

MINUTE
of
EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

Minute of virtual meeting held at 2.00pm on 24 June 2020.

Present:

Provost Jim Fletcher	Councillor Alan Lafferty
Depute Provost Betty Cunningham	Councillor David Macdonald
Councillor Caroline Bamforth	Councillor Jim McLean
Councillor Tony Buchanan (Leader)	Councillor Colm Merrick
Councillor Angela Convery	Councillor Stewart Miller
Councillor Charlie Gilbert	Councillor Paul O’Kane
Councillor Barbara Grant	Councillor Jim Swift
Councillor Annette Ireland	Councillor Gordon Wallace

Provost Fletcher in the Chair

Attending:

Lorraine McMillan, Chief Executive; Caroline Innes, Deputy Chief Executive; Mhairi Shaw, Director of Education; Andy Cahill, Director of Environment; Julie Murray, Chief Officer - Health and Social Care Partnership; Margaret McCrossan, Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer); Gillian McCarney, Head of Environment (Chief Planning Officer); Debbie Hill, Chief Procurement Officer; Eamonn Daly, Democratic Services Manager; and Paul O’Neil, Committee Services Officer.

Apologies:

Councillors Paul Aitken and Danny Devlin.

OPENING REMARKS

1269. The Provost referred to the impact COVID-19 had had on communities across the country and indeed across the world, particularly on those people whose relatives had died and who had not been able to spend as much time with their loved ones as they would have in normal times. He highlighted that East Renfrewshire’s sizeable elderly population had borne the heaviest toll, with deaths in care homes both public and private sector and with the Council’s caring services being stretched to new limits. He also indicated there would be few, if any, people in East Renfrewshire who would have not been directly affected by coronavirus whether it be their health, work or education and many of those taking part in the meeting would know someone who had suffered the ultimate loss of a loved one.

To recognise that loss, he asked the Council to pause for a few moments in memory of those who had died.

Thereafter, highlighting the importance of the Council recognising and thanking people across East Renfrewshire who had been part of the tremendous community response to the crisis, Provost Fletcher referred especially to those who had volunteered to help their fellow residents by delivering shopping, picking up prescriptions and working in the Council's own Humanitarian Food Hub.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1270. Provost Fletcher and Councillors Grant, Merrick and O'Kane declared non-financial interests in relation to Item 1280 by virtue of the fact that they were members of the East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure Trust Board.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

1271. The Council considered and approved the Minutes of the meetings held on 27 February and 23 March 2020.

MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES

1272. The Council considered and approved the Minutes of the meetings of the undernoted, except as otherwise referred to in Item 1273 below:-

- (a) Appointments Committee – 11 March 2020;
- (b) Planning Applications Committee – 11 March 2020;
- (c) Local Review Body – 11 March 2020;
- (d) Cabinet – 12 March 2020;
- (e) Audit and Scrutiny Committee – 12 March 2020;
- (f) Emergencies Committee – 14 May 2020;
- (g) Emergencies Committee – 21 May 2020;
- (h) Appointments Committee – 8 June 2020;
- (i) Education Committee – 11 June 2020; and
- (j) Emergencies Committee – 11 June 2020;

EDUCATION COMMITTEE – 11 JUNE 2020

1273. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the Education Committee of 11 June, (Page 1177, Item 1263 refers), Councillor Wallace commented that the terms of the Minute in relation to the Council's COVID-19 Local Delivery Phasing Plan were now out of date given the recent announcement by Mr John Swinney, Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills that schools would now return in August 2020. He sought an update on the matter.

In reply, Councillor O'Kane advised that it was the intention for schools to return in August, subject to the continued suppression of coronavirus and ongoing advice from scientists. The proposed blended model of education was a contingency in the event that pupils could not return to full-time education in August. The Director of Education advised that an updated plan had been sent to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) regarding this matter and a that a report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Education Committee on 21 August 2020 providing further information.

The Council noted the position.

