a bug hotel. This project was part of a wider initiative “The Root Cause Project” which arranged events, programmes and activities to raise awareness of sustainability and green issues at a local level.

He reported that the Culture and Leisure Trust had again delivered successful school summer holiday camps at Barrhead and Williamwood High Schools which included age appropriate outdoor/indoor activities for 5-14 year olds and lunches each day. The Trust had also supported an activity programme at Isobel Mair school during the holiday period which included arts and crafts; parachute games; author events; and sports. He advised that the Leisure Trust would build on the success of the summer programme with a term time out of school activity programme at Isobel Mair school provided by the active schools team.

Councillor Anderson concluded by providing an update on his attendance at the recent Community and Leisure Trust Board meeting when the final accounts for the year had been signed off. He advised that progress in all Trust programmes had been extremely positive with attendance at libraries, gyms, swimming pools, and Eastwood Theatre all reporting a rise on previous years. He wished to commend and thank everyone involved for their achievements.

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

Councillor Pragnell reported on the recent meeting of the Integration Joint Board when, amongst other things, members received a presentation on Adult Services; received an updated on financial matters; and were provided with an overview of an Audit Scotland report. The report highlighted local issues and challenges which had previously been discussed at the IJB and it was acknowledged that significant and complex challenges would require all partners to work together collaboratively. An overall projected overspend of £1.241m was expected, although there had been an underspend in social work and social care activities. She advised that a report on changes to community alarm and Bonnyton House charges had been delayed due to the recent Parliamentary General Election and would now be submitted to Cabinet in October. Further updates had also been provided on the Blood and Go Service and on the health and care experience survey results.

PROVOST'S ENGAGEMENTS

935. 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 24 April 2024.

Having heard the Provost thank Councillor Campbell for deputising at some events, the Council noted the report.

FINAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT FOR 2023-24

936. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee of 8 August 2024 (Page 906, Item 907 refers), the Council considered a report by the Head of Accountancy seeking approval for the investment of surplus funds to the organisations listed in Appendix 8 to the report.

The report explained that delays impacting on some major projects during the year meant that the council had borrowed less than planned in 2023/24 to support the capital programme. However, as projects would still require to be delivered at some point in the future, the borrowing would be delayed and would not be noted as a saving.

The Council agreed to: -

- (a) note the Treasury Management Annual Report for 2023/24; and
- (b) approve the list of organisations at Appendix 8 for investment of surplus funds.

STRATEGIC END YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT AND ANNUAL COMMUNITY PLANNING AND FAIRER EAST REN REPORT FOR 2023-24

937. The Council considered a report by the Chief Executive on the performance of the Council and Community Planning Partnership and demonstrating how the Council was meeting its strategic outcomes.

The report summarised the Council's strategic performance at end-year 2023-24 based on performance indicators in the Outcome Delivery Plan (ODP) including the annual update on complaints handling; the 2023-24 annual progress report on the Community Plan, including Fairer East Ren; and included a short video of the annual highlights across the Council and Community Planning Partnership.

The Director of Business Operations and Partnerships advised that some of the comments contained in the report had been amended and the updated information had been circulated to members. The amended comments related to quality of life for carers; and reduced care need following reablement/rehabilitation.

In response to questions from members, the Chief Officer, Health and Social Care Partnership advised that the numbers relating to the percentage of drug users moving from treatment to recovery were extremely small and even small fluctuations could have a significant impact on the percentages noted. She added that a number of factors had influenced these figures including speed of recovery and ill health; the HSCP hoped to develop a recovery hub in the future; and further information on recovery encouragement could be provided in due course. She advised that completion of Community Payback Order surveys were entirely voluntary, and reasons for non-completion included literacy issues. She added that an action plan to tackle this had been developed.

The Director of Education advised that a decrease in Primary 1 pupils meeting targets had been discussed at the Education Committee as part of an early years report submitted in June 2024 and although no firm explanation for this could be provided, this trend would be monitored closely.

The Head of Operations (Environment) advised that recycling rates had fallen recently as a number of initiatives were no longer being funded and savings had been required in some areas. However, he added that East Renfrewshire continued to be one of the top performing councils in this area.

The Council noted:-

- (a) the summary of the Council's strategic performance at end year 2023/24 and associated comments made;
- (b) the Community Plan and Fairer East Ren Annual Progress Report for 2023-24;
- (c) the complaints handling report 2023-24; and
- (d) the annual highlights video.

LOCAL CHILD POVERTY ACTION REPORT: YEAR 6

938. The Council considered a joint report by the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships and Chief Officer HSCP on the annual East Renfrewshire Local Child Poverty Action Report required under the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017.

The report provided a summary of progress made in relation to child poverty focussing on critical indicators; income from employment; income from social security; costs of living; and mitigating the impact of poverty. Approaches to tackling family poverty were provided together with action plans and progress measures for 2024-27 including improved understanding of the circumstances of families in, or at risk, of poverty; improved income from employment for parents; enhanced gains for families from income maximisation and social security; and reduced costs of living.

In response to questions, the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships reported that the council continued to assist residents with energy and debt applications, and a fuel/benefits advisor had been appointed until 2025 to give further information on accessing support. She added that a poverty awareness training course had been developed for front line staff and a presentation had also been given to primary and secondary Head Teachers.

The Head of Housing and Property explained that many different types of emergency accommodation were used by the Council, including hotels and B&Bs, but there were rules around how long this type of accommodation could be used for. He added that the council's own stock was also used as temporary accommodation, with families and vulnerable people being prioritised for this type of accommodation. He clarified that families who presented as homeless on an emergency basis could be accommodated in hotels or B&Bs which were not specifically designated for family use, but their stay there would be minimised.

The Council agreed:-

- (a) to note the Local Child Poverty Action Report as required under the Child Poverty Act 2017 and associated comments made; and
- (b) to approve the report for publication, subject to IJB and NHSGGC Population Health and Wellbeing Committee approval.

A PLACE TO GROW STRATEGIC VISION AND COMMUNITY PLAN

939. The Council considered a report by the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships on the long-term strategic vision and Community Plan for East Renfrewshire "A Place to Grow".

The report explained that "A Place to Grow" the strategic vision and community plan for East Renfrewshire would be the bedrock of all future planning and partnership work and the interdependent pillars would inform the council's strategic intent and direction for the next 15 years. It was highlighted that the vision would only be achieved through a shared commitment across the Community Planning Partnership and unequivocal cross-party support.

The Council agreed:-

- (a) to note the "A Place to Grow" strategic vision;
- (b) to approve the strategic vision as East Renfrewshire's Community Plan, subject to adoption by the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) Board;
- (c) to delegate to the Chief Executive, in consultation with Council elected members on the CPP Board, to implement any minor changes to the strategic vision to secure adoption by the Board;
- (d) to note the key priorities laid out for each pillar and make a cross-party commitment to deliver these;

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- (e) to note the continued development of the CPP leadership and governance structures to oversee the strategic vision;
- (f) that more detailed three-year delivery plans with measures would be brought to Council for the start of the 2025/26 cycle; and
- (g) to note the ongoing planning work involved in organising a community conference.

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2025

940. The Council considered a report by the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships seeking approval of the calendar of Council/committee meetings for 2025.

The Council agreed to:-

- (a) approve the Calendar of Meetings for 2025 as set out in Appendix 1 of the report; and
- (b) note the provisional dates of meeting of the East Renfrewshire Integration Joint Board.

CAPELRIG HOUSE PROGRAMME UPDATE

941. The Council considered a report by the Director of Environment providing an update on works taking place at Capelrig House and outlining options being explored to utilise the building following completion of improvements and renovations.

The report explained that restorative works had been identified through surveying as being essential to protect Capelrig House. Further information on the renovations and improvements which had taken place were provided, which included ensuring the building remained wind and watertight while conserving the original fabric of the building as much as possible. It was reported that Children First had previously expressed an interest in the building as a "Bairn's Hoose" facility, but they were no longer able to progress with this due to budgetary constraints. Discussions were ongoing regarding how to utilise the space in the future and suggestions included provision of flexible learning spaces; introduction of a social enterprise café; provision of flexible meeting spaces; and storage space for voluntary groups.

In response to questions, the Chief Executive confirmed that the Council was under obligation to ensure that the building was adequately maintained and the contract for external work had come in on budget. He advised that no internal work had yet been carried out as further discussion on possible uses would be required prior to any internal fitting costs being estimated. He added that some community groups had asked previously about using the building as a storage facility and this proposal would form part of the discussions around future use in due course. Community use at evenings and weekends would also be considered as part of the ongoing discussions and option appraisals would be submitted to members in due course.

The Council noted:-

- (a) the improvement and renovation work that had taken place at Capelrig House; and
- (b) the ongoing process to determine a future use for Capelrig House.

OUTLINE OF PRESSURES FACING HOMELESSNESS

942. The Council considered a report by the Director of Environment advising on the challenges and issues facing East Renfrewshire Council Homelessness Services and seeking approval to declare a local housing emergency.

The report explained that East Renfrewshire had received a significant increase in homelessness applications since 2019 which had impacted on demand for services and how they were being delivered. The Scottish Housing Regulator had stated that several Councils in Scotland, including East Renfrewshire, were facing systemic failure of their homelessness services mainly due to the use of hotel accommodation. Further information was provided on the local housing market; data relating to the increase in homelessness; and actions being taken to address increased homelessness including doubling the provision of temporary accommodation; increasing the percentage of lets to homeless households; reviewing existing agreements with local Registered Social Landlords; and reviewing internal processes to focus on a prevention approach.

In response to comments Councillor O'Donnell advised that he had written to the First Minister regarding new measures funding and would share this correspondence with all Members. He added that officers were working extremely hard to deliver a credible action plan relating to homelessness but this issue wouldn't be solved quickly and would require continued lobbying from the Council to address cuts in funding which had impacted on projects being delivered.

The Head of Housing and Property advised that this issue would require more than one solution, and a number of possible options could be considered including using modular units, shipping containers, flatted developments, etc. However, these would always be subject to the necessary consents, warrants and ward member conversations. He added that discussions would continue with local housing providers and to expand mid-market rentals.

The Council agreed:-

- (a) to approve the declaration of a local housing emergency and note the actions being taken to mitigate the impact;
- (b) to approve the use of £1m Capital Reserve to support the costs of developing increased supply of temporary accommodation including the purchase of additional housing units and other measures as set out in the report; and
- (c) that a six month update report be presented to Council on levels of homelessness within East Renfrewshire and measures being put in place to address a local housing emergency.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 3 EVIDENCE REPORT

943. The Council considered a report by the Director of Environment seeking approval to submit the Evidence Report for the next Local Development Plan (LDP3) to Scottish Ministers for the process known as "Gate Check".

The report explained that the first stage in preparing LDP3 was a process of evidence gathering to inform production of an Evidence Report. The Strategic Planning team had worked collaboratively with a range of internal and external stakeholders to prepare the Evidence Report and the topic papers had been open for public consultation between 12th April and 10th May 2024. Disputes over the sufficiency of the evidence related to identification and review of Green Belt boundaries; housing requirements and existing housing need; education analysis and projection methodology; scope for development contributions towards healthcare and infrastructure; and site assessment methodology. The new Gate Check

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process would provide an independent assessment of the evidence and disputes prior to preparation of the new LDP for consultation, examination and adoption.

In response to questions the Head of Place advised that the plan was expected to be adopted by 2027 and any review of school catchment areas as a result of housebuilding would take place between now and the adoption date. The Director of Education added that officers were experienced in dealing with this process, as they had done so previously for St. Clare's and Calderwood Lodge Primary Schools, and would ensure that proper notice was given for any review.

