

FALKIRK COUNCIL

MINUTE of SPECIAL MEETING of the EXECUTIVE held within the MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS, FALKIRK on TUESDAY 17 JUNE 2014 at 11.00 a.m.

COUNCILLORS:

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

OFFICERS:

Rhona Geisler, Director of Development Services
Rose Mary Glackin, Chief Governance Officer
Brian Pirie, Democratic Services Manager
Stuart Ritchie, Director of Corporate & Neighbourhood Services

ALSO ATTENDING:

Maureen Campbell, Chief Executive, Falkirk Community Trust

EX22. APOLOGIES

No apologies were received.

EX23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

EX24. PROVISION OF 3G PITCHES

The motion regarding 3G pitches which had been referred to the Executive by Council on 14 May 2014 was withdrawn by Councillor McNally.

EX25. 3G SYNTHETIC SPORTS PITCHES

The Executive considered a report by the Chief Executive, Falkirk Community Trust presenting options for the provision of 3G synthetic sports pitches in the area.

The Council had agreed in 2009 to provide 6 synthetic 3G sports pitches for the area. Two sites, in Grangemouth and Denny, had been identified. The proposed site at Grangemouth was not pursued and, following discussion with the Scottish Football

Association (SFA) and sportscotland as potential funders, an alternative site within the footprint of Denny Football Centre was identified.

The report summarised developments since 2009 and set out the SFA's and sportscotland's current position in regard to pitch provision, including their funding preference for projects fully supported by local community clubs with a robust business case to ensure long term sustainability. Two options were now presented – to pursue the Denny option or to consider a club led option whereby clubs are encouraged to submit development plans and business cases for their proposals. In the latter option, clubs would identify sources of funding beyond those available from the Council and would be liable for ongoing operation costs and risks. The club led option would increase community ownership and capacity building.

The report summarised the benefits and costs of each option together with key considerations.

Decision

The Executive agreed to pursue the club led option and to seek a further report outlining a mechanism and criteria for clubs to access the Council's funding.

EX26. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 13 MAY 2014 REVIEW OF EXTERNAL FUNDING TO SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN AFFECTED BY ABUSE

The Executive had, on 27 May 2014 (ref EX18), continued consideration of recommendations arising from a review of external funding to services for people who have been affected by abuse.

The report to the Scrutiny Committee set out the background to the review of the services provided by Women's Aid, Relationship Scotland, Central Scotland Rape Crisis and Open Secret. The range of services provided, purpose of each organisation, together with Falkirk Council's contribution to each organisation's funding were set out.

The aim of the review had been to ensure that the most appropriate range and quality of support is provided by the right providers to those most in need within the area.

Overall it was concluded that the Council should, through agreed joint working arrangements, commission specific services to ensure clarity in service provision and expected outcomes. The report set out conclusions in relation to future service delivery and budgeting provision for each organisation.

Decision

The Executive agreed:-

- (1) to commission services as described within the specification and to enter into Joint Working Agreements with Open Secret, Rape Crisis, Relationship Scotland, and Women's Aid based on this specification;**
- (2) that, in order to achieve the savings agreed by Council, Open Secret be provided with notice of a reduction in funding of £34,000 during 2014/2015, with a further saving in 2015/2016 of £26,000, equating to a total recurring saving of £60,000;**
- (3) that Council Officers are to enter into discussion with Women's Aid to develop a triage service thereby establishing a framework for service provision under the new service specification and reducing the organisation's reserves to an acceptable level; and**
- (4) to commission an independent review of the service provided by Open Secret.**

EX27. TOURISM STRATEGY 2015-2020

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Development Services proposing that a policy development panel is established to develop a tourism strategy for the period 2015-2020.

The Council area had seen a build up of tourism facilities over the last 20 years, such as the Helix Park, John Muir Way and the Kelpies

It was recommended that a tourism strategy, to replace the current tourism action plan for 2014, is developed for the period 2015-2020. The strategy would generate the longer term thinking and industry co-operation needed to capitalise on the offers developed thus far and to maintain the growth momentum.

Decision

The Executive:-

- (1) agreed that a tourism strategy is prepared for the period 2015– 2020;**
- (2) agreed that a policy development panel be established to develop the strategy;**
- (3) agreed that the panel will comprise 5 members (3 from the Administration and 2 from the Opposition) and will be chaired by Councillor Mahoney with nominations for the remaining places to be submitted to the Chief Governance Officer; and**

- (4) requested that the Director of Development Services prepare a draft strategy for the Executive's approval by November 2014.**

EX28. DENNY TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION UPDATE REPORT

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Development Services providing an update in regard to the regeneration of Denny Town Centre.

