

**MINUTE**  
**of**  
**EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL**

**Minute of meeting held at 5.00pm in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 25 June 2025.**

**Present:**

Councillor Andrew Anderson	Councillor Chris Lunday*
Councillor Caroline Bamforth	Councillor Colm Merrick
Councillor Tony Buchanan	Provost Mary Montague
Deputy Provost Kate Campbell	Councillor David Macdonald
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; Alexis Chappell, Chief Officer, Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP); Caitriona McAuley, Director of Environment; Louise Pringle, Director of Business Operations and Partnerships; Mark Ratter, Director of Education; Lesley Bairden, Head of Finance and Resources (Chief Financial Officer), HSCP; Kirsty Stanners, Head of Finance (Chief Financial Officer); Gerry Mahon, Chief Officer (Legal and Procurement); Kenny Markwick, Head of Environment (Operations); Mark Rodgers, Head of Environment (Housing and Property); Michaela Sullivan, Head of Place; Barry Tudhope, Democratic Services Manager; John Burke, Democratic Services Officer; and Bethany Mitchell, Assistant Democratic Services Officer.

(\*) indicates remote attendance.

**Apologies:**

Councillors Jim McLean.

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest intimated.

**MINUTE'S SILENCE – COUNCILLOR BETTY CUNNINGHAM OBE**

Provost Montague referred to the passing of Councillor Betty Cunningham OBE and called for those present to observe a minute's silence in her memory.

**ORDER OF BUSINESS**

The Provost indicated that, to facilitate the smooth running of the meeting, the items would be considered in the order shown below.

## **NOTICE OF MOTION – PLANNING MATTERS**

In accordance with Standing Order 27, the following notice of motion had been submitted by Councillor Edlin, seconded by Councillor Morrison:

*Council hereby:*

1. *Acknowledges the decision of the Planning Applications Committee on 15 April 2025 to conditionally grant planning permission in respect of application 2025/0043/TP for the construction and operation of a 40 MW battery energy storage facility, including associated infrastructure, substation, security fencing, CCTV, security lighting, and landscaping.*
2. *Notes that a previous application (2024/0168/TP) for an almost identical development was rejected by the Planning Applications Committee, a decision subsequently upheld by the Scottish Government Reporter following an unsuccessful appeal by the developer.*
3. *Recognises the significant similarities between the two applications and the clear precedent set by the Reporter's ruling, which aligns with Local Development Plan Policy D3 regarding the development in the greenbelt.*
4. *Therefore requests that officers prepare a report for the next appropriate Council meeting detailing:*
  - *The legal and procedural steps required to issue a revocation order.*
  - *An assessment of the applicant's compliance with all imposed planning conditions, including those still to be discharged before development can proceed.*
  - *Clarification on potential compensation liabilities under the Planning Act, particularly where the applicant does not hold freehold title to the land in question.*
  - *Consideration of the expediency of such a course of action.*
5. *Further requests that the report includes any relevant legal and financial implications for the Council arising from a potential revocation, ensuring fully informed decision making.*
6. *This motion seeks to uphold the integrity of the planning process, ensure policy consistency, and protect the Council's interests in the event of legal or financial consequences.*

Councillor Edlin summarised the motion and his reasons for proposing it.

Councillor O'Donnell, seconded by Councillor Pragnell, moved the following as an amendment:

*Council hereby:*

1. *Acknowledges the decision of the Planning Applications Committee on 15 April 2025 to conditionally grant planning permission in respect of application 2025/0043/TP for the construction and operation of a 40 MW battery energy*

*storage facility, including associated infrastructure, substation, security fencing, CCTV, security lighting, and landscaping.*

2. *Requests that officers prepare a report for the next appropriate Council meeting detailing:*
  - *The legal and procedural steps required to issue a revocation order.*
  - *An assessment of the applicant's compliance with all imposed planning conditions, including those still to be discharged before development can proceed.*
  - *Clarification on potential compensation liabilities under the Planning Act, particularly where the applicant does not hold freehold title to the land in question.*
  - *Consideration of the expediency of such a course of action.*
3. *Further requests that the report includes any relevant legal and financial implications for the Council arising from a potential revocation, ensuring fully informed decision making.*
4. *This motion seeks to uphold the integrity of the planning process, ensure policy consistency, and protect the Council's interests in the event of legal or financial consequences.*

Following the tabling of the amendment, Councillor Anderson, seconded by Councillor O'Donnell moved that the question be put to the Council without further discussion.