Having heard the Provost, on behalf of the Council, thank all officers for the work which had been put in to producing this report, the Council agreed:-

- (a) to note the findings of the Evidence Report;
- (b) that officers submit the Evidence Report to Scottish Ministers for the Gate Check; and
- (c) to delegate the Director of Environment to approve any minor changes to the Evidence Report, in line with Council policy, prior to submission to Scottish Ministers.

PROVOST

MINUTE
of
CABINET
(POLICE & FIRE)

Minute of meeting held at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 12 September 2024.

Present:

Councillor Owen O'Donnell (Leader)	Councillor Katie Pragnell
Councillor Andrew Anderson (Vice Chair)	Councillor Gordon Wallace
Councillor Caroline Bamforth	

Councillor O'Donnell, Leader, in the Chair

Attending:

Steven Quinn, Chief Executive; Louise Pringle, Director of Business Operations and Partnerships; and John Burke, Committee Services Officer.

Also Attending:

Chief Superintendent Lynn Ratcliff; Chief Inspector Graeme Gallie, (Area Commander); Inspector Brian Eaglesham, Police Scotland; Area Commander Kevin Murphy; and Group Commander Alan Coughtrie, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

Apology:

Councillor Danny Devlin

CHAIR'S REMARKS

944. The Leader welcomed Chief Superintendent Lynn Ratcliff and Area Commander Kevin Murphy to their first meetings of the Cabinet (Police and Fire).

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

945. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

POLICE SCOTLAND – PERFORMANCE REPORT - QUARTER 1 - 2024-25

946. The Cabinet considered a report by the Divisional Commander, Police Scotland, providing details of the performance of the police over the first quarter of 2024-25. The

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report also provided statistical information in relation to various categories of crimes and offences committed during the reported period together with comparative statistics for the corresponding period in 2022-23.

Chief Superintendent Ratcliff introduced the report, highlighting the positive performance shown, but indicating that there was no room for complacency. Furthermore, she thanked members of the Council and partners for their support during the disorder that had taken place in some parts of England and Northern Ireland as this had been an area of concern for residents.

Chief Inspector Gallie then reported on the performance of the police against the five local policing priorities contained in the East Renfrewshire Policing Plan 2023-26, summarising the information contained within the report.

Chief Inspector Gallie provided some examples of the work being done in East Renfrewshire by officers of Police Scotland on all of the areas of focus covered, which were highlighted within the report.

In conclusion, Chief Inspector Gallie congratulated Constables Darren McGowan and Alexandra Murphy, and Special Constable Victor Monaghan who had been recognised at the recent Divisional Commander awards.

There followed a question and answer session in the course of which Chief Superintendent Ratcliff and Chief Inspector Gallie responded to a number of questions and provided clarification on a range of operational issues within East Renfrewshire and the crime statistics recorded in the report. In particular, on violence against women, fraud offences, shoplifting, house breaking, drug statistics, knife crime and reporting of hate crimes. They also provided further information on the introduction of body worn video to officers in East Renfrewshire.

The Cabinet noted the report.

SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE (SFRS) PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE FIRST QUARTER OF 2024-25

947. The Cabinet considered a report by the Group Commander, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS), providing details of the performance of SFRS in East Renfrewshire during the first quarter of 2024-25 against the key priorities in their local plan.

Introducing the report, Area Commander Murphy thanked the Leader for his welcome and looked forward to working in partnership with the Council, Police Scotland and other partners going forward.

Group Commander Coughtrie then reported on the performance of SFRS on performance over quarter 3, summarising the information provided in the report. In particular, he highlighted the Strategic Service Review Programme, which had received 6,400 responses across 80 engagement events. A public consultation would follow on the proposed changes to Scottish Fire and Rescue Services based on this feedback.

Thereafter, he presented the statistical information contained within the report.

There followed a question and answer session in the course of which officers Murphy and Coughtrie responded to a number of questions and comments on a range of issues recorded in the report. Mainly, the discussion focused on the success of the Fire Skills course, Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) training, and levels of Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS).

It was also suggested that in future the report should include more of the information relating to home fire safety visits and other proactive work carried out by fire crews in the area.

Thereafter the Cabinet agreed to note the report.

CHAIR

MINUTE
of
SPECIAL LICENSING COMMITTEE

Minute of meeting held at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock, on 17 September 2024.

Present:

Councillor Paul Edlin (Chair)
Provost Mary Montague

Councillor Andrew Morrison

Councillor Edlin in the Chair

Attending:

Gerry Mahon, Chief Officer (Legal and Procurement); Brian Kilpatrick, Civic Government Enforcement Officer; and Victoria Harkness, Democratic Services Officer.

Also Attending:

Mr Savio D'Souza (My Disability Plus), Mr Paul McDonald (Eastwood Mearns Taxis), Mr James Kyle (Scottish Taxi Federation), Mr John Paul Duffy (Scottish Private Hire Association) and Mr Brian Leca (Taxi Operator).

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

948. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE VEHICLE POLICY

949. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 5th December 2023 (Page 693, Item 678 refers), the committee considered a report by the Chief Legal Officer (Legal and Procurement) on the response to the consultation regarding potential changes to the Council's current Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle (WAV) policy and to recommend proposed changes to the policy following such responses.

There was heard verbal submissions from several stakeholders from both the taxi industry and disability rights communities, in which there was a consensus that the proposed changes to the council's current WAV policy could potentially deter new drivers from taking up the role due to the financial effects of the proposed changes, as well as forcing existing drivers into retirement and thus having an overall adverse impact on the availability of taxis for the public at large including disabled persons, whether wheelchair users or otherwise.

Although there was an appreciation for the need for WAVs within the taxiing community it was noted that no exact figures relating to the demand for WAVs within the council area currently

existed that would reasonably allow determination of the need for the proposed changes in policy.

It was highlighted within the discussions that financial incentives such as waiving licence fees may be a way to incentivise new and existing drivers to take up or remain in the industry and enable them to comply with any future policy changes.

The Committee thanked all attendees who contributed to the meeting and agreed to an adjournment to consider all matters discussed.

On reconvening, the Committee, having taken account of all the positions cited, agreed to:-

- (a) approve the definition of WAV as outlined in the report;
- (b) remove the age requirements, subject to annual inspection, for all vehicles meeting the WAV definition, including Hackney cabs;
- (c) recommend that no fee is charged for new and renewal applications for WAVs as defined;
- (d) instruct the Chief Legal Officer to report the committee's recommendation regarding the proposed removal of fees for WAV applications to Cabinet for final decision;
- (e) adopt the amended policy for an initial trial period of 18 months, and to thereafter review its practical effect at that time and in the interim period to commission stakeholders to gather empirical evidence on the demand for and usage of WAVs;
- (f) reject the proposal to amend the current policy in respect to WAVs to require all new applications for taxi or private hire car licences and any subsequent substitutions to relate to vehicles which are wheelchair accessible; and to
- (g) reject the proposal to require that all vehicles identified as replacements in a substitution request and which are capable of carrying more than four passengers to be wheelchair accessible.

MINUTE
of
EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Minute of meeting, held at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on Thursday 26 September 2024.

Present:

Councillor Andrew Anderson (Chair)
Councillor Tony Buchanan
Councillor Kate Campbell
Councillor Owen O'Donnell (Leader)
Councillor Katie Pragnell (Vice Chair)
Councillor Colm Merrick

Councillor Gordon Wallace
Ms Dorothy Graham
Mr Des Morris
Ms Evelyn Yedd

Councillor Anderson in the Chair

Attending:

Mark Ratter, Director of Education; Janice Collins, Head of Education Services (Quality Improvement and Performance); Joe McCaig, Head of Education Services (Provision); Siobhan McColgan, Head of Education Services (Equality and Equity); Graeme Hay, Senior Manager Leading Change (Education); Tracy Morton, Senior Manager (Developing People) and Victoria Harkness, Democratic Services Officer.

Apology:

Councillor Danny Devlin and Ms Fiona Gilchrist.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

950. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

The Chair noted the running order of the meeting had been changed from the originally published agenda, to the following:

EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT ON CROSS ARTHURLIE PRIMARY SCHOOL

951. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Education informing members of the report produced by Education Scotland following its inspection of Cross Arthurlie Primary School. A copy of the inspection report accompanied the report.

The inspection had been carried out in June 2024 and Education Scotland had evaluated two quality indicators and provided a short report which detailed the strengths and areas for improvement.

The Head of Education Services (Quality Improvement and Performance) provided further information in relation to the inspection process, stating that Education Scotland found both aspects of the work to be very good: learning, teaching and assessment; and raising attainment and achievement. The report especially highlighted 2 areas of best practice being demonstrated at Cross Arthurlie Primary and identified them as worth sharing more widely on a national platform; professional learning and enquiry and teaching and learning in French.

It was noted the report identified two areas for improvement; for the school to continue to support children to use feedback to set and evaluate their own targets in learning and continue to develop approaches to monitor the progress of children's learning across all curricular areas. The recommendation being to "continue to" as both areas having already been identified by the school as improvement priorities they are working towards.

The committee heard from Fiona MacDonald, Head Teacher, who thanked the committee for their continued support and explained that she was delighted with the report. She was particularly pleased with the recognition of school's strong commitment to recognising the needs of their pupils and continuously trying to build positive relationships with their children and families. She reflected that the report had been achieved through the hard work and commitment of the entire school community and paid tribute to all of the staff and their dedication and commitment to developing the curriculum.

Members of the Committee expressed their congratulations on an excellent report and gave high praise to the staff in relation to their dedication on creating a great learning experience within Cross Arthurlie Primary.

Having heard members commend the report, the Committee agreed:-

- (a) to note the content of the Education Scotland report on Cross Arthurlie Primary School; and
- (b) to approve the action plan to address the agreed areas for improvement.

EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT ON CAROLSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL

952. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Education informing members of the report produced by Education Scotland following its inspection of Carolside Primary School. A copy of the inspection report accompanied the report.

The inspection had been carried out in May 2024 and Education Scotland had evaluated four quality indicators and provided a short report which detailed the strengths and areas for improvement.

The Head of Education Services (Quality Improvement and Performance) provided further information in relation to the inspection process and conveyed to the committee that the report was considered exceptional. In assessing the indicators of quality in the school, Education Scotland found 1 aspect of the work to be excellent: leadership of change; and 3 areas to be very good: learning, teaching and assessment, ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion and raising attainment and achievement.

It was noted the report identified two areas for improvement; for the school to continue with improvement priorities to build on highly effective practice in learning and teaching and the support of children's wellbeing and continue as planned, develop approaches to tracking and monitoring of children's wider achievements and progress in all curricular areas. The recommendation being to "continue to" as both areas having already been identified by the school as improvement priorities they are working towards.

The committee heard from Bryan McLachlan, Head Teacher, who provided further information on the inspection. Mr McLachlan was pleased that the key strengths of the School and Carolside Communication Support Service (CCSS) had been highlighted during the inspection and had affirmed that together with their highly effective senior leaders, they have been able to create a culture where children, parents, staff and partners feel empowered and motivated and where hearing children's voices was at the heart of their learning experience. He expressed his pride in the children who attend the school and referred to the close partnership working with parents and families, which was an extremely important part of the school's pupil centric approach to learning. He thanked all staff and partners for their enthusiasm and commitment which had led to such a positive report, adding that staff were well placed to continue to take forward the areas for improvement highlighted. He also thanked the Education Leadership Team and the Education Committee for their continued support and encouragement.

Having heard members commend the report, the Committee agreed:-

- (a) to note the content of the Education Scotland report on Carolside Primary School
- (b) to approve the action plan to address the agreed areas for improvement.

PROGRESS REPORT ON PRIORITIES ASSOCIATED WITH NATIONAL IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK

953. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Education providing an update on the Education Department's progress implementing priorities associated with the National Improvement Framework for Scottish Education (NIF).