STATEMENTS BY REPRESENTATIVES ON JOINT BOARDS/COMMITTEES

1274. The following statements were made:-

(a) **Councillor Bamforth - Integration Joint Board**

Councillor Bamforth reported on the business considered at the most recent meeting of the Health and Social Care Partnership Integration Joint Board (IJB) which had been held earlier in the day at which consideration had been given to the unaudited accounts and the HSCP's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. She referred to those members of staff who had been working on the frontline during the COVID-19 pandemic providing valuable services to vulnerable residents living both at home and in care homes and congratulated them for all their hard work. Concluding her remarks, she highlighted that the HSCP was now planning for recovery and was working in collaboration with partner organisations to meet the needs of East Renfrewshire residents.

(b) **Councillor Merrick – East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure Trust**

Councillor Merrick reported on the actions the Trust had taken in response to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic including closing all of its buildings to the public and suspending its programmes on 18 March. In addition, customer payments were suspended and/or refunded from that point, with the only services continuing being those delivered online, free of charge.

Whilst noting that ERCL staff had stepped forward as volunteers to support critical services elsewhere in the authority, including the Humanitarian Aid programme; and the delivery of the Spring Holiday Programme, Councillor Merrick highlighted that under the Government Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, 90% of staff were placed on furlough, including half of the management team, with ERCL meeting the full cost to make sure staff were continuing to be paid 100% of their salary. He advised that planning for recovery and relaunch of culture and leisure services, and for the delivery of a holiday programme to support vulnerable children and the children of key workers throughout the summer break, was well underway.

Details of the 2019/20 performance of the Trust were outlined it being noted that the business had placed a real focus on transforming both product offerings and service quality in response to market and customer insight. Despite the impact of COVID-19 the Trust had finished the year with an operating surplus, further strengthening an emerging trend. Councillor Merrick emphasised that for the previous two years the Trust had generated significant surpluses through developing products and services, whilst effectively managing the cost base. Arts and Theatre; Swimming and Gyms and Fitness were three areas which had seen improved performance.

Concluding his remarks, Councillor Merrick further emphasised that the strong performance achieved also followed the decision to bring marketing services in-house, and to create a dedicated sales and marketing team within the Trust. This had played a significant part in the increase in earned income for the year, and the growth of memberships, audiences, and attendances.

The Council noted the statements.

AUDIT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - APPOINTMENT OF REPLACEMENT MEMBER

1275. The Council considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive, seeking the appointment of a replacement for Provost Fletcher on the Audit and Scrutiny Committee.

The Council agreed that Councillor Convery be appointed to the Audit and Scrutiny Committee as a replacement for Provost Fletcher.

PROVOST'S ENGAGEMENTS

1276. The Council considered and noted a report by the Deputy Chief Executive, providing details of civic engagements attended and civic duties performed by Provost Fletcher since the meeting on 27 February 2020.

ESTIMATED REVENUE BUDGET OUTTURN 2020/21

1277. The Council considered a report by the Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer), advising of the estimated financial impact of COVID-19 on the Council's budget plans, projecting the revenue budget out-turn position for 2020/21 and setting out potential options for addressing the resulting shortfall. The report also provided details of expected year-end variances for each department as at 30 April 2020 and subsequent assessment of pressures arising from COVID-19. Full details of the impact of COVID-19 on Council budgets together with information on service virements and operational adjustments appeared as appendices to the report.

Whilst noting that prior to the meeting of the Council on 27 February 2020 the Scottish Government had announced an increase of £1.875m in the Council's General Revenue Grant, the report explained that at that time, the Council had already agreed the budget as set out in the report considered at that meeting. To address the late announcement by the Scottish Government, officers were requested to return to the Council with a proposal for an amended budget reflecting the increased funding.

Details of the COVID-19 impact on Council budgets were outlined in the report it being noted that they were seen across five broad areas these being: additional spending pressures in providing new services and addressing increased needs; losses in normal income streams; reduced spending in areas where services had been curtailed; reduction in ability to deliver planned budget savings; and putting in place recovery arrangements.

