

The background of the slide features a large, light blue watermark of the City of Vancouver's coat of arms. The crest is a shield divided into four quadrants. The top-left quadrant shows a city skyline with a diagonal beam of light. The top-right quadrant depicts a stag's head with antlers. The bottom-left quadrant shows a three-masted sailing ship on wavy water. The bottom-right quadrant features a grizzly bear standing on a rocky outcrop. Above the shield is a crown with four maple leaves. A banner at the bottom contains the motto 'CITY OF VANCOUVER' in a circular arrangement.

# **Agenda Item 3**

## **Minute**

Draft

**FALKIRK COUNCIL**

**Minute of meeting of the EMERGENCY EXECUTIVE held remotely on Thursday 6 August 2020 at 11.00 a.m.**

**Councillors:** David Alexander  
Robert Bissett  
Fiona Collie  
Joan Coombes  
Paul Garner  
Nigel Harris  
James Kerr  
Adanna McCue  
Cecil Meiklejohn (Convener)  
Alan Nimmo  
Pat Reid

**Officers:** Jack Frawley, Team Leader - Committee Services  
Kenny Gillespie, Head of Housing & Communities  
Kenneth Lawrie, Chief Executive  
Robin Millard, Head of Design, Roads & Transport  
Colin Moodie, Chief Governance Officer  
Robert Naylor, Director of Children's Services  
Bryan Smail, Chief Finance Officer

In accordance with section 43 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 the Convener had directed that the meeting would be conducted by video conference to allow remote attendance by elected members.

In accordance with section 50A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 the public were excluded from this meeting as it was likely that, if members of the public were present, there would be a real and substantial risk to public health due to infection or contamination with coronavirus.

**EE33. Apologies**

An apology was submitted on behalf of Councillor Nicol.

**EE34. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations.

## **EE35. Minutes**

### **Decision**

**The minutes of the meetings of the Emergency Executive held on 25 June and 7 July 2020 were approved.**

## **EE36. Update on Syrian Vulnerable Persons Scheme**

The Emergency Executive considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Housing Services which provided an update on the Council's involvement in the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme. Approval was sought to participate in the new Resettlement Scheme which amalgamated the three largest existing Home Office Resettlement schemes.

The Council agreed to participate in the Syrian Vulnerable Person Resettlement Scheme in December 2015 and pledged to welcome 60 people over a 5 year period. So far the Council had welcomed 54 refugees, with a final family to arrive once Covid restrictions were lifted to complete the initial pledge.

The Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme and Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme were due to conclude at the end of March 2020. Going forward there would be amalgamation of the largest resettlement schemes into a new global resettlement scheme called the UK Resettlement Scheme. COSLA was engaging with Scottish Councils on their commitment to the resettlement programmes beyond 2020 and the end of the current resettlement schemes.

The new UK Resettlement Scheme was a work in progress but the current information available was:-

- The three largest resettlement schemes would be replaced by one broad global scheme to bring consistency of provision for all refugees resettled in the UK while broadening the geographical focus of current schemes beyond the Middle East and North Africa;
- The funding tariff that was currently in place was confirmed for 2020/21, along with the provision of additional funding for exceptional cases;
- Current levels of resettlement would be sustained;
- The scheme would continue on a voluntary basis;
- The scheme would continue to be based on United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees vulnerability criteria.

COSLA anticipated that the request from UK Government would be that Scotland resettle approximately 10% of all those being resettled in the UK. Based on Falkirk Council's previous pro rata pledge, this equated to resettling 15 people in Year 1 of the new scheme.

## **Decision**

### **The Emergency Executive:-**

- (1) noted the work carried out in Support of the Vulnerable Persons Refugee Programme in Falkirk, and**
- (2) agreed that Falkirk Council participate in the new Global Resettlement scheme on the same pro rata basis, subject to the same level of funding being confirmed by the Home Office.**

## **EE37. Capital Programme Financial Overview**

The Emergency Executive considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Housing Services which provided an update on: the 2019/20 outturn position for the General Fund and Housing Capital Programmes, subject to audit; information on the 2020/21 Capital Programmes, and an update on the process for development of the 2021/22 – 2025/26 Capital Programmes.

The approved 2019/20 budget was revised to £41.7m (£38.2m after deduction of the £3.5m slippage allowance). Total General Fund capital investment in 2019/20 was £29.96m, excluding the TIF project which was reported separately. The revised 2019/20 budget had assumed a £3.5m allowance for slippage. The total slippage figure for 2019/20 was £9.8m - £6.3m over the budgeted allowance.

The Housing Capital Programme budget for 2019/20 was £47.7m, with total capital investment in housing of £43.6m at year end, an underspend of £4.1m and a net decrease in spend of £0.1m compared to the forecast reported to the February Executive.

The year end outturn information for 2019/20 for the General Fund Capital Programme had been used to update the starting point for the 2020/21 Capital Programme for the General Fund. The Covid-19 pandemic had impacted on the Council's ability to deliver the Capital Programme in 2020/21 with a number of projects being delayed. Conversely some projects, such as Connected Falkirk, had been accelerated.