The Head of Education Services (Quality Improvement and Performance) gave a background to the report and explained that on 6 January 2016, the Scottish Government had launched the NIF to drive both excellence and equity in Scottish education. The framework was reviewed annually with the 2024 NIF and associated Improvement Plan published in December 2023.

The NIF contains 5 national priorities, which mirror the Council's own aspirations as set out in our Local Improvement Plan 2024-2027, West Partnership Improvement Plan and Strategic Equity Plan, these being noted as: placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education; improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing; closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people; improvement in skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people; and improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy. The Head of Education Services (Quality Improvement and Performance) referred to the key strengths highlighted in the report as found in Appendix 1.

Councillor O'Donnell sought clarification on why the percentage of SIMD Q1 pupils in S3 achieving expected levels had increased so dramatically in one year. In reply, the Head of Service (Quality Improvement and Performance) suggested a range of factors could be contributed including the targeted use of Scottish Attainment Challenge monies, both at authority and school level, the Director of Education added as explanation that the increased focus on the broad general education of S1-S3 pupils, along with moderation of work across all schools has also contributed to the increased levels.

In response to Councillor Campbell's question about why there has been an increase in the number of referrals for mental and emotional support across schools, the Head of Education Services (Equality and Equity) explained that there has been an emphasis in schools on developing and rolling out a range of supports and resources that allow children the opportunity to discuss and reach out for support; giving them the confidence and self-awareness to seek help if in need, thus increasing the number of overall referrals.

Thereafter, the committee noted the Education Department's progress in implementing priorities associated with the National Improvement Framework.

IMPROVING OUTCOMES THROUGH SCOTTISH ATTAINMENT CHALLENGE FUNDING: STRATEGIC EQUITY PLAN 2024-2025

954. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Education on the updated Strategic Equity Funding (SEF) Plan Action Plan 2024–2025 and associated stretch aims.

The Head of Education Services (Quality Improvement and Performance) highlighted that stretch aims were developed having taken account of 5 key principles: ambition for all – any stretch aims should improve outcomes for all learners and close relevant equity gaps; alignment - the agreed stretch aims should enable strategic council (Outcome Delivery Plan and Fairer East Renfrewshire Plan), departmental (Local Improvement Plan) and school improvement plans to reflect the ambitious and achievable aim to improve outcomes for all learners, whilst closing the poverty related attainment gap; reliability – measures should be based on reliable and robust data, including national benchmarking data, which supports improvement; relevance – stretch aims need to reflect the East Renfrewshire context and take account of the Education Department's self-evaluation evidence; and subsidiarity - it is important that the East Renfrewshire Stretch Aims are relevant and support improvement at all levels of the system, from the classroom to national level.

In reply to Councillor Anderson's query asking if the stretch aims that had been set are realistic and achievable, the Head of Education Services (Quality Improvement and Performance) acknowledged that last year the committee had agreed that the stretch aims should be ambitious as opposed to setting targets that could be cautiously achieved and that individual schools and establishments had played a significant role in formulating the targets and as such were putting in place the support in each cohort for their young people to achieve those targets. It was noted that the East Renfrewshire stretch aims are a statement of intent agreed

upon for schools and the department to raise the bar for everyone, allowing every child to make progress at an accelerated rate thus closing the attainment gap.

The committee agreed to:-

- a) the committee approved the updated action plan and associated stretch aims; and
- b) request the Director of Education to bring regular reports to Education Committee on the progress and impact of its implementation.

WEST PARTNERSHIP 1140 HOURS OF EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE RESEARCH

955. The Committee was asked to consider a report by the Director of Education detailing the progress made with the West Partnership 1140 hours of Early Learning and Childcare Research.

The Head of Education Services (Quality Improvement and Performance) gave some background to the report stating since August 2021, all 3-4 year olds and some eligible 2 year olds in Scotland have been entitled to 1140 hours of funded Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) per year. The Scottish Government highlighted the primary objectives of this policy were to improve children's outcomes and reduce the attainment gap; increase parents' opportunities to return to work, training, or further study; and support and promote family wellbeing. Detailing the methodology behind the report where 97 settings from both the private, public and voluntary sector across 8 local authorities, contributed to the evaluation, culminating in the recommendations summarised in Appendix 1 of the report.

Councillor Wallace queried the benefits of encouraging the removal of 3 and 4 year olds from a home setting and putting them essentially into a full time early years setting and asked if there was research being carried out on the effects of this. The Head of Education Services (Quality Improvement and Performance) communicated the benefits to parents financially of the introduction of 1140 hours, as many already had their children in a nursery or child care setting for more than the hours they were getting funding for. It was also confirmed there is currently a national study taking place on the introduction of the 1140 hour model and its overall effects.

Councillor Campbell highlighted the issue of child care staff feeling under greater pressure since the introduction of 1140 hour across Scotland and asked what support had been put in place for them. The Head of Education Services (Quality Improvement and Performance) replied advising a comprehensive professional learning offer is afforded to staff and that we continue to work closely with the West Partnerships and our own educational psychology team to make sure we are supporting staff to support children, with our next steps being to take forward the report recommendations to create an action plan that should address the issues found in relation to staff support. The Head of Education Services (Equality and Equity) contributed that there is support provided by the Early Years Outreach Team, having

recognised the increased numbers of children with additional support needs presenting in our nurseries and family centres and funded providers.

The committee noted the report.

WEST PARTNERSHIP IMPROVEMENT COLLABORATIVE: EVALUATION REPORT 2023-24

956. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Education informing it of the evaluation of work undertaken by the West Partnership (Glasgow Region Education Improvement Collaborative) in 2023 - 2024.

The attached report in Appendix 1 provided details on the progress over the last academic year towards achieving each of the associated target outcomes and expected impacts, as detailed in the West Partnership Improvement Plan for 2023-2024.

The Director of Education provided further information highlighting that the report, which provided an overview of the West Partnership saw a significant growth in engagement with practitioners experienced in the 2023-2024 session, with 92% of the region's schools across primary, secondary, and special sectors engaged with the activities. Included in the report is an overview of the strengthened evaluation model including the three drivers of improvement. The report showcases progress in enhancing collaboration, improving knowledge and confidence and changing practice. Three main illustrations which demonstrate impact in these three improvement areas have been included along with an overview of the work that has been completed in each workstream. The Director of Education was pleased to note the West Partnership continues to compare favourably against national figures across most measures despite the significant increase in engagements and the West Partnerships demographic.

Members commented on the positive outcomes of the collaborative work of the West Partnerships and its significance in relation to the positive impact it is having on our teachers and learning staff.

The Committee noted the West Partnership Improvement Plan for 2023-24.

WEST PARTNERSHIP IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2024-25

957. The committee considered a report by the Director of Education on the contents of the West Partnership's Improvement Plan 2023-2024.

It was reported that Regional Improvement Collaboratives (RICs) were established in 2017 as a national initiative to bring about improvement for all schools in Scotland. They are intended to bring together local authorities and Education Scotland, facilitating collaborative working and providing educational support to practitioners. The Partnership is required to produce an annual improvement plan which outlines the vision, purpose and key activities of the collaborative for the year ahead. Education Committee should note that the plan captures those areas where collaboration between the partners will be beneficial. Not all schools or local authorities will participate in all activities, but the plan sets out the partnership's offer to schools, based on what stakeholders have indicated they would benefit from.

The Director of Education highlighted key areas within the report, referring to the consultation to date and the evidence gathered which saw a clear consensus that the existing programs and activities are broadly meeting the needs of staff and leaders across the West Partnership

and as a result the three work streams will continue to be: Wellbeing For Learning; Leadership Empowerment And Improvement; And Curriculum, Learning, Teaching And Assessment.

Councillor Wallace highlighted evidence in the report that primary and secondary attendance rates had fallen consistently since 2018-2019 and asked what was being done to rectify this. The Director of Education responded by noting that this is a national trend being experienced across Scotland and a considerable number of head teachers and schools had signed up to collaborative research on the matter to enable them to develop their own projects and their own interventions. Attendance rate recovery remains a critical area for the authority and it is recognised as a multifaceted issue.

The committee approved the report.

CHAIR

MINUTE
of
AUDIT & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minute of meeting held at 2.00pm in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 26 September 2024.

Present:

Councillor Andrew Morrison (Chair)
Councillor Tony Buchanan
Councillor Paul Edlin
Councillor Annette Ireland *

Councillor David Macdonald *
Provost Mary Montague *
Councillor Gordon Wallace

Councillor Morrison in the Chair

(*) indicates remote attendance

Attending:

Steven Quinn, Chief Executive; Margaret McCrossan, Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer); Louise Pringle, Director of Business Operations and Partnerships *; Lesley Bairden, Head of Finance and Resources, HSPC; Sharon Dick, Head of HR and Corporate Services; Barbara Clark, Chief Accountant; Kath McCormack, HR Manager; Michelle Blair, Chief Auditor; Anthony Jenkins, Resilience Coordinator; Linda Hutchison, Clerk to the Committee; and Lesleyann Burns, Assistant Democratic Services Officer.

Also Attending:

Rob Jones and Grace Scanlin, Ernst and Young.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

958. Referring to the forthcoming retirement of the Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer), Councillor Morrison thanked her for her contribution to the Committee's work over many years, including the support she had provided to him in his role as Chair.

In advance of the Committee's consideration of the Annual Accounts, Councillor Morrison also thanked all those involved in their preparation, including the Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer), the Chief Accountant and her team, and the Council's External Auditors.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

959. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

CHAIR'S REPORT – EXTERNAL AUDIT ISSUES

960. Under reference to the Minute of the Meeting of 8 August 2024 (Page 905, Item 905 refers), when it had been noted that the Chair was scheduled to have a further routine meeting with Mr Jones of the External Audit team on 20 August, Councillor Morrison reported that issues discussed had included general local government sector updates, governance issues, and progress on the audit of the Accounts and related issues.

The Committee noted the report.

2023/24 ANNUAL ACCOUNTS FOR THE COUNCIL'S CHARITABLE TRUSTS

961. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 20 June 2024 (Page 884, Item 879 refers), when the Committee had noted the unaudited Annual Accounts for 2023/24 and that a report on the final Accounts for the Council's charitable trusts and related documents would be submitted to a future meeting, the Committee considered a report by the Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer) regarding the amalgamated 2023/24 Annual Accounts for the six charitable trusts for which the Council acted as Trustee, and submitting a copy for consideration. A copy of a related Independent Examiner's Report was included.

The Chief Accountant clarified that, in February 2024, Audit Scotland had published updated guidance on the audit requirements for charity accounts, in accordance with which the Council had appointed an external trustee, removing the requirement to obtain a costly full International Standard on Auditing (ISA) compliant audit. Instead, the Accounts had been independently examined by South Ayrshire Council's Internal Audit Team, with no material concerns having been identified.

In response to Councillor Ireland, the Chief Accountant confirmed that information was available on the Council's website regarding the Netherlee School 1937 Endowment Trust and that its Trustees, including the school Head Teacher, determined to whom funds were awarded. In reply to Councillor Edlin, she explained that the possibility of the Provost's Community Defibrillator Fund becoming a charitable trust could be explored.

The Committee agreed to:-

- (a) note that it would be explored if the Provost's Community Defibrillator Fund could become a Charitable Trust;
- (b) note the amalgamated 2023/24 Annual Accounts for the six charitable trusts for which the Council acted as Trustee, including the Independent Examiner's Report; and
- (c) remit the report to the Council for consideration.

2023/24 ANNUAL ACCOUNTS AND DRAFT ANNUAL AUDIT REPORT FOR EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

962. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 20 June 2024 (Page 884, Item 879 refers), when the Committee had noted the unaudited Annual Accounts for 2023/24 and that a report on the final Accounts and related documents would be submitted to a future meeting, the Committee considered a report by the Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer) regarding the Annual Accounts for 2023/24; the associated draft Annual Audit Report prepared by the External Auditor which provided an overview of the main issues arising from the 2023/24 audit and would be issued in final form after the financial statements had been certified; and the associated Letter of Representation from the Council to the External Auditor.

