

DRAFT**FALKIRK COUNCIL**

MINUTE of SPECIAL MEETING of the FALKIRK COUNCIL held in the MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS, FALKIRK on WEDNESDAY 7 FEBRUARY 2007 at 10.30 a.m.

PRESENT: Provost Johnston; Depute Provost R Wilson; Councillors Alexander, Anderson, Bryson, Buchanan, Coleman, H Constable, J Constable, Eaglesham, Fowler, D Goldie, G Goldie, Gow, Graham, Hamid, Rev. Jenkinson, Kenna, A MacDonald, C MacDonald, McCafferty, McNally, Martin, Miller, Nicol, Patrick, Reid, Spears, Speirs, Williamson and J Wilson.

CONVENER: Councillor Alexander.

APOLOGY: Councillor Pollock

ATTENDING: Chief Executive; Directors of Community Services, of Corporate and Commercial Services, of Education Services, of Finance Services, and of Housing and Social Work Services; Acting Director of Law and Administration Services; Heads of Accountancy Services, of Housing Management, of Planning and Transportation Services and of Strategic Support, Accounting Services Managers (D Cairney, J Flannigan and B Heron), and Democratic Services Manager.

Prior to commencement of the formal business of the meeting, the Provost and Members expressed condolences to Councillor Pollock who was attending the funeral service for her sister.

FC36. MINUTE

There was submitted (tabled) and **NOTED** Minute of Special Meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 7 February 2007.

FC37. REVENUE BUDGET 2007/08 TO 2009/10

With reference to Minute of Special Meeting of Policy and Resources Committee held on 7 February 2007 (Paragraph PR 104 refers), there was submitted joint Report (circulated) dated 26 January 2007 by the Chief Executive and Director of Finance (a) providing details of the Local Government Finance Settlement for the financial year 2007/08, and (b) detailing draft Service Revenue Budgets for 2007/08, proposed Council Tax levels for 2007/08 and summarising Falkirk Council's position in relation to Band D Council Tax levels throughout Scotland.

Councillor Alexander, seconded by Councillor Kenna moved acceptance of the recommendations detailed in the Report.

By way of an amendment, Councillor Gow, seconded by Councillor C Macdonald moved that (a) Council use £1 million from reserves to be invested in the roads and footpaths programme; (b) all charges at Meeks Road Car Park and Kemper Avenue Car Park be a flat rate of £1.00 per day, and (c) the charges for special uplifts be removed forthwith.

The Provost agreed to a short adjournment at 10.55 am to allow the terms of the amendment to be considered. The meeting reconvened at 11.10 am with all Members present as per the sederunt.

Councillor Buchanan gave notice of a further amendment.

Councillor G Goldie gave notice of second further amendment.

In terms of standing Order 21.4(i), a vote was taken by way of a roll call, there being 30 Members present with Members voting as undernoted.

For the Motion (17) – Provost Johnston; Depute Provost Wilson; Councillor Alexander, Anderson, Bryson, Coleman, H Constable, J Constable, Eaglesham, Graham, Kenna, A MacDonald, McCafferty, McNally, Patrick, Spears and Williamson.

For the Amendment (12) – Councillors Buchanan, Fowler, D Goldie, G Goldie, Gow, Hamid, Rev. Jenkinson, C MacDonald, Martin, Miller, Reid and Speirs.

Abstentions (1) – Councillor Wilson

Accordingly, the Motion was carried and became the substantive Motion.

Councillor Buchanan's further amendment was not seconded.

By way of further amendment, Councillor G Goldie, seconded by Councillor Speirs, moved that the proposed additional expenditure on roads and footpaths should be spread equally across all wards and that consideration be given to allocating further significant finance in future budgets ring fenced to bring roads and footpaths up to a an acceptable standard.

Councillor Nicol entered the meeting during discussion on the foregoing amendment.

In terms of Standing Order 21.4(i), a vote was taken by way of a roll call, there being 31 Members present with Members voting as undernoted:-

For the substantive Motion (18) – Provost Johnston; Depute Provost Wilson; Councillor Alexander, Anderson, Bryson, Coleman, H Constable, J Constable, Eaglesham, Graham, Kenna, A MacDonald, McCafferty, McNally, Nicol, Patrick, Spears and Williamson.

For the Amendment (12) – Councillors Buchanan, Fowler, D Goldie, G Goldie, Gow, Hamid, Rev. Jenkinson, C MacDonald, Martin, Miller, Reid and Speirs.

