

Agenda Item 3

Minute

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FALKIRK COUNCIL

Minute of meeting of the EXECUTIVE held within the Municipal Buildings, Falkirk on Tuesday 13 June 2017 at 10.50 a.m.

Councillors:	David Alexander Gary Bouse Provost Tom Coleman Fiona Collie Paul Garner Dennis Goldie	Gordon Hughes Adanna McCue Cecil Meiklejohn Alan Nimmo John Patrick Robert Spears
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Officers:	Robin Baird, Waste Manager Jack Frawley, Committee Services Officer Rhona Geisler, Director of Development Services Colin Moodie, Chief Governance Officer Robert Naylor, Director of Children's Services Mary Pitcaithly, Chief Executive Stuart Ritchie, Director of Corporate & Housing Services Bryan Smail, Chief Finance Officer
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EX1. Apologies

There were no apologies.

EX2. Declarations of Interest

No declarations were made.

EX3. Minute

Decision

The minute of the meeting of the Executive held on 21 March 2017 was approved.

EX4. Rolling Action Log

A rolling action log detailing decisions not yet implemented following the previous meeting on 21 March 2017 was provided.

Decision

The Executive noted the rolling action log.

EX5. Valedictory Remarks

The Convener, on behalf of the Executive, thanked Robin Baird, Waste Manager for his service to the Council over many years and wished him well in the future.

EX6. Processing of Blue Bin Material and Charter Compliant Service

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Development Services providing an update on the processing of the Council's blue bin material as well as presenting the next steps to provide a Household Recycling Charter compliant service.

Blue bin material is processed at the Council's bulking facility at Roughmote. The Service is allocated a budget of £280,912 to process the material. The annual cost of processing co-mingled dry recyclate externally ranges from £625,000 to £937,000 based on the Council's current tonnages. The cost of processing the material at Roughmote is in the region of £500,000. Processing internally remains the most cost effective option but is outwith the allocated budget.

Falkirk Council was the first local authority to sign up to the National Household Recycling Charter, which is a fundamental commitment to improve household waste and recycling services. The Council is not currently compliant with the Charter because paper/cardboard and plastics/metals are collected in one container. Non compliance makes the Council ineligible for external funding.

Councillor Garner, seconded by Provost Coleman, moved that the Executive agrees:-

- (1) to authorise the Director of Development Services to submit a funding application to Zero Waste Scotland to allow the authority to provide a Household Recycling Charter compliant collection service;
- (2) to authorise the Director of Development Services to provide details of the funding application outcome and develop an implementation plan for approval at a future meeting, and
- (3) that the said implementation plan is to be informed by the conclusions of a review of the current domestic waste collection and disposal arrangements in place in the Council area. Such review is to incorporate a stakeholder engagement exercise. The review findings are to be reported back to the Executive at the same future meeting referred to in clause 2.

The Executive adjourned at 11.10 a.m. to allow members of the Opposition to consider the terms of the motion and reconvened at 11.20 a.m. with all members present as per the sederunt.

As an amendment, Councillor Goldie, seconded by Councillor Nimmo, moved, in substitution for the motion, that the Executive continues the report to find out where we can draw down the financial resources for this.

In terms of Standing Order 22.1, the vote was taken by roll call, there being 12 members present with voting as undernoted:-

For the motion (10) – Provost Coleman; and Councillors Alexander, Bouse, Collie, Garner, Hughes, Meiklejohn, McCue, Patrick and Spears.

For the amendment (2) – Councillors Goldie and Nimmo.

Decision

The Executive agreed the motion.

EX7. Falkirk Tax Incremental Finance Initiative and Falkirk Gateway

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Development Services providing an update on the Falkirk Tax Incremental Finance Initiative (TIF), Investment Zone and the Falkirk Gateway including proposals to procure development partners through the establishment of a framework for delivery.

The Falkirk Economic Partnership, involving national economic development agencies, local business representatives and the Council is progressing the development of a business case for the Investment Zone. An outline business case is expected to be submitted to the Scottish and UK Governments later in the year, following consideration by the Executive.

The Council has appointed an agent to market the Gateway site and work is underway to accelerate developer interest. The agent has highlighted the need to establish a framework of development partners which assists delivery of projects and enables the Council to respond to investment enquiries seeking a completed development scheme within a fixed timescale. Council would procure developers via the Official Journal of the European Union. A report on this work would be presented to a future meeting of the Executive for approval.

Decision

The Executive:-

- (1) noted the update of progress of the Falkirk Tax Incremental Finance Initiative and Investment Zone proposals, and**

- (2) agreed to procure a developer framework agreement for the Falkirk Gateway, Tax Incremental Finance Initiative and Investment Zone sites.**

EX8. Financial Outturn 2016/17

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Housing Services providing an outturn comparison against the budget for 2016/17.

Net expenditure at 31 March 2017 is forecast to be £329.1m which is £3.176m (1%) below the resources available. This represented a movement of £1.151m (0.35%) from the position at January 2017 and was mainly due to favourable movements in Service expenditure.

The report set out the reasons for significant deviations from budget in the following areas:-

- Children's Services – under budget by £0.854m;
- Social Work Adult Services – under budget by £0.533m;
- Development Services – under budget by £0.068m;
- Corporate & Housing Services – under budget by £1.041m.

