

**FALKIRK COUNCIL**

**MINUTE of MEETING of the EXECUTIVE held within the MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS, FALKIRK on TUESDAY 13 JANUARY 2015 at 9.30 a.m.**

**COUNCILLORS:**

Jim Blackwood  
Dennis Goldie  
Gerry Goldie  
Linda Gow  
Adrian Mahoney  
Craig Martin (Convener)  
Dr Craig R Martin  
Alan Nimmo  
Robert Spears

**OFFICERS:**

Margaret Anderson, Director of Social Work  
Ross Fenwick, Assistant Waste Strategy Co-ordinator  
Rhona Geisler, Director of Development Services  
Kenny Gillespie, Property and Asset Manager  
Elizabeth Hood, Neighbourhood and Access to Housing Manager  
Jennifer Litts, Head of Housing  
Rose Mary Glackin, Chief Governance Officer  
Gillian McIntyre, Customer and Development Manager  
Brian Pirie, Democratic Services Manager  
Mary Pitcaithly, Chief Executive  
Bryan Smail, Chief Finance Officer

**EX98. APOLOGIES**

No apologies were intimated.

**EX99. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations were made.

**EX100. MINUTE**

**Decision**

The minute of meeting of the Executive held on 2 December 2014 was approved.

#### **EX101. CORPORATE PRINT AND MFD POLICY**

The Executive considered a report by the Chief Governance Officer presenting a Corporate Print and MFD (multi functional devices) Policy. The proposed policy aims to ensure that printed material is produced cost effectively, is of a professional standard and is fit for purpose.

##### **Decision**

**The Executive agreed the Corporate Print and MFD Policy as detailed in the report.**

Councillor Gow joined the meeting during consideration of the previous item.

#### **EX102. REVIEW OF STANDARD FOR RE-LETTING PROPERTIES**

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Neighbourhood Services presenting a revised Void Management Policy and updated Standard for Letting of Council Housing.

A consultation on the Council's current Standard for Letting Council Housing was undertaken in 2014. The responses to the consultation were presented together with proposed amendments to the Standard and to the Council's Void Management policy which includes the Standard, (attached as appendices to the report) to ensure that void properties are let as quickly as possible to deliver a quality service to customers.

##### **Decision**

**The Executive agreed the Standard for Letting Council Housing including Void Management policy appended thereto.**

#### **EX103. ALLOCATION POLICY REVIEW**

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Neighbourhood Services presenting proposed revisions to the Allocation Policy and presenting the allocation outcomes for 2013/14.

The Council's Allocation Policy was introduced in January 2010 (ref FC75). The allocations outcomes are reported annually. The outcomes for 2013/14 were appended to the report.

The Allocation Policy has been subject to minor amendments since its introduction. In 2014 a review of the policy was undertaken, driven in part by provisions of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014. A consultation exercise was undertaken as part of the review and the responses were summarised together with proposed amendments in regard to:-

- letting quotas;
- local letting initiatives including high flats and new build Council houses;
- exceptional circumstances;
- the appeals process; and

- Welfare Reform rules.

Additionally, the report provided background to, and the main conclusions arising from, a pilot 'Tenants' Incentive Scheme, together with proposals for development of the Scheme.

## **Decision**

### **The Executive agreed:-**

- (1) the recommendations set out in section 4 of the report;
- (2) that there should be consultation with tenants on a proposal that a tenant should be suspended from receiving an offer for a period of 6 months where the tenant has not kept the garden and/or property to the required standard and has received warnings from the Council for this or the Council has required to undertake work to maintain the garden or property because of the tenant's failure to do so, with a report to return to the Executive following the consultation;
- (3) to review of the High Flat Local Letting Initiative;
- (4) the development of the Tenants' Incentive Scheme; and
- (5) to revise the current Allocation Policy to reflect the changes set out in the report to be effective from 1 April 2015.

## **EX104. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT LAND SALE – NAILER ROAD, CAMELON**

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Neighbourhood Services proposing that land at Nailer Road, Camelon is declared surplus to requirements to enable it to be sold.

## **Decision**

### **The Executive agreed to:-**

- (1) declare the land detailed in the plan attached to the report surplus to operational requirements; and
- (2) authorise the Director of Development Services to, subject to obtaining any necessary consent from the Scottish Ministers, organise the negotiated disposal of the site at Nailer Road detailed in the plan contained within the report.

## **EX105. STRATEGIC HOUSING INVESTMENT PLAN 2013-2018**

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Neighbourhood Services in relation to the Council's Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) presenting suggested revisions to the Strategic Local Programme (SLP) which lists the projects prioritised in the SHIP.