The Council had received an audit certificate which was unqualified. It had operated within its operational budget, returning departmental surpluses totalling £6.844m due mainly to various one-off variances, including improved income of £2.5m; a £2.7m recovery from HMRC relating to a successful VAT appeal and various underspends. These had been partly offset by various items, including increased homelessness pressures.

Transfers totalling £6.2m had been made to various specific reserves, with £0.644m retained in the non-earmarked reserve resulting in a closing balance of £7.302m. This equated to 2.3% of the overall net budgeted revenue expenditure which was in accordance with the Council's reserves policy to hold a minimum level of around 2%, the upper target being 4%.

The Council's overall General Fund reserve balances at 31 March 2024 totalled £41.766m, this being a decrease of £10.348m from the previous year, the reasons for which were summarised. In total £34.5m of General Fund reserve balances were earmarked for specific purposes.

Capital expenditure of £46.485m had been invested, and there had been an operating deficit of £146k on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), thus decreasing the accumulated surplus balance to carry forward on that Account to £1.652m.

Finally the report commented on the draft Annual Audit Report which made reference to International Standard of Auditing (ISA) 260 matters to those charged with governance, and the Letter of Representation, copies of both of which were appended to the report.

Mr Jones highlighted key messages in the draft Annual Audit Report, during which he explained why the overall materiality figure for external audit procedures had increased to £7.7m, and referred to the financial statements audit and detailed audit approach adopted. Whilst commenting on various significant and fraud audit risks, he referred to those associated with income recognition and material misstatement by manipulation which all auditors required to assume existed, and various aspects of audit work undertaken on the valuation of property, plant and equipment. He confirmed that two material misstatements in relation to the valuation of these had been identified, and referred to associated recommendations made which had been accepted by management. Mr Jones also referred to risks and audit requirements associated with Strathclyde Pension Fund, confirming that there had been no material findings on which to report and commenting on the ceiling placed on the amount of pension surplus that could be included in the Council's balance sheet, known as the asset ceiling.

Whilst commenting on the assessment of the wider scope audit responsibilities referred to in the draft Annual Audit Report, such as on financial responsibility and financial management, Mr Jones highlighted ongoing challenges regarding financial sustainability and medium term financial planning faced by the Council, including in terms of forecasting. Key messages regarding Best Value were referred to briefly, given that the findings of a Best Value thematic review were to be discussed later in the meeting.

Finally, having referred to the recommendations itemised in the draft Annual Audit Report and highlighted that various issues were summarised in related appendices, Mr Jones thanked those involved in the audit for their support, including the Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer) and the Chief Accountant and her team.

In response to Councillor Morrison, Mr Jones provided further clarification regarding Recommendation 4 on the need for management to be sufficiently prepared for the expiry of the infrastructure asset statutory override, during which he outlined challenges associated with ensuring that adequate accounting records for the measurement of such assets were maintained and commented on associated issues. In response to Councillor Wallace, he clarified that audit work undertaken on the level of borrowing incurred by the Council included considering the Council's overall financial position and that the local authority was complying

with requirements and progressing issues in line with its objectives. He also referred to the requirement for it to demonstrate that a prudent approach was being taken, in respect of which the Committee received regular treasury management reports.

In response to Councillor Ireland, the Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer) itemised issues that had resulted in the budget surplus in 2023/24 of £6.844m, including a higher than anticipated level of interest earned on cash balances, and a lower level of uptake than anticipated of brown bin permits in relation to which future forecasts were being adjusted. She also commented briefly on the current budgetary position for 2024/25.

In reply to Councillor Morrison, she reported that further information on how the availability of Whitelee Wind Farm related grants were promoted to the community could be requested from the Director of Environment.

Having heard Councillor Wallace query why the accounts reflected that funds in excess of £1m for employee wellbeing and development were not being used, the Chief Executive clarified that this was a timing issue, with the position having now changed. He confirmed that a range of work was being progressed to help recruit, retain and train employees, including to prepare them for future promoted posts, and ensure the Council was an employer of choice.

The Committee agreed:-

- (a) that feedback be sought from the Director of Environment and circulated to members of the Committee on how the availability of Whitelee Wind Farm related grants was promoted to the community;
- (b) to note the draft Annual Audit Report to the Council and Controller of Audit 2023/24;
- (c) to note the content of the Council's Annual Accounts for 2023/24 and related comments made; and
- (d) remit the report to the Council for consideration.

INTERIM TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT 2024/25 – QUARTER 1

963. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 8 August 2024 (Page 906, Item 907 refers), when it had been agreed to note the Treasury Management Annual Report for 2023/24 and recommend to the Council that the organisations specified in the report for investment of surplus funds be approved, the Committee considered a report by the Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer) on treasury management activities for the first three months of 2024/25.

The report explained that, in line with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management, the Committee was responsible for ensuring effective inspection of the Council's treasury management activities. In accordance with that requirement, the interim Treasury Management Report for April to June 2024 was attached to the report for consideration.

Whilst highlighting key aspects of the report, the Chief Accountant confirmed that long term borrowing remained static, with no such borrowing having been taken due to the high levels of rates currently offered. The Council continued to adopt a prudent approach to treasury management and, in particular, the percentage of loans held as at 30 June 2024 that had variable interest rates was 7.38% which was well below the Council's approved upper limit of 15%.

Having commented on short term investments which had increased due to cash flows in both capital and revenue, she highlighted the prudential indicators referred to in the report which helped confirm that capital investment plans and treasury management decisions remained affordable, prudent and sustainable, highlighting that indicators 3 and 4 demonstrated that the Council was operating well within its limits.

Finally, the Chief Accountant commented on amendments to the Council's list of counterparties, confirming it had not changed from the one in the 2023/24 year-end report. It was clarified that all investments were restricted to UK bodies with high credit ratings, with the maximum period of investment, in general, restricted to 6 months.

The Committee agreed:-

- (a) to **recommend to the Council** that the organisations for investment of surplus funds be approved in accordance with Appendix 8 to the report; and
- (b) otherwise, to note the report and related comments made.

IMPACT OF HYBRID WORKING

964. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 23 November 2023 (Page 683, Item 670 refers), when it had been agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting on the advantages and disadvantages of working from home, drawing on local experience and the findings of research on this issue at a more national level, the Committee considered a report by the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships on these issues.

Having commented on the option the Council had given some employees to work from home on an agile basis for many years and guidance introduced through the pandemic on The Way We Work, the report referred to the new Hybrid Working Policy implemented in May 2023 which aimed to allow employees to work in different ways and locations. Depending on the needs of the service, the Policy typically allowed hybrid employees to work from home for up to 40%-60% of the time where the needs of the service could still be met, with employees attending the workplace a minimum of two days per week.

The report commented on the volume of employees across various workstyles, the advantages and disadvantages of hybrid working, related local and national research, and hybrid working in practice within the Council.

It was concluded that, overall, hybrid working could provide numerous advantages for both the Council and its employees, and that it was important to offer this for suitable roles to attract and retain people and be regarded as an employer of choice. Having referred to associated policy and guidance in place, the report highlighted that the volume of hybrid workers within the Council was relatively small compared to other sectors due to the community based focus of many local government roles, with the majority of employees having a fixed workstyle.

The HR Manager highlighted a range of issues regarding hybrid working within the Council, including that it was not new having been offered to some employees for approximately 30 years. Other issues commented on included that the majority of employees worked in fixed locations, changing employee expectations, that employees did not have a right to work from home, the need for managers to manage this working style effectively, and the ongoing monitoring of the impact of hybrid working.

In response to Councillor Wallace, the HR Manager clarified that ongoing monitoring was done through feedback from both managers and employees. The Head of HR and Corporate Services clarified that overall feedback had been positive, and commented that benefits for the Council included the opportunity to recruit from a wider pool of applicants and increased

levels of applications for some posts. Further in response to Councillor Wallace who sought feedback on how potential bullying could be addressed which could be less visible than in a work-based environment, she referred to the importance of organisations addressing this when it occurred, and various policies and initiatives in place within the Council to help counter bullying and provide avenues through which employees could raise such concerns if required.

In reply to further issues raised by Councillor Wallace on the measurement of productivity, the Chief Executive referred to the emphasis placed on performance rather than how people worked, a range of mechanisms in place to gauge performance, how offering different working arrangements helped to attract job applicants in a competitive recruitment environment, and the importance of hybrid working meeting the needs of the Council rather than those of individuals. He confirmed that, where necessary, he expected employees to be at their place of work full time rather than working from home, emphasising that it was only where it was an option for a service to offer hybrid working that this could be offered.

Councillor Ireland enquired if contracts of employment had been changed in the light of the adoption of hybrid working practices and about savings accrued from this way of working. The HR Manager confirmed that no changes to contracts had been made or were planned. By way of example regarding savings, the Chief Executive confirmed that it would not be possible to realise a significant saving in future from the relocation of those working in Spiersbridge in the absence of hybrid working arrangements. The Head of HR and Corporate Services confirmed that savings would continue to be made as the occupation of buildings was consolidated, following which the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships reported that travelling expenses savings had been cited in a recent report to the Cabinet on digital developments.

The Committee agreed to note the report.

ANNUAL SICKNESS ABSENCE REPORT 2023/24

965. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 18 January 2024 (Page 726, Item 706 refers), when the position on absence management during 2022/23 had been discussed, the Committee considered a report by the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships providing an update on the Council's annual sickness and performance indicator (PI) data for 2023/24.

The report explained that, Council wide, sickness days per full time equivalent (FTE) employee had reduced from 11.15 days in 2022/23 to 10.96 days in 2023/24, due to lower local government employee (LGE) absence and a minimal increase in teacher absence. Local Government Benchmark Framework (LGBF) data placed East Renfrewshire 3rd best for teaching staff and 13th best for LGEs, performance on both having improved. A range of related data was provided, including on trends over time, the top reasons for absence and days lost by age and years of continuous service. Having commented on sickness absence related research, the report referred to the development of a new Sickness Absence Policy, related training to be provided, the continued focus placed on addressing sickness absence issues, and both occupational health and employee assistance referrals.

It was concluded that sickness absence levels remained high, but that the introduction of the revised Policy aimed to address some of the complexities of current absence processes. Access to detailed absence data was also allowing more targeted reviews of workforce issues.

Whilst commenting on the report, the HR Manager highlighted statistics referred to within it and the top 5 reasons for sickness absence, anticipating that the revised and simplified Policy would be welcomed. She also referred to the importance of wellbeing related initiatives to support staff to remain at work.

In reply to Councillor Morrison who welcomed the additional data and contextual information now provided in the report as requested by the Committee, the HR Manager confirmed what the data on both long and short term absence in Figures 4 and 7 of the report demonstrated, acknowledged challenges managers faced associated with long-term absence, and referred to training made available to support them.

Councillor Edlin queried if it was reasonable to expect absence rates in the public sector to match those of the private sector, and asked if consideration had been given to incentivising employees to get flu vaccines by paying for them for those who were not entitled to receive one.

The Chief Executive commented on the need to exercise caution and make fair comparisons of absence rates in the public and private sectors, taking account of the nature of posts, whilst acknowledging the importance of reducing absence. He anticipated that implementation of the new Policy would be helpful, as would the delivery of the associated training on its implementation. He emphasised that a large proportion of the workforce were rarely absent.

The HR Manager confirmed that vaccines had been offered at times in the past, and referred to work undertaken with the Health and Care Partnership to determine the costs and benefits of such initiatives. She stressed that employees could not be compelled to take up an offer of funded vaccines, reporting that take up of the flu vaccine when offered had been low, and that the evidence supporting the promotion of such an approach was not compelling at present.