The report highlighted that the additional full year COVID pressure on the Council was currently estimated at £13.9m which was based on a number of assumptions and under a worst case scenario could rise to £17.5m. However, taking into account expected government grant of £4.394m for COVID related activity, this would leave a potential COVID related shortfall in the Council's 2020/21 budget of between £9.5m to £13.1m. This total COVID related variance had been included in the overall monitoring of the Council's budget as set out in Annex B to the report. This showed that, after accounting for the £1.875m grant increase announced by the government in February 2020 and some slight minor variances on routine expenditure, the overall forecast year-end Council position was a shortfall of £8.55m, made up of £8.4m relating to General Fund services and £0.150m relating to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

It was noted that the figures did not include COVID pressures being addressed by Integration Joint Boards, as these were being separately accounted for. The Scottish Government had provided £50m of IJB mobilisation costs of which the East Renfrewshire IJB had been allocated £0.886m. The IJB estimated that its total costs would be in the region of £9m with social care costs being a significant part of those costs. The IJB expected government funding to cover these costs although an element of this pressure had been reflected under the worst case scenario as detailed in Annex A, should full funding not be provided.

The report provided details of various options for addressing the unprecedented gap and indicated that a further report would be submitted to the meeting of the Cabinet in August updating the position and providing more detailed proposals. However, it was noted there was a limited range of options available to councils to address an in-year shortfall of this scale. The use of reserves where available could be considered along with the option to decrease costs by reducing service levels. Details of the Council's current reserves situation were outlined in the report it being noted that the Council's non-earmarked General Fund reserve as at 31 March 2020 was estimated at £9.590m (3.8% of budget).

The Council had agreed to use a further £3.5m from this reserve to assist with 2020/21 budget pressures, thus the projected balance at 31 March 2021 would be £6.090m (2.4%). It was noted that a range of between 2 to 4% was generally considered prudent. As such there was some scope to use this reserve to help close the gap. The use of £1m would bring the balance down to the lower (2%) recommended limit, although substantial additional measures would also be needed, particularly if COVID related pressures were to extend until late in the current year or beyond.

The use of the Council's earmarked reserves could also be reviewed, with the Modernisation Fund (estimated balance at 31 March 2020 £7.050m) also offering some scope to assist. There was, however, an ongoing need to draw down up to £1m each year from this fund in support of essential service redesign work. If anything, such pressure to use these resources to redesign and digitise services would increase in the short term as councils had to adopt new ways of working as they emerged from the pandemic.

Whilst noting that the Council had yet to determine how the increase of £1.875m in the Council's General Revenue grant announced by the Scottish Government just prior to the Council's budget meeting in February should be applied, the report proposed that given the present circumstances, it would seem prudent to use part of the funding to offset the £1.278m of unallocated savings in the February 2020 budget. The remaining £0.597m of the funding could be considered at a later date as part of the response to the funding of the COVID related budget gap.

The report also indicated that a major review of current year budgets and service prioritisation would be required in view of the extent of the potential shortfall, although this would be very challenging in view of the extent of budget savings implemented in recent years. In view of this, the report proposed that directors work on this over the summer with a view to bringing proposals back after the recess. At that stage, more information should be available on the forecast pressures for the Council, government funding and permitted financial flexibility. In the interim, it would be prudent to cease all non-essential spend.

Whilst the UK Government was expected to unveil a package of economic stimulus measures in July 2020, a full budget was unlikely to be delivered until later in the year. The report suggested that as a result, it would be prudent for the Council to apply a one year deferral to its plans for a 3 year budget covering 2021-2024. It was proposed that instead a single year budget approach was recommended for 2021/22, with the intention of reverting to 3-year

budget setting for 2022-25, when it was hoped that multi-year settlements would again be available. In the interim, 3-year Outcome Delivery Plans and 6-year long term financial plans would continue to be prepared.