The Executive agreed an SLP for 2013 – 2018 on 18 March 2014 (ref. EX136). The SLP sets out the proposed new affordable housing programme for Council and Registered Social Landlord (RSL) partners based on Scottish Government Funding.

The report set out the annual funding required against the anticipated funding allocated together with the cumulative variances. As a consequence of a shortfall in funding from 2013/14 to 2016/17, it was proposed that the SLP for the period is revised.

In addition, the report provided an update on a proposed Social/Affordable Housing investment project at Bellsdyke together with details of a shortfall in funding of £4m for the project. Although funding of £2m had been secured for the proposed development from the Scottish Government Financial Innovation Unit, a shortfall of £2m remained. The report set out the development proposal together with funding options, which included securing funding from Falkirk Council.

### **Decision**

#### **The Executive agreed:-**

- (1) the revised Strategic Local Programme for 2013/14 – 2016/17 outlined in the report;**
- (2) not to fund the £2m shortfall in funding of the proposed development by Castle Rock Edinvar at Bellsdyke, Larbert; and**
- (3) to ask officers to liaise further with the Scottish Government Housing, Regeneration and Welfare Directorate with a view to securing additional Affordable Housing Grant.**

## **EX106. FINANCIAL POSITION 2014/15**

The Executive considered a report by the Chief Finance Officer presenting the Council's projected year end financial position.

An overspend of £3.471m was projected in the General Fund. This is a decrease of £0.236m from the position reported on 11 November 2014 (ref. EX76). The report summarised the main deviations from budget.

The Executive was reminded that the current reserves policy was agreed on 4 September 2012 (ref. PR32). A review of the strategy concluded that the policy of retaining 2% of annual revenue expenditure in reserve as a contingency against unforeseen events and emergencies remained fit for purpose.

In regard to the Council's spend to save projects it was proposed that the £1m allocated for the provision of a new health and fitness suite at Stenhousemuir is returned to the fund and replaced by prudential borrowing.

The projected year end positions in regard to the Trading Account, Housing Revenue Account and General Fund Reserves were also provided, together with details of movements on the Repairs and Renewals Fund.

### **Decision**

#### **The Executive agreed:-**

- (1) to note the Council's projected year-end financial position for 2014/15;
- (2) that the reserves strategy will retain an uncommitted General Fund Balance of 2% of annual revenue expenditure;
- (3) to note the transfers to the Repairs and Renewals Fund and Earmarked Reserves as outlined at appendix 3 to the report;
- (4) that the new health and fitness suite at Stenhousemuir is financed by prudential borrowing;
- (5) to note the position on the General Fund Reserve set out in paragraph 5.4 of the report; and
- (6) to instruct Chief Officers to take action to bring expenditure more into line with the approved budget in the current financial year.

## **EX107. CAPITAL PROGRAMMES UPDATE REPORT**

The Executive considered a report by the Chief Finance Officer presenting the position of the General Services and Housing capital programmes at November 2014.

A projected underspend of £9.243m in regard to the 2014/15 General Services capital programme was reported to the Executive on 30 September 2014 (ref. EX63). Details were given of revisions to the programme and of movements in projects since the previous report. In particular 5 projects, totalling £7.263m, which would not commence until 2015/16 or 2016/17, were removed from the programme giving a revised current year's budget of £28.274m against anticipated expenditure of £26.982m.

The 2014/15 Housing capital programme projected outturn remained unchanged, with spend of £36.50m against a budget of £36.53m forecast.

The report also set out the Prudential Indicators for 2014/15.

### **Decision**

#### **The Executive agreed to:-**

- (1) note the budget and forecast position for the General & Housing Revenue Account Capital Programmes for 2014/15; and
- (2) note the Prudential Indicators as set out in appendix 3 to the report.

#### **EX108. LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE SETTLEMENT 2015/16**

The Executive considered a report by the Chief Finance Officer providing an update on the Scottish Government's revenue and capital allocations to local authorities for 2015/16.

A report to a special meeting of Council on 12 November 2014 (ref. FC45) included the anticipated budget settlement for 2015/16. In December 2014, Scottish Government Finance Circular 9/2014 set out each local authority's revenue and capital allocations for 2015/16. In order to receive the settlement set out the circular, Councils are required to agree to:-

- maintain the Council Tax freeze in 2015/16; and
- secure places for all probationers who require one under the teacher induction scheme.

The report set out the grant allocation to local authorities nationally together with Falkirk Council's allocation. In 2015/16 Falkirk Council will, subject to the commitments above, receive a grant allocation of £274.056m for revenue funding and an allocation of £16.208m in capital funding.

