

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 rock. Above the shield is a crown with four maple leaves. A banner at the bottom contains the motto 'A NE FOR A' in a stylized font.

Agenda Item 3

Minute

Draft

FALKIRK COUNCIL

Minute of meeting of the EXECUTIVE held within the Municipal Buildings, Falkirk on Tuesday 12 June 2018 at 9.30 a.m.

Councillors: David Alexander
Robert Bissett
Gary Bouse
Paul Garner
Dennis Goldie (Convener)
Nigel Harris
Gordon Hughes
Cecil Meiklejohn
Alan Nimmo

Officers: Karen Algie, Head of HR & Business Transformation
Fiona Campbell, Head of Policy, Technology & Improvement
Douglas Duff, Head of Planning & Economic Development
Jack Frawley, Committee Services Officer
Rhona Geisler, Director of Development Services
Joe McElholm, Head of Social Work Adult Services
David McGhee, Head of Procurement & Housing Property
Colin Moodie, Chief Governance Officer
Robert Naylor, Director of Children's Services
Mary Pitcaithly, Chief Executive
Bryan Smail, Chief Finance Officer

Also Attending: Councillor Murtagh, Public Protection Portfolio Holder item EX32

EX23. Apologies

Apologies were intimated on behalf of Councillors Coombes, Kerr and Nicol.

EX24. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Bissett declared a non-financial interest in agenda item 7 (ref EX29) as the holder of an allotment but stated that he considered that this did not require him to recuse himself from consideration of the item having regard to the objective test in the Code of Conduct.

EX25. Minute

Decision

The minute of the meeting of the Executive held on 15 May 2018 was approved.

EX26. Rolling Action Log

A rolling action log detailing decisions not yet implemented following the previous meeting on 15 May 2018 was provided. Items 224 – Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, and 399 – Sale of Former Seabegs Road Depot Site, Bonnybridge were subject of reports on the agenda and accordingly fell from the action log.

Decision

The Executive noted the rolling action log.

EX27. Motion referred to the Executive under Standing Order 31- Single Use Plastics

On 9 May 2018, and in accordance with Standing Order 31.1, Council referred the following motion, proposed by Councillor Murtagh to the Executive:-

Council recognises the efforts of volunteers across our communities who have been engaging in "Spring Clean" litter-picks over recent weeks and thanks all those involved for their determination to make a positive contribution to their community and the environment.

Council further notes the damaging amount of single use disposable plastics, such as plastic drinking straws, which have been detected along our own foreshores, and which have been highlighted as a global problem for our environment, with particularly damaging consequences for marine life. Council recognises the efforts of campaigns such as "The Final Straw" campaign, aimed at minimising the environmental damage caused by single use disposable plastics and resolves to take a lead locally in combating unnecessary plastic pollution.

Council instructs officers to undertake an immediate review to establish where single use disposable plastics, such as plastic straws and hot beverage stirrers, are in use across all Council facilities and services.

The results of this review should be reported to the Council's Executive at the earliest opportunity following completion with a report on progress provided to the Executive prior to summer recess. The report will advise on where immediate removal of such items can be practically and commercially achieved and where further work is necessary to put into effect the desire of Council to minimise all unnecessary procurement of single use disposable plastics.

In doing so, officers will consult with disability advisors to ensure that all those who require the use of straws or other single use disposable plastic items, due to their disability, will have easy access to a suitable alternative where possible, or continue to be able to access plastic items where no alternative is deemed appropriate.

Council notes the efforts of other councils to implement similar policies and will liaise with partners at Scotland Excel on the best procurement options available to make any necessary transitions as cost effective as possible.

Council further commits to writing to Falkirk Community Trust to advise of this change to Council policy and ask that a similar policy be considered by the Trust board at its next meeting.

In terms of Standing Order 31.2, Councillor Murtagh spoke in support of her motion.

Councillor Garner, seconded by Councillor Meiklejohn, moved the terms of the motion.

As an amendment, Councillor Bissett, seconded by Councillor Nimmo, moved, in addition to the motion:-

That the Executive agrees to instruct officers to contact all Falkirk Council suppliers and service providers, to ask them to join Falkirk Council in reducing and eventually eliminating single use plastics from daily use.

Councillor Garner, with the consent of the Convener and Councillor Meiklejohn as his seconder, agreed to adjust the terms of his motion to include the terms of the amendment.

Decision

The Executive agreed the adjusted motion.

EX28. Council of the Future

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Housing Services which provided a quarterly update on the progress made on the Council of the Future Change Programme.

Phase 1 of the programme had involved significant engagement with employees, elected members and trades unions. Phase 2 of the programme was the delivery plan of key transformational projects. For 2018/19 cashable savings delivered by projects within the programme totalled c. £5m. Updates were provided on a number of projects, including: Smart Working, Smart Travel; BMD; Housing of Tomorrow; Early Years Expansion, and Virtual Learning in Schools.

A number of engagement events had been held in the period March to June 2018, including:-

- a Leadership Forum
- a Council wide employee and trades unions listening event
- a Change Agent Network workshop

- multiple service based employee listening events, development workshops and communication groups.