Councillor Buchanan commented that based on expenditure pressures and funding confirmed so far, the Council was facing a budget shortfall of at least £8.4m as a result of the current pandemic. He highlighted that the report had been prepared before Mr John Swinney, Deputy First Minister's announcement on 23 June indicating that the aim of the Scottish Government was to return children to school on a full-time basis from 11 August and that should this take place, the cost pressures on the Council could reduce by over £3million.

Concluding his remarks, Councillor Buchanan emphasised that the Council would continue to lobby the Scottish and UK Governments through COSLA for increased grant funding and borrowing powers. It was noted that the position was constantly changing and would be closely monitored, with further reports being brought forward throughout the year. However, due to the level of uncertainty nationally, he recommended that the Council should prepare to set a single year budget for 2021/22 rather than adopt a 3 year approach as originally planned for the coming years.

The Council:-

- (a) noted the £1.875m increase in the Council's General Revenue Grant in late February 2020;
- (b) agreed to apply £1.278m of the additional grant to cancel out the requirement for unallocated savings in the Council's 2020/21 budget;
- (c) noted the forecast additional financial pressures arising from COVID-19, the further revisions to the Council's Scottish Government grant funding confirmed to date and the resulting significant budget gap for 2020/21;
- (d) noted the broad options for addressing this unprecedented gap and that a further report would be submitted to the Cabinet in August updating the position and providing more detailed proposals;
- (e) instructed departments to avoid all non-essential spending with immediate effect;
- (f) authorised the Corporate Management Team (CMT) to incur essential unbudgeted COVID related expenditure commitments over the summer up to the maximum figures set out in Annex A;
- (g) agreed that a single year budget approach for 2021/22 be adopted; and
- (h) approved the service virements and operational adjustments as set out in the notes to the tables in Annex B.

GENERAL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2020/21

1278. The Council considered a report by the Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer), recommending adjustments to the 2020/21 General Fund Capital Programme, approved on 27 February 2020, resulting from finalisation of the previous year's programme and in light of subsequent information.

The report highlighted that this was the first report of the year on capital projects and showed how the project budgets had been updated to reflect the position reached on individual schemes at 31 March 2020. It was noted that over £8m of expenditure scheduled for 2019/20 had not been incurred by 31 March 2020 and therefore the 2020/21 Capital Plan had been increased by this amount to allow these works to be completed in the current year which brought the total 2020/21 programme up to £51.621m.

Whilst noting that the timing of various projects would be affected by the current COVID-19 pandemic with work on construction sites having been halted since late March and only now beginning to resume, the report indicated that officers were now working to assess how schemes could be rescheduled and reprioritised. A report on this matter would be submitted to a future meeting of the Cabinet.

The report also highlighted the latest developments relating to the programme, including the latest income and expenditure movements and cash flow management issues and indicated that the projected shortfall of £425,000 which represented 0.83% of the resources available was within manageable limits. Detailed explanations of the reasons for the major movements within the programme were outlined in the report.

The Council:-

- (a) noted and approved the movements within the programme; and
- (b) noted the shortfall of £0.425m and that income and expenditure on the programme would be managed and reported on a regular basis.

HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2020/21

1279. The Council considered a joint report by the Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer) and the Director of Environment, recommending adjustments to the 2020/21 Housing Capital Programme, approved on 27 February 2020, resulting from the finalisation of the previous year's programme and in light of subsequent information.

The report highlighted that almost £0.2m of expenditure scheduled for 2019/20 had not been incurred by 31 March 2020 and the 2020/21 Capital Plan had been increased by this amount to allow these works to be completed in the current year bringing the total 2020/21 programme up to £17.757m. As with the General Fund, the timing of various housing projects would be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and a report on this matter would be submitted to a future meeting of the Cabinet.

The report highlighted the latest developments relating to the programme, including the latest income and expenditure movements and cash flow management issues and indicated that the shortfall of £0.135m which represented 0.8% of the resources available was within manageable limits. Detailed explanations of reasons for the major movements within the programme were outlined in the report.

The Council:-

- (a) noted and approved the current movements within the programme;
- (b) noted the shortfall of £0.135m and that income and expenditure on the programme would be managed and reported on a regular basis.