On the roll being called, Councillors Anderson, Bamforth, Buchanan, Convery, Devlin, Ireland, Lunday, Merrick, O'Donnell, Pragnell and Provost Montague voted yes.

Councillors Campbell, Edlin, Macdonald, Morrison and Wallace voted no.

There being 11 votes for yes and 5 for no, the question was put to the Council without further discussion.

On the roll being called, Councillors Campbell, Edlin, Macdonald, Morrison and Wallace voted for the motion.

Councillors Anderson, Bamforth, Buchanan, Convery, Devlin, Ireland, Lunday, Merrick, O'Donnell, Pragnell and Provost Montague voted for the amendment.

There being 5 votes for the motion and 11 for the amendment, the amendment was declared carried.

## **MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Council considered and approved the Minute of the meeting held on 23 April 2025.

## **MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES**

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

- (a) Special Planning Applications Committee – 15 April 2025;
- (b) Licensing Committee – 29 April 2025;
- (c) Audit and Scrutiny Committee – 8 May 2025;

- (d) Cabinet – 29 May 2025;
- (e) Planning Applications Committee – 4 June 2025;
- (f) Local Review Body – 4 June 2025;
- (g) Cabinet (Police & Fire) – 5 June 2025;
- (h) Licensing Committee – 10 June 2025; and
- (i) Education Committee – 12 June 2025.

## **AUDIT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 19 JUNE 2025 – CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT**

Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee of 19 June 2025 (Page 1195, Item 1240 refers), when it had been agreed to recommend to the Council the approval of the 2024/25 Annual Governance Statement, the Council considered a report by the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships providing an update on progress against improvement actions and seeking approval of a new Code for 2024/25, and seeking Council approval of the Annual Governance Statement..

Councillor Morrison made a brief statement on the report and thanked the finance team for the work that had gone in to its production. In discussion, members also gave thanks to the work of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee on this matter and clarified some minor points around the evaluations provided in the report.

The Council agreed to approve the 2024/25 Annual Governance Statement set out in Annex 2 to the report.

## **STATEMENTS BY CONVENERS AND REPRESENTATIVES ON JOINT BOARDS AND COMMITTEES**

The following statements were made:-

### **(a) Councillor Pragnell – Convener for Social Work and Health**

Councillor Pragnell gave a summary of the business considered at the meeting of the Integration Joint Board, which had met prior to the Council meeting. In particular, she welcomed the new Chief Officer of the HSCP and described some of her ambitions and commitments to work alongside partners to give improved outcomes for all people within East Renfrewshire.

### **(b) Councillor Anderson – Convener for Education, Culture and Leisure**

Councillor Anderson gave statements on both the Culture and Leisure Trust and Education. He summarised the business considered at the recent Culture and Leisure Trust Board meeting. In particular, he highlighted that gym membership, community sports participation and swimming lesson programmes were all at an all time high. He added that the Theatre had broken its box office records.

He then remarked on the Armed Forces Covenant Scheme, where the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Victory in Europe Day had been celebrated at Barrhead Foundry on 15 May 2025 with veterans invited to participate. At the gathering, the Trust had received the Armed Forces Covenant Employer Recognition Bronze Award in recognition of their support for the Armed Forces community. Councillor Anderson went on to summarise some of the ways in which the Trust supported the Armed Forces.

On Education, Councillor Anderson gave a statement on the Inter-Secondary School Sports Day. The event, hosted at Williamwood and St Ninian's High Schools and Clarkston Tennis Club, had been a great success and Councillor Anderson congratulated all who participated, with all Secondary Schools represented. The event had been won by Williamwood High School, with Woodfarm and Mearns Castle High Schools finishing in second and third places, respectively.

Finally, Councillor Anderson summarised the business considered at the most recent meeting of the Education Committee, in particular, he highlighted a report on Getting It Right For Every Child in East Renfrewshire, with discussions on the use of mobile phones in schools detailed.

The Council noted the statements.

## **PROVOST ENGAGEMENTS**

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 23 April 2025.

The Council noted the report.

## **GENERAL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

The Council considered a report by the Head of Finance (Chief Financial Officer) on adjustments to the 2025/26 General Fund Capital Programme, approved on 26 February 2025, resulting from finalisation of the previous year's programme and in light of subsequent information.

