

**MINUTE**  
**of**  
**CABINET**

**Minute of Meeting held at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 25 January 2018.**

**Present:**

Councillor Tony Buchanan (Leader)	Councillor Danny Devlin
Councillor Paul O’Kane (Deputy Leader)	Councillor Alan Lafferty
Councillor Caroline Bamforth	Councillor Colm Merrick

Councillor Buchanan, Leader, in the Chair

**Attending:**

Lorraine McMillan, Chief Executive; Caroline Innes, Deputy Chief Executive; Mhairi Shaw, Director of Education; Andy Cahill, Director of Environment; Margaret McCrossan, Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer); Fiona Morrison, Head of Education Services (Provision and Resources); Phil Daws, Head of Environment (Strategic Services); Murray Husband, Head of ICT and Digital Enablement; and Paul O’Neil, Committee Services Officer.

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**287.** There were no declarations of interest intimated.

**DEVOLVED SCHOOL MANAGEMENT – CARRY-FORWARD PROPOSAL**

**288.** The Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Education, seeking approval, subject to certain conditions, to allow Head Teachers on behalf of their school/early years centre to carry-forward Devolved School Management (DSM) budget underspends up to a maximum level and thereby enhance the flexibility within DSM budgets. Details of the proposed categorisation of budget lines were appended to the report.

Whilst noting that DSM had been operating since 1993, and having noted the changing landscape in education governance that would impact on DSM, the report proposed that with immediate effect a change to the administration of DSM in East Renfrewshire be introduced which would allow schools to carry-forward budget underspends within an agreed tolerance, subject to certain conditions being met.

The report provided details of the DSM carry-forward principles highlighting that for each school the DSM budget would comprise budget lines that would be controllable by the Head Teacher who had flexibility in determining their use and would be able to transfer monies between budget headings and a non-DSM budget which would comprise other budget lines

that supported the running of the school but over which the Head Teacher had little or no influence.

Details of the conditions that Head Teachers required to meet before underspends could be carried forward were outlined in the report.

The report explained that the proposal to introduce an element of carry-forward of unspent resources from schools' DSM budgets for use by Head Teachers would empower them to better meet local needs and deliver the best possible outcomes for their learners. Furthermore, it would increase the flexibility that Head Teachers would have helping to maximise available resources at their disposal, which was particularly important at times of significant financial restraint.

Whilst noting that the proposal would be an interim change to DSM procedures, since there would likely be further changes as a consequence of evolving national developments on governance, funding, the Head Teachers' charter etc., that would impact on the administration of DSM, the report indicated that once the impact was known the DSM procedures would be reviewed to ensure they met evolving requirements of Head Teachers in this respect.

The Cabinet agreed:-

- (a) to approve with immediate effect a change to the administration of DSM in East Renfrewshire to allow schools to carry-forward budget underspends within an agreed tolerance and subject to certain conditions as outlined in the report being met; and
- (b) that it be remitted to the Director of Education to review DSM procedures to ensure they meet evolving requirements of Head Teachers and to reflect the outcome of national developments as they impacted on DSM.

## **MOBILE DEVICE POLICY**

**289.** The Cabinet considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive, seeking approval of the revised Mobile Device Policy for the Council which had been reviewed and modernised to reflect the changing use and reliance on mobile devices across the Council, it being noted that the proposed policy would apply to both officers and Elected Members.

The report explained that the Council's existing Mobile Device Policy was written, approved and published in 2011 and was a key element in the drive towards new ways of working and ensuring Council staff and Elected Members were able to safely and properly use mobile devices. However, since being approved, mobile device technology had changed significantly with the vast array of phones, smartphones, tablets and laptops now being mainstream and in many cases more prevalent than more traditional desktop equipment.

Whilst noting that the policy had been updated to reflect changes in device technology and increased Council reliance on these devices, the report indicated that the policy would now enter a regular review cycle to retain its currency and relevance to the Council and that in addition, clarity had been provided on a number of policy positions whilst reducing the restrictions on devices and personal use.

The Cabinet agreed to approve the new Mobile Device Policy it being noted that the policy would apply to both officers and Elected Members.

## **COUNCIL HOUSE BUILDING PROGRAMME**

**290.** Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the Council of 10 November 2016 (Page 2100, Item 2255 refers) when it was agreed amongst other things to approve in principle, and subject to consultation, the proposal to build up to 120 new Council homes over the following 3 to 5 years which would be owned and managed by the Council, the Cabinet considered a report by the Director of Environment, seeking approval in principle for the Council to build and thereafter manage a further 120 new Council houses over the next 3-5 years, and to consult on the proposal as required by the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987.

The report highlighted that a review of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) business plan with external expert advice had confirmed that financial capacity existed to increase the currently agreed Council house building programme from 120 houses to 240 houses in order to help address ongoing housing need in the area. Specific consultation on individual sites would take place in the future as more detailed proposals were drafted.

The Cabinet:-

- (a) approved in principle and subject to consultation, the proposal to build a further 120 new Council houses in the next 3-5 years to be owned and managed by the Council; and
- (b) noted the intention to consult upon the proposals as outlined in the report.

## **ESTIMATED REVENUE BUDGET OUT-TURN 2017/18**

**291.** The Cabinet considered a report by the Chief Financial Officer, detailing the estimated projected revenue out-turn for 2017/18 and providing details of the expected year end variances, together with summary cost information for each of the undernoted services as at 10 November 2017:-

- (i) Objective and Subjective Summaries;
- (ii) Education Department;
- (iii) Contribution to Integration Joint Board;
- (iv) Health and Social Care Partnership;
- (v) Environment Department;
- (vi) Environment Department – Support;
- (vii) Chief Executive's Office;
- (viii) Chief Executive's Office – Support;
- (ix) Corporate and Community Services Department – Community Resources;
- (x) Corporate and Community Services Department – Support;
- (xi) Other Expenditure and Income;
- (xii) Joint Boards;
- (xiii) Contingency – Welfare; and
- (xiv) Housing Revenue Account.

Whilst noting that as at 10 November 2017, the estimated year-end position showed a net favourable variance on net expenditure of £4,280,000 based on current information, the report highlighted that for General Fund services the projected underspend was £4,222,000. Furthermore, Council Tax collection had been higher than budgeted, with additional income of £700,000 now anticipated, bringing the total forecast underspend on General Fund services to £4,922,000.

However, it was noted that a number of operational variances required management action to ensure that departmental expenditure would be in line with budget at the end of the financial year. At this time, it was expected that management action would lead to all overspends being recovered, that all underspends were consolidated wherever possible and that spending up to budget levels did not take place.

The Cabinet, having noted the reported probable out-turn position, agreed that:-

- (a) the service virements and operational adjustments be approved;
- (b) management action be taken to remedy the forecast overspend in Environment – Support; and
- (c) all departments continue to closely monitor their probable out-turn position.

CHAIR