Decision

The Executive noted the:-

- (1) progress made in the Council of the Future Programme; and**
- (2) criteria for the change fund as set out in section 4.16 of the report.**

EX29. Community Empowerment Update

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Housing Services which provided an update on the work to ensure the Council fulfilled its obligations set out in the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.

It was expected that each community planning partnership would develop a Local Outcomes and Improvement Delivery Plan and adopt a model of locality planning. To deliver this the Falkirk Community Planning Partnership had agreed a framework for delivery of locality planning that linked the need to deliver on strategic priorities with the needs of local communities. This work had been initiated in the east area. Locality planning would be rolled out to the west area in September and then to the centre in April 2019.

A community action planning process would be carried out in the Grangemouth area, which would start with a community conference in June 2018. The conference would feed back to the community on the findings of the consultation and engagement work which had been undertaken and seek to identify issues of importance to the community going forward.

The Falkirk Health and Social Care Partnership was developing integrated locality structures. It was proposed that where practicable joint community engagement and locality planning was undertaken to maximise the opportunities for communities to co-design and co-produce local activity and services.

Work was being progressed in relation to participatory budgeting, with a further report to be presented later in the year. Specific pieces of work being carried out in relation to participatory budgeting included:-

- articulating what the options for participatory budgeting in Falkirk could be in order to ensure the achievement of 1% of budget being subject to meaningful participatory budgeting prior to 2020
- determining which budgets have a locality focus and therefore could potentially be subject to some form of locality decision making. This could include budgets such as parks and open spaces maintenance, and small grants
- working up options on how to encourage communities to become involved in decision making on budgets
- identifying how other public sector partners can engage in this.

Decision

The Executive:-

- (1) noted the work being undertaken on locality planning in the east and the plans to roll this out across the District;**
- (2) noted that locality planning will be aligned and undertaken where practical with the Health and Social Care Partnership to improve health and wellbeing outcomes;**
- (3) agreed that a report outlining options on the approach to Participatory Budgeting is presented later in the year and in time for any decisions to be taken at the meeting of the budget in 2019 and;**
- (4) agreed that a consultative draft Community Food Growing Strategy be presented for consideration in autumn 2018.**

EX30. Youth Council - Youth Engagement Review

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Housing Services which provided details on the outcomes from the Council's youth engagement review. The review was carried out to: learn how to better engage with young people; find out how young people wanted to engage with the Council; identify barriers to engagement, and understand views on the introduction of a youth council.

The review began in March 2018 and was guided by the results of an online survey, hosted on Citizen Space, of young people, aged 12-25 living in the Falkirk Council Area. 627 responses were received with the following key findings:-

- 82% of young people agreed or strongly agreed that they would like to be involved in making decisions that affect them and their local area
- 53% of young people agreed or strongly agreed that they could influence decisions affecting their local area
- 15% of young people have been involved in Council youth engagement activities
- 28% of young people were interested in joining a youth council
- 70% of young people stated their preferred method of engagement as online surveys.

Decision

The Executive agreed to:-

- (1) develop, in conjunction with young people, an online survey platform similar to the Citizens Panel;**

- (2) promote youth engagement activities more effectively using the online channels which are preferred by young people;**
- (3) work closely with schools and Forth Valley College to provide young people opportunities to get involved in youth engagement;**
- (4) use social media to keep young people informed of changes and developments in their local areas;**
- (5) regularly ask young people what issues are important to them and design engagement activities around this. This may be achieved through an annual survey through which an engagement agenda is developed, and**
- (6) manage the expectations of young people by being honest about the scope of their influence over decision making processes.**

EX31. Fairer Scotland Duty and Equalities Training

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Housing Services which provided an update on guidance received on the new Fairer Scotland Duty and outlined a series of training and awareness sessions on equalities which were being organised for the Council.

The Council had obligations to meet under the Equalities Act 2010, including the Public Sector General Equality Duty. This required that public bodies be pro-active in tackling discrimination by:-

- eliminating discrimination
- promoting equality of opportunity
- fostering good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

The Scottish Government had published guidance on the Fairer Scotland duties which was interim and non-statutory. The duties would be phased in over a three year period. Public bodies were asked to do more to tackle the inequalities caused by socio-economic disadvantage.

A training programme, led by an external facilitator, would be offered on a rolling basis with the initial sessions rolled out to Councillors and senior officers.

Decision

The Executive:-

- (1) noted the obligations on the Council with regards the Fairer Scotland Duty;**
- (2) noted the interim guidance;**

- (3) agreed that the current Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment Process is the way the Council will ensure compliance with the Fairer Scotland duty, and**
- (4) noted the equalities awareness training programme.**

EX32. Review of Taxi Fare Scales and Other Charges

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Housing Services which proposed to increase the fare scale used by all taxi operators licenced by the Council.

The Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 imposed a duty on all Councils to fix, from time to time, the maximum charges for the hire of taxis. There had been several reviews in recent years but the last increase in the tariff was introduced in October 2013.