Abstentions (1) – Councillor Wilson

Accordingly, **RESOLVED** that:-

- (1) Council accepts the Draft 2007/08 Budget as detailed in the Report;
- (2) estimated Expenditure for the financial year 2007/08 be set at £298.9m, before specific Grants of £21.9m, leaving net expenditure of £277.0m;
- (3) Council levies the following Council Tax for the year 2007/08:
 - (a) A Council Tax to be paid in respect of a chargeable dwelling in Band D of £1,070, an increase of £25 per annum (2.4%);
 - (b) A Council Tax to be paid in respect of a chargeable dwelling in each of the other valuation bands in accordance with Section 74 (1) of the Local Government Act 1992 (as set out in Appendix 3 of the Report)
- (4) Chief Officers be instructed to deliver services within the Revenue Budget allocated to each Service.

FC38. GENERAL SERVICES CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2007/08 TO 2009/10

With reference to Minute of Special Meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 7 February 2007 (Paragraph PR105 refers), there was submitted Report (circulated) dated 22 January 2007 by the Director of Finance setting out the Council's proposed capital investment plans for the next 3 financial years on all areas of service delivery, with the exception of Council Housing, which was reported separately to this meeting of Council.

Councillor Alexander, seconded by Councillor Kenna moved acceptance of the recommendations detailed in the Report.

By way of an amendment, Councillor Buchanan, (having been given consent to the Provost to withdraw parts of his original motion, in terms of Standing Order 19.7) seconded by Councillor Gow moved that car parking at Bonnybridge Primary School and St Joseph's Primary School be increased utilising adjoining Council owned land at an estimated cost of £70,000 each with costs to be met from the proposed sale of the Seabegs Road depot.

Councillors D Goldie, Rev. Jenkinson and Wilson left the meeting during consideration of the foregoing item of business.

On a division, 18 members voted for the Motion and 8 Members for the Amendment.

Accordingly, **AGREED** to approve the General Services Capital programme for 2007/08 to 2009/10, and the Prudential Indicators, as appended to the Report.

In terms of Standing Order 31.1, it was **AGREED** to continue the meeting beyond the three hour limit with a view to completing the business, following a short adjournment for lunch. The meeting adjourned at 1.20 pm and reconvened at 1.50 pm, with all Members present as per the sederunt with the exception of Councillors Fowler, Rev. Jenkinson, Martin, Miller, Speirs and Wilson.

**FC39. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT AND COUNCIL HOUSE RENTS
2007/08 TO 2009/10**

With reference to Minute of Special Meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 7 February 2007 (Paragraph PR106 refers), there was submitted joint Report (circulated) dated 26 January 2007 by the Directors of Finance and of Housing and Social Work Services (a) presenting a draft Housing Revenue Account for the financial year 2007/08; (b) making recommendations on the level of council house and garage rents for 2007/08, and (c) showing indicative rent levels for the years 2008/09 and 2009/10.

AGREED:-

- (1) that an average house rent increase of £59.76 per annum be applied from 1 April, 2007 (equivalent to £1.15 per week or £2.49 per fortnightly rent charge period). The new average fortnightly charge, based on the 24 fortnightly periods with no rent being charged during the fortnightly periods commencing 25 June 2007 and 24 December 2007 would therefore be £101.68;
- (2) that no tenant face an increase of more than £85.92 per annum (equivalent to £1.65 per week or £3.58 per fortnightly rent period);
- (3) to utilise £1.3m from the Housing Revenue Account reserves;
- (4) that lock-up garage rentals be increased by an average of 10 pence per week with effect from 1 April 2007;
- (5) that garage site rentals be increased by £1 to £39 per annum with effect from 1 April 2007;
- (6) that Castings Hostel rentals be increased to a charge of £120.92 per room per week;
- (7) that homeless property rentals be increased to an average of £140.18 per week; and
- (8) that the indicative Budgets and Rent Increases for 2008/09 and 2009/10 as outlined in the Report be noted, as representing the best information available at this time.

Councillor Martin, Speirs and Wilson entered the meeting during consideration of the foregoing item of business.

FC40. HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2007/08 TO 2009/10

With reference to Minute of Special Meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 7 February 2007 (Paragraph PR107 refers), there was submitted Report (circulated) dated 26 January 2007 by the Director of Housing and Social Work Services outlining expenditure proposals for the 2007/08 to 2009/10 HRA Investment Programme.

AGREED to approve the expenditure proposals outlined in the report as the HRA Investment Programme for 2007/08 to 2009/10.