A public drop-in event had been held on 26 and 27 May in Denny Old Parish Hall to provide an update on the Council's proposal for Denny town centre. All attendees had been invited to complete a questionnaire which provided feedback on the proposals. These were summarised in an appendix to the report.

Details of the town centre site assembly process and proposals for the re-siting of the War Memorial had been considered at the Executive meeting on 29 April 2014 (ref EX10). It had been anticipated that the cost of temporarily relocating Boots would be approximately £120,000. However, following a tender exercise, this was now revised to £148,028 due to additional costs in regard to delivery and installation access requirements, more onerous foundation costs and longer connection distances for utilities companies.

A tender exercise had also been undertaken in regard to the resiting of the War Memorial. The cost of the project, which had been estimated at £95,437, would now be £64,194. It was proposed that a survey is carried out in early 2015 to inform the final decision on the final location of the permanent War Memorial.

Decision

The Executive agreed:-

- (1) to note the outcome and feedback from the two day drop-in consultation event;**
- (2) the amended sum of £148,028, identified through the tendering for the provision of the temporary retail accommodation for Boots;**
- (3) that a consultation exercise on the relocation of the Denny War Memorial is conducted early in 2015; and**
- (4) that future reports are submitted on the delivery of the project including the construction of phase 1 and on the result of the consultation on the War Memorial.**

EX29. COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS ACCOMODATION OFFICE RE-PROVISION

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Development Services presenting options for the preferred location for a new Council headquarters.

The Executive had agreed, on 25 February 2014 (ref EX 118), to progress work on a business case for the provision of new Council office headquarters as part of a staged replacement of the current accommodation and town hall. A member/officer working group was established to progress the work. The group comprised: the Provost; Leader of the Council; Leader of the Opposition; and the Portfolio Holders for Culture, Leisure and Tourism, and for Economic Development.

Six potential sites had been identified:-

- Site at Municipal Buildings, Falkirk;
- Meeks Road car park;
- Melville Street car park;
- Land to the south of Falkirk Stadium;
- Land at Falkirk Gateway; and
- Abbotsford House and environs.

The report set out the key characteristics and considerations for each site together with the views of the member/officer working group in regard to the options. The group had, after considering costs, impact on the town centre, and the need for value for money, identified the existing site at the Municipal Buildings as its preferred location.

In considering the options the group was advised that the Council currently leased Abbotsford House and that the landlord, Carisbrooke Investments, had declined to negotiate over its acquisition. Should the position change, an option appraisal would be carried out.

Decision

The Executive agreed:-

- (1) for the purposes of developing a detailed business case, the existing Municipal Buildings Falkirk site as the preferred location for the site of the new office headquarters building;**
- (2) that should Carisbrooke Investments agree to negotiate the acquisition of Abbotsford House an appraisal will be undertaken to assess the benefits of this option and its implications for the Council office headquarters project; and**
- (3) that further reports will be submitted to the Executive on the full business case and, if required, the options appraisal for Abbotsford House.**

EX30. GRANGEMOUTH SPITFIRE MEMORIAL TRUST

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Development Services setting out a proposal that the Council adopts the replica Spitfire and war memorial wall site in Bo'ness Road, Grangemouth.

The land upon which the replica Spitfire and war memorial wall are sited is currently leased by the Council to the Spitfire Memorial Trust at a cost of £50 per annum. The Council provides the maintenance for the site, but not for the Spitfire or for the wall. The Memorial Trust had proposed that the Council adopt the site thereby assuming maintenance responsibilities for both. The Memorial Trust would pay a commuted sum toward future maintenance. The report summarised the likely implications of the proposal together with an overview of the anticipated costs involved.

During the discussion, members sought information on events which are planned to mark the anniversary of significant dates in both WWI and WWII. The Convener asked that officers prepare and circulate a diary of planned events.

Decision

The Executive agreed to take over maintenance responsibilities for the replica Spitfire and war memorial wall at Bo'ness Road Grangemouth subject to negotiation with the Spitfire Memorial Trust on an acceptable commuted sum towards future maintenance costs.

EX31. 8 CENTRAL BOULEVARD, CENTRAL PARK, LARBERT, UPDATE REPORT

The Convener informed the Executive that the report on this item was not yet complete and would be submitted to a future meeting.