Before fixing any scales or undertaking such a review, the Council must:-

- consult with persons or organisations appearing to them to be, or be representative of, the operators of taxis operating within their area;
- give notice of their intention by advertisement in a newspaper in its area stating, (a) the general effect of the proposals and the date when they propose that its decision will take effect; and (b) that any person may lodge written representations with respect to the proposals within a period of one month after the date of the first publication of the notice, and
- consider any such representations duly lodged.

The taxi forum was identified as being representative of operators of taxis and was invited to make representation in respect of the tariff. The forum recommended that there be a 50p increase on the flag fall with an increase in the running mile of between 10% and 20%. The following issues were highlighted in reference to the requirement for an increased fare:-

- increasing fuel costs
- increasing insurance costs
- increasing maintenance costs
- increased capital costs as a result of Council policy that replacement taxi/private hire car vehicles must be no older than 3 years
- to allow greater investment in technology

When comparing the cost of a 2 mile journey across all local authorities in Scotland under the current tariff rate Falkirk was the lowest. It was proposed that the fare scales be increased by 50p on the flag fall and 10% on the running mile. The proposed rates would place Falkirk 22 out of 32 local authorities for a two mile journey.

Decision

The Executive agreed to:-

- (1) to the proposed changes to the existing Taxi fares and scales; and**
- (2) to instruct the Chief Governance Officer to advertise the fare scales and charges to take effect from midnight on 31 August 2018 and,**
 - (a) In the event of any written representations being received in respect of the published proposals, a further report will be submitted to the Executive to allow them to be considered and,**
 - (b) In the event that no written representations are received the proposals will be held as confirmed and formally notified to the consultees.**

EX33. Treasury Management Annual Review 2017/18

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Housing Services which presented the Treasury Management Annual Review 2017/18. Council was required to produce an annual review of treasury management activities together with the prudential and treasury indicators as set out in the Regulations issued under the Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003.

The report provided a review of:-

- economic and interest rates;
- the borrowing strategy 2017/18 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 2017/18, and**
- (2) agreed to refer the report to Council.**

EX34. Provisional Financial Outturn Position 2017/18

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Development Services which provided an updated financial position for the Council for 2017/18. The final accounts process was underway and would be subject to final audit review.

Net expenditure at 31 March 2018 was £330.2m which was £4.928m (1.5%) below the resources available. This was a movement of £1.737m from the position reported in January. The contributing factors included additional revenue support grant of c. £1m and the refund of VAT of £0.7m. The report set out spend against budget by service and the significant reasons for deviation. The spend was:-

- Children's Services – over budget by £0.110m
- Adult Services – under budget by £0.413m
- Development Services – over budget by £0.201m
- Corporate & Housing Services – under budget by £4.207m.

Decision

The Executive noted:-

- (1) Council's year-end financial position subject to audit for 2017/18, and**
- (2) the transfers to the Repairs & Renewals Fund and Earmarked Reserves as outlined at appendix 3 to the report.**

EX35. Housing Infrastructure Fund - M80 Junction 7 Sliproads

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Development Services which provided an update on progress of a project to upgrade the junctions of the A803 with the M80 junction 7 sliproads. Agreement on arrangements for delivery of the project was sought.

Upgrading the junctions of the M80 with the A803 in Banknock and Haggs formed infrastructure proposal INF06 of the Falkirk Local Development Plan. Upgrading was necessary along the A803 corridor between Coneypark and Dennyloanhead to facilitate settlement growth. If upgraded the potential delivery of new housing units was 1254, without the improvements the capacity would be limited to 160 new houses.

Through the Scottish Government's Housing Infrastructure Fund an opportunity had arisen to obtain a 100% grant to cover the residual cost of the junction improvements. Following an expression of interest the Scottish Government had responded in February 2018 inviting a formal application. An offer of up to £1.543m grant funding was received during May 2018. If the offer was accepted the funds would be paid to the Council to deliver the project in partnership with I&H Brown and Mactaggart and Mickel.

Decision

The Executive:-

- (1) noted the award of up to £1.543m grant funding from the Scottish Government's Housing Infrastructure Fund for the delivery of a project to upgrade the junctions of the A803 with the M80 junction 7 sliproads;**
- (2) agreed to participate in a Banknock and Dennyloanhead Regeneration Partnership with I&H Brown Ltd and Mactaggart and Mickel in the delivery of the project;**
- (3) agreed to commission WSP for delivery of the project at a cost of £1.61m, and**
- (4) noted the requirement for the project to be included in the Council's 2019/20 capital programme.**

EX36. Exclusion of Public

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

EX37. Sale of former Seabegs Road Depot Site, Bonnybridge

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Development Services which provided an update on the work to identify a preferred option for the disposal or transfer of the former Seabegs Road depot site.

Decision

The Executive:-

- (1) noted the assessment, and**
- (2) agreed that the preferred option was to split the site, subject to the company demonstrating, within 12 months, that their plans were deliverable.**