It was estimated that c£20.5m of spend would no longer take place in 2020/21. The figures were provisional and highly likely to change as the full impact of Covid-19 became more clear. Work was ongoing in respect of Council priorities and development of a revised business plan, including Council recovery plans. These plans may include projects which would need to be progressed during 2020/21 and which would impact on the capital programme. It was expected that the Corporate and Business Plans would be presented to Members in September 2020.

Council requested at the budget meeting of 26 February 2020 that a report be submitted to the Executive on what would be achieved with an additional £7m of investment in roads. The work on this report had been impacted by the pandemic. It was anticipated that a report setting out more detail on roads investment would be submitted to Council in September 2020. A further report on the Council HQ and Arts Centre was also anticipated in Autumn 2020.

The current lack of certainty over the General Capital Grant did not preclude the progression of the 2021/22 – 2025/26 Capital Programmes. However, the Capital Programme was designed to ensure that the Council delivered on the priorities as set out in its Corporate Plan. It was recognised that in light of the pandemic, the vision and priorities of the Council would need to be revisited. A crucial element of the Capital Programme was ensuring that it supported delivery of Council priorities and helped to deliver on key Council of the Future workstreams and projects, for example:

- The Strategic Property Review
- Anytime, Anywhere Working Group
- Succeed Today, Excel Tomorrow (subject to Scottish Government funding arrangements)
- The Digital Strategy

Alongside these a number of large, strategic investment programmes would also need to be considered in the Capital Programme as a whole, including:

- The Falkirk Growth Deal
- Grangemouth Flood Protection Scheme
- Climate Change (aligned to the Strategic Property Review)
- Tax Incremental Finance Scheme

## **Decision**

### **The Emergency Executive noted:-**

- (1) the projected year end outturn for 2019/20 for both General Fund and Housing Capital Programmes;**
- (2) the Prudential Indicators and the external borrowing requirement for 2019/20;**
- (3) the draft revisions to the 2020/21 Capital Programmes, and the potential for further change as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic;**
- (4) that the bid process for the 2021/22 to 2025/26 General Fund Capital Programme had been delayed to ensure appropriate links with the revised Council vision and priorities; Business Plan, including Council Recovery Plans, and**

- (5) that there would be the opportunity at the Council meeting in September to take any necessary decisions, when the position would be clearer.

**EE38. Children's Services – Update on Re-opening Plans for School and Early Years Establishments**

The Emergency Executive considered a report by the Director of Children's Services which provided an update on Children's Services re-opening plans taking account of Scottish Government guidance and detailed the key changes that had been made to the guidance since the previous report was agreed by the Emergency Executive on 7 July 2020.

A number of recent updates had been announced by the Scottish Government which required school and ELC establishments re-opening plans to be amended. The key changes included:

- no requirement for physical distancing between any children and young people in primary and secondary settings;
- requirement for ELC settings to group children into "bubbles" of up to a maximum of 8 had been removed;
- no requirement for physical distancing between pupils whilst on school transport;
- drivers would require appropriate PPE or to maintain physical distancing;
- week commencing Monday 10 August 2020 flexibility would be allowed to facilitate "phased returns", but all pupils should resume full time education by 18 August 2020;

In order to reduce the risks associated with cross contamination and minimise large gatherings of pupils it was proposed to initially provide a slightly limited school meals offer via "grab bags" for pupils from the start of the new term. This service would be adopted by a number of local authorities and was recognised within the new national guidance. This would be reviewed in September 2020.

In order to give parents sufficient notice of the emergency critical childcare service ending the Director of Children's Services, under delegated authority, made the decision to end the provision on Wednesday 5 August 2020. This end date also ensured that cleaning staff had 2 days to undertake a full clean of those establishments which had been used ahead of staff returning on Monday 10 August 2020.

It was proposed that primary, secondary and special schools re-opening was:

- Phase 1 from Wednesday 12 August – Friday 14 August 2020 - soft start in line with report agreed on 7 July 2020;
- Phase 2 from Monday 17 August 2020 - full return of all children.

## **Decision**

### **The Emergency Executive:-**

- (1) noted the arrangements outlined in sections 4.2 and 4.3 of the report regarding the re-opening plans for early learning and childcare establishments and all primary, secondary and additional support needs schools;**
- (2) noted the arrangements outlined in section 4.1 (iv) of the report regarding school meal provision;**
- (3) endorsed the decision made by the Director of Children's Services regarding the cessation of emergency critical childcare on Wednesday 5 August 2020 as detailed in section 4.1 (v) of the report, and**
- (4) requested a report from officers setting out monitoring arrangements and contingency measures (further to those previously agreed) to be presented at a future meeting. Safety and recovery are the main priorities and the Director must ensure all schools follow the prescribed guidance without deviation and local interpretations.**