

RECORD OF VOTES TAKEN AT THE MEETING OF FALKIRK COUNCIL ON WEDNESDAY 27 June 2018

Councillors in attendance:

David Aitchison	Fiona Collie	John McLuckie
David Alexander	Joan Coombes	Cecil Meiklejohn
David Balfour	Jim Flynn	Lynn Munro
Lorna Binnie	Paul Garner	Laura Murtagh
Robert Bissett	Dennis Goldie	Malcolm Nicol
Allyson Black	David Grant	Alan Nimmo
Jim Blackwood	Nigel Harris	John Patrick
Gary Bouse	Gordon Hughes	Pat Reid
Provost William Buchanan	James Kerr	Depute Provost Ann Ritchie
Niall Coleman	Adanna McCue	Robert Spears

Agenda Item: 10

Falkirk Local Development Plan 2 – Proposed Plan

Motion

Council agrees to continue consideration of the item to a special meeting of Council in August.

Moved by: D Goldie

Seconded by: A Nimmo

Amendment

Council agrees to consider the report at today's meeting.

Moved by: D Alexander

Seconded by: G Bouse

VOTE

For the motion (17)

D Aitchison	N Harris
R Bissett	J Kerr
A Black	J McLuckie
J Blackwood	L Munro
W Buchanan	M Nicol
J Coombes	A Nimmo
J Flynn	J Patrick
D Goldie	P Reid
D Grant	

For the amendment (13)

D Alexander	G Hughes
D Balfour	A McCue
L Binnie	C Meiklejohn
G Bouse	L Murtagh
N Coleman	A Ritchie
F Collie	R Spears
P Garner	

Decision: Motion carried.

Agenda Item: 17(b)**Motion****Motion**

Falkirk Council welcomes the joint commitment from COSLA and the Scottish Government to a national minimum clothing grant and the additional funding to support the commitment. Falkirk Council seeks to minimise the impact of poverty through the anti-poverty strategy and the additional £201,000 funding should be directed to this aim.

Council agrees to increase the level of grant for primary and secondary pupils above the £100 minimum to £120. This requires extra recurring funding over and above the £201k grant of £76,290 and includes £8,000 that will be held in reserve to offset any increase in the uptake of the clothing grant during the 2018/19 financial year.

Level of Grant	Total Cost (based on 2017/18 uptake)	Falkirk Council Contribution (based on 2017/18 uptake)	Additional Grant Funding	Additional Funding Required ensure £120 grant plus £8000 in reserve
£	£	£	£	£
£120	£461,640*	£192,350	£201,000	£76,290

*2017/18 uptake of 3847 primary pupils and secondary pupils

Moved by: R Bissett

Seconded by: A Nimmo

Amendment

Council welcomes the SNP Scottish Governments recent decision to provide additional funding of £50 per child for School Clothing Grant to families who are also in receipt of free school meals. This represents for Falkirk a 100% increase in grant.

It is recognised that Falkirk Council have a more generous criteria, which includes families that are in receipt of tax credit but do not fit the criteria for free school meals. Last year this equated to 750 families receiving School Clothing Grant and would propose that we continue to provide the same level of funding as those on free school meals for this year with any short fall being covered from within the service existing resources.

Falkirk Council currently award 3,847 grants, however it is anticipated as a result of the increased level of grant and the awareness campaign there is likely to be an increase in up take. It would therefore be prudent to review the impact of the current changes before making any further increase in grant as this will have a recurring revenue cost.

It is also recognised that there are a number of other targeted funds, such as the summer food project that support low income families leaving them with more disposable income at this critical time.

Council therefore agrees

- (1) the School Clothing Grant be raised to £100 from August 18;
- (2) the take up of the grant be monitored in order to inform the budget planning assumptions for future years;
- (3) a benchmarking exercise be carried out against what other councils funding is for School clothing grants and what the impact in take up has been following the additional funding from Government, and
- (4) the outcome of the review as above to be reported to the Budget Working Group to inform service budget planning assumptions.

Moved by: A McCue

Seconded by: G Bouse

VOTE

For the motion (17)

D Aitchison	N Harris
R Bissett	J Kerr
A Black	J McLuckie
J Blackwood	L Munro
W Buchanan	M Nicol
J Coombes	A Nimmo
J Flynn	J Patrick
D Goldie	P Reid
D Grant	

For the amendment (12)

D Alexander	G Hughes
D Balfour	A McCue
L Binnie	C Meiklejohn
G Bouse	L Murtagh
F Collie	A Ritchie
P Garner	R Spears

Abstention (1) – N Coleman

Decision: Motion carried.

Agenda Item: 17(d)

Motion

Motion

The current choice based allocations system was introduced in 2010 and has been reviewed favourably by external agencies since its introduction. The allocations system used to be renewed annually, with the overall consensus that it was one of the best in Scotland.

That said however, the Labour Group consider it is necessary for the system to be reviewed again. This would enable the current members of the council, and our tenants and residents groups, and partner agencies a further opportunity to comment on the efficiency of the system to address the complex needs of our housing applicants today and in the future.

One of the more obvious examples of this is how the allocations system could resolve difficulties in areas where there is low or no demand. Members of the council may have been approached as I have by residents living in or in close proximity to these areas who consider that the allocations process itself is a contributing factor to increases in anti social behaviour/criminal behaviour where significant low/no demand exists. There is also evidence of increased maintenance costs in these areas as well. In some cases the council has taken the decision to demolish properties or sell them off to other housing providers.

Another perceived concern is the reluctance the elderly and parents/ single parents, and single female applicants in particular applying for properties suitable for their housing need and which they would bid for if they were void in other areas, and the inability of the council to address these issues. Members of the council and public also share a perception of medical professionals, local GPs, District Nurses, local Police officers, and Neighbourhood Officers Tenancy Services having their workload increased significantly due to nature of the particular client groups who seem to choose to reside in these areas, and who may have significant medical conditions.

Council accordingly instructs the Director of Corporate and Housing Services to conduct an immediate review of the Allocations Policy in consultation with a three member cross party working group and to make recommendations to the Executive on any changes to the policy that would address the problems outlined in this motion, for consultation with tenants and tenant's organisations.

Moved by: D Goldie
Seconded by: J Blackwood

Amendment

Council acknowledges that at the full Council meeting of December 2017.

That the agreed Scrutiny Plan for the coming year would comprise the following three topics:-

- Fly Tipping
- Housing Allocations
- Anti-social behaviour

As the content of the motion refers to Housing Allocations and Anti-social behaviour these matters should be referred to the Scrutiny Panel.

Moved by: G Hughes
Seconded by: G Bouse

VOTE

For the motion (16)

D Aitchison	D Grant
R Bissett	N Harris
A Black	J Kerr
J Blackwood	J McLuckie
W Buchanan	L Munro
J Coombes	M Nicol
J Flynn	A Nimmo
D Goldie	P Reid

Against the motion (13)

D Alexander	G Hughes
D Balfour	A McCue
L Binnie	C Meiklejohn
G Bouse	L Murtagh
N Coleman	A Ritchie
F Collie	R Spears
P Garner	

Decision: Motion carried.

Notes

1. This voting record is subject to approval of the formal minute at the meeting of Council on 19 September 2018.
2. Only those items where a vote was taken are recorded here. For information about decisions reached on any other items considered at this meeting, please contact Brian Pirie, 01324 506110.