EAST RENFREWSHIRE CULTURE AND LEISURE TRUST - CONFIRMATION OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT

1280. The Council considered a report by the Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer), seeking approval for the issue of a letter to East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure Trust (ERCLT) confirming the Council's ongoing financial support for the Trust. A copy of the proposed letter was appended to the report.

The Council approved the issue of a letter to ERCLT confirming the Council's ongoing financial support for the Trust's activities.

STRATEGIC END-YEAR COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2019/20

1281. The Council considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive, providing a summary of Council performance at end-year 2019-20 based on performance indicators in the Outcome Delivery Plan (ODP) 2019-22 together with information on end-year complaints. Full details of both were appended to the report.

The report explained that the Council set out its contribution to the partnership outcomes in the Community Plan through the content of the Outcome Delivery Plan (ODP) which was a three year plan, updated annually, which set out the Council's critical activities, performance measures and targets for the 3 year period 2019-22. In addition, it conveyed what the Council was doing to contribute to the delivery of the agreed community planning local outcomes, it being noted that the Council was responsible for ensuring that the money it spent contributed towards achieving these outcomes and worked in partnership with the Health and Social Care Partnership and the East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure Trust to deliver them. Annex 1 to the report set out details of the Council's performance against the relevant indicators.

The report also provided details on other statutory reporting that the Council was required to carry out including complaints, details of which appeared as Annex 2 to the report. A further statutory duty was to report on a suite of benchmarking indicators that made up the national Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF), to enable comparative performance analysis with other local authorities. The LGBF data for year 2018/19 was reported to the meeting of the Cabinet on 12 March 2020. Details of other statutory reporting was outlined in the report. Finally, in accordance with the provisions of the 2010 Equality Act the Council reported performance on equalities and a progress report on the Councils' Equality and Human Rights Mainstreaming and Outcomes Programme 2017-21 would be submitted a meeting of the Cabinet in April 2021.

Whilst noting that the Council was performing well across the majority of the ODP indicators, the report explained that in those areas where there was further scope for improvement, there was a clear understanding of the reasons for performance levels. Departments were not complacent and continued to monitor progress and take appropriate action. Furthermore, in terms of complaints, all Scottish councils were required to assess and monitor their complaints handling performance quarterly against a number of high level performance indicators identified by Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO). Full details of the Council's performance against these indicators at end-year point appeared as Annex 2 to the report. It was noted that the information contained in the report would be published on the Council's website where additional performance information could also be found, including departmental and benchmarking reports.

The report indicated that the ODP 2020-23 had been drafted and had been due to be considered at a meeting of the Cabinet in April 2020. However, in light of the COVID-19

pandemic the plan would be revised to take into account recovery planning across the Council family, including changes to activities and targets within the ODP, and would be considered for approval at a later date.

The Council noted:

- (a) the summary of the Council's performance at end-year 2019-20; and
- (b) the end-year complaints report.

PROPOSED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2 - RESPONSE TO REPRESENTATIONS

1282. Under reference to the meeting of the Council on 26 June 2019, (Page 876, Item 938 refers), when it was agreed to approve the Proposed Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2) and supporting documents for publication and an 8-week consultation period, the Council considered a report by the Director of Environment, seeking approval for the responses to the representations on the Proposed LDP2 and authority to submit them to the Scottish Government for formal Examination. Full details of the proposed responses accompanied the report as Appendices 1 and 2.

The report explained that the Local Development Plan was the Council's key strategic land use planning document which strongly linked with the Corporate and Community Plans. The current Local Development Plan (LDP1) was adopted in June 2015 and set out a long-term vision and Development Strategy for East Renfrewshire up to 2025. It was noted that the formal consultation on the Proposed LDP2 closed on 13 December 2019.

