

FALKIRK COUNCIL

MINUTE of SPECIAL MEETING of FALKIRK COUNCIL held in the MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS, FALKIRK on TUESDAY 15 JUNE 2010 at 2.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Provost Reid; Depute Provost Black; Councillors Alexander, Blackwood, Buchanan, Carleschi, Coleman, Goldie, Gow, Hughes, Jackson, Kenna, Lemetti, A MacDonald, C MacDonald, Mahoney, C Martin, C R Martin, McLuckie, McNally, McNeill, Meiklejohn, Nicol, Nimmo, Oliver, Ritchie, Spears, Thomson and Waddell.

CONVENER: Provost Reid.

APOLOGIES: Councillors Constable, Fry and Patrick.

ATTENDING: Chief Executive, Directors of Corporate and Neighbourhood Services and of Finance; Acting Director of Law and Administration Services; Head of Policy and Performance and Democratic Services Manager.

DECLARATIONS None.
OF INTEREST:

FC14. NOTICES OF MOTION

Investment Committee

Councillor A MacDonald, seconded by Councillor Meiklejohn, moved that:-

“Council welcomes the major investment by the Scottish Government in new affordable and social housing, facilitating the first major social house building programme for decades.

Council recognises the need to continue house building initiatives in Falkirk district however recognition is also given to reduced bank lending resulting in the social housing sector seeking alternative funding from other sources.

Council notes that as part of Falkirk Council’s Pension Fund Investment Strategy, 3 per cent of the “Alternatives” section of the Strategic Asset Allocation is to be invested in infrastructure projects.

Council recognises that an ethical investment in social housing would provide much needed social housing at a time of excessive demand, and would also provide a secure return on an inflation-linked investment.

Council therefore instructs officers to prepare a report to the relevant strategy Committees and the Investment Committee in the near future, detailing the options available to the Council for local investment in social housing via the Falkirk Council Pension Fund.”

By way of an Amendment Councillor C Martin, seconded by Depute Provost Black, moved the terms of the Motion subject to the final paragraph being amended to exclude the words “the relevant strategy committees and”.

In terms of Standing Order 21.4 (i) a vote was taken by roll call, there being 28 Members present, with voting as undernoted :-

For the Motion (12) – Councillors Alexander, Carleschi, Coleman, Hughes, Kenna, A MacDonald, McNally, Meiklejohn, Oliver, Ritchie, Spears and Thomson.

For the Amendment (16) – Provost Reid; Depute Provost Black; Councillors Blackwood, Buchanan, Goldie, Gow, Lemetti, C MacDonald, Mahoney, C Martin, C R Martin, McLuckie, McNeill, Nicol, Nimmo and Waddell.

Accordingly, **AGREED** to:-

- (1) Welcome the major investment by the Scottish Government in new affordable and social housing, facilitating the first major social house building programme for decades;
- (2) Recognise the need to continue house building initiatives in Falkirk district however recognition is also given to reduced bank lending resulting in the social housing sector seeking alternative funding from other sources;
- (3) Note that as part of Falkirk Council’s Pension Fund Investment Strategy, 3 per cent of the “Alternatives” section of the Strategic Asset Allocation is to be invested in infrastructure projects;
- (4) Recognise that an ethical investment in social housing would provide much needed social housing at a time of excessive demand, and would also provide a secure return on an inflation-linked investment, and
- (5) Instruct officers to prepare a report to the Investment Committee in the near future, detailing the options available to the Council for local investment in social housing via the Falkirk Council Pension Fund.

Councillor Goldie joined the meeting during consideration of the foregoing item of business.

Councillor Jackson left the meeting during consideration of the foregoing item of business.

Affordable Housing

The Provost confirmed that this Motion had been withdrawn as the matter had been considered at a Special Meeting of Council earlier in the day.

Councillor Lemetti left the meeting following consideration of the foregoing item of business.

Denny Town Centre

On behalf of the requisitioners, Councillors Oliver confirmed that this Motion had been withdrawn on the understanding that as a Report on Denny Town Centre Regeneration would be considered by Council on 23 June 2010.

Economic Recession

Councillor Oliver, seconded by Councillor A MacDonald, moved that:-

“Council recognises that the economic recession has impacted disproportionately on the most excluded social groups in our society, with forthcoming UK Government budget cuts expected to have a significant effect on these groups’ ability to respond to emerging and changing needs.

Council instructs officers to develop plans, and to lead on, the formation of a local Financial Inclusion Network which will be a registered charity and partnership organisation, whose aim would be to ensure that all Falkirk district residents are aware of their financial choices and to promote access to financial advice, financial products and other services, particularly to the most excluded social groups.

Council further instructs officers to bring a report to the next Policy and Resources Committee detailing the steps required to form the local Financial Inclusion Network.”

By way of an Amendment, Councillor C Martin, seconded by Councillor Nimmo, moved that:-

“Council recognises the value of all services and organisations working together to ensure the best advice and information is provided to residents of Falkirk Council with regards money and debt advice.

The Council and our partners have worked together to ensure these services are available and co-ordinated through an established financial inclusion partnership. Through our approach to financial inclusion we have seen the development and expansion of support to our Credit Unions, CABs, money advice services, services to homeless people and financial education in Schools. We do not require a formal structure/organisation to ensure the continued development and co-ordination of services to the most vulnerable individuals. While recognising the need to co-ordinate services, we must also ensure our resources are used to

deliver front line services rather than the establishment and running of a new organisation.

On that basis Officers are asked to ensure the existing financial inclusion partnership is further developed with its work reported to Members as part of a wider approach to addressing poverty and in the context of an emerging poverty strategy.”

On a division, 12 Members voted for the Motion and 15 voted for the Amendment.

Accordingly, **AGREED** in terms of the Amendment.