#### **Decision**

**The Executive noted the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2015/16.**

#### **EX109. FALKIRK/GRANGEMOUTH ENERGY PROJECT: INTRODUCTORY REPORT**

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Development Services providing an update on an energy project based in Grangemouth and the potential benefits in establishing an energy service company (ESCo) to deliver a range of energy related services to commercial, industrial and residential premises in Falkirk and Grangemouth.

The report provided background on an energy project which could utilise renewable technologies to deliver substantial energy cost savings to the Grangemouth industrial complex and potentially to the wider area through the development of a district heating scheme and on proposals to establish an energy service company (ESCo).

Three options for the structure of a Falkirk ESCo were set out together with anticipated benefits for the area. Scottish Enterprise has offered to lead in the development of a detailed business case and it was proposed that Falkirk Council contribute up to £25,000 towards the cost of this.

#### **Decision**

**The Executive agreed to:-**

- (1) note the report on the development of an energy project for Falkirk and Grangemouth and the possible formation of a Falkirk ESCo to support the energy needs of the area;**

- (2) contribute up to £25,000 towards the development of a detailed business case with stakeholders; and
- (3) request that officers report back in due course, recommending the next steps.

**EX110. BANKNOCK AND HAGGS SPECIAL INITIATIVE FOR RESIDENTIAL LED REGENERATION: DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK ALTERATION**

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Development Services presenting a Development Framework Alteration for the Banknock and Haggs Special Initiative for Residential Led Regeneration for approval as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

The Executive agreed, on 19 August 2014 (Ref. EX44), to instruct officers to consult on a draft Development Framework Alteration. The report set out the comments received during the consultation together with responses. Proposed modifications to the Framework Alterations were set out. It was proposed that the modified Framework Alteration is approved as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

**Decision**

**The Executive agreed the proposed responses and modifications contained in the appendix to the report and approved the modified Banknock and Haggs Special Initiative for Residential Led Regeneration: Development Framework Alteration, as Supplementary Planning Guidance.**

**EX111. REVIEW OF CAR PARKING CHARGES**

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Development Services presenting a review of parking charges in Falkirk together with proposals to introduce multiple purchase permits.

The report summarised the pricing structure applied to car parks in the Council area together with the location and structure for each of the 8 pay and display car parks in Falkirk. It was proposed to amend the pricing structure for the West Bridge Street car park from tier 1 to tier 2 i.e. from short stay to short stay/long stay. The report summarised the rationale for this proposal together with the anticipated benefits.

The report also provided an overview of a trial to introduce multiple annual parking permits and proposed that a multiple purchase permit scheme is introduced for long stay car parks.

**Decision**

**The Executive agreed to:-**

- (1) formalise the multi purchase permit scheme as set out in paragraph 8.2 of the report for the Council's long stay car parks; and
- (2) change the tariff structure at West Bridge Street car park to a tier 2 short stay/long stay car park.

## **EX112. KERBSIDE RECYCLING COLLECTION**

The Executive considered a report recommending acceptance of a tender for the provision of kerbside collection services together proposals for the collection of Absorbent Hygiene Products (AHPs) and bric-a-brac.

The current contract for the provision of kerbside collection services will expire on 2 May 2015. Tenders were invited for four lots: –

- lot 1: Collection of Fortnightly Box and Weekly Food; Monday to Friday, 8am to 4pm
- lot 1A: Collection of Fortnightly Box and Weekly Food; Monday to Sunday, 8am to 8pm
- lot 2: Collection of Weekly Box and Weekly Food; Monday to Friday, 8am to 4pm
- lot 2A: Collection of Weekly Box and Weekly Food; Monday to Sunday, 8am to 8pm

Bidders were also invited to highlight additional material which could be collected as part of the service, including AHPs and bric-a-brac.

The report summarised the evaluated bids for each lot together with recommendations.

### **Decision**

**The Executive agreed:-**

- (1) to accept the tender submitted by FCC Environment (UK) Limited for lot 1A, in the sum of £6,082,216, for the seven years of the contract from 4 May 2015 to 3 May 2022;
- (2) to accept the proposal by FCC Environment (UK) Limited to collect the additional material of Absorbent Hygiene Products (AHPs) and Bric-a-brac for an additional £10,081 per annum (the total contract value will therefore be £6,152,783); and
- (3) to note that, should the proposal to collect the additional material be accepted, officers will present a report at a future meeting with a collection methodology.

## **EX113. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC**

The Executive agreed in terms of s50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, to exclude the press and public from the meeting for the following item of business on the ground that it would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 12 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the said Act.



**EX114. MINUTE**

**Decision**

**The Executive approved the extract of the minute of the meeting held on 2 December 2014.**