The budget savings for 2016/17 required Services to reduce staff numbers by c231 full time equivalent (FTE). From March 2016 to March 2017 the Council's workforce had reduced from 6,013 FTE to 5,906 FTE. There were 16 employees seeking redeployment and 137 leaving through voluntary severance in 2016/17.

The Housing Revenue Account was on budget and there was no application of reserves. The projected level of reserves is considered to be prudent to meet future revenue and capital investment requirements being in line with the Scottish average of c10% of annual expenditure.

The General Fund Reserve shows a balance of £11.529m at March 2017. This was £1.479m more favourable than the projected position previously reported and was primarily due to the lower than expected costs relating to compensatory lump sums and equal pay. Further, fees relating to work on the new Council HQ were to be charged to the General Fund in 2016/17 and amounted to £0.480m.

There had been a number of transfers made to the Repairs and Renewals Fund to offset future commitments, including £0.0750m for the strategic property review, £0.165m for roads signage and £0.102m for enhancing procurement arrangements.

Decision

The Executive noted the:-

- (1) Council's year-end financial position for 2016/17, and**

- (2) transfers to the Repairs and Renewals Fund and Earmarked Reserves as outlined at Appendix 3 to the report.**

EX9. Treasury Management Annual Review 2016/17

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Housing Services presenting the Treasury Management Annual Review 2016/17. Council is required to produce an annual review of treasury management activities together with the prudential and treasury indicatory as set out in Regulations issued under the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003.

The report provided a review of:-

- economic and interest rates;
- the borrowing strategy 2016/17 outcome;
- the investment strategy;
- treasury management prudential indicators;
- member training, and
- benchmarking information.

Decision

The Executive:-

- (1) noted the contents of the Treasury Management Annual Review 2016/17, and**
- (2) agreed to refer the report to Council for consideration.**

EX10. Falkirk Townscape Heritage Initiative Update and Steeple End Use Options

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Development Services presenting an update on the progress of the Falkirk Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) and options for the future use of the Steeple.

The Falkirk THI commenced in 2013 and is due to complete on 30 September 2018. A total of £3.6m of grant funding from Heritage Lottery Fund and Historic Environment Scotland has been awarded to deliver the scheme within Falkirk town centre's conservation area.

The Steeple is a priority project within the Falkirk THI and renovation works were completed in May 2017. The Steeple is a Common Good property, maintained by the Council and leased to Falkirk Community Trust. The premises comprise a ground floor commercial premises, first floor small storage and toilet area, second and third floor restored former prison cells. The report presented three options for the future use of the building:-

- 1) Market the vacant space for lease as a commercial opportunity;
- 2) Falkirk Community Trust retain the lease and formally put in place with the Falkirk Local History Society arrangements for the Society to operate the Steeple as a local heritage space and attraction, and
- 3) Keep the premises vacant while the future use of the Steeple is considered. This can take place in the context of the Council's ongoing Strategic Asset Review.

Decision

The Executive:-

- (1) **noted the continued successful delivery of the Falkirk Townscape Heritage Initiative, and**
- (2) **approved option 2 for the proposed future use of the Steeple as set out in section 5 of the report, subject to submission of a viable business case for Executive approval.**

EX11. Refurbishment of Arnotdale House, Dollar Park, Falkirk

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Development Services advising of a successful funding bid to the Regeneration Capital Grant Fund for the refurbishment of Arnotdale House and the proposed letting of the property to Cyrenians.

Arnotdale House is a Common Good property and a Grade B listed building, prominently situated within Dollar Park. The external fabric of the property was refurbished in 2014 and further capital funds of £450k had been allocated for a Phase 2 refurbishment. Phase 2 had been scheduled for 2016/17 following receipt of a proposal from Cyrenians. The works were put on hold in order to use the Council funds as leverage for external funding. The Scottish Government's Regeneration Capital Grant Fund has allocated funding of £1.125m for the project.

The proposal is to develop a café, events/meeting space and office accommodation in Arnotdale House. The key outputs of the refurbishment project and lease to Cyrenians are:-

- to provide work experience and job opportunities for people from deprived communities and vulnerable groups;
- that individuals on community payback or supervision orders will have access to learning new skills and development opportunities to help them back to work;
- that 4 new FTE jobs will be created, and

- to provide interpretation materials on the history of Dollar Park and Robert Dollar, who donated the park and Arnoldale House to the town.

Decision

The Executive agreed to the refurbishment of Arnontdale House using the Regeneration Capital Grant Fund award of £1.125m and £450k from the Council's capital programme to accommodate a community facility led by Cyrenians.

EX12. Exclusion of Public

The Executive agreed in terms of Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, to exclude the press and public from the meeting for the following item of business on the ground that it would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the said Act.

EX13. Sale of former Torwood School site, Torwood, near Larbert

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Development Services providing the outcome of the marketing exercise regarding the sale of the former Torwood school site.

Councillor Coleman, seconded by Councillor Spears, moved that the Executive does not proceed with the disposal of this site at this time and examines additional options for maximising the use and value of the site.

As an amendment, Councillor Goldie, seconded by Councillor Nimmo, moved, in substitution for the motion, that the Executive accept the offer and associated terms set out in the report.

On a division 10 members voted for the motion and 2 voted for the amendment.

Decision

The Executive agreed not to proceed with the disposal of the former Torwood School site at this time and examines additional options for maximising the use and value of the site.