Whilst noting that the Proposed LDP2 promoted a refreshed strategy of regeneration and consolidation of the urban areas, and enhancing existing places alongside a focus on protecting green spaces in line with Option 2B of the Main Issues Report (MIR) 'Consolidation and Regeneration', the report explained that the Council was required to consider every representation received to the Proposed LDP2 and provide a response to each. It was noted that if there were any unresolved objections, the Proposed Plan and any unresolved objections were required to be submitted to Scottish Ministers for Examination. This Examination was conducted by Reporters from the Scottish Government's Planning and Environmental Appeals Division (DPEA) on behalf of Ministers.

An overview of the responses, numbers received and policies/proposals that received the most responses was outlined in the report. Whilst noting that officers had analysed representations and provided a series of recommendations to the Proposed Plan, the report highlighted that responses had been prepared that strongly defended the Council's position. Details of the Proposed Modifications were set out in Appendix 1 to the report together with information on all representations received which had been grouped under 36 issues or 'Schedule 4 forms' as set out in Appendix 2.

The report advised that a total of 568 individual responses had been received arising from the consultation and that the majority of the responses related to five policy/proposals. These were noted as Policy M4: Braidbar Quarry, Giffnock; Proposal D8.13: Netherlee to Giffnock – Access Project; Proposal SG1.17: Neilston Juniors, Neilston – Housing Proposal; Proposal SG1.20: North Kirkton Road, Neilston - Housing Proposal; and Proposal SG1.23: Broompark Drive, Newton Mearns – Housing Proposal. In addition, the report indicated that 31 alternative residential development proposals were promoted.

The report explained that a number of recommendations to the responses had been made. These were noted in the report as the Development Strategy being in accordance with Scottish Planning Policy and the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan; that the Plan was providing an effective generous land supply up to 2031; no additional land releases were required and none of the 31 alternative housing proposals were recommended for inclusion; further housing releases would have major impacts upon the existing education infrastructure; retention of the master plan approach and comprehensive remediation strategy at Braidbar Quarry; retention of Netherlee to Giffnock – Access Project – feasibility study required; deletion of the housing Proposal SG1.17 at the Neilston Juniors site with the community/sporting provision at the site retained; and the retention of housing proposals at North Kirkton Road, Neilston and Broompark Drive, Newton Mearns.

It was noted that the next stages of the Examination process would take between 6 to 9 months commencing in late summer 2020 and that at the conclusion of the Examination the Council would receive an Examination Report containing the Reporter's recommendations.

Whilst expressing her pleasure that there were no additional land releases included in the Plan, Councillor Grant sought clarification why the housing proposal at Broompark Drive, Newton Mearns had been retained.

In reply, the Head of Environment (Chief Planning Officer) explained that the area in question had been zoned for housing for a long time in the course of which Councillor Swift welcomed the absence of any infilling proposals in Newton Mearns.

Councillor Wallace referred to the consultation exercise that had been undertaken in relation to the proposed LDP2 and indicated that residents who had submitted responses in relation to Braidbar Quarries seemed to have been ignored given that the proposal at that site had been retained. He emphasised the importance of the need to retain green spaces for the public to enjoy given the restrictions placed upon the general public over the last 3 months as a result of COVID-19.

Councillor Miller congratulated the staff in the Planning Service for their work in preparing the Plan. Councillor Buchanan echoed these remarks suggesting that the Council was adopting a prudent approach in terms of the Plan. In response to the issue of Braidbar Quarries it was noted that a health and safety risk existed at the site and that Huntly Park had been protected.

At this stage, the Head of Environment (Chief Planning Officer) commented that Mactaggart and Mickel had submitted a proposal to build 10 units at Broompark Drive. She also clarified in response to the comments made by Councillor Wallace that the majority of representations submitted in relation to Braidbar Quarries were in fact about Huntly Park which had been designated protected open space both in the LDP and LDP2.

Councillor Wallace suggested that there was tremendous ambiguity as to what was defined as 'Huntly Park' in the course of which the Head of Environment (Chief Planning Officer) explained that it was effectively the Huntly playing fields. She agreed to send Councillor Wallace details showing the exact area designated as Huntly Park. She also highlighted that that LDP2 was the 'greenest' ever plan prepared.