Councillor Macdonald considered there to be a direct relationship between reduced absence levels and increased hybrid working, which he attributed to the fact that some employees may not consider themselves fit enough to come to the office when they were ill, but still able to work from home. He expressed the view that this helped demonstrate the value of hybrid working.

Councillor Ireland commended the improved absence levels reported and efforts invested into achieving this when rates were increasing in the private sector. In response to her, the Head of HR and Corporate Services confirmed that the Health and Wellbeing Officer was still in post. In response to Councillor Wallace, she confirmed that the standard way in which absence statistics were measured in local government was as presented in the report.

The Committee agreed to note the report and related comments made.

REVIEW OF STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER (SRR) AND PRESENTATION ON USE OF THE SRR

966. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 28 March 2024 (Page 808, Item 797 refers), when the position on the Strategic Risk Register (SRR) and related issues had been noted, the Committee considered a report by the Chief Executive regarding the most recent biannual update of the register.

The report referred to the Council's approach to risk management and its review by the Corporate Management Team (CMT), confirming that the SRR appended to the report itemised key strategic risks considered and actions identified to manage these. There were now 13 risks on the SRR compared to 15 previously, 8 of which were recognised as high risk. A summary of the changes made was provided.

Having summarised the process adopted to review the SRR, the report made reference to risk management training being arranged for Council officers, both for the CMT and others, learning from which would be used to shape improved content within the Register reflecting best practice while meeting the Council's needs. It would also aid the updating of the Council's Risk Management Framework and Risk Management Strategy, both of which would be

updated in 2025. It was reported that the Council's insurance provider would also be providing critical friend support regarding all of the Council's risk management documentation.

Having highlighted key aspects of the report, including changes made to the SRR, that it would be updated to reflect that the Council had declared a Housing Emergency and the reference within it to the training organised, the Resilience Coordinator delivered a short presentation on the use of the SRR as requested by the Committee in March. Amongst other things, he explained further how risks were reflective of a combined score of likelihood and impact, and how they were presented in terms of description, controls, scoring, proposed controls and updated scoring. Having commented on the related change log maintained and the removal of risks from the SRR, he referred to the range of related documentation that existed in terms of departmental, service and project risk registers; the Risk Management Strategy; and the Risk Management Framework. Other issues commented on further included the review of issues by the CMT and the training referred to previously.

In response to Councillor Morrison, the Resilience Coordinator confirmed there were no consequences arising from reference to the Housing Emergency declared by the Council having been omitted from the version of the SRR under discussion, clarifying that this was attributable to a timing issue and that reference to it would be added.

In reply to Councillor Wallace who asked about the use of the SRR in practice by the CMT, the Chief Executive referred to its use to inform decision-making at present, the need for this to be developed further, and the difference between issues that were already identified and being addressed and the identification of potential risks in terms of horizon scanning which the Council needed to be ready to address, should they materialise, through mitigation measures and the allocation of appropriate resources. He also commented on the value of the risk related training provided by the Council's insurers at the Council's request, which was to be rolled out and related benefits.

The Committee agreed:-

- (a) that feedback be provided to appropriate senior officers on comments made at the meeting on the Strategic Risk Register for consideration; and
- (d) otherwise, to note the development of the Strategic Risk Register; that it was considered to be a live document; and that it would be updated and amended by the Corporate Management Team.

LOCAL EXTERNAL AUDIT REPORT – BEST VALUE THEMATIC REPORT ON WORKFORCE INNOVATION

967. The Committee considered a Best Value Thematic Report by the Local External Auditor on Workforce Innovation. The report explained that, under the Code of Audit Practice June 2021, External Auditors had been tasked with performing an annual programme of work in relation to Best Value and wider scope responsibilities, including reviews based on annual thematic Best Value topics prescribed by the Accounts Commission.

For 2023/24, the Commission had directed auditors to report on Workforce Innovation. Key conclusions were provided against 6 questions posed by the Commission. These questions included how effectively the Council's workforce plans integrated with its strategic plans and priorities; how effectively digital technology had been used to support workforce productivity and improve service quality and outcomes; what innovative practices the Council was using to develop its future workforce capacity and skills needs and manage staff reductions in line with its priorities; and what progress had been made by the Council in sharing roles or functions across its services and/or with other councils and partners.

Four recommendations had been made, and accepted, on the Council considering how best to broaden awareness of key workforce planning issues amongst Elected Members; the 2025/26 budget process needing to address the funding of the digital transformation programme to continue to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of services; and the Council taking steps to improve participation rates in Quality Conversations and the response rate to the employee survey.

Whilst commenting on the report, Ms Scanlin highlighted that, as the Accounts Commission set the questions for the topic under review, a consistent approach was taken across local authorities in identifying good practice, clarifying that a single overview report would also be prepared to complement those prepared for each authority. She explained that the report reflected challenges facing the Council, including on recruitment, and referred to a number of the recommendations made. She thanked all those involved in providing support during the review, particularly the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships and Head of HR and Corporate Services and their teams, including the Digital Transformation Team. She also welcomed Trade Union engagement during the review.

Councillor Morrison commented that Exhibit 3 of the report provided a good example of how digital transformation was delivering a practical solution by providing insight into absence management issues.

Regarding progress made on the sharing of roles or functions with partners, Councillor Ireland welcomed the Regional Local Government Skills Working Group's work with the University of the West of Scotland to launch a 2 year conversion course and undergraduate course for planning skills. In response to a question from her on any plans to improve collaboration with other local authorities, the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships confirmed that there was nothing concrete to report on at present, but referred to work the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) was doing with the Improvement Service on six work streams to improve collaboration, such as to maximise digital capacity.

The Committee agreed to note the report and the related recommendations and Action Plan.

NATIONAL EXTERNAL AUDIT REPORT - INTEGRATION JOINT BOARDS' FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE 2024

968. The Committee considered a report by the Clerk on the publication in July 2024 of a report by Audit Scotland entitled Integration Joint Boards' Finance and Performance 2024. Under the Committee's specialisation arrangements, Councillor Edlin was leading the review of the report. Comments on the report prepared by the Head of Finance and Resources, HSPC, as considered and noted by the East Renfrewshire Integration Joint Board (IJB) on 14 August, were attached to the report, with the Board having also noted that the report would be considered by the Audit and Scrutiny Committee.

The feedback provided an overview of and highlighted the key messages within the Audit Scotland report concerning the finances and performance of IJBs. Having highlighted that unprecedented pressures and financial uncertainties were faced by community health and social care services, with there being rising unmet need, the report clarified that the basis for the report was financial data from the 2022/23 financial year, looking forward to 2023/24. Given the Board's financial recovery position in 2023/24, the Board benchmarked in a worse position, albeit a number of IJBs nationwide were engaged in recovery discussions.

The report outlined seven key messages within the national report, summarising the associated local position. It also presented five recommendations, on which initial thoughts were provided in terms of the local position. While these recommendations were not new for the IJB, setting a balanced budget was reported to be increasingly challenging.

The report concluded that, although the report primarily focused on IJBs, it was considered crucial that all bodies collaborated to address the significant and complex challenges facing primary and community health and social care, with IJBs alone being unable to resolve the sector's crisis. It was clarified that the next version of the national External Audit annual report would be produced jointly with the Auditor General for Scotland, adopt a whole system approach, and make recommendations to the Scottish Government, local councils, NHS boards, and IJBs as appropriate.

Councillor Morrison referred to the comments in the Audit Scotland report on a lack of significant evidence of a shift in the balance of care from hospitals to the community, asking how this could be achieved. The Head of Finance and Resources, HSCP referred to challenges now faced, including increased demand for beds and care in the community, confirmed that a long-term aspiration was in place regarding the shift, and cited examples of where this had been achieved locally thus far. She added that the change required the redesign of services, giving examples of clinics, such as for some maternity services, which had been established recently in the community. Also in response to him, she commented on the National Care Service (NCS) proposals, highlighting that services had been integrated locally for a long time prior to there being a legal requirement to do so, that there were significant workforce changes associated with the proposals, and that the current proposals differed from those set out initially. The Head of Finance and Resources added that a NCS would bring governance changes, expressed hope that nothing would detract from how services were delivered for the community, and commented that it was hard to identify what difference a NCS would make in the absence of sufficient funds being made available.

Councillor Edlin commended what was being achieved locally, but stressed the need for services to be funded to address rising demand and that the challenges faced were significant. He reported that the IJB's views on the NCS proposals had been made known.

The Committee agreed to note the report and related comments made.

INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24

969. The Committee considered a report by the Chief Auditor regarding the annual report on the activities of internal audit during 2023/24, and providing an independent annual opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's governance, risk management and internal controls based on work undertaken in 2023/24.

Whilst commenting on the report and implementation of the 2023/24 Internal Audit Plan, the Chief Auditor explained that 2023/24 had again been a challenging year for various reasons, with some audits having been deleted from the original Plan and priority given to audits which gave most assurance that internal controls continued to operate satisfactorily. She quantified the initial and final number of audit days available to implement the Plan, explaining that 18 reports had been issued relating to it, satisfactory responses to all of which had been received.

Having referred to updates provided quarterly to the Committee and various Internal Audit reports circulated in full to the Committee's membership, the Chief Auditor confirmed that where recommendations had not been accepted by management, the responses by management had been deemed satisfactory and information on them had been included in the progress reports submitted to the Committee. It was reported that 13 of 100 days budgeted for contingency had been used on two pieces of work that had been concluded.

Regarding the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS), she referred to the external assessment completed which had been the subject of a report to the Committee in January 2024, the resulting Quality Assurance Improvement Plan a copy of which was appended to the report, and clarified that 2 of the 6 actions agreed remained to be implemented on which

work would be progressed during the forthcoming months. She also commented on the 3 performance targets which had not been met, for reasons specified in the report.

Regarding the annual statement on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's governance, risk management and internal controls, it was confirmed that based on the information available and work carried out, the Chief Auditor's opinion was that reasonable assurance could be placed upon the adequacy and effectiveness of these controls in the year to 31 March 2024.

In response to Councillor Wallace, the Chief Auditor confirmed that senior management were receptive to the work of Internal Audit and implementation of recommendations made, with no problems regarding this having been encountered. She also confirmed that the section was now fully staffed.

The Committee agreed:-

- (a) to approve the statement on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's governance, risk management and internal control systems and submit it to the Council; and
- (b) otherwise, to note the Internal Audit Annual Report 2023/24 and associated comments made.

REVIEW OF INTERNAL AUDIT CHARTER

970. The Committee considered a report by the Chief Auditor seeking approval of the revised Internal Audit Charter which had been last reviewed in 2019. The report explained that there was a requirement to review the Charter periodically to ensure it remained fit for purpose, clarifying that the Quality Assurance Improvement Plan arising from the review of the Internal Audit Section's compliance with PSIAS had included a recommendation suggesting that the Charter be updated to include a Mission Statement and provide a definition of the nature of assurance services provided to the Council and external parties. A copy of the proposed Charter, addressing these issues, was appended to the report.

The Committee, having heard the Chief Auditor highlight key aspects of the report, agreed to approve the revised Internal Audit Charter.

CHAIR

MINUTE
of
EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

Minute of meeting held at 4.30pm in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 26 September 2024.

Present:

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

Provost Montague in the Chair

Attending:

Steven Quinn, Chief Executive; Caitriona McAuley, Director of Environment; Louise Pringle, Director of Business Operations and Partnerships*; Julie Murray, Chief Officer, Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP); Margaret McCrossan, Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer); Gerry Mahon, Chief Officer (Legal & Procurement); Andy Corry, Head of Environment (Operations); Graeme Smith, Communications Manager; Barbara Clark, Chief Accountant; Barry Tudhope, Democratic Services Manager; Linda Hutchison, Senior Democratic Services Officer; and Lesleyann Burns, Assistant Democratic Services Officer.