The current position and proposed adjustments were detailed in the report, including amendments in terms of projects for the Eastwood Leisure Centre, Kingston Playing Fields and the Eastwood high School Dining Project.

Following discussion of a number of matters relating to the Aurs Road project, the Council agreed:-

- (a) to note and approve the movements within the programme;
- (b) to approve the removal of the £1.920m limit on the advance works associated with the new Eastwood Leisure Centre while maintaining the costs within the overall project budget;
- (c) approved the use of developer contributions to fully fund a new capital project at Kingston Playing Fields, with a total cost of £0.119m;
- (d) homologated the decision to use £0.140m of developer contributions to fund the increased cost of the Eastwood High School Dining Project; and
- (e) noted the shortfall of £0.174m and that income and expenditure on the programme would be managed and reported on a regular basis.

## **HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

The Council considered a joint report by the Head of Finance (Chief Financial Officer) and the Director of Environment on recommended adjustments to the 2025/26 Housing Capital Programme, approved on 26 February 2025, resulting from the finalisation of the previous year's programme and in light of subsequent information.

The current position and proposed adjustments were detailed in the report, including information on the proposed purchase of additional housing units.

Following discussion on the potential for the purchase of "off the shelf" housing to meet demand, the Council agreed:-

- (a) to note and approve the current movements within the programme;
- (b) to approve the drawdown of an additional £0.400m from the Capital Reserve to support the purchase of additional housing units; and
- (c) noted the shortfall of £207,000 and that income and expenditure on the programme would be managed and reported on a regular basis.

## **LOCAL CHILD POVERTY ACTION REPORT**

The Council considered a joint report by the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships and Chief Officer – Health and Social Care Partnership, on the annual East Renfrewshire Local Child Poverty Action Report, as required by the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017.

The East Renfrewshire Local Child Poverty Action Report 2024-2025, attached as an appendix to the report, provided updates on progress between April 2024 and March 2025 on the Council's approach to tackling child poverty. It was noted that child poverty in East Renfrewshire was the lowest in Scotland at 12%, down from 14% in the previous year.

If approved, the Local Child Poverty Action Report 2024-2025 would be published, subject to approval by the Integration Joint Board and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Population Health and Wellbeing Committee.

In discussion, members welcomed the report and the reduction in child poverty in East Renfrewshire, while accepting that more needed to be done to eradicate child poverty in the area.

The Council agreed to:-

- (a) note the Local Child Poverty Action Report 2024-2025 as required under the Child Poverty Act 2017; and
- (b) approved the report for publication, subject to approval by the IJB and NHSGGC Population Health and Wellbeing Committee.

## **STRATEGIC END-YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT AND ANNUAL COMMUNITY PLANNING AND FAIRER EAST REN REPORT FOR 2024-2025**

The Council considered a report by the Chief Executive on the final performance update on the Council's Outcome Delivery Plan (ODP) and Fairer East Ren Plan and to demonstrate the progress that had been made in 2024/2025.

The report included: a summary highlight of the Council's strategic performance at end-year 2024-2025 at annex 1 with a link to more detailed data report on the performance indicators

in the Outcome Delivery Plan also provided; the 2024/2025 annual progress report on the Community Plan, including Fairer East Ren (Local Outcome Improvement Plan) at annex 2; and an annual update on complaints handling at annex 3 of the report.

Officers responded to members' questions and welcomed the positive information contained within the report.

The Council:-

- (a) scrutinised and commented on the highlight summary of the Council's strategic performance (ODP) at end year 2024/2025;
- (b) scrutinise and comment on the Community Plan and Fairer East Ren Annual Progress Report for 2024/2025;
- (c) scrutinised and commented on the complaints handling report 2024/2025; and
- (d) noted the strategic plans referred to in (a) and (b) had come to an end and that "A Place to Grow" would replace both the ODP and Community Plan going forward.

#### **DEATH OF COUNCILLOR BETTY CUNNINGHAM OBE (WARD 1: BARRHEAD, LIBOSIDE AND UPLAWMOOR)**

The Council considered a report by the Chief Executive/Returning Officer on the death of Councillor Betty Cunningha, OBE (Ward 1: Barrhead, Liboside and Uplawmoor).

The report reflected on the extraordinary service to East Renfrewshire of the late Councillor Cunningham, and informed members of the intention to hold a by-election in Ward 1 on Thursday 21 August 2025 to fill the vacancy resulting from her passing.

The Council agreed to note the report.

PROVOST

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