The Council:

- (a) approved the proposed responses and recommendations to representations made as contained within Appendices 1 and 2 to the report;

- (b) agreed that delegated authority be granted to the Director of Environment to approve any minor inconsequential changes arising from the responses to be incorporated into the finalised 'Schedule 4 Forms'; and
- (c) approved the submission of the Proposed Local Development Plan 2, supporting documents and the finalised 'Schedule 4 Forms' to Scottish Ministers in due course for Examination.

COVID-19 ACTIONS - UPDATE

1283. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the Emergencies Committee held on 21 May 2020 (Page 1171, Item 1259 refers) when the committee noted a report on the work that had been undertaken by the Council and partners over the preceding 2 months in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Council considered a report by the Chief Executive providing an update on further actions taken in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The report provided details of the additional activities that had been undertaken since the previous report. While some of these related to further action in respect of ongoing service provision it was important to note that some related to new duties and responsibilities that the Council had taken on. How long the Council would need to continue to deliver these services and functions was not clear and would have ongoing financial implications.

Councillor Buchanan thanked all members of staff throughout the Council for the fantastic job they had done in response to the COVID-19 pandemic highlighting that the whole of the public sector had contributed to tackling a whole range of issues that had arisen in relation to COVID-19. His remarks were supported by Councillors O'Kane and Miller it being noted that the Council would make an argument for additional funding as it moved to recovery.

The Council noted the report.

FAMILY LEAVE FOR ELECTED MEMBERS

1284. The Council considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive, seeking adoption of the COSLA guidance on Family Leave for Elected Members. A copy of the guidance was appended to the report.

The report explained that in September 2019 Council Leaders had endorsed guidance on Family Leave for Elected Members and agreed that it be circulated to Scottish councils for adoption on a voluntary basis. The guidance related to leave in the certain circumstances these being: maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave.

The Council agreed to adopt the COSLA guidance on Family Leave for Elected Members.

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2021

1285. The Council considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive, seeking approval for the 2021 meetings calendar.

The report explained that the proposed calendar had taken account of all meetings in respect of which the dates had been determined. However, it was noted that it did not take into account those ad-hoc meetings which would be held as and when necessary such as the Appeals Committee, Appointments Committee, Planning Pre-determination hearings etc. and any other special meetings that might be called from time to time.

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Details of the factors that had been taken into consideration in the preparation of the calendar were outlined in the report. It was noted that following consultation with the members of the Licensing Committee it was proposed that the time of meetings be changed from 2.00pm to 10.00am with the change taking immediate effect for the remaining meetings in 2020. The dates of meetings of the Integration Joint Board had also been incorporated into the calendar.

The Council:-

- (a) approved the 2021 meetings calendar;
- (b) agreed that the proposed change in the time of the meeting of the Licensing Committee from 2.00pm to 10.00am to take place with immediate effect; and
- (c) noted the dates of meetings of the Integration Joint Board.

AMENDMENT TO CONTRACT STANDING ORDERS TO SUPPORT COVID-19 CONSTRUCTION RECOVERY

1286. The Council considered a report by the Chief Executive, seeking approval to temporarily amend the Council's Standing Orders Relating to Contracts to support the Council's response to COVID-19 construction recovery by increasing the works Quick Quote threshold from £150,000 to £500,000.

The report explained that amending the Council's Standing Orders Relating To Contracts would allow more works contracts to be issued under the Quick Quote procedures rather than going through full tendering by raising the current upper threshold for works contract Quick Quotes from £150,000 to £500,000 for a temporary period of 12 months with a review of its ongoing need at that time. The advantages of increasing the threshold were outlined in the report.

Following discussion on the length of time the amendment should apply, the Council approved the temporary increase of the Quick Quote threshold for works from £150,000 to £500,000 for a period of one year and that the amendment to the Council's Contract Standing Orders Relating to Contracts be introduced with immediate effect.

PROVOST