(*) indicates remote attendance.

Also Attending:

Rob Jones, Ernst and Young.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

971. Referring to the forthcoming retirement of the Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer) and Head of Environment (Operations), Provost Montague confirmed that there would be an opportunity for Elected Members to make remarks to them regarding their service following the meeting.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

972. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

ANNUAL STATEMENT ON ADEQUACY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, RISK MANAGEMENT AND INTERNAL CONTROL SYSTEMS

973. The Council considered a report by the Audit and Scrutiny Committee, providing an annual statement on the adequacy and effectiveness of the governance, risk management and internal control systems operating within the Council during 2023/24.

Councillor Morrison, Chair of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee, referred to the requirement for the Committee to review the control environment and make an annual statement to the Council on its evaluation of internal controls. To assist with that, the Chief Auditor required to provide the Committee with an annual statement on the adequacy and effectiveness of the governance, risk management and internal control systems operating within the Council, the statement for the year ending 31 March 2024 having been considered by the Committee immediately prior to the Council meeting as an Appendix to the Internal Audit Annual Report 2023/24. It concluded that it was the opinion of the Chief Auditor that reasonable assurance could be placed upon the adequacy and effectiveness of these controls for the year ending 31 March 2024.

The Council agreed to note the annual statement on the adequacy and effectiveness of the governance, risk management and internal control systems operating within the Council during 2023/24.

2023/24 ANNUAL ACCOUNTS FOR THE COUNCIL'S CHARITABLE TRUSTS

974. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee held earlier that day (Page 950, Item 961 refers), the Council considered a report by the Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer) regarding the amalgamated 2023/24 Annual Accounts for the six charitable trusts for which the Council acted as Trustee, and submitting a copy for consideration. A copy of a related Independent Examiner's Report was included.

Councillor Morrison, Chair of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee, commented on the Annual Accounts which had been awarded a clean Independent Examiner's Report. He clarified that following a change in Regulations, the charitable trusts' Annual Accounts had been subjected to an independent check by an Internal Auditor in another Council under a reciprocal agreement, rather than a full audit requiring to be carried out by the Council's External Auditor. This had allowed the Council to avoid annual External Audit fees of around £9,000.

In reply to Councillor Pragnell, the Chief Accountant confirmed that, to help raise awareness of the Trusts, information on them was available on the Council's website. Councillor Ireland commented that she had checked but been unable to find information on the Netherlee School 1937 Endowment Trust on the website.

Further in response to Councillor Pragnell, the Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer) confirmed that arrangements had already been made, in light of her forthcoming retirement, to appoint the Head of Finance as a Trustee to replace her.

Councillor Edlin reported that it had been noted by the Audit and Scrutiny Committee that it would be explored if the Provost's Community Defibrillator Fund could become a Charitable Trust, to allow it to take advantage of tax provisions relating to charities.

The Council:-

- (a) agreed that it be checked if information on the Netherlee School 1937 Endowment Trust remained accessible on the Council's website; and

- (b) otherwise, approved the Annual Accounts.

2023/24 ANNUAL ACCOUNTS AND DRAFT ANNUAL AUDIT REPORT FOR EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

975. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee held earlier that day (Page 950, Item 962 refers), the Committee considered a report by the Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer) regarding the Annual Accounts for 2023/24; the associated draft Annual Audit Report prepared by the External Auditor which provided an overview of the main issues arising from the 2023/24 audit and would be issued in final form after the financial statements had been certified; and the associated Letter of Representation from the Council to the External Auditor.

The Council had received an audit certificate which was unqualified. It had operated within its operational budget, returning departmental surpluses totalling £6.844m due mainly to various one-off variances, including improved income of £2.5m; a £2.7m recovery from HMRC relating to a successful VAT appeal and various underspends. These had been partly offset by various items, including increased homelessness pressures.

Transfers totalling £6.2m had been made to various specific reserves, with £0.644m retained in the non-earmarked reserve resulting in a closing balance of £7.302m. This equated to 2.3% of the overall net budgeted revenue expenditure which was in accordance with the Council's reserves policy to hold a minimum level of around 2%, the upper target being 4%.

The Council's overall General Fund reserve balances at 31 March 2024 totalled £41.766m, this being a decrease of £10.348m from the previous year, the reasons for which were summarised. In total £34.5m of General Fund reserve balances were earmarked for specific purposes.

Capital expenditure of £46.485m had been invested, and there had been an operating deficit of £146k on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), thus decreasing the accumulated surplus balance to carry forward on that Account to £1.652m.

Finally the report commented on the draft Annual Audit Report which made reference to International Standard of Auditing (ISA) 260 matters to those charged with governance, and the Letter of Representation, copies of both of which were appended to the report.

Councillor Morrison highlighted that an unqualified audit certificate had again been awarded, and was delighted to report that the External Auditors and Council officers had again managed to complete the Annual Accounts exercise in line with the required deadline of 30 September. He emphasised that this was an extremely demanding annual exercise, thanking all those involved in the Accountancy and Valuation Teams, as well as the External Auditors, for this tremendous achievement.

He commented that the Accounts showed that the Council operated within budget, benefitting in particular from increased investment income and a large one-off historic VAT refund, and closely controlled budgets to produce additional flexibility in addressing anticipated budget challenges in 2024/25 and beyond. He also summarised the position regarding reserves and related issues.

Councillor Morrison stated that the Auditors' report was largely positive but, as always, various audit findings had been listed as referred to in Appendix E of the Annual Audit Report which also included an Action Plan completed by Council officers to address all of the points raised.

Councillor O'Donnell, supported by the Provost, echoed the comments made by Councillor Morrison, thanking the Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer), the Chief Accountant

964

and all those involved for completing the Accounts on time, especially given the complexities involved.

The Council agreed to:-

- (a) approved the Council's Annual Accounts for 2023/24, including the Management Commentary, Annual Governance Statement, Accounting Policies and Audit Certificate, for signature on behalf of the Council;
- (b) noted the draft 2023/24 Annual Audit Report, including the related Action Plan, the finalised copy of which would be circulated to Elected Members; and
- (c) approved for signature the Letter of Representation to be sent from the Council to Ernst & Young.

CHANGE TO SCHEME OF ADMINISTRATION – LICENSING COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

976. The Council considered a report by the Chief Officer (Legal & Procurement), explaining that a member of the Licensing Committee had resigned due to a conflict of interest, and proposing that a new Elected Member be appointed as a replacement. The report also recommended that the Council's Scheme of Administration be changed to provide for an increased membership of the Committee from 5 to 7 Elected Members. This was to ensure that business it required to transact was not disrupted due to the unexpected absence or unavailability of Members.

It was clarified that training on relevant licensing matters would be provided to all those newly appointed to the Committee to ensure they had the relevant knowledge required prior to sitting on it. It was also confirmed that members of the Committee were, by implication, members of the Licensing Board, and that newly appointed members of the Board were expected to undertake duties in that capacity having passed an examination administered by Alcohol Focus Scotland.

The Council:-

- (a) agreed to amend Paragraph 2 of the Scheme of Administration to change the membership of the Licensing Committee from "5 Elected Members" to "7 Elected Members"; and
- (b) approved the appointment of Councillors Campbell, Merrick and Lundy as further members of the Committee.

PROVOST

MINUTE
of
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Minute of meeting held at 2.00pm in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 2nd October 2024.

Present:

Councillor Jim McLean (Chair)
Councillor Paul Edlin
Councillor Chris Lunday

Provost Mary Montague
Councillor Andrew Morrison

Councillor McLean in the Chair

Attending:

Derek Scott, Principal Planner (Development Management); Margaret McGleish, Planner; John Burke, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies:

Councillors Betty Cunningham and Annette Ireland.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

977. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

APPLICATIONS FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

978. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Environment on an application for planning permission requiring consideration by the Committee.

It was agreed that the applications be determined as indicated at Appendix 1 accompanying this Minute, particular reference being made to the following:-

- (i) 2024/0118/TP – Single storey front, side and rear extension, including boundary wall and elevated decking at 34 Strathview Park, Netherlee, East Renfrewshire.

The Principal Planner was heard further on the report, in the course of which he summarised the 14 representations that had been received.

He provided further information on the relevant planning policies and assessments and stated that the proposal was considered to comply with the terms of the development plan, including NPF4 and LDP2.

There was discussion among members around the possibility of arranging a site visit to assist in the consideration of this item. Thereafter, Councillor Morrison, seconded by Councillor Ediln, moved that a site visit be conducted.

The Committee agreed to defer consideration of this item to allow a site visit to take place.

- (ii) 2024/0295/TP – Demolition of existing commercial buildings and erection of dwellinghouse. Erection of boundary wall with fence above and gate to front at J H Barclay & Co, 53 Burnfield Road, Giffnock, East Renfrewshire.

The Principal Planner was heard further on the report, in the course of which he summarised the 12 representations that had been received.

He provided further information on the relevant planning policies and assessments and stated that the proposal was considered to be contrary to the terms of National Planning Framework 4 and the adopted East Renfrewshire Local Development Plan 2 for the reasons set out in the report..

In discussion, members were broadly supportive of the Planning Department's assessment of the application.

Thereafter, the Committee agreed to refuse planning permission for the reasons set out in the report of handling.

CHAIR

APPENDIX

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997
AS AMENDED BY THE PLANNING ETC (SCOTLAND) ACT 2006
PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997**

Draft index of applications under the above acts to be considered by Planning Applications Committee
on 2nd October 2024.

Reference No: 2024/0118/TP**Ward:** 4**Applicant:**

Mr Mark Young
34 Strathview Park
Netherlee
Glasgow
Scotland
G44 3EN

Agent:

Barry Coogan
10 William Ure Place
Bishopbriggs
Glasgow
Scotland
G64 3BH

Site: 34 Strathview Park, Netherlee, East Renfrewshire, G44 3EN**Description:** Single storey front, side and rear extension, including boundary wall and elevated decking.Please click [here](#) for further information on this application

Reference No: 2024/0295/TP**Ward:** 3**Applicant:**

Mr Joshua Ekundayo
53 Burnfield Road
Giffnock
Scotland
G46 7PY

Agent:

Cameron McCue
60 Tradeston Street
Glasgow
Scotland
G5 8BH

Site: J H Barclay & Co, 53 Burnfield Road, Giffnock, East Renfrewshire, G46 7PY**Description:** Demolition of existing commercial buildings and erection of dwelling house, erection of boundary wall with fence above and gate to front.Please click [here](#) for further information on this application

MINUTE
of
LOCAL REVIEW BODY

Minute of meeting held at 2.30pm in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 2 October 2024.

Present:

Councillor Jim McLean
Councillor Paul Edlin
Councillor Chris Lunday

Provost Mary Montague
Councillor Andrew Morrison

Councillor McLean in the Chair

Attending:

Mark Brand, Planning Adviser; Nicola McEleny, Solicitor; and John Burke, Committee Services Officer.

Apologies:

Councillors Betty Cunningham and Annette Ireland.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

979. Provost Montague declared an interest in Item 4 of the meeting as the applicants were known to her.

The Chair advised that site visits had been held prior to the meeting.

NOTICE OF REVIEW – REVIEW 2024/07 – DOMESTIC DOUBLE STOREY REAR EXTENSION AT 6 PAIDMYRE CRESCENT, NEWTON MEARNES, G77 5AG (REF NO:- 2024/0053/TP).

980. The Local Review Body considered a report by the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships relative to a 'Notice of Review' submitted by Mr Asif Sharif against the decision taken by officers to refuse planning permission in respect of a domestic double storey rear extension at 6 Paidmyre Crescent, Newton Mearns, G77 5AG.

The decision had been made in accordance with the Council's Scheme of Delegation made in terms of Section 43A of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended.

The Local Review Body, having considered the information previously circulated, agreed that it had sufficient information to determine the review without further procedure.

