

FC74. Revenue Budget 2017/18

Immediately prior to consideration of this item, Council adjourned to allow members of the Administration to consider the terms of the SNP group's proposed amendments which had been made available to the Leader of the Council prior to the meeting. The Leader of the Council had also shared the Administration's proposed motion with the Leader of the Opposition. Council reconvened at 10.45 a.m. with members present as per the sederunt.

Council considered a report by the Chief Executive and the Director of Corporate and Housing Services presenting the Administration's revenue budget proposals for 2017/18 with options for the level of council tax. The report also set out Falkirk Community Trust's Business Plan for 2017/18 and proposed an allocation of funds to the Integration Joint Board.

Council had previously considered reports on the revenue budget process and the local government finance settlement for 2017/18, the most recent being on 19 December 2016 (ref FC65 and FC 64). Additionally the Executive had considered further update reports on 10 January 2017 (ref EX103).

Councillor C Martin, seconded by Baillie Coombes, moved that Council agrees:-

- (1) the Draft Budget for 2017/18 as proposed in the report and as appended to it subject to the additional spending proposals outlined below;
- (2) to increase the council tax by 3%;
- (3) the additional spending proposals outlined in the table attached (appendix 1 of this minute);
- (4) to continue COSLA membership for a further year consistent with para 4.7.18 of the report;
- (5) (i) the Business Plans and savings options for Falkirk Community Trust as set out in section 4.8 of the report subject to saving proposals in the attached table (appendix 1) not being pursued, and (ii) the adjusted Service Payment for 2017/18 of £11.433m;
- (6) that the adjusted sum of £60.351m to be made available to the Integration Joint Board (IJB) to reflect (i) the additional spending proposals, and (ii) a savings requirement of £2m in place of the £2.455m submitted by the IJB on the basis that the reduced target allows the garden aid scheme to be included in its wider public consultation and that the service will continue in 2017/18;
- (7) to note the update on terms and conditions and agrees:-
 - (i) in respect of the 35/37 hour protection, to commence negotiations as soon as possible with Trade Unions with the aim of reaching an agreement on that issue by no later than the end of April. If such agreement is not possible, employees will be approached by the end of May to seek their voluntary acceptance of this change and, for those who do not agree, the Chief Executive will make appropriate

arrangements to implement this change, in accordance with any legal requirements, as soon as possible thereafter, and

- (ii) to continue with negotiations on terms and conditions more broadly with a view to achieving a package of savings for implementation in 2018/19, and
- (8) to note the Chief Officers who have either left, or are intending to leave, and agrees to:-
- (i) call an Appointments Committee to make an appointment to the post of Head of Social Work Children's Services;
 - (ii) slot the current Depute Chief Governance Officer on a temporary basis into the post of Chief Governance Officer and delete the resulting Depute Chief Governance Officer post at chief officer level;
 - (iii) slot the three Heads of Service within Development Services in to the re-designed Head of Service roles on a temporary basis to enable a reduction in Heads of Service from 4 to 3 as agreed by Council in 2015;
 - (iv) delete both chief officer Depute Chief Finance Officer posts at chief officer level to bring the Finance structure into line with other parts of the Council's chief officer structure;
 - (v) receive a report back on the current temporary arrangements for the Head of Housing post;
 - (vi) note the position with regards to the Head of Social Work Adult Services; and
 - (vii) implement a new grade O, as detailed in paragraph 4.10.25 of the report, to enable appropriate remuneration for officers who deputise for statutory officers.
- (9) to instruct Chief Officers to deliver services within the specific budget allocation for each Service and authorise them to take such actions as may be required within Council policy to give effect to the service delivery proposals outlined in relevant sections of the report and related appendices, annexes and addendums.

As an amendment, Councillor Meiklejohn, seconded by Councillor Jackson, moved the terms of the motion, subject to the following alterations:-

- (3) the additional income and savings, and spending proposals attached (appendix 2 of the minute);
- (5) the business plans and savings options for Falkirk Community Trust as set out in section 4.8 of the report with the following amendments:-

FC80. Revenue Budget 2017/18 (continued)

Council adjourned at 5.30p.m. to allow members to take advice on that part of the motion and amendment in regard to the Revenue Budget 2017/18 which related to Chief Officer posts. Council reconvened at 6.05 p.m. with members present as per the sederunt.

Councillor C Martin, seconded by Baillie Coombes, had moved that Council notes the Chief Officers who have either left, or are intending to leave and agrees to:-

- (1) call an Appointments Committee to make an appointment to the post of Head of Social Work Children's Services;
- (2) slot the current Depute Chief Governance Officer on a temporary basis into the post of Chief Governance Officer and delete the resulting Depute Chief Governance Officer post at chief officer level;
- (3) slot the three Heads of Service within Development Services in to the re-designed Head of Service roles on a temporary basis to enable a reduction in Heads of Service from 4 to 3 as agreed by Council in 2015;
- (4) delete both chief officer Depute Chief Finance Officer posts at chief officer level to bring the Finance structure into line with other parts of the Council's chief officer structure;
- (5) receive a report back on the current temporary arrangements for the Head of Housing post;
- (6) note the position with regards to the Head of Social Work Adult Services; and
- (7) implement a new grade O, as detailed in paragraph 4.10.25 of the report, to enable appropriate remuneration for officers who deputise for statutory officers.

As an amendment, Councillor Meiklejohn, seconded by Councillor Jackson, had moved in substitution that:-

Council notes the chief officers who have either left or intend to leave the Council and agrees to conduct a full review of the management structures with the final decision being taken by the incoming Council post 4 May.

Prior to the start of the debate, Councillor C Martin, with the consent of the Provost and Baillie Coombes as his seconder, adjusted the terms of his motion at clause (2) and (3) with the deletion of "on a temporary basis".

Members then debated the adjusted motion and amendment.

Councillor Nicol left the meeting at this point.

In terms of Standing Order 22.4(i), a vote was taken by roll call, there being 30 members present with voting as undernoted:-

For the motion (15) – Provost Reid; Depute Provost Patrick; Baillies Buchanan and Coombes; Councillors Black, Blackwood, D Goldie, Gow, MacDonald, McLuckie, Mahoney, C Martin, Dr C R Martin, Murray, Nimmo.

For the amendment (15) – Councillors Alexander, Balfour, Bird, Carleschi, Chalmers, Coleman, Garner, Hughes, Jackson, McCabe, Meiklejohn, Oliver, Ritchie, Turner and Spears.

There being an equality of votes, Provost Reid, exercised his casting vote in favour of the motion.

Decision

Council noted the Chief Officers who have either left, or are intending to leave and agreed to:-

- (1) call an Appointments Committee to make an appointment to the post of Head of Social Work Children’s Services;**
- (2) slot the current Depute Chief Governance Officer into the post of Chief Governance Officer and delete the resulting Depute Chief Governance Officer post at chief officer level;**
- (3) slot the three Heads of Service within Development Services in to the re-designed Head of Service roles to enable a reduction in Heads of Service from 4 to 3 as agreed by Council in 2015;**
- (4) delete both chief officer Depute Chief Finance Officer posts at chief officer level to bring the Finance structure into line with other parts of the Council’s chief officer structure;**
- (5) receive a report back on the current temporary arrangements for the Head of Housing post;**
- (6) note the position with regards to the Head of Social Work Adult Services; and**
- (7) implement a new grade O, as detailed in paragraph 4.10.25 of the report, to enable appropriate remuneration for officers who deputise for statutory officers.**
 - (i) increase funding to Falkirk Community Trust by £230,000 to maintain access to outdoor activities for both schools and community, and**
- (6) the content of section 4.9 of the report with the following amendment:-**
 - (i) £200,000 to enhance respite care provision and support carers.**
- (8) to note the Chief Officers who have either left or intend to leave the council and agree to conduct a full review of the management structures with the final decision being taken by the incoming Council post 4 May.**

Council adjourned at 11.45 a.m. to enable the Chief Finance Officer to give consideration to the proposed income and expenditure adjustments and to allow members to receive any advice on them that may be required. The meeting reconvened at 12.05 p.m. with members present as per the sederunt.

Provost Reid proposed that Council consider clauses (1)-(7) and (9) of the motion and the related clauses of the amendment at this point (clauses (3), (5) and (6)) and consider clause (8) at the end of the meeting so that, if required, Council could consider that latter part of the business in private. Members supported the proposal.

Following debate Council adjourned at 1.10 p.m. for lunch and reconvened at 2.10 p.m. with members present as per the sederunt.

In terms of Standing Order 22.4(i), a vote was taken on clauses (1)-(7) and (9) of the motion and clauses (3), (5) and (6) of the amendment by roll call, there being 31 members present with voting as undernoted:-

For the motion (16) – Provost Reid; Depute Provost Patrick; Baillies Buchanan and Coombes; Councillors Black, Blackwood, D Goldie, Gow, MacDonald, McLuckie, Mahoney, C Martin, Dr C R Martin, Murray, Nicol, Nimmo.

For the amendment (15) – Councillors Alexander, Balfour, Bird, Carleschi, Chalmers, Coleman, Garner, Hughes, Jackson, McCabe, Meiklejohn, Oliver, Ritchie, Turner and Spears.

Decision

Council agreed:-

- (1) the Draft Budget for 2017/18 as proposed in the report and as appended to it subject to the additional spending proposals outlined below;**
- (2) to increase the council tax by 3%;**
- (3) the additional spending proposals outlined in the table attached as appendix 1 to this minute;**
- (4) to continue COSLA membership for a further year consistent with para 4.7.18 of the report;**
- (5) (i) the Business Plans and savings options for Falkirk Community Trust as set out in section 4.8 of the report subject to saving proposals in the attached table (appendix 1) not being pursued, and**
 - (ii) the adjusted Service Payment for 2017/18 of £11.433m;**
- (6) that the adjusted sum of £60.351m to be made available to the Integration Joint Board (IJB) to reflect**
 - (i) the additional spending proposals, and**

- (ii) a savings requirement of £2m in place of the £2.455m submitted by the IJB on the basis that the reduced target allows the garden aid scheme to be included in its wider public consultation and that the service will continue in 2017/18;**
- (7) to note the update on terms and conditions and agrees:-**
 - (i) in respect of the 35/37 hour protection, to commence negotiations as soon as possible with Trade Unions with the aim of reaching an agreement on that issue by no later than the end of April. If such agreement is not possible, employees will be approached by the end of May to seek their voluntary acceptance of this change and, for those who do not agree, the Chief Executive will make appropriate arrangements to implement this change, in accordance with any legal requirements, as soon as possible thereafter, and**
 - (ii) to continue with negotiations on terms and conditions more broadly with a view to achieving a package of savings for implementation in 2018/19, and**
- (9) to instruct Chief Officers to deliver services within the specific budget allocation for each Service and authorise them to take such actions as may be required within Council policy to give effect to the service delivery proposals outlined in relevant sections of the report and related appendices, annexes and addendums.**