970

The Planning Adviser outlined the planning application and reasons for refusal as determined by the Appointed Officer in the decision notice and the grounds for review.

The Planning Adviser further outlined a proposed additional condition to be attached to any consent in the event the Local Review Body overturned the decision of the Appointed Officer and granted planning permission.

Discussion took place, particularly around the proposed size of the extension and its effect on the massing of the existing building.

Following the discussion, and having heard from the Planning Adviser, the Local Review Body agreed that the Appointed Officer's decision be upheld and planning permission refused.

Provost Montague, having declared an interest in the following item of business, left the meeting during its consideration.

NOTICE OF REVIEW – REVIEW 2024/08 – DOWNSTAIRS EXTENSION TO ENABLE SINGLE LEVEL LIVING WITH ACCESS TO A RAMP AND FITTING OUT OF A WET FLOOR SHOWER TRAY ADAPTATION. (REF NO:- 2024/0131/TP).

981. The Local Review Body considered a report by the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships relative to a 'Notice of Review' submitted by Mr Khalid Masood against the decision taken by officers to refuse planning permission in respect of a downstairs extension to enable single level living with access to a ramp and fitting out of a wet floor shower tray adaptation.

The decision had been made in accordance with the Council's Scheme of Delegation made in terms of Section 43A of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended.

The Local Review Body, having considered the information previously circulated, together with the medical reports provided by the applicant, agreed that it had sufficient information to determine the review without further procedure.

The Planning Adviser outlined the planning application and reasons for refusal as determined by the Appointed Officer in the decision notice and the grounds for review.

The Planning Adviser further outlined proposed additional conditions to be attached to any consent in the event the Local Review Body overturned the decision of the Appointed Officer and granted planning permission.

Discussion took place, particularly around the risk of subsidence and the condition of the ground.

Following the discussion, and having heard from the Planning Adviser, the Local Review Body agreed that the Appointed Officer's decision be overturned and planning permission be granted, subject to standard conditions and the following additional conditions:

- 1. The development hereby approved must be begun not later than the expiration of 3 years, beginning with the date on which the permission is granted or, as the case may be, deemed to be granted.*

Reason: To comply with the provisions of Section 58 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended.

2. *Before development commences, a report on the ground conditions within the development site should be submitted to the planning authority for approval.*

Reason: To ensure the ground is not at risk from subsidence and, if risk is identified, what measures will be taken to prevent subsidence of any future building.

Provost Montague returned to the meeting following the completion of this item's consideration.

NOTICE OF REVIEW – REVIEW 2024/09 – PROPOSED TWO STOREY REAR EXTENSION AND ASSOCIATED INTERNAL ALTERATIONS TO EXISTING DWELLINGHOUSE AT TREESIDE COTTAGE, AYR ROAD, NEWTON MEARN, G77 6RT. (REF NO:- 2023/0077/TP).

982. The Local Review Body considered a report by the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships relative to a 'Notice of Review' submitted by Mr Robin Ghosh against the decision taken by officers to refuse planning permission in respect of a proposed two storey rear extension and associated internal alterations to existing dwellinghouse at Treeside Cottage, Ayr Road, Newton Mearns, G77 6RT.

The decision had been made in accordance with the Council's Scheme of Delegation made in terms of Section 43A of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended.

The Local Review Body, having considered the information previously circulated, agreed that it had sufficient information to determine the review without further procedure.

The Planning Adviser outlined the planning application and reasons for refusal as determined by the Appointed Officer in the decision notice and the grounds for review.

The Planning Adviser further outlined a proposed additional condition to be attached to any consent in the event the Local Review Body overturned the decision of the Appointed Officer and granted planning permission.

Discussion took place, particularly around concerns about the effect on the visual amenity of the existing building and the visibility of it from the rear.

Councillor Morrison, seconded by Councillor Edlin, moved that the decision of the Appointed Officer be overturned and planning permission be granted subject to the conditions outlined by the Planning Adviser.

Councillor McLean, seconded by Provost Montague, moved as an amendment that the Appointed Officer's decision be upheld and planning permission refused.

On a vote being taken by a show of hands, 2 members voted for Councillor Morrison's motion while 3 members voted for Councillor McLean's amendment.

Therefore, the Local Review Body agreed that the Appointed Officer's decision be upheld and planning permission refused.

Councillor McLean, having not participated in the consideration of the following item at a previous meeting, left the meeting prior to its consideration.

972

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

In the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair it was agreed that Councillor Edlin would chair the meeting.

Councillor Edlin in the Chair

NOTICE OF REVIEW – REVIEW 2024/05 – REPLACEMENT OF REAR SINGLE STOREY EXTENSION WITH COMBINED FLAT AND PITCHED ROOF AND EXTENDED REAR DORMER AT 68 MONTGOMERY STREET, EAGLESHAM, G76 0AU (REF NO:- 2024/0059/TP).

983. The Local Review Body considered a report by the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships relative to a 'Notice of Review' submitted by Mr and Mrs B and P Scholarios Brown against the decision taken by officers to refuse planning permission in respect of the replacement of a rear single storey extension with a combined flat and pitched roof and extended rear dormer at 68 Montgomery Street, Eaglesham, G76 0AU.

The decision had been made in accordance with the Council's Scheme of Delegation made in terms of Section 43A of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended.

The Local Review Body, having considered the information previously circulated, agreed that it had sufficient information to determine the review without further procedure.

The Planning Adviser outlined the planning application and reasons for refusal as determined by the Appointed Officer in the decision notice and the grounds for review.

The Planning Adviser further outlined a proposed additional condition to be attached to any consent in the event the Local Review Body overturned the decision of the Appointed Officer and granted planning permission.

Discussion took place, particularly around the decision taken by the Scottish Government Reporter in terms of listed building consent.

Following the discussion, and having heard from the Planning Adviser, the Local Review Body agreed that the Appointed Officer's decision be upheld and planning permission refused.

CHAIR

MINUTE
of
CABINET

Minute of meeting held at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 3 October 2024.

Present:

Councillor Owen O'Donnell (Leader) Councillor Katie Pragnell
Councillor Andrew Anderson (Vice Chair)

Councillor O'Donnell, Leader, in the Chair

Attending:

Steven Quinn, Chief Executive; Caitriona McAuley, Director of Environment; Julie Murray, Chief Officer – Health and Social Care Partnership; Louise Pringle, Director of Business Operations and Partnerships; Mark Ratter, Director of Education; Kirsty Stanners, Head of Finance; Barry Ashcroft, Head of ICT and Resilience; Michaela Sullivan, Head of Place; Debbie Hill, Chief Procurement Officer; Suzanne Conlin, Senior Housing Manager; Paul Parsons, Principal Accountant, and John Burke, Democratic Services Officer.

Apology:

Councillor Danny Devlin

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

984. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

GENERAL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME

985. The Cabinet considered a report by the Head of Finance to monitor both income and expenditure as at 30 June 2024 against the approved General Fund Capital Programme and recommending adjustments where possible.

The report updated project costs and phasings based on current progress and anticipated progress to 31 March 2025.

The Principal Accountant outlined that the current position was a budget shortfall of £0.215m, which was within manageable limits.

The main income and expenditure movements to June 2024 were detailed in the report. In particular, the proposed use of Developer Contributions to fully fund the estimated £0.526m increase in the total budget for the Maidenhill Primary School Extension.

Following a brief discussion, the Cabinet agreed to recommend that Council:-

- (a) note and approve the movements within the 2024/25 programme;
- (b) approve the use of Developer Contributions to fully fund the estimated £0.526m increase in the total budget for the Maidenhill Primary School Extension; and
- (c) note the shortfall of £0.215m and that income and expenditure on the programme would be managed and reported on a regular basis.

HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME

986. The Cabinet considered a report by the Head of Finance to monitor both income and expenditure as at 30 June 2024 against the approved Housing Capital Programme and recommending adjustments where required.

The report updated project costs and phasings based on current progress and anticipated progress to 31 March 2025.

The Principal Accountant outlined that the current position was a budget shortfall of £0.101m, which was within manageable limits.

The main income and expenditure movements to June 2024 were detailed in the report.

Following a discussion, the Cabinet recommended that Council:-

- (a) note and approve the movements within the programme;and
- (b) note the shortfall of £0.101m and that income and expenditure on the programme would be managed and reported on a regular basis.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE PARTNERSHIP – CHARGING FOR SERVICES IN 2024/2025 AND BEYOND

987. The Cabinet considered a report by the Chief Officer – Health and Social Care Partnership on the progress of moving to implementation of charging for non-residential services in 2025/26 and to request an increase to existing charges for Community Alarms and Bonnyton House.

The legislation supporting the integration of health and social care within the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) determined that the authority and approval for setting charges for social care remained with the Council and not delegated to the Integration Joint Board (IJB).

HSCP had set up an Income Generation Short Life Working Group to explore the implementation of wider charging for non-residential care as well as a review of existing charges. The recommendations of the Working Group had been endorsed by IJB on 14 August 2024 and those recommendations had formed the basis of the report.

HSCP budget savings for 2024/25 had included £0.2 million for additional income, with further savings required in future years. This would require charging for non-residential care to be in place by April 2025 to meet those targets. The report proposed that the charges be put in place from 1 January 2025 to meet that deadline.

The full detail of the proposals was outlined in the report, as well as the increased income that was expected to result from their introduction.

Following discussion, the Cabinet:

- (a) noted the update on charging within the HSCP;
- (b) agreed the proposed increase to existing charges for Community Alarms to £4.90 per week and Bonnyton House to £960 per week, effective from 1 January 2025; and
- (c) noted that the Annual Report in November/December would provide the detail on new charges as well as the usual approach to annual inflation.

ANNUAL PROCUREMENT REPORT 2023/2024 AND PROCUREMENT STRATEGY 2023-2026

988. The Cabinet considered a report by the Chief Procurement Officer on the Annual Procurement Report 2023/2024 and an update on the implementation of the Procurement Strategy 2023-2026.

The Annual Procurement Report (APR) was required under Section 18 (2)(a) of the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 where it was stated that councils must publish a summary of their regulated procurements completed during the year covered by the report. The APR provided an opportunity for the Council to demonstrate to stakeholders that procurement spend was being used to achieve not only best value, but also supporting the Council's vision of being modern and ambitious to create a fairer future with all.

The Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 also required the Council to develop a Procurement Strategy and review it annually to demonstrate how procurement played a fundamental role in delivery of the Council's strategic objectives. It was a key enabling strand for continuous improvement and identifying efficiencies across the Council.

Copies of both documents were attached as appendices to the report and the key points within both were summarised by the Chief Procurement Officer.

Following a discussion, the Cabinet:-

- (a) approved the Annual Procurement Report 2023/24 and noted the update on the Procurement Strategy, as detailed in Appendices 1 and 2 to the report; and
- (b) noted that the Chief Procurement Officer would advise members in terms of the contract for maintenance of CCTV in Maidenhill and the historical difference between indicative costs and actual costs of such maintenance.

INVESTMENT FUND – ICT INFRASTRUCTURE REVIEW

989. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships on the proposed utilisation of the Investment for the Future reserve to undertake essential works from a review of ICT infrastructure.

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The new Head of ICT and Resilience had taken up post in January 2024. Following on from two ICT outages in early January, a full review of the Council's ICT infrastructure and mobile device management environments had been commissioned.

The objectives and conclusions of that review were detailed in the report and the financial cost or upgrading, maintaining or replacing the identified issues was itemised. The total costs arising from the conclusions of Phase 1 of the review were £515,000, with further resources required for Phase 2 works and any unplanned implementation issues. For example, it was anticipated that replacing the network cabling in Council Headquarters would have a cost in the region of £200,000. It was anticipated that spend would be spread between the 2024/25 and 2025/26 financial years.

There followed a discussion where Cabinet members expressed their support for the works as there were clearly issues that required to be addressed with ICT infrastructure.

Thereafter, the Cabinet agreed funding of up to £850,000 from the Investment for the Future reserve for essential works over the next 12-24 months as a result of the recent ICT Infrastructure Review.

BUSINESS OPERATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS END YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT 2023/2024

990. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships summarising the performance of the Business Operations and Partnerships Department in 2023/24.

The report detailed the functions carried out by the Business Operations and Partnerships Department and provided further detail on some of the operational highlights from the year. The full performance report was attached as an Appendix to the report.

Members recognised the excellent work being done in the department, particularly the many functions of the department that were conducted out of the public view.

Thereafter, the Cabinet noted the content of the report as a summary of the Business Operations and Partnerships Department's performance throughout 2023/24.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE END YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT 2023/2024

991. The Cabinet considered a report by the Chief Executive summarising the performance of the Chief Executive's Office for 2022/23.

The report detailed the functions carried out by the Chief Executive's Office and provided further detail on some of the operational highlights from the year. The full performance report was attached as an Appendix to the report.

Members recognised the excellent work of the Chief Executive's Office and, as in the previous item, highlighted those roles which were often carried out in the background and outside of the public eye, but were vital to the functioning of the Council.

Thereafter, the Cabinet:-

- (a) scrutinised the performance and achievements of the Chief Executive's Office; and

- (b) noted the contents of the report and appendix as a summary of the Chief Executive's Office end of year performance for 2023/24..

EAST RENFREWSHIRE CULTURE AND LEISURE TRUST END YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT 2023/2024

992. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Education informing the Cabinet of the end year performance of East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure (ERCL) for 2023/22.

The report detailed the functions carried out by ERCL and provided further detail on some of the operational highlights from the year. The full performance report was attached as an Appendix to the report.

Members expressed their thanks for the excellent performance, and requested some information relating to membership retention in ERCL facilities.

Thereafter, the Cabinet:-

- (a) scrutinised the summary of East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure end year performance for 2023/24; and
- (b) noted that the Director of Education would come back to members with detail on membership retention in ERCL facilities.

ENVIRONMENT END YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT 2023/2024

993. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment summarising the 2023/24 performance of the Environment Department.

The report detailed the functions carried out by the Environment Department and provided further detail on some of the operational highlights from the year. The full performance report was attached as an Appendix to the report.

Members recognised the excellent work being done within the Department, in very difficult times for local authorities, highlighting the key role the Environment Department played in providing some of the most front-line services to residents. They recognised some issues around staff absences, which were largely due to the physical nature of many of the roles carried out in the department.

Thereafter, the Cabinet noted the content of the Environment Department's end of year performance report for 2023/24.

LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY

994. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment on the proposed publication of the Council's Local Housing Strategy (LHS) covering the period 2024-2029, and the implementation of the LHS in conjunction with key partners and local stakeholders.

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 required local authorities to prepare a LHS covering a period every 5 years, setting out the strategic direction for housing and related services for the local area. The document should reflect priorities for development and investment in housing and

housing related services in the local area, taking into account all housing tenures. Though the Council was not responsible for all housing in its area, it was the “strategic housing authority” with a strategic and enabling role in ensuring that improvements sought and delivered helped to support sustaining and improving the quality of life for its residents. The report set out the specific evidence base and priorities identified within that context.

The East Renfrewshire LHS had been developed at a time of unprecedented housing pressure both locally and nationally, culminating in the declaration of a housing emergency by several councils, including East Renfrewshire Council, and the Scottish Parliament.

The LHS 2024-2029 was attached as Appendix 1 to the report and the report summarised the vision and strategic priorities laid out in the document. It also set out the key targets set by the Scottish Government in its “*Housing to 2040*” document, to which a link was provided in the report.

Appendix 2 provided a visual storyboard, providing a comprehensive overview of the issues identified and the outcomes that the LHS would seek to deliver.

In discussion, a concern was highlighted around communication difficulties around residents being discharged from hospitals to a home setting with particular needs. It was recognised that there could be difficulties in meeting specific needs of individuals, but the Council would always seek to meet all needs of its residents and find appropriate solutions.

Thereafter, the Cabinet

- (a) noted the vision and strategic housing priorities identified for the Local Housing Strategy 2024-2029;
- (b) noted that the draft Local Housing Strategy was subject to a formal “peer review” process led by Scottish Government and feedback provided in March 2024 had been taken into account in subsequent revisions; and
- (c) approved the Local Housing Strategy 2024-2029 and its publication.

PLACE BASED INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

995. The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment on the changes to the Place Based Investment Programme (PBIP) award from the Scottish Government for 2024/25 and the Council’s application for approval of continued funding for two existing projects. The report also provided an update on other Scottish and UK Government regeneration and infrastructure funding.

The Scottish Government had announced the PBIP in February 2021, indicating that it would be introduced over the 5 year period of the parliament. This would aim to ensure all place-based investments were shaped by the needs and aspirations of local communities and accelerate the delivery of improved connectivity, town centre action, community led regeneration and community wealth building.

The full breakdown of funding was detailed in the report. East Renfrewshire Council had initially been allocated £635,000 of capital grant funding for the financial year 2021/22. For subsequent years, this had been set at £551,100 in 2022/23 and £385,000 in the following 3 years, representing a total funding programme of £2.34m for the Council over 5 years.

The report went on to explain that the Scottish Government had advised on 11 July 2024 that there was uncertainty around PBIP funding and that allocations for 2024/25 would not be at the full level. No funding would be released to support new projects and an element of funding up to a maximum of 50% would be released to support existing projects. Local Authorities had been asked to complete a template to identify their priority regeneration projects that needed funding to progress to completion.

Two projects had been identified, the Thornliebank Playing Fields Access Improvements Project and the Off Grid Community Facilities Improvements Project. The details of those projects were provided in the report. It was indicated that five other projects could no longer be funded under PBIP due to the reduction in funding.

The report went on to provide information of other regeneration programmes for which funding had been paused and indicated the significant impact this had on the Council's place-making priorities and local community assets. In particular, it was indicated that the UK Shared Prosperity Fund was scheduled to close in March 2025, and this would have an impact on local authorities in terms of delivering important local projects.

In light of this, it was proposed by the Leader that a letter be drafted to both UK and Scottish Governments asking for clarity on those sources of funding and, in particular, plans for a successor programme to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Cabinet was supportive of this proposal.

The Cabinet:-

- (a) noted the changes to the Place Based Investment Programme funding to Local Authorities in 2024/25;
- (b) noted the new, reduced bidding process for funding in 2024/25;
- (c) approved the continuation of two projects, outlined in the report;
- (d) noted the updates on other regeneration and infrastructure funding; and
- (e) requested that the Director of Environment write to both UK and Scottish Governments to seek clarity on regeneration funding and, in particular, any successor programme to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

CHAIR

MINUTE
of
LICENSING COMMITTEE

Minute of meeting held at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock, on 08 October 2024.

Present:

Councillor Paul Edlin (Chair)
Provost Mary Montague*

Councillor Andrew Morrison
Councillor David Macdonald*

Councillor Edlin in the Chair

(*) indicates remote attendance

Attending:

Gerry Mahon, Chief Officer (Legal and Procurement); Brian Kilpatrick, Civic Government Enforcement Officer; and Jennifer Graham, Democratic Services Officer.

Also Attending:

Chief Inspector Graeme Gallie and Inspector Gareth Griffiths, Police Scotland.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

996. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR

997. The Chief Officer (Legal and Procurement) advised that the Vice Chair had recently tendered her resignation from the Committee and a new Vice Chair would require to be appointed. As membership of the Committee had recently been increased to 7 members, he proposed that this item be continued to allow all members to consider the appointment

Thereafter, the committee agreed that appointment of a Vice Chair be continued to a future meeting.

Resolution to Exclude Press and Public

At this point in the meeting, on the motion of the Chair, the Committee unanimously resolved that in accordance with the provisions of Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 6 and 14 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Act.

Variation in Order of Business

In accordance with the terms of Standing Order 19, Councillor Edlin altered the order of business to facilitate the conduct of the meeting.

PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER'S LICENCE – APPLICATION FOR RENEWAL

998. The Committee considered a report by the Chief Officer (Legal and Procurement) in relation to an application for the renewal of a Private Hire Car Driver's Licence (agenda item 5 refers).

The applicant was present together with his Solicitor, Mr Hobbs.

Chief Inspector Gallie and Inspector Griffiths, representing the Chief Constable, who had made an objection to the application, were also present.

The report explained that in determining the application it would be for the Committee to decide if it wished to consider the out of time objection submitted by the Chief Constable and, if so, what weight it wished to attach to the objection and its relevance to the type of licence being applied for.

Following discussion, the Committee agreed to consider the out of time objection and copies were circulated.

Inspector Griffiths was heard in respect of the objection submitted by the Chief Constable.

The applicant's solicitor was then heard in respect of the application.

The Committee agreed that the application for renewal be continued until after the date of the pending court case.

PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER'S LICENCE – APPLICATION FOR GRANT

999. The Committee considered a report by the Chief Officer (Legal and Procurement) in relation to an application for the grant of a Private Hire Car Driver's Licence (agenda item 6 refers).

The applicant was present.

Chief Inspector Gallie and Inspector Griffiths, representing the Chief Constable, who had made an objection to the application, were also present.

The report explained that in determining the application it would be for the Committee to decide if it wished to consider the out of time representation submitted by the Chief Constable and, if so, what weight it wished to attach to the representation and its relevance to the type of licence being applied for.

Following discussion, the Committee agreed to consider the out of time representation and copies were circulated.

Inspector Griffiths was heard in respect of the representation submitted by the Chief Constable and in response to questions from members.

The applicant was then heard in respect of the application.

The Committee agreed to a short adjournment to consider the matter.

On reconvening, the Committee, having taken account of the applicant's previous convictions, their seriousness and relevance to the licence being applied for, and also having taken account of the representation by the Chief Constable, agreed that the application be refused on the grounds that the applicant was not a fit and proper person to be the holder of such a licence by virtue of his previous convictions.

PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER'S LICENCE – APPLICATION FOR GRANT

1000. The Committee considered a report by the Chief Officer (Legal and Procurement) in relation to an application for the grant of a Private Hire Car Driver's Licence (agenda item 7 refers).

The applicant was present.

Chief Inspector Gallie and Inspector Griffiths, representing the Chief Constable, who had made an objection to the application, were also present.

The report explained that in determining the application it would be for the committee to decide what weight it wished to attach to the objection by the Chief Constable.

Inspector Griffiths was heard in respect of the objection submitted by the Chief Constable and in response to questions.

The applicant was then heard in respect of the application and in response to questions.

The Committee agreed to a short adjournment to consider the matter.

On reconvening, the Committee, having taken account of the applicant's previous convictions, their seriousness and relevance to the licence being applied for, and also having taken account of the objection by the Chief Constable, agreed that the application be refused on the grounds that the applicant was not a fit and proper person to be the holder of such a licence by virtue of his previous convictions.

PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER'S LICENCE – APPLICATION FOR GRANT

1001. The Committee considered a report by the Chief Officer (Legal and Procurement) in relation to an application for the grant of a Private Hire Car Driver's Licence (agenda item 4 refers).

The applicant was present.

Chief Inspector Gallie and Inspector Griffiths, representing the Chief Constable, who had made an objection to the application, were also present.

The report explained that in determining the application it would be for the committee to decide what weight it wished to attach to the objection by the Chief Constable.

Inspector Griffiths was heard in respect of the objection submitted by the Chief Constable and in response to questions.

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The applicant was then heard in respect of the application and in response to questions.

The Committee agreed that the application for grant be continued until after the date of the